

Bahá'ís are complicit in genocide.

This will be uncomfortable for many Bahá'ís... especially those with truly good hearts. But neutrality and silence in the face of injustice support tyranny. Of all people, Bahá'ís should know this.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cde3eyzdr63o>

In what kind of world can one preach justice and claim to stand for truth, while remaining silent about the slaughter of children just a few miles away? Shame on those who defend such hypocrisy.

There are many kind-hearted Bahá'ís who feel a deep unease about this... and they should. That discomfort is not weakness. It is your conscience. It is reason, trying to speak the truth.



You cannot, on one hand, denounce the atrocities in Iran, and on the other, turn away from genocide unfolding right before your eyes. That contradiction is not neutrality. It is hypocrisy. And those who numb the hearts of the kind and the compassionate should be ashamed.

Singing 'Kumbaya' in circles, quoting scripture, and exchanging emails from within ivory towers, while children are being butchered outside your door, is this what truth looks like?

If you claim to belong to the 'Holy Land', then the suffering in that land is your problem too. Just as you speak out for justice in Iran, in Ukraine, or anywhere else, you must speak out here as well. Anything less is complicity.

Bahá'ís are fortunate, most of the world barely knows who they are. They live safely in a comfortable bubble, untouched by scrutiny. But never before has the world been so united in its moral outrage and those who speak of 'unity' day and night are choosing, willfully, to remain outside of it.

Go test it for yourself. I dare you to bring up this issue with your Local Spiritual Assembly. Watch the reactions. Witness the hypocrisy.

Here is a heroine, one of your own, who stood up for justice. And what became of her? She was cast out. Banished from your circle. Thrown out of the very community she tried to hold accountable.....

<https://www.palquest.org/en/biography/14231/sadhj-nassar>

Collaboration Between Israeli Officials and the Baha'i Community

while the propagation of the Baha'i Faith is prohibited in Haifa, a strong correlation viewed among Israel and the Baha'i community as a political tool rather than a genuine religious movement. In this article, we report the more aspects of these supports in detailed. Due to the differences between [Bahau'llah](#) and his brother Sobh Azal, the Ottoman government exiled him to the port of Acre in the north of Palestine and he was buried there. At the same time, his family members and other few followers immigrated to Palestine and settled there, but in order not to face the opposition of the Palestinian Muslim people, he pretended to be a Muslim and even 'Abdu'l-Bahá (Baha'u'llah's son and successor) sometimes became the Imam of the Muslim congregations. During the First World War, he helped British soldiers against the Ottoman Muslim government. He was accused of espionage for the benefit of England and was subject to the death penalty, but he was saved by the intervention of the British government. In addition, he gave a lot of help to the Jews to buy Palestinian lands. At that time, he did not oppose Lord Balford's declaration to form a Jewish state in Palestine. Later, Maxwell, Shoghi Effendi's wife, stated: "The fate of us Baha'is and Israelis is linked like the links of a chain."

1-Baha'i expressions of support for the Jewish state

After 'Abdu'l-Bahá, a new aspect of the Bahá'í Faith was presented. In fact, the organizational structure of the Bahá'í Faith was established with the help of the associates of Shoghi Effendi, especially his aunt Bahiyyih Khánum (daughter of Bahá'u'lláh) and his wife Rúhíyyih Maxwell, replacing the religious layer of the Bahá'í Faith. These supports and the relationships between the State of Israel and the Bahá'í leadership, and sometimes the Bahá'í community were in circulation to establish an administrative and organizational order named the 'Most Great Order' by Shoghi Effendi. The stages of this organizational process are as follows:

Please note that the term 'Most Great Order' is a translation of 'Názm-i-Badí', which refers to the administrative order of the Bahá'í Faith. If you have any more texts to translate or any other questions, feel free to ask!

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In December 1948, the third Baha'i leader Shoghi Rabbani stated that Baha'i scriptures had predicted the reestablishment of the Jewish state of Israel.

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close relationship between Israel and the Baha'i community dates back to when the establishment and growth of Israel state promised by the Baha'i leadership to refrain from proselytizing within the country.

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Despite their restraint in Israel, Baha'is activity via their media have been developed and gained virtual followers. This multiplier made more easier than the Baha'i propaganda.

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Shoghi Rabbani limited Baha'i pilgrimages to settle in Israel to only nine days, which was seen as insufficient by some Israeli officials who wanted to showcase the country's progress.

For example, one government official wrote in May 1952:

But the Baha'i leader not only rejected the request but also insisted on this short period for pilgrimage and this law continues until now.

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The Baha'i leadership discouraged followers, particularly American Baha'is, from moving to Israel.

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Shoghi Rabbani was careful not to upset the Israeli government or the Jewish public, especially during the sensitive period after the 1948 War.

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High-ranking Baha'i officials communicated their support for Israel to the state authorities, emphasizing the religious significance of Israel to the Baha'i Faith.

for example, Baha'i International Council member Lawrence Hautz wrote to state officials:

How does a person who considers himself the second leader of a religion that claims to fight oppression and promote the unity of the human world allow himself to predict and issue the path of deportation of the Palestinian people and throw the red carpet under the feet of the occupying Jews?

This immense support of '[Abdu'l-Bahá](#)' for the non-Palestinian Jews and preparing the ground for their occupation is quite clear for the intellectuals and speaks of his hidden connection with the Zionist movements before the [establishment of the state of Israel](#).

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Israel viewed Baha'i pilgrimages as a means to promote its image of tolerance, democracy, and modernization.

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Baha'i leaders expressed pride in contributing to Israel's rising prestige and influence worldwide.

In fact, the relationship between the Baha'i community and the state of Israel during the post-independence period, highlighting the Baha'i Faith's support for Israel and the strategic considerations involved in their interactions.

2- Officials of Israel and the Baha'i Community Support

The Israeli government's response to the Baha'i support has been complex. While there isn't a direct statement from the government regarding the Baha'i support mentioned in the historical context you provided, recent developments suggest a legal battle over the classification of [Baha'i gardens in Acre](#):

The Baha'i World Center is involved in a legal dispute with the city of Acre over the classification of the Bahji Gardens as a holy site. The local authorities had formerly granted the gardens a waiver from property taxation, acknowledging their spiritual significance, but subsequently rescinded this waiver, resulting in a substantial yearly tax obligation for the Baha'i fellowship.

Following the tax dispute, the Baha'i World Center has opted to restrict the gardens' entry, confining admittance exclusively to pilgrims.

The municipality's stance is that full tax exemption can only be given to a "house of worship," which traditionally requires a building. Given that the Baha'i belief system does not utilize edifices for worship, the local government contends that the privilege of tax immunity ought to be rescinded.

This situation indicates that while the Baha'i community has historically supported the state of Israel, there are contemporary challenges related to the recognition and treatment of Baha'i holy sites within the country.

3- Baha'is in Haifa Garden and building projects

Baha'i leadership took advantage of Arab flight during the 1948 War to purchase land around the shrine and mansion of Baha'u'llah in Bahji. The Baha'is owned very little land in that location, hindering development. In 1950, Shoghi Rabbani expressed interest in purchasing absentee-owned property in Bahji for beautification efforts.

After negotiations, Israel transferred about 40 acres of Arab absentee-owned land around Baha'u'llah's tomb and shrine to the Baha'is.

The transaction justified by considering the acquired lands as belonging to Arab supporters of excommunicated Baha'is.

This acquisition nearly equaled the total land acquired by the Baha'is in Haifa over the previous 60 years.

The Baha'is restored Baha'u'llah's home in Acre and planned to build a religious hospice.

The iconic Shrine of the Bab on Mount Carmel, with stained-glass windows and a golden-domed superstructure, was completed in 1953.

Israeli officials supported the project, providing tax-free building materials and even donating cement.

The Baha'i Archives, modeled after the Parthenon, was completed between 1955 and 1957. The designer of the grand edifice, the Canadian Baha'i, William Sutherland Maxwell, stood as Shoghi Rabbani's father-in-law.

The Baha'is acquired new lands on Mount Carmel, allowing them to create garden terraces leading down the slope.

Most funding for local projects came from the United States.

The Baha'is received support from the Israeli government in disputes over religious sites.

4- Israel and the Baha'i Community: Support from Leaders

The Baha'i community in Israel held a unique position, receiving favorable treatment from state leaders. Here's why:

4-1-Israel and the Baha'i Community Valued

State leaders recognized the Baha'i presence and appreciated their support.

the Baha'is feinted that according their teaching they had no political or religious ambitions to control the state, so with this trick, they were able to instill the public perception that their presence in this land is non-threatening.

The Baha'i movement has been shown as a soothing influence the regional tensions prevalent in the 1950s.

The Baha'i holy places in Haifa garden were built in such a way that attracted pilgrims from around the world, contributing to tourism and the country's image.

4-2-Government Officials' Support

In a correspondence dated 1954 to the International Baha'i Council in Haifa, Teddy Kollek, who would later become Jerusalem's mayor and served as the Director-General of the Prime Minister's Office during the 1950s, personally conveyed his endorsement and commendation for the Baha'i community's endeavors in Israel. In confidential state discussions, Kollek declared that Prime Minister Ben-Gurion consistently backed the Baha'i Council's initiatives to enhance their sacred sites and provided aid to this devoted group whose efforts adorned the nation. [4]

Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, serving as Israel's President from 1952 to 1963 and a scholar with a keen interest in, and a notable advocate for, non-Muslim minorities in Israel and adjacent countries, facilitated family visits for Baha'is from adversarial nations to their senior kin in Israel. He posited that their faith was rooted in humanistic ideals and that they had consistently expressed positive regard for the Jewish people and demonstrated unwavering fidelity to the [State of Israel](#). [5]

During his visit to the Baha'i Gardens on the slopes of Mount Carmel in October 2019, and participation in the bicentennial celebration of the birth of the Bab, the President of Israel, Reuven Rivlin, explicitly stated:

In this visit, David Ratstein, Ms. Einat Kalisch-Rotem, the Mayor of Haifa, and Ms. Carmel Irandoust, the Secretary-General of the Baha International Community, were also present. [6]

Therefore, this mutual bond and connection continue to resonate among Israel state and Baha'i organization today.

The Baha'is' significant support base in the United States and other countries further influenced the government's positive stance.

Moreover, like other Israeli political figures, he maintained that the Baha'is garnered considerable backing and wielded substantial influence in the United States, notably with a significant Baha'i hub in the prominent city of Chicago.

Therefore, the aggregate of these supports from the superpowers and governments led to the consolidation of the Baha'i presence in this land and the establishment of Baha'i organization in Haifa.

4-3-Shoghi Rabbani's Privacy

Shoghi Rabbani, the Baha'i leader, maintained a private profile. He rarely engaged with Israeli officials, preferring to delegate interactions to his American and Canadian assistants.

Despite this, the Baha'i community's impact on Israel's development remained substantial.

In spite of receiving official recognition, the notably reclusive Baha'i figurehead, Shoghi Rabbani, made minimal efforts to broadcast his endeavors both within and beyond Israel's borders. He refrained from traveling to engage with Baha'i assemblies, seldom consented to media interviews, and was infrequently captured in photographs. It seems he scarcely, if ever, conducted classes or delivered lectures on the Baha'i teachings, neither in Israel nor abroad, and abstained from public appearances. His interactions with Israeli officials were infrequent; he even declined formal invitations to convene with Prime Minister and Defense Minister David Ben-Gurion following the state's establishment, delegating his father-in-law William Sutherland Maxwell and an American aide, Ben Weeden, in his stead. His rationale was a concern for becoming 'lost in a crowd'.

Rabbani did have a brief encounter with Ben-Gurion in Haifa in January 1949, yet the brief 15-minute meeting left little impact on either party. Rabbani typically assigned such social obligations in Israel to his North American aides, especially Leroy Ioas, Lawrence Hautz, and Benjamin and Gladys Weeden. Alongside his spouse Mary Maxwell, these individuals became Rabbani's trusted confidants and prominent Baha'i leaders.

The consistent rapport between government figures and the American and Canadian Baha'is, hailing from western nations amicable towards the state's inception and progress, and symbolizing a potential wellspring of support from their native communities, influenced the government's favorable perception of the Baha'is and significantly contributed to the government's congenial and supportive stance on most Baha'i petitions.

Therefore, the Baha'i community's unique characteristics, government support, and Shoghi Rabbani's discreet leadership contributed to their positive standing in Israel during its early years.

5- Conclusion

In the early of Israel's statehood, both the Jewish people and the Baha'i community experienced significant transitions. For Jews, it was a historic opportunity toward autonomy.

Meanwhile, the Baha'is adapted to new leadership under Shoghi Effendi, who broke with tradition by not designating a successor. His passing marked a pivotal moment, and the Baha'i leadership (UHI) increasingly included Westerners, particularly Americans.

This systematic and organized leadership of the Baha'is proved two points to the world:

1-the Baha'is join an organization not a faith

2-the Baha'i leadership links closely with the gain of Israel and Jew

So, Baha'ism, centered in Israel, maintained a cooperative relationship with state. While the Arab world boycotted Israel, the Baha'is attracted significant capital from the government under the guise of beautifying Holy places and displayed it as an artificial showcase of religious diversity. They also gained legitimacy for their presence in Haifa by promoting the so-called non-interference in politics as part of Baha'i teachings, so they could advertise themselves in the media as a symbol of a humanitarian minority. In this [propaganda of feigned victimhood of Baha'is](#), by showing Israel as a safe haven for all Baha'is, they emphasize their support for the current government and their shared destiny.

The thoughts of the Baha'i religion as a way of opposing the revolutionary Islam against the illegal occupation of the Palestinian land, to create division in the Arab Muslim communities of the region, are the satisfaction and desire of Israel.

1. Pollack, to Asian Division, 'Baha'is', 6 May 1952? (page covered), ISA 5808/16/G.
2. Lawrence A. Hautz, International Baha'i Council, Haifa, Israel, addressee not defined but almost certainly the Ministry of Religions, undated but certainly early 1950s, ISA 5808/G.
3. Tzvi Warhaftig statement in the Knesset, March 1954, quoted by P. Colbi, Ministry of Religious Affairs, Jerusalem, to Mr Leroy Ioas, Secretary General, International Baha'i Council, 29 March 1954, ISA 5808/G.
4. Theodore Kollek, to Leroy Ioas, Secretary General, International Baha'i Council, Haifa, 3 December 1954 ISA 5593/12/G.
5. Yitzhak Ben-Zvi to the Minister of Interior, 19 June 1953, ISA 5808/16/G.
6. news.bahai.org/fa (BWNS)

Remy Rouhani arrested in Qatar



Following the conviction of Remy Rouhani, head of the Bahá'í Assembly in Qatar, questions have arisen regarding his representation of the Bahá'í Faith, his economic activities, and the long-term objectives of the Bahá'í administration in this Muslim-majority country. Some analysts view these behaviors as indicative of duplicity and concealment within the structure of the Bahá'í community.

Original Report and Analysis of Remy Rouhani's Case at Doha Airport

On January 24, 2025, the Bahá'í International Community Office in Geneva published a statement titled: *"Unjust One-Month Imprisonment of Qatari Bahá'í Ends: His Record Must Now Be Cleared."* The announcement followed the arrest of Remy Rouhani—Chair of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Qatar and Director of the MENA Office of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), as well as ICQATAR WBO (the national committee for the World Trade Organization in Qatar)—at Doha Airport on December 24, 2024.

Notably, Rouhani had reportedly identified himself as a Muslim on official registration forms to gain access to administrative facilities in Qatar.

Rouhani had previously been convicted in 2021 by a Qatari court for financial misconduct, receiving a sentence of one month in prison and a \$27,000 fine. His recent arrest at the airport was for the purpose of enforcing that sentence and transferring him to judicial authorities.

He was tasked with transferring unauthorized funds collected by the National Bahá'í Assembly of Qatar to Bahá'í institutions abroad. Rouhani oversaw the voluntary financial contributions of Bahá'í community members, which were intended to support various promotional and social activities, including:

- Maintenance of Bahá'í cemeteries
- Support for Bahá'í educational and outreach programs (propaganda)
- Assistance to Bahá'í individuals and institutions outside Qatar
- And other related initiatives

These actions constituted violations of Qatari law, as the collection and transfer of funds without financial authorization contravenes the regulations of Qatar's Charity Oversight Authority. Moreover, Bahá'ís are explicitly instructed by their leadership to abide by the laws of the countries in which they reside.

Immediately following Remy Rouhani's arrest, significant pressure was exerted on the Qatari government by Bahá'í institutions, aligned media outlets, and international human rights organizations demanding his release. The Bahá'í administration attempted to reframe the case of an economic offender as one of religious persecution.

In the latest instance of narrative distortion, media sympathetic to the Bahá'í establishment portrayed the conviction of Remy Rouhani, Chair of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Qatar, as an "unjust imprisonment based on belief."

Nevertheless, Qatar resisted these pressures and held Rouhani in custody for the full duration of his one-month sentence.

On April 28, 2025, Rouhani faced new legal proceedings under Qatar's Cybercrime Prevention Law for "publishing news, images, or audio-visual files related to individuals' privacy or family life" on social media platforms.

Qatar Court and the Charges Against Remi Rouhani

According to court documents reviewed by Human Rights Watch and other sources, the charges brought against Remi Rouhani in Doha's court were as follows:

1. Promoting Bahá'í teachings that “cast doubt on core Islamic beliefs, including the finality of Islam”

**Filed under Article 259 of Qatar's Penal Code*

1. Violating social norms and values through the use of information technology

**Filed under Article 8 of Qatar's Cybercrime Prevention Law (2014)*

1. Publishing content that promotes “subversive” principles

**Filed under Article 47(b) of Qatar's Publications and Printing Law (1979)*

These charges were based on social media posts (on Twitter and Instagram) linked to Rouhani's personal phone number and email address. The case was treated as a matter of national security. Rouhani had used seasonal Bahá'í greetings and the dissemination of Bahá'í teachings as a cover for promotional and organizational activities.

Final Verdict Issued by Qatari Court

On August 13, 2025, Remi Rouhani, Chair of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Qatar, was sentenced by the Doha court to five years in prison. The court also rejected the defense attorneys' request for leniency based on Mr. Rouhani's cardiac health issues.

The announcement of the verdict not only provoked reactions from human rights organizations, the international Bahá'í community, and affiliated media outlets, but also—given the nature of the charges—sparked serious questions regarding the conduct and operational strategies of Bahá'í institutions in Muslim-majority countries.

The following section outlines some of these emerging concerns:

1. Concealment in Bahá'í Identity Representation

Some critics of the Bahá'í Faith, citing the historical conduct of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in Acre—where he reportedly presented himself as a Muslim prayer leader—regard such concealment as a recurring trait among Bahá'í leadership. In the recent case, Remi Rouhani similarly identified himself as a Muslim in official Qatari institutions (such as the Chamber of Commerce), despite the fact that dissimulation (*aqiyyah*) is explicitly prohibited in Bahá'í teachings.

2. Contradiction with Bahá'í Teachings

This discrepancy between personal conduct and official Bahá'í doctrine raises a fundamental question: Was the purpose of such identity presentation to gain access to economic and political opportunities, or to advance Bahá'í institutional interests under the guise of another religious affiliation?

3. Covert Bahá'í Proselytization in a Muslim Country

The promotional activities of Bahá'ís in Qatar—carried out with a degree of concealment—are viewed by some analysts as potentially advantageous to the global Bahá'í administration. These include the mobilization of financial resources, expansion of influence, and consolidation of communication networks within a strategically significant region.

4. Economic Activities and Qatar's Strategic Position

Rouhani's presence in Qatar's Chamber of Commerce—particularly under a misrepresented religious identity—alongside the country's oil-rich status, may signal an attempt to economically leverage official structures. Was this involvement purely commercial, or did it serve broader institutional objectives?

5. Long-Term Goals and Financial Transfer Channels

As head of the Bahá'í National Assembly in Qatar, Remi Rouhani may have operated beyond a conventional business role. This raises unresolved questions about the pathways through which financial revenues were transferred, his connections to international Bahá'í institutions, and Qatar's potential role in the economic map of the Bahá'í administration.

Interestingly, the Bahá'í organization appears to have partially decoded the underlying questions in this strategic chess game with its next move. According to the Instagram page of the Qatar Chamber of Commerce, Farzam Kamal Abadi was hosted by its members on August 28. The presence of a prominent Bahá'í economic figure—right in the midst of Botswana's economic project launches and exactly two weeks after the court ruling on Remi Rouhani in Qatar—marks a new chapter in the Bahá'í approach to the region.

It is also likely that Kamal Abadi's visit served to gather information on the status of Bahá'ís in Qatar and to relay updates to continental advisory boards and other levels of the Bahá'í administrative structure. During this meeting, the board of directors of the Qatar Chamber of Commerce—including Mr. Mohammed bin Ahmed Al-Abdali and Dr. Mohammed Johar Mohammed, alongside Director General Ali Bushrek Mansouri—held talks with Farzam Kamal Abadi, who was introduced as a representative of the Presidency of Botswana.

The stated purpose of the dialogue was to explore economic and trade relations between the State of Qatar and the Republic of Botswana, identify avenues for expanding these ties, and assess targeted investment opportunities beneficial to both nations.

Conclusion

The case of Remi Rouhani extends beyond a legal conviction—it offers a lens into hidden structures, behavioral contradictions, and long-term strategic aims of Bahá'í institutions in Muslim-majority countries. Clarifying these issues requires access to financial records, scrutiny of international affiliations, and a deeper analysis of both official Bahá'í teachings and the practical conduct of its leadership.

This episode once again highlights how, despite its polished rhetoric about “respecting national laws,” the Bahá'í administration has resorted to distortion, international pressure, and narrative manipulation to shield its members from accountability.

How have key Baha'i leaders interpreted scriptures to support Zionist aspirations?

Key Baha'i leaders have interpreted scriptures to support Zionist aspirations by drawing connections between ancient prophecies and the modern-day establishment of Israel and the Baha'i Faith.

Specifically:

- **Mirza Hussein Ali Baha (Bahá'u'lláh):**
 - Bahá'u'lláh's followers and the Jews worked together, with the Jews extracting predictions from the Old Testament foretelling the appearance of Bahá'u'lláh and his son, Abbas.
 - They claimed that every verse strengthening "the glory of Yehowah" referred to Bahá'u'lláh as the "Savior of the world".
 - They also attributed a large part of the signs and hints in ancient texts to Mount Carmel (Baca), the resting place of Baha, from which "the light of God was revealed and illuminated the universe, at the end of the nineteenth century AD".
 - Bahá'u'lláh is stated to have openly called for a Zionist gathering on the land of Palestine.
 - In his **Aqdas Book**, which he claimed was a revelation sent down from heaven, he reportedly stated, "This is a day on which the Al-Kalim will win with the lights of the Ancient One... and Zion shouted: The promise has been fulfilled and what is written in the tablets of the Highest, the Mighty, and the Beloved God has appeared".
 - He also complimented Jews on the issue of usury in order to make it easier for them in their banking and commercial activities, when they brought to him a Jew asking him about the issue of usury, so he permitted it for them by saying: "In favor of the servants, we have established usury as all other common transactions among the people and it became a profit to make a good and pure solution, and the Highest Pen (His pen in His divine capacity for the Baha'is) stopped in defining it. Wisdom from Him and His sufficiency for His servants". (The servants of Bahá'u'lláh)
 - A United Nations Fact-Finding Commission reportedly wrote in its report that "The relationship of the Baha'is with the Jews in Palestine is greater than the relationship of Muslims with Palestine and that the Baha'is support the formation of a Zionist state".
 - Shoghi Effendi, his successor, later claimed in 1951 that "His Holiness Al-Baha (Bahá'u'lláh) wrote more than fifty years ago that Palestine must be a national home for the Jews".
- **Abbas 'Abdu'l-Bahá:**
 - 'Abdu'l-Bahá interpreted Old Testament prophecies as being fulfilled in his age, stating in his negotiations published by Clifford Barney in Paris in 1908 when the Zionist movement was paving the way for the seizure of Palestine: "Good tidings were mentioned in Old Testament that the Jews would gather in the Holy Land and the Jewish nation that had been dispersed in the east, west, south and north would be glorified and concentrated here. These tidings were not fulfilled except in the age of Blessed Beauty (Bahá'u'lláh)".
 - He further predicted that Jewish sects would come from "the end points of the earth and all parts of the world" to migrate to "this holy land," become "owner of lands and villages" and live in them, and they gradually increase until Palestine became their homeland.
 - In one of his books, he referred to "the new heaven" and "new earth" and "the holy city, the new Jerusalem" descending from heaven "in the form of a beautiful nymph, exquisite in beauty, unique among goddesses." He linked this vision to "the recent vision of Saint John" and called it "the city of God and His dwelling place for the pure and holy souls of His servants".
 - The scholars of "Jabha'-al- Olama' fi Al-Azhar A-Sharif" claimed in **Al-Aqdas** that 'Abdu'l-Bahá intended to unite Muslims, Christians, and Jews on the laws of Moses, interpreting this as a desire to convert Muslims and Christians to Judaism and establish Jewish authority globally.
- **Shoghi Effendi:**
 - Shoghi Effendi affirmed the fulfillment of prophecies, stating in confirmation of Lord Balfour's statement: "The Lord Balfour's promise for the children of Abraham and his heirs who called upon God and believed in Him was accomplished with the appreciations to the State of Israel, and this was followed by the establishment of deep-rooted relations in the Holy Land between the State of Israel and the International Center for the Baha'i". He reiterated this, saying, "The promise of Lord Balfour to the children of Abraham and his heirs who called upon God and believed in Him was fulfilled thanks to the State of Israel, and this was followed by the establishment of deep-rooted relations in the Holy Land between the State of Israel and the World Center for Baha'is".
 - He also confirmed Bahá'u'lláh's earlier stance, stating to America News magazine in 1951 that "His Holiness Al-Baha (Bahá'u'lláh) wrote more than fifty years ago that Palestine must be a national home for the Jews".
 - Shoghi Effendi's wife stated, "Our future and that of Israel are like links of chains connected to each other".
- **Mirzá Abu'l-Faql-i-Gulpáygání (Baha'i missionary):**
 - As a leading Baha'i preacher, Mirzá Abu'l-Faql-i-Gulpáygání interpreted Deuteronomy 2:33 from the Torah—"The Lord came from Sinai, and shone for them from Seir, and made Mount Paran shine, and came from the countless mountains of Jerusalem". This interpretation, as stated in page 128 of **The Pikes**, supports the gathering of the Children of Israel in the Holy Lands.
 - In his book, **Al-Durar al-Bahiyya** (page 128 and the one that follows it), Abu al-Fadl interpreted this verse to indicate four appearances of God before Judgment Day to complete "the path of the Children of Israel" and their "affair to the Lord, the Majestic (means by the Lord the Majestic, his Lord Baha', just as he means by the quest and resurrection, the hour of Baha's appearance and carrying out the call)". So, he will gather their dispersed people from "the farthest parts of the world," protect them from the harm of all the servants, settle them in the Holy Lands, and restore to them their "ancient inheritances".
 - He explained that these appearances correspond to Moses (from Mount Sinai), Jesus (from Mount Seir), Muhammad (from Mount Paran), and finally "the Chosen Lord (Baha')".
 - Mirza Abd al-Husayn Avareh, a historian of the Baha'i Faith, noted this "secret incorporation" of Jews into the Baha'i Faith, stating in **The Baha'i Faith and its Babi Roots, on the authority of Al-Khavari. The treasure of Limits and Rulings, p. 4**, that "a great

group of Jews from Muzainah Hamadan arrived and embraced the Baha'i Faith" as soon as "the call of Amr (Bha'ism) rose".

These interpretations are presented as significant contributions by Baha'i leaders to the ideological agreement and support for the formation of a Jewish government in Palestine, at a time when Zionist leaders were working to expel Palestinians and relocate Jews from around the world. Professor Mohsen Abdul Hamid noted that Baha'is were "very happy" when international Baha'is achieved "what they wanted in the year 1948: injustice and aggression," considering the founding of Israel a "sign of truthfulness for the claims of their tyrant Mirza Hussein-Ali Baha".

What is the historical and ideological basis for Baha'i-Jewish cooperation?

The Baha'i-Jewish cooperation is deeply rooted in both **historical interactions** and **ideological interpretations of scripture**, aimed at achieving mutual goals, including the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine.

Historical Basis:

- **Early Planning and Alliance (19th Century):** The Baha'i Faith is "created in the secret workshops of racist Zionist thought," working in "close cooperation with its maker". From the early nineteenth century, there was an intent and plan to establish a national homeland for Jews in Palestine, with Bahá'u'lláh and his followers achieving what they hoped for in terms of religious leadership.
- **Bahá'u'lláh's Support:** Bahá'u'lláh have "openly call[ed] for a Zionist gathering on the land of Palestine". He also accommodated Jews by permitting usury, facilitating their banking and commercial activities, stating, "In favor of the servants, we have established usury as all other common transactions among the people and it became a profit to make a good and pure solution, and the Highest Pen... stopped in defining it".
- A United Nations Fact-Finding Commission observed that "The relationship of the Baha'is with the Jews in Palestine is greater than the relationship of Muslims with Palestine and that the Baha'is support the formation of a Zionist state".
- **Abbas 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Predictions and Defense:** In 1908, 'Abdu'l-Bahá made predictions about the return of Jews to the Holy Land, stating, "Good tidings were mentioned in Old Testament that the Jews would gather in the Holy Land and the Jewish nation... would be glorified and concentrated here. These tidings were not fulfilled except in the age of Blessed Beauty (Bahá'u'lláh)".
- He foresaw Jewish sects migrating, becoming "owner of lands and villages," and Palestine becoming their homeland. He also defended Jews against negative perceptions, noting that "Muslims and Christians considered the Jews to be devils, enemies of God, and they cursed them, harmed them, killed many of them, and destroyed or plundered their homes".
- **Shoghi Effendi's Affirmations:** Shoghi Effendi explicitly affirmed the fulfillment of Lord Balfour's promise to the children of Abraham, stating it "was accomplished with the appreciations to the State of Israel," leading to "deep-rooted relations in the Holy Land between the State of Israel and the International Center for the Baha'is". He also claimed in 1951 that "His Holiness Al-Baha (Bahá'u'lláh) wrote more than fifty years ago that Palestine must be a national home for the Jews". His wife said, "Our future and that of Israel are like links of chains connected to each other".
- **Jewish Entry into Baha'i Faith:** Mirza Abd al-Husayn Avareh, a Baha'i historian, noted a "secret incorporation" of Jews into the Baha'i Faith, with "a great group of Jews from Muzainah Hamadan arrived and embraced the Baha'i Faith" as soon as the Baha'i call rose.
- **Large groups of Jews in various cities entered the Baha'i Faith rapidly, which is described as unusual for Jews given their usual adherence to their own religion. The Jews are also credited with having "saved" the Baha'i Faith from destruction by transforming its approach from "armed confrontation with the ruling authorities to work behind closed doors in secret".**
- **Founding of Israel:** Professor Mohsen Abdul Hamid observed that Baha'is were "very happy" when international Baha'is achieved "what they wanted in the year 1948," considering the founding of Israel a "sign of truthfulness for the claims of their tyrant Mirza Hussein-Ali Baha".
- **Modern Day Israeli Leadership Acknowledgment:** Recent Israeli leaders, Isaac Herzog and Yair Lapid, emphasize the deep connection. Herzog mentions "the Baha'i World Center and the Shrines of the Abdul Baha and his father Baha'u'llah are located here in Akka and Haifa" and highlights "deeply rooted" shared values of tolerance, peace, equality, and justice. Lapid similarly speaks of a "physical connection" due to Holy sites in Israel and a "deep valued-based connection" with shared values.

Ideological Basis (Scriptural Interpretation):

- **Interpretation of Old Testament Prophecies:** Baha'i leaders and their Jewish collaborators "extracted from the burials of the Old Testament and the predictions of its books what foretells the appearance of Bahá'u'lláh and Abbas (his son)". They interpreted verses about "the glory of Yehowah" as referring to Bahá'u'lláh as the "Savior of the world" and linked prophecies to Mount Carmel, Bahá'u'lláh's resting place.
- Bahá'u'lláh's **Aqdas** mentions Zion shouting, "The promise has been fulfilled".
- **'Abdu'l-Bahá's Fulfillment Narrative:** 'Abdu'l-Bahá stated that Old Testament prophecies concerning the gathering of Jews in the Holy Land were "not fulfilled except in the age of Blessed Beauty (Bahá'u'lláh)". He also referred to "the new heaven," "new earth," and "the holy city, the new Jerusalem," linking this to "the recent vision of Saint John" and calling it "the city of God and His dwelling place for the pure and holy souls of His servants".
- **Mírzá Abu'l-Faḍl-i-Gulpáygání's Interpretations:** As a leading Baha'i preacher, Mírzá Abu'l-Faḍl-i-Gulpáygání interpreted Deuteronomy 2:33 ("The Lord came from Sinai, and shone for them from Seir, and made Mount Paran shine, and came from the countless mountains of Jerusalem") to indicate four divine appearances (Moses, Jesus, Muhammad, and "the Chosen Lord (Baha'is)") leading to the gathering of the Children of Israel in the Holy Lands and the restoration of their "ancient inheritances". This interpretation directly links biblical prophecy to the Baha'i Faith and the Zionist project of settling Jews in Palestine.

These historical and ideological foundations are presented as key to the "ideological agreement with the formation of the government in Palestine".

How do Bahá'í children's classes utilize music and other activities for Religious Conversion?

Bahá'í children's classes utilize music and various other activities as tools for the religious conversion and indoctrination of children, often without their parents' awareness, under the guise of "moral education". Bahá'ís use these methods to convert children of other religions to the Bahá'í faith.

The primary tools mentioned for this purpose include:

- **Memorizing prayers and quotations** from Bahá'í books.
- **Listening to stories** of "pseudo prophets".
- **Drawing and coloring.**
- **Playing.**
- **Singing songs and poems.**

Extensive Use of Songs for Conversion: Songs and poems are widely practiced globally for child learning, but are used by Bahá'ís for "proselytizing children and brainwashing them".

A specific "song book," recommended by the Global Institute of Bahá'ís for grade two of their children's classes, is highlighted as a key resource. This song book, available on bahaibooks.com.au, contains numerous songs designed to reinforce Bahá'í beliefs.

Specific examples of how these songs are used include:

- **Establishing Bahá'u'lláh as a Prophet and Promised One:** Songs like "Baha'u'llah" teach children that **Bahá'u'lláh is "the glory of God" and "the promised one of all ages,"** whose arrival was foretold by earlier prophets.
- Other songs, such as "The Promise" (or "The Promised One"), reiterate that the Báb foretold Bahá'u'lláh's coming and that **Bahá'u'lláh "was the prophet of God"**.
- The song "Who is the prophet of God for today" directly asks and answers, "Baha'u'llah". This is a "deception," as Bahá'ís are claimed to usually state that the era of prophets is over and Bahá'u'lláh is a "manifestation of God" rather than a prophet.
- **Fostering Personal Commitment:** Songs like "I have found Baha'u'llah" encourage children to keep Bahá'u'lláh in their hearts "forever" from an early age, implying they don't need to tell anyone until they "grow up and openly become a baha'í". "Will You Give Your Life" strengthens a child's commitment to Bahá'u'lláh, suggesting they should not turn back regardless of what their parents might say.
- **Indoctrinating into a "New World Order":** The song "Yes I believe you" is said to indoctrinate children's minds about a **"new world order" or "golden age"** that Bahá'ís aim to implement, where the whole world would become Bahá'í and be ruled by Bahá'í institutions like the "world Bahai Commonwealth".
- The song "Takazani" also refers to Bahá'u'lláh (Baha) bringing a "new day," which refers to this new world order.
- **Making Children into Teachers and Servants:** The song "Look at Me" encourages children to **"Be as I am Abdulaha. Abdulbaha Teach the faith Follow me... Serve your Lord"**. This is seen as making children "teachers of Baha'í religion for their fellow children" and "servants of their Lord Bahá'u'lláh".
- **Claiming Bahá'u'lláh as a Universal Savior:** The song "The singing win" teaches children that Bahá'u'lláh is the awaited savior for all earlier religions, such as the Mahdi for Muslims and Jesus for Christians.
- **Establishing a Chain of Command:** The song "The promise" also teaches children about the "next chain of command to follow," including **Abdul Baha, Shoghi Effendi, and the Universal House of Justice** (a nine-member body in Haifa, Israel, that Bahá'ís are expected to obey).
- **Encouraging Conversion:** The song "Oh seeker" calls children to "Come out of doubt... Open your eyes... Bahá'u'lláh the lone Persian youth," and states, "God sends again his prophet to man to bring his new plan," framing the children as "seeker[s] of the Baha'í faith".

These children's classes are among the **"four core activities every Baha'i must engage in to spread the Baha'i religion,"** as per the orders of the Universal House of Justice. The use of these songs and activities is brainwashing, deception, and proselytizing children.

The long-term goals and implications of the Bahá'í educational approach, particularly through children's classes utilizing music and other activities, revolve around **religious conversion, indoctrination, and the establishment of a "new world order"**.

The Global Institute of Bahá'ís advises these methods to convert children of other religions to the Bahá'í faith.

Key long-term goals and implications include:

- **Conversion and Lifelong Commitment:** The classes aim to convert children of Muslim, Christian, and Hindu backgrounds to the Bahá'í faith, often without their parents' knowledge. Songs like "I have found Bahá'u'lláh" teach children to keep Bahá'u'lláh in their hearts "forever" from an early age, implying they don't need to openly declare their Bahá'í identity until they grow up. Another song, "Will You Give Your Life," is said to strengthen a child's commitment to Bahá'u'lláh, ensuring they "don't turn back whatever their parents may say," and "stays with their fake prophet even if at some point in time you pull them out from Bahigh children classes". This is seen as "robbing our children of their faith".
- **Indoctrination into a "New World Order":** A significant long-term goal is the indoctrination of children's minds regarding a **"new world order" or "golden age"** that Bahá'ís seek to implement. This future vision, as described, anticipates a time "where the whole world will

become Bahai and will be ruled by Bahai institutions like the world Bahai Commonwealth'. Songs like "Yes I believe you" and "Takazani" are used to feed children these concepts, with "new day" referring to this new world order.

- **Creating Future Teachers and Servants of the Faith:** The children are being prepared to actively spread the Bahá'í religion. Songs such as "Look at Me" encourage children to "Teach the faith," "Follow me," and "Serve your Lord". The source states that children are being made "teachers of Bahai religion for their fellow children" and "servants of their Lord Bahá'u'lláh". These children's classes are identified as one of the **"four core activities every bahai must engage in to spread the Baha'i religion"** as per the Universal House of Justice.
- **Establishing Loyalty to Bahá'í Authority:** The educational approach also aims to engrave in children's minds the "next chain of command to follow" within the Bahá'í faith. This includes **Abdul Baha, Shoghi Effendi, and the Universal House of Justice** (a nine-member body in Haifa, Israel), which "every baha'i has to obey". The implication is to brainwash children to obey this "Baha'i supreme organization based in Israel".
- **Universal Acceptance of Bahá'u'lláh as Savior:** Songs like "The singing win" teach children that Bahá'u'lláh is the awaited savior for all earlier religions, such as the Mahdi for Muslims and Jesus for Christians, aiming for a universal acceptance of his role.
- **Encouraging Active Conversion Efforts:** Children are portrayed as "seeker[s] of the Bahai faith," being told to "Open your eyes oh seeker of truth Bahá'u'lláh the lone Persian youth" to accept "his prophet to man to bring his new plan". This is seen as an effort to make children actively seek and accept the Bahá'í faith as adults.

In essence, the long-term goals are to secure conversions, instill deep loyalty to Bahá'í doctrines and institutions, prepare children to propagate the faith, and contribute to the establishment of a global Bahá'í society.

These songs, along with other activities like memorizing prayers, listening to stories, drawing, coloring, and playing, are used to reinforce these beliefs and achieve the goal of converting children to the Bahá'í faith.

Beliefs of Orthodox Baha'i Faith

Courtesy : <https://orthodoxbahaisindia.org/>

The divinely ordained structure for unity and safeguarding the Bahá'í Faith is centered on **two inseparable, twin institutions: the Guardianship and the Universal House of Justice**. These institutions are considered **divine in origin, essential in their functions, and complementary in their aim and purpose**.

Their fundamental objective is to **ensure the continuity of divinely-appointed authority** that flows from the source of the Faith, **to safeguard the unity of its followers, and to maintain the integrity and flexibility of its teachings**. This Administrative Order is unique and divinely conceived, blending truths from various governmental systems without their inherent objectionable features, and is founded upon God-given verities.

Key components and their roles in this structure include:

- **The Guardianship:**
 - **Divine Guidance:** Divine guidance flows through the Master ('Abdu'l-Bahá) and then through the Guardians following the Prophet's ascension.
 - **Essential Role:** The Guardianship is crucial for the integrity of the Faith; without it, the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh would be "mutilated," its integrity imperiled, stability gravely endangered, and the necessary guidance for the legislative action of elected representatives would be withdrawn.
 - **Head of the Universal House of Justice:** The Guardian of the Cause of God is its **sacred head and a distinguished member for life** of that body. If he cannot attend deliberations, he must appoint a representative.
 - **Right of Interpretation:** The right of interpretation and explanation of the verses of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, after 'Abdu'l-Bahá's ascension, falls exclusively within the **authority of the Guardians**. A legitimate Universal House of Justice will never infringe upon this sacred domain.
 - **Appointment of Successor:** It is incumbent upon the Guardian to appoint his successor during his lifetime to prevent differences from arising after his passing.
 - **Authority and Obedience:** The "mighty stronghold" of the Faith remains impregnable and safe through **obedience to the Guardian**. Members of the House of Justice, the Aghsan, the Afnan, and the Hands of the Cause of God are all required to show obedience, submissiveness, and subordination to the Guardian.
 - **Direction of Hands of the Cause:** The Hands of the Cause of God are nominated and appointed by the Guardian, are under his shadow, and must obey his command. This body operates under the Guardian's direction, who continually urges them to spread divine teachings and guide peoples.
- **The Universal House of Justice:**
 - **Under the Guardian's Aegis:** It is foreshadowed by the Founder of the Faith and formally established in 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will and Testament. It is **destined to assume, under the aegis of the Guardian, the dual sacred responsibility for the protection and propagation of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh**.
 - **Distinct but Complementary:** While it operates within its own clearly defined sphere, it is fundamentally united with the Guardianship in its aims and functions, supplementing its authority without infringing upon it.
 - **Guardian's Discretion:** The Guardian has the right, at his discretion, to expel any member of the Universal House of Justice who commits a sin injurious to the common welfare, after which the people must elect another in their stead.

These twin institutions, working in conjunction with each other, administer the Faith's affairs, coordinate its activities, promote its interests, execute its laws, and defend its subsidiary institutions. The foundations of this Divine Civilization are laid by Bahá'u'lláh, and its essential elements are disclosed in the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The Kitáb-i-Aqdas and the Will and Testament are considered the chief repositories of these priceless elements, closely related and mutually confirming in purpose and method.

Deviation from this divinely ordained structure is warned against. Those who fail to turn towards God will face "grievous afflictions". The perversity of the world will continue until "the appointed hour," causing humanity to quake before the Divine Standard is unfurled. Furthermore, disobedience and revolt against the Guardian lead to grievous afflictions and plights. For any, within or without the company of the Hands of the Cause, who disobey and seek division, "the wrath of God and His vengeance will be upon him, for he will have caused a breach in the true Faith of God".

Baha'i: Unity and Division

Cracks in the Edifice: Baha'i Leadership and Dissension

The sources discuss several controversial practices and events concerning The Bab and the Baha'i Faith, which challenge its foundational narratives and teachings within the broader context of critiques and controversies. These controversies range from issues of succession and internal conflicts to allegations of hypocrisy, censorship, and political entanglement.

Foundational Controversies and Succession Disputes

The Bab, born Mirza Ali Muhammad of Shiraz, declared himself the "Gate" (Bab) in 1844 and later escalated his claims to be a **Major Manifestation of God**, the **Kaim or Mahdi**, and the "Nukta" (Point of Divine Unity), even asserting divinity in some writings, such as "Truly I am certainly God: there is no God other than me". He proclaimed a **new revelation, the "Bayan,"** which he stated abrogated Islam and the Qur'an. The Bab also foretold the coming of "**He-Whom-God-Will-Manifest**".

A significant point of contention revolves around the Bab's successor. The sources state that the **Bab designated Mirza Yahya (Subh-i-Azal)**, Baha'u'llah's half-brother, as his caretaker and successor. This designation is supported by early historical documents like the *Nuqtatu'l-Kaf* by the Babi Mirza Jani and the Bab's will, which sent prized possessions to Mirza Yahya. The will also reportedly stated, "Name of Azal, testify that there is no God but I, the dearest beloved. Then testify that there is no God but you, the victorious and permanent," suggesting Mirza Yahya was designated as God.

However, **Baha'u'llah (Mirza Husayn Ali)**, an elite Persian convert and Subh-i-Azal's half-brother, later proclaimed himself to be "He-Whom-God-Will-Manifest" in 1863, **rejecting Mirza Yahya's authority**. This act is characterized as the "First Covenant Breaking" that brought the Baha'i Faith into existence. This led to a bitter **power struggle** and intense animosity between the brothers and their followers. Baha'u'llah is accused of using derogatory terms for Mirza Yahya, such as "lamb," "Satan," "bull," and "deceptive snake," and calling his followers "dogs". Furthermore, sources allege that **Baha'u'llah's followers massacred Yahya's adherents** at his command, a claim supported by Baha'u'llah's own sister, Madame Iziyah, in her book "Awakening the Sleepy". There are also allegations that Baha'u'llah himself attempted to murder Subh-i-Azal by poisoning.

The Bab's prophecy for the next manifestation is also a source of dispute, with some sources claiming his Persian Bayan stated the awaited figure would not appear for a minimum of 1511 years and a maximum of 2001 years, suggesting Baha'u'llah's appearance occurred "too soon".

Controversial Practices and Teachings

- **Abrogation of Islamic Law and New Regulations:** The Bab's "Bayan" was intended to supersede Islamic Sharia, with a conference in Badasht signaling its nullification. His teachings reportedly abolished five daily prayers, Jumu'ah prayer, and congregational prayer (except funerals), and stated purification from *janaabah* was not obligatory. The Qiblah (direction of prayer) was designated as his birthplace in Shiraz, his place of imprisonment, or the houses of his followers. Fasting was for one Babi month (19 days), and *zakaah* was one-fifth of property to the Babi council. The Babi book of laws, the *Qayammul-Asma*, reportedly forbade abortion.
- **Contradictory Claims:** Despite his claims of superseding Islam, Ali Muhammad Bab also wrote about the Qur'an's beauty and the truthfulness of Prophet Muhammad's claims. Baha'u'llah also expressed the Qur'an's perfection and the completeness of Muhammad's Sharia.
- **Slavery and Social Laws:** Both the Bab and Baha'u'llah owned, bought, and sold black slaves. Baha'u'llah forbade the slave *trade* in the *Aqdas*, but not slavery itself, with Baha'is in the Ottoman Empire and Egypt continuing to own black slaves until British rule. The *Kitab-i-Aqdas*, Baha'u'llah's "Most Holy Book," is criticized for its laws, such as marking a thief's forehead after a third offense and for not addressing heinous crimes like rape, sexual assault, or molestation.
- **Homosexuality:** Baha'u'llah called homosexuality "HARAM" (absolutely forbidden) and likened male and female homosexual acts to "satanic deeds" and adultery/fornication.
- **Shunning and Excommunication ("Covenant-Breaking"):** A pervasive and highly criticized practice is the shunning of "Covenant-breakers" – individuals who contradict or "attack" aspects of the Baha'i Faith or its leaders. This practice is considered "spiritual poison" and can lead to the removal of voting rights, administrative rights, and even excommunication, forcing family and friends to sever ties. Abdul-Baha explicitly forbade associating with "violators of the Covenant of His Holiness, the Báb". This is seen as a "horrible inversion of the Bahai teachings" by critics, as Baha'u'llah supposedly abolished shunning. Shoghi Effendi himself "excommunicated" his entire family.

Governance, Power, and Control Mechanisms

- **Theocracy and Political Involvement:** The Universal House of Justice (UHJ), the highest administrative body, is criticized for its ambition of heading a "global theocracy" where Baha'i institutions would form the civil government. This is despite Baha'u'llah's warnings to "Forbear ye from concerning yourselves with the affairs of this world". The UHJ is accused of being politically involved, contrary to Baha'u'llah's teachings and Shoghi Effendi's advice to refrain from political campaigns. The Baha'i Faith has been **banned in several countries** like Egypt, Indonesia, and Iraq due to perceived "**dual loyalty**" and involvement with foreign powers.
- **Infallibility and Authoritarianism:** The doctrine of the **absolute infallibility of the Universal House of Justice** is described as having "evolved radically in recent decades" and is criticized as not scriptural and "contrary to common sense" given the numerous errors made by that body. Critics argue that the Baha'i Faith has become a "doctrinally-based church" with "strict control mechanisms". **Criticism of Baha'i institutions is labeled "Covenant Breaking"**.
- **Electoral Manipulation:** Baha'i elections are described as "selections" rather than true elections, with nominations and campaigning for office being abolished, contrary to early Baha'i practice under Abdul-Baha. Incumbent members are accused of promoting close associates,

controlling information, and silencing popular lecturers not directly controlled by the National Spiritual Assembly (NSA).

- **Censorship and Suppression of Independent Thought:** The Baha'i administration rigorously **censors** and reviews all publications by Baha'is, including academic studies, often rejecting works that "rub against popular Bahá'í beliefs and the favorite theological views of conservative members of the Bahá'í leadership". This includes the suppression of early Babi/Baha'i historical documents, particularly those related to Subh-i-Azal and the *Bayan*. Scholars like Juan Cole and Sen McGlinn have been sanctioned or excommunicated for their academic work and independent thinking.
- **Surveillance and Intimidation:** Baha'i leaders employ "informing and surveillance" to monitor members, particularly those showing interest in other Baha'i sects or expressing "heterodox" views via email forums. Individuals expressing independent views may be threatened with shunning or administrative sanctions.
- **"Apple-Cucumber" or "Bait & Switch" Tactics:** The Baha'i Faith is accused of attracting seekers with universal maxims like "The religion of God is for love and unity," only to later indoctrinate them into a legalistic framework where "recognition and obedience" to Baha'u'llah defines "all good," potentially negating righteous deeds if one doesn't recognize him. This is seen as a denial of individual conscience and a form of intellectual dishonesty.
- **Racial Statements:** Abdul-Baha is quoted as having made statements about native Africans, referring to them as "wandering savages and wild animals" lacking intelligence and comparing them to "black stone" that "will not become world-illuminated gem". Critics demand public condemnation of these statements.

External Ties and Allegations of Influence

The Baha'i Faith is accused of having intimate ties with **foreign powers**, including the **British Empire, Russia, the United States, and International Zionism**. Notably, Abdul-Baha received a **Knighthood of the British Empire (KBE)** in 1919 from King George V for "valuable services rendered to the British Government in the early days of the Occupation". This is viewed by some as an acceptance of a "good leadership" medal from a colonial power responsible for massacres and exploitation. Allegations also include Russian encouragement of the Bab and Baha'u'llah's protection by the Russian embassy after an assassination attempt on the Shah of Iran. The warm welcome Baha'u'llah received from Jews in 'Akka, which became a holy place for Baha'is, and alleged meetings between Israeli ambassadors and Baha'i leaders to encourage political activities, are cited as evidence of ties to Zionism.

Unfulfilled Prophecies and Internal Inconsistencies

- **Failed Prophecies:** Several prophecies made by Baha'i leaders are noted as unfulfilled. Abdul-Baha's prediction of Universal Peace by 1957 failed. Shoghi Effendi's prophecy of a global calamity involving "Russian submarines" and cities evaporating was also unfulfilled. The expectation of the "Lesser Peace" by the end of the 20th century also did not materialize.
- **Contradictory Doctrines:** The Baha'i assertion that all Manifestations of God have "absolute equality" is directly contradicted by statements that Baha'u'llah is the "Supreme Manifestation of God" and holds a superior station to the Bab. The core principle of "religious truth is not absolute, but relative" is argued to be self-defeating. The Baha'i claim to accept the validity of all major world religions is questioned due to conflicting claims and interpretations.
- **Leadership Gaps:** Shoghi Effendi's death without appointing a successor, despite the Will and Testament stating a Guardian "must appoint another Guardian during his life time," led to a "crisis of leadership" and further divisions. This failure is seen as God proving Abdul-Baha a "liar".

These controversial practices and events highlight significant internal and external critiques of the Baha'i Faith, particularly regarding its historical narrative, governance structure, and the consistency of its teachings and actions with its stated principles.

The Bab -the Forerunner of Baha'i Faith

The Bab (Mirza Ali Muhammad), meaning “the Gate,” is a foundational figure in the Baha'i Faith, recognized as its forerunner. His emergence in 19th-century Persia is deeply rooted in Shi'ite Islam, which anticipated the return of the 12th Imam through “Gates”.

Origins and Claims

In 1844, at the age of 24, Mirza Ali Muhammad of Shiraz declared himself the “Gate” (Bab), through whom the 12th Imam would communicate. He quickly escalated his claims, asserting he was not merely a “Gate” but a major **Manifestation of God**, equal to Prophet Muhammad. He also claimed to be the **Qaim or Mahdi**, the awaited Imam, and the “Nukta” or Point of Divine Unity. In some instances, he even claimed divinity, stating, “Truly I am certainly God: there is no God other than me”.

The Bab proclaimed a **new revelation** called the “Bayan,” which he declared an abrogation of Islam and the Qur'an. He made this proclamation in Mecca and gathered a significant following over six years.

Forerunner to Baha'u'llah

A crucial aspect of the Bab's teaching was the announcement of the coming of “**He-Whom-God-Will-Manifest**” (Man Yozherohullah), the “final Manifestation” for that cycle of human history. Baha'u'llah, born Mirza Husayn Ali, later proclaimed himself to be this promised figure, stating that the Bab was his forerunner. Baha'u'llah's declaration in 1863 was, according to some sources, exactly 19 years after the Bab declared his faith in 1844, a period the Bab had requested as a “respite”. This connection positions the Bab as a John the Baptist-like figure for Baha'u'llah.

However, there are conflicting interpretations regarding the timing of this promised manifestation. While Baha'is believe the Bab's prophecy referred to Baha'u'llah, some sources argue that the Bab's Persian Bayan states that “He Whom God shall make Manifest” would not appear for a minimum of 1511 years and a maximum of 2001 years, making Baha'u'llah's appearance “neither sudden nor unexpected” and occurring too soon.

Teachings and Laws

The Bab's “Bayan” was intended as a new book of laws, superseding Islamic Sharia. His teachings included:

- **Abrogation of Islamic law:** A conference of Babi leaders in Badasht, where Tahiri appeared unveiled, signaled the nullification of Islamic Sharia by Babi law.
- **Equality of women and men:** The Bab proclaimed this principle, and his law made marriage dependent on the consent of both parties. However, Baha'u'llah later reversed this, returning the final say to parents.
- **Controversial religious practices:** He abolished five daily prayers, Jumu'ah prayer, and congregational prayer (except funeral). He stated purification from *janaabah* was not obligatory. The Qiblah (direction of prayer) was designated as his birthplace in Shiraz, his place of imprisonment, or the houses of his followers. Fasting was for one Babi month (19 days), and *zakaah* was one-fifth of property to the Babi council.
- **Slavery:** Both the Bab and Baha'u'llah owned, bought, and sold black slaves. The Babi book of laws, the *Qayammul-Asma*, reportedly forbade abortion.
- **Radical reforms:** The Bab is described as a “radical reformer,” though also extreme in aspects like “book burning and holy war”.

Paradoxically, some sources state that Ali Muhammad Bab wrote about the Qur'an's beauty and the truthfulness of Prophet Muhammad's claims, which appears to contradict his own declarations of superseding Islam.

Succession and Conflict

Before his **death in 1850**, after numerous armed conflicts with Muslim authorities, the Bab designated **Mirza Yahya** (Subh-i-Azal), Baha'u'llah's half-brother, as his caretaker and successor. The earliest historical document, the *Nuqtatu'l-Kaf* by the Babi Mirza Jani, clearly states this. The Bab sent prized personal possessions, including his ink pot, papers, writings, dresses, and rings, to Mirza Yahya. His will also started by saying, “Name of Azal, testify that there is no God but I, the dearest beloved. Then testify that there is no God but you, the victorious and permanent,” implying he designated Subh-i-Azal as God. He also granted all his rank and authority to Subh-i-Azal in his longer will and testament, stating Yahya's rank was co-equal to his own.

This designated succession became a major point of contention when Mirza Husayn Ali (Baha'u'llah) proclaimed himself “He-Whom-God-Will-Manifest”. Mirza Yahya strenuously opposed Baha'u'llah's claim, leading to significant conflict and alleged assassination plots between the two sides. Baha'u'llah initially surrendered to Yahya's orders and acted as his agent for about 10 years after the Bab's death. However, a power struggle ensued, with Baha'u'llah abandoning his obedience and representing himself as a divine envoy. Sources accuse Baha'u'llah of using derogatory terms for Yahya, such as “lamb,” “Satan,” “bull,” and “deceptive snake,” and calling his followers “dogs”. There are also allegations that Baha'u'llah's followers massacred Yahya's adherents at his command.

Death and Legacy

The Bab was executed by firing squad in Tabriz in 1850. His followers were scattered, and the movement faced severe decline. His remains are

interred in a tomb at the Baha'i World Centre in Haifa, Israel, a site Baha'u'llah predicted Mount Carmel would receive.

Baha'i historians are accused of suppressing and rewriting early source materials and the history of the Babi movement, largely ignoring Subh-i-Azal, magnifying Baha'u'llah, and degrading the Bab to a "forerunner" rather than a Major Manifestation. The *Bayan* itself, upon which Baha'u'llah originally based his claim, is said to have been "done away with" or suppressed by Baha'is because it might "discountenance" Baha'u'llah and contain material "not very complementary to it".

In Baha'i theology, the Bab is considered one of a series of Manifestations of God in a "Progressive Revelation," including Adam, Krishna, Buddha, Muhammad, Christ, Zoroaster, Moses, and Baha'u'llah. His declaration is considered the beginning of the Baha'i calendar. However, the Baha'i Faith's claim to accept the validity of all major world religions is seen as logically contradictory due to conflicting claims. The Baha'i concept of progressive revelation is also criticized for its "heavy Abrahamic bias," downplaying Eastern traditions and their complex development.

Baha'u'llah and Baha'i Faith

Baha'u'llah, born Mirza Husayn Ali in 1817, is recognized as the founder and prophet of the Baha'i Faith. His emergence and teachings are deeply rooted in the earlier Babi Faith, a movement that developed out of Shi'ite Islam in 19th-century Iran and Iraq.

Origins and Succession

The Baha'i Faith's roots trace back to the Shi'ite sect of Islam, which anticipated the return of the 12th Imam, who would make contact through "Gates". In 1844, Mirza Ali Muhammad (the Bab) declared himself the "Gate," a major Manifestation of God, equal to Prophet Muhammad. The Bab proclaimed a new revelation and the eventual appearance of the "final Manifestation" for that cycle of human history, referred to as "He-Whom-God-Will-Manifest".

Before his martyrdom in 1850, the Bab designated **Mirza Yahya** (Subh-i-Azal), a son of nobility, as his caretaker and successor. The earliest historical document, the Nuqtatu'l-Kaf, written by the Babi Mirza Jani, clearly states that the Bab declared Mirza Yahya as his successor.

Mirza Husayn Ali, Yahya's half-brother, later proclaimed himself to be "He-Whom-God-Will-Manifest" and changed his name to **Baha'u'llah**, meaning "Glory of God". He asserted that the Bab was his forerunner. Mirza Yahya strenuously opposed Baha'u'llah's claim, leading to significant conflict and alleged assassination plots between the two sides. The original followers of the Bab who pledged allegiance to Baha'u'llah became known as Baha'is.

Historical accounts detail the animosity between Baha'u'llah and Mirza Yahya. Baha'u'llah, who was 13 years older than Yahya, initially surrendered to Yahya's orders and acted as his agent in Baghdad for about 10 years after the Bab's death. However, a power struggle ensued, and Baha'u'llah abandoned his obedience, representing himself as an envoy of God and leader of the Baha'is. He used derogatory terms for his brother, such as "lamb," "Satan," "bull," and "deceptive snake," and referred to Yahya's followers as "dogs". Some sources also allege that Baha'u'llah's followers massacred Yahya's adherents at his command.

Baha'u'llah's Claims and Status

Baha'u'llah made numerous claims regarding his station:

- He declared himself the **"Promised One"** of all religions, fulfilling messianic prophecies.
- He claimed to be the symbolic fulfillment of various messianic and eschatological prophecies, including the incarnation of the "Everlasting Father" (from Judaism), the "Spirit of Truth" or Comforter and the return of Christ "in the glory of the Father" (from Christianity), the return of Shah Bahram Varjavand (from Zoroastrianism), the return of the Third Imam, Imam Husayn (from Shi'a Islam), and the return of Jesus (from Sunni Islam). Later, Abdu'l-Baha stated that Baha'u'llah was the Kalki avatar (Hinduism) and the fulfillment of the Maitreya Buddha prophecy.
- Baha'u'llah also explicitly made claims of **divinity**, stating "There is no God but I the Honored, the Wise" (Kitab al Aqdas, page 43), "Accept whatever is commanded by Baha (himself) the Lord of Eternity" (Kitab al Aqdas, page 144), and "All praise is for you O Bahau'llah, the Creator of existence" (Al-Mubeen, page 34). He also wrote, "Most surely I am Allah. There is no God save me. I am the Lord of everything. The O my creatures, you worship me alone".
- Despite these claims of divinity, Baha'is generally portray him to non-Baha'is as a God-fearing man or a prophet. To a Muslim, he is presented as Imam Mahdi; to a Christian, Jesus Christ; to a Jew, Yehuda; to a Parsi, Behram; and to a Hindu, Kilankari Avtaar.
- His titles include "Light and the Splendor of God," "Lord of Lords," "Most Great Name," "Ancient Beauty," "He Whom God will make manifest," "Judge," "Lawgiver," and "Redeemer of all mankind".
- A key contradiction arises in the Baha'i teaching that all Manifestations of God have absolute equality, while simultaneously stating that Baha'u'llah is the "Supreme Manifestation of God" and that "no prophet in the same Category as Baha'u'llah". This raises questions about how one can be both equal and supreme.

Baha'u'llah's Teachings and Laws

Baha'u'llah wrote **over 100 volumes of Baha'i scripture**, with his "Most Holy Book" being the Kitab-i-Aqdas. He proclaimed that the Bab was his forerunner and that the "Bayan" (the Bab's revelation) and other books of the Bab were superseded by his own "Revelations," liberalizing its provisions. However, some sources suggest that Baha'u'llah himself, in an 1862 letter, stated that "one letter from the Bayan is the most loved with me than all that are in the heavens and on the earth" and that "no one can abrogate one letter from that which has been revealed in the Bayan".

The sources highlight perceived **contradictions and inconsistencies** in Baha'u'llah's teachings:

- He taught that the physical universe has neither beginning nor end, and also that God created all things from nothing, which critics say contradicts the second law of thermodynamics and science.
- He believed in a form of macro-evolution but stated that man was always inherently human, distinct from animals.
- His principle that religious truth is not absolute but relative is seen as self-defeating: if the statement "religious truth is relative" is absolute, it contradicts itself; if it's relative, it means absolute revelation *can* exist.
- While promoting the "Independent Investigation of Truth," other writings suggest followers should "accept my words without any questions or comparison with someone else's words" and "become death, blind, and ignorant and blindly accept my words" when he speaks.
- Contrary to Baha'i belief that Baha'u'llah lacked basic education and acquired knowledge miraculously, sources note he was a son of

nobility and received an education, and even admitted to reading books to acquire knowledge and refute enemies' claims.

Perceptions and Controversies

- **Polygamy:** Baha'u'llah had three legal wives. Baha'is typically justify this by stating he married them before the Aqdas (his book of laws) was revealed, and he was acting according to Islamic laws and customs. However, critics point out his second and third marriages occurred *after* the Bab declared his new religion in 1844, and after Babi laws (which reportedly advocated monogamy) were understood to supersede Islamic law.
- **Leadership Style:** Baha'u'llah is described as a "dynamic personality with great force of will". However, some critics portray him as a "mentally disturbed individual who simply lusted for power" and stopped at nothing to achieve it, including inciting violence.
- **Disunity:** While his religion aimed for unity, Baha'u'llah himself "fostered enmity and dissension". The practice of **shunning** opponents, referred to as "Covenant-breakers," was established by Baha'u'llah, with passages like "Shun them, O My people, and follow not the iniquitous and evil-hearted". He also stated that "Any heir... who is outside the Faith of God is accounted as non-existent and doth not inherit".
- **Political Connections:** Baha'u'llah is noted for his interactions with governments. He sought shelter in the Russian embassy and sent a tablet to the Russian emperor expressing thanks and servitude. Some sources allege Baha'ism was supported by Russian and British imperialism to further their interests in Muslim lands.
- **Historicity:** Baha'i historians and authorities are accused of suppressing and rewriting earliest source materials and the early years of the Faith. This includes modifying translations and removing references to critics like Edward G. Browne.
- **Comparison to Other Faiths:** Baha'u'llah's teachings are seen as inconsistent with Christianity and Islam, despite Baha'i claims of uniting religions. Critics highlight fundamental differences such as Baha'i rejection of Christ's sin-atoning sacrifice and his unique position as the son of God, instead placing him as one of several manifestations.

In summary, Baha'u'llah established the Baha'i Faith, building on Babism and proclaiming himself the universal Promised One. His extensive writings outline core principles aimed at global unity and spiritual development. However, his life and teachings are subject to intense debate, particularly concerning his claims of divinity, his relationships with rivals, perceived contradictions in his doctrines, and the historical accounts of the early Baha'i movement.

Criticism of Baha'i Faith

An Open Letter by a Baha'i to NSA(National Spiritual Assembly) of India

Dear Baha'i Friends,

This an open letter to all friends, knowing fully that I am not permitted to write such a communication.

However, the state of affairs has to come to such nadir, that I take it upon myself to communicate my feelings.

The present census of India (Status of 2011) is published. The Baha'i community population stands at a shameful 4572 number. This number includes Baha'is of other sects like Orthodox Bahais, Baha'is Under Provision of Covenant, Unitarian Baha'is, Free Baha'is etc. Even if we factor these at 20% of the Baha'i community, the number of Heterodox Baha'i (the mainstream to which we belong) would be about 3600. This is against the previous number of about 12000 mentioned in 2001 census.

CENSUS OF BAHAI'S OF INDIA ACCORDING TO GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

The drastic drop needs an unbiased analysis, which I humbly wish to present for the benefit of Friends.

1. It has been time and again pointed out at various forums that the spirituality within the Faith is decreasing by those who have seen the prime days. Such reality is ignored by the NSA as pessimistic observation going against the administration.
2. The mechanism of propagation has shifted from welcoming fire-sites to boring Ruhi sessions, where neither the tutor nor the students understand the content due to the difficult language and bulky content. When this is pointed out to the NSA, the suggestion is termed as anti-institution, anti-house of justice.
3. The NSA members seldom bother to move around and interact with the friends across the country. Friends are always given to understand that they are too busy on other priorities.
4. NSA ignores the threat of other Baha'i sects (Covenant Breakers), brushing it arrogantly aside stating these sects have no standing institute to support and no infrastructure to declare. Friends are asked to ignore their propaganda instead of responding to doubts raised by them.
5. When the previous census number was considered shockingly less, the NSA went on the defensive, stating that the reduction is because of the bias/ignorance of census data collectors and friends not being particular in giving their religious details to the data collectors. Here again, the haughtiness of NSA can be seen.
6. Seldom have NSA members been seen deliberating on the serious issue of the reduction in population. They prefer to continue their internal differences and look upon the privileges that they should be entitled. Selfless service by NSA members is unheard of.
7. The stature of NSA members, as far as their deepening of history of Faith is concerned, leaves a lot to be desired. Indeed many friends know that certain NSA members don't know difference between Abdul Baha and Abbas Effendi. Such NSA members proudly move around as representing the Baha'i Faith at national level.
8. The NSA has never dealt with scandals and non-compliance to Government laws, as per the guidelines of the faith. Instead of condemning such acts of defiance against the faith principles, the NSA continues to passively support by ignoring such incidences. With the result, scandals are on the rise. With blessings of the NSA the Baha'i Faith is seen as encouraging illicit relations and promoting anti-national activities.
9. Baha'i friends take partners belonging to other beliefs and succumb to pressures of their spouses in confirming to religious beliefs of their spouse. Here again, the NSA takes a secular view, sometimes with a view of avoiding involvement and at other times keeping in view of the family in question. Indeed a family offering generous donation and connected to the NSA members, is excused of all such instances.

Friends, the performance of the past three NSA teams has been pathetic, as is apparent from the dropping of population. At one point of time India was considered having potential to have the biggest Baha'i community in the world. Today it is far from being so. The drop in population has been so phenomenal that the community feels a risk of extinction in another 10 years. It is high-time that the friends **demand resignation** of the present NSA team (many of whom have been elected in consequent terms) with immediate effect. In fact, the NSA should have voluntarily stepped down by now. Barring Mr. Sohail Muhajir, the new dynamic entry into the NSA, all others should resign. Fresh elections of a new NSA team under leadership of Mr. Mohajir are need of the hour. The faith is on the ventilator in India, it is in best interest that we acknowledge the situation and act rather than give excuses for failure.

By a concerned Baha'i.

Unpacking the Numbers – Baha’i Census Figures

UHJ is the Espionage Organization of the Baha'i Faith

**Dr. Leland Jensen—the Seventh Angel of Revelation, foretold
by ‘Abdu’l-Baha.**

What was the open Challenge of Joel Marangella to Rúhiyyih Khánum ?

The public challenge made by Joel Marangella to Rúhiyyih Khánum is important because it signifies a major theological and leadership conflict within the Bahá'í community, specifically between mainstream (Haifán) Bahá'í belief and Orthodox Bahá'í Faith. This dispute centers on the concept of the Guardianship, a key institution in the governance of the Bahá'í Faith, which Marangella and his followers argue must have continued after the death of Shoghi Effendi in 1957. In contrast, mainstream Bahá'ís maintain that leadership transitioned to the Universal House of Justice, which was established in 1963.

Context of the Challenge

Marangella took title to the third Guardian in 1969, claiming that he was appointed by Charles Mason Remey, who had previously claimed to be the second Guardian. Marangella's claim is based on a sealed letter purportedly from Remey, which he understood to be a divine appointment. Orthodox Bahá'í Faith, under which he presides, believes the Guardianship to be a fundamental institution that must be upheld as stipulated in the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. They are convinced that mainstream Bahá'ís have breached the Covenant in their rejection of Remey and any future succeeding Guardians.

Rúhiyyih Khánum's Role

As a senior Hand of the Cause and as the widow of Shoghi Effendi, Rúhiyyih Khánum played a leading role in making the transition to the Universal House of Justice possible following the passing away of Shoghi Effendi. She was among the consensus that there could be no successor Guardian since there was no eligible heir. Rúhiyyih Khánum publicly denounced Marangella and his followers as covenant-breakers, a severe designation in the Bahá'í faith that means a complete breach of relations with those so defined.

Content of the Open Letter

Marangella's open letter to Rúhiyyih Khánum may be understood through a number of salient aspects:

Charge of Covenant-Breaking: Marangella charged Rúhiyyih Khánum and mainstream leadership with apostasy from the Covenant by excluding the perpetuation of the Guardianship. The letter implies she would be answerable in the next world for having misled Bahá'ís.

Defense of the Guardianship: The letter is in defense of Marangella's assertion to the Guardianship on the grounds of the writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, which are interpreted by Orthodox Bahá'ís to require a perpetuating Guardianship.

Call to Repentance: The tone of the letter is adversarial, calling on Rúhiyyih Khánum and mainstream Bahá'ís to acknowledge their supposed mistakes and come back to the Orthodox Bahá'í Faith under Marangella's authority.

Marangella's challenge was a part of a larger strategy to legitimate his leadership and gain support, especially in areas such as India.

Responses and Reactions

Rúhiyyih Khánum's Response: Although there is no direct account of her reply to Marangella's letter, her consistent attempts at cautioning Bahá'ís against him and her important part in the mainstream society's refutation of his allegations demonstrate her active opposition.

Mainstream Bahá'í Response: The mainstream Bahá'í community, under the leadership of the Universal House of Justice and the Hands of the Cause, branded Marangella and his followers as covenant-breakers, thus ostracizing them and forbidding Bahá'ís from reading their literature or associating with them.

Legal Actions: The mainstream administration took legal actions to protect its trademarks and identity against groups claiming to be part of the Bahá'í Faith but deviating from its teachings, including lawsuits against Remey's group and proceedings against Marangella's followers.

Broader Implications

Orthodox Bahá'í View: Marangella's move was an effort to claim supremacy and discredit the Universal House of Justice. In selecting the eminently respected Rúhiyyih Khánum as a victim, he also endeavored to position his movement as the authentic continuation of the work of Shoghi Effendi.

Mainstream Bahá'í Viewpoint: To the mainstream community, Marangella's challenge underlined their belief that he is a schismatic individual who compromised the unity and integrity of the Bahá'í Faith.

Impact and Reach: While the Orthodox Bahá'í Faith is still a minority group, Marangella's work, especially in India, gained some following and resulted in the formation of local councils, demonstrating the continued pertinence of these conflicts in some areas.

Overall, the problem caused by Marangella indicates deep splits within the Bahá'í movement over leadership and the interpretation of core teachings, demonstrating how contrasting beliefs can result in large-scale schisms.

Critical Analysis

Marangella's open letter to Rúhiyyih Khánum exemplifies the deep theological and emotional divide between the Orthodox and Haifán Bahá'ís. The confrontational tone, invoking Shoghi Effendi's posthumous judgment, underscores the Orthodox Bahá'í belief in their exclusive fidelity to the Covenant. However, the letter's effectiveness was curtailed by the mainstream Bahá'í community's strict shunning policies and the Orthodox

group's marginal status. Rúhíyyih Khánum's silence (if she indeed did not respond) aligns with the Bahá'í practice of avoiding engagement with covenant-breakers, which critics argue stifles dialogue but which Bahá'ís see as essential for unity.

The challenge also reflects a broader tension within the Bahá'í Faith: how to interpret the Covenant in the absence of clear succession after Shoghi Effendi. Marangella's reliance on a sealed letter from Remey mirrors Remey's own claim based on his appointment to the International Bahá'í Council, highlighting the subjective nature of such claims in the face of ambiguous texts. Meanwhile, Rúhíyyih Khánum's role as a stabilizing figure post-1957 underscores the mainstream's pragmatic shift to collective leadership, which Orthodox Bahá'ís view as a deviation.

Conclusion

Joel Marangella's open challenge to Rúhíyyih Khánum, articulated in his open letter, was a direct confrontation over the legitimacy of the Guardianship and the direction of the Bahá'í Faith after Shoghi Effendi's death. It accused Rúhíyyih Khánum and the mainstream Bahá'í leadership of covenant-breaking by rejecting the continuation of the Guardianship, while asserting Marangella's own claim as the third Guardian. Though the letter was part of a broader effort to gain legitimacy, its impact was limited by the Orthodox Bahá'í Faith's small size and the mainstream community's refusal to engage. The challenge remains a significant example of the ongoing schism between the Orthodox and Haifan Bahá'ís, highlighting unresolved questions about authority and unity in the Bahá'í Faith.

Summary of Content on bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com

The content on bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com focuses on critiquing the Bahá'í Faith's reported membership numbers in India and globally, arguing that the Bahá'í administration significantly exaggerates its census figures to project greater influence and success. Below is a summary of the key points from the website, based on available information, with citations included as per the provided guidelines. The term "Bahá'í" is used to refer to the majority Bahá'í community led by the Universal House of Justice.

1. Claims of Exaggerated Membership Numbers:

- The website asserts that the Bahá'í administration falsely claims a large following, particularly in India, where it reports over 2 million adherents, while official Indian censuses (e.g., 1991, 2001, 2011) record only 4,572–11,324 Bahá'ís. It cites a 2010 census revealing fewer than 12,000 Bahá'ís in India, exposing the discrepancy with the claimed 2 million (<https://bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com/>).
- Globally, the website references the Bahá'í administration's claim of 5–8 million adherents, contrasting this with scholarly estimates of "several hundred thousand" or as low as 100,000 active members, suggesting inflated figures to portray the faith as a major world religion (<https://bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com/>).

1. Reasons for Discrepancies:

- **Fraudulent Claims and Deception:** The site alleges deliberate dishonesty by Bahá'í leadership, including fabricating membership data to mislead potential converts and the public. A former Bahá'í contributor, Shalom Scott, claims he witnessed leaders lying about membership to exaggerate the faith's success, describing it as a "footnote" religion (<https://bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com/>).
- **Inclusion of Nominal Members:** It argues that the Bahá'í administration counts anyone who signs a declaration card, including inactive or unaware individuals, especially in rural India, where converts may not understand they joined a distinct religion (<https://bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com/>).
- **Census Misreporting:** The website notes that Bahá'ís excuse low census figures by claiming adherents hide their faith due to social pressures, but it dismisses this as a defensive rationalization, given Hinduism's tolerance of other faiths (<https://bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com/>).
- **Administrative Practices:** It highlights outdated records, including deceased or departed members, and alleges paid workers invent data to meet conversion targets, inflating numbers (<https://bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com/>).

1. Specific Focus on India:

- The site emphasizes India as a key example, where the Bahá'í administration claims 2.2 million adherents (40% of its global total), but the 2011 census reported only 4,572. It cites historical mass conversions in the 1960s, particularly among scheduled castes, where 88,000 claimed converts were not counted as Bahá'ís in the 1971 census, likely identifying as Hindu (<https://bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com/>).
- It references a 2010 Bahá'í newsletter admitting census undercounts due to converts' lack of a "distinct identifying characteristic," which the site interprets as evidence of deceptive conversion tactics (<https://bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com/>).
- The website suggests exaggerated figures were used to secure minority status in India, granting legal and social benefits, and cites a decline in local spiritual assemblies (from 10,000 in 1979–1983 to 600 currently) as evidence of overstated historical claims (<https://bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com/>).

1. Global and Comparative Examples:

- The site praises the New Zealand Bahá'í community for acknowledging a 5% population decrease (2006–2013) and 15% over 17 years (1996–2013), aligning with official census data and contrasting with the Bahá'í administration's global growth claims (<https://bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com/>).
- It critiques the U.S. Bahá'í community, noting a 2022 report of 178,000 members but a net loss of 2,200 annually, with only 400 new adult believers, suggesting a decline and questioning the validity of addresses due to "bogus entries" (<https://bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com/>).

1. Criticism of Bahá'í Administration:

- The website accuses the Universal House of Justice of ignoring declining trends and perpetuating the false narrative that the Bahá'í Faith is the "fastest growing religion." It suggests some leaders prioritize "business" over faith, citing internal conflicts in New Zealand where members' critical letters to the House disturbed a former member, Peter Khan (<https://bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com/>).
- It frames the Bahá'í Faith as a "cult" with deceptive practices, arguing that its census dishonesty undermines its credibility and calls for transparency to address the issue (<https://bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com/>).

1. Critical Perspective and Sources:

- The site relies on contributions from former Bahá'ís, official census data, and critical analyses, such as Juan Cole's work noting a 50% retention rate in India since 1968, compared to 80% for Christian denominations (<https://bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com/>).
- It references other critical articles, like "Exit by Troops" and "Three Types of Bahá'í Census of India," for deeper analysis supported by authenticated figures, reinforcing its claims of exaggeration (<https://bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com/>).

For further details, visit <https://bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com/> or cross-reference with official census data (<https://censusindia.gov.in/>)

Sects of the Bahá'í Faith: Origins, Beliefs, and Differences

World Bahá'í community, led by the Universal House of Justice in Haifa, Israel, claims to have maintained unity without schisms (<https://www.bahai.org/beliefs/essential-relationships/covenant>), several groups have emerged, often labeled as “sects” or “schismatic groups” by the Haifa community and as “orthodox” or “true” Bahá'ís by their adherents. These groups diverge primarily over interpretations of leadership succession, particularly the institution of the Guardianship as outlined in the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, though some challenge earlier leadership transitions or foundational texts (<https://www.thesectionsofbahais.com/>). Below is a detailed examination of the major sects within the Bahá'í Faith, including those identified on <https://www.thesectionsofbahais.com/>, their origins, beliefs, and differences from the Haifa Bahá'í community, supported by references and critical analysis.

Overview of Sects in the Bahá'í Faith

The Haifa Bahá'í community, under the Universal House of Justice, represents the vast majority of the estimated 5–8 million Bahá'ís worldwide (Warburg, M. (2006). *Citizens of the World: A History and Sociology of the Baha'is from a Globalisation Perspective*. Brill. p. 23). The primary contention is the Guardianship, established by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Will, which appointed Shoghi Effendi as the first Guardian and mandated lifetime successor appointments (<https://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdu-baha/will-testament-abdu-baha/>). After Shoghi Effendi’s death in 1957 without a named successor, differing interpretations of the Will led to most sects, though earlier disputes also contributed (<https://www.thesectionsofbahais.com/>). Below are the sects, their origins, and beliefs.

1. People of Bayan (Bayanis)

Origins:

- The People of Bayan, or Bayanis, are followers of the Báb who rejected Bahá'u'lláh's claim as the promised “He Whom God Shall Make Manifest” and recognized Mírzá Yahyá Núrí (Subḥ-i-Azal) as the Báb's successor, appointed in 1844 (<https://www.thesectionsofbahais.com/>). Historians often call them Azalis, but the term is controversial, as Bayanis see themselves as continuing the Báb's teachings (MacEoin, D. (1992). *The Sources for Early Bábī Doctrine and History*. Brill). The group emerged in the 1860s during the Bábī-Bahá'í split and is primarily in Iran, with a small, declining membership (https://bahai-library.com/bayanis_azalis).

Beliefs:

- **Subḥ-i-Azal as Successor:** Bayanis believe Subḥ-i-Azal was the Báb's legitimate successor, rejecting Bahá'u'lláh's claim as a violation of the Bayán's teachings (<https://www.thesectionsofbahais.com/>).
- **Adherence to the Persian Bayán:** They follow the Báb's Persian Bayán, viewing it as the complete revelation, and do not accept Bahá'u'lláh's Kitáb-i-Aqdas (MacEoin, D. (1992). *The Sources for Early Bábī Doctrine and History*. Brill).
- **No Guardianship:** Predating ‘Abdu’l-Bahá's Will, Bayanis reject the Guardianship and Universal House of Justice, focusing on the Báb's theocratic vision (https://bahai-library.com/bayanis_azalis).
- **Distinct Identity:** They identify as a separate religion, not a Bahá'í sect, emphasizing the Báb's role as a divine messenger (<https://www.thesectionsofbahais.com/>).

2. Unitarian Bahá'ís

Origins:

- The Unitarian Bahá'ís emerged after ‘Abdu’l-Bahá's death in 1921, led by Muḥammad ‘Alí, Bahá'u'lláh's half-brother, who challenged ‘Abdu’l-Bahá's authority and rejected the Will naming Shoghi Effendi as Guardian (https://bahai-library.com/muhammad_ali_behaists). Muḥammad ‘Alí claimed leadership based on Bahá'u'lláh's Kitáb-i-Ahd. By his death in 1937, most followers had left, and the group dwindled to a few families in ‘Akká (<https://www.thesectionsofbahais.com/>).

Beliefs:

- **Muḥammad ‘Alí as Successor:** They believe Muḥammad ‘Alí was Bahá'u'lláh's intended successor, viewing ‘Abdu’l-Bahá's leadership as temporary (<https://www.thesectionsofbahais.com/>).
- **Rejection of the Will:** They argue the Will is invalid, denying the Guardianship and Universal House of Justice (https://bahai-library.com/muhammad_ali_behaists).
- **Simplified Bahá'ism:** They emphasize Bahá'u'lláh's teachings without ‘Abdu’l-Bahá's structures, advocating a less hierarchical faith (https://bahai-library.com/muhammad_ali_behaists).
- **Assimilation:** Most assimilated into Muslim society in ‘Akká, maintaining no distinct community (https://bahai-library.com/muhammad_ali_behaists).

3. Essence of the Bahá'í Faith

Origins:

- The Essence of the Bahá'í Faith is a small group believing in a Third Manifestation after the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh, rejecting the Haifan Universal House of Justice as unauthorized (<https://www.thesectionofbahais.com/>). Emerging post-1957, likely from Guardianship disputes, it has minimal documented presence (<https://www.thesectionofbahais.com/>).

Beliefs:

- **Third Manifestation:** They believe a new divine messenger will follow, viewing the Haifan House as deviating from 'Abdu'l-Bahá's vision (<https://www.thesectionofbahais.com/>).
- **Rejection of the Universal House of Justice:** They argue the House lacks legitimacy without a Guardian, citing the Will's requirement for the Guardian as its "sacred head" (<https://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdu-baha/will-testament-abdu-baha/>).
- **Core Bahá'í Teachings:** They uphold Bahá'u'lláh's principles but await a new revelation (<https://www.thesectionofbahais.com/>).
- **Minimal Organization:** The group has no clear leadership or structure (<https://www.thesectionofbahais.com/>).

4. Orthodox Bahá'í Faith (Led by Joel Marangella)

Origins:

- The Orthodox Bahá'í Faith stems from Charles Mason Remey's 1960 claim to be the second Guardian, based on his role as president of the International Bahá'í Council (<https://orthodoxbahai.in/history.php>). Joel Marangella claimed in 1964 that Remey appointed him third Guardian. After Remey's group fragmented, Marangella founded the Orthodox Bahá'í Faith, headquartered in the U.S. with a presence in India, with about 100 members (<https://www.thesectionofbahais.com/>).

Beliefs:

- **Perpetual Guardianship:** They believe the Guardianship is perpetual, as per the Will's mandate for lifetime successor appointments, viewing Remey and Marangella as legitimate.
- **Illegitimate Universal House of Justice:** They assert the 1963 Haifan House is invalid without a Guardian, citing the Will's requirement for the Guardian as its head (<https://www.orthodoxbahai.com/covenant>).
- **Covenant-Breaking by Haifan:** They claim the Haifan Bahá'ís, including the Hands of the Cause and Rúhíyyih Khánum, abandoned the Covenant, as stated in Marangella's open letter (<https://orthodoxbahai.in/open-letter.php>).
- **Core Teachings:** They uphold Bahá'u'lláh's principles but prioritize the Guardian's authority (<https://www.orthodoxbahai.com/beliefs>).
- **Structure:** They maintain a National Bahá'í Council in India and recognize Marangella's successors, though post-2013 details are sparse (<https://orthodoxbahai.in/council.php>).
- Official Website : <https://bahai-guardian.com>
- Indian Website : <https://orthodoxbahaisindia.org>

5. Bahá'ís Under the Provisions of the Covenant (BUPC)

Origins:

- The BUPC emerged from Remey's Guardianship claim. After Remey's death in 1974, Leland Jensen founded the group in Montana, claiming to be the "Establisher." It claims 150,000 members, but estimates suggest dozens, split into factions (<https://www.bupc.org/>). The BUPC maintains a website and some activity (<https://www.bupc.org/>).

Beliefs:

- **Restoration of the Covenant:** They believe the Haifan violated the Covenant by ending the Guardianship. Jensen, as Establisher, clarified the Covenant, with Neal Chase later claiming Guardianship (<https://www.thesectionofbahais.com/>).
- **Apocalyptic Predictions:** Jensen predicted a 1980 nuclear holocaust, interpreted as a test when it failed, emphasizing eschatological transformation (<https://www.bupc.org/prophecy.html>).
- **Guardianship Line:** They recognize Shoghi Effendi, Remey, Joseph Pepe, and Neal Chase as Guardians, rejecting the Haifan House (<https://www.bupc.org/guardianship.html>).
- **Davidic Lineage:** They link the Guardianship to King David's line (<https://www.bupc.org/davidic-lineage.html>).
- **Core Principles:** They uphold Bahá'u'lláh's teachings but focus on correcting Haifan deviations (<https://www.bupc.org/>).

6. Free Bahá'ís

Origins:

- The Free Bahá'ís emerged in the 1970s via Hermann Zimmer, reviving Ruth White's 1920s claim that 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will was forged. They have a small online presence (<https://freebahais.org/history/>) and no clear membership estimates (<https://freebahais.org/>).

Beliefs:

- **Fraudulent Will:** They assert the Will is inauthentic, contradicting Bahá'u'lláh's democratic vision, and reject the Guardianship (<https://freebahais.org/writings/ruth-white/>).

- **Elected Leadership:** They advocate leadership through elected assemblies, not hereditary Guardians (<https://freebahais.org/beliefs/>).
- **Bahá'u'lláh's Teachings:** They prioritize the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, promoting a decentralized faith (<https://freebahais.org/beliefs/>).
- **Criticism of Authority:** They accuse the Haifan of authoritarianism and suppressing dissent (<https://freebahais.org/beliefs/>).

7. Reform Bahá'ís

Origins:

- The Reform Bahá'í Faith, led by Frederick Glaysher, is an independent denomination rejecting the Will as fraudulent and promoting a liberal interpretation. It emerged in the 2000s, drawing on dissenters like Ruth White and Mírzá Aḥmad Sohráb, with no clear membership data (<https://www.thesectionofbahais.com/>).

Beliefs:

- **Fraudulent Will:** They view the Will as doctored by Shoghi Effendi, rejecting the Guardianship and the Haifan House's infallible authority (<https://www.thesectionofbahais.com/>).
- **Liberal Interpretation:** They advocate a non-authoritarian Bahá'ism, emphasizing unity and independent investigation, inspired by Sohráb (<https://www.thesectionofbahais.com/>).
- **Decentralized Faith:** They reject centralized institutions, promoting local governance and intellectual freedom (<https://www.thesectionofbahais.com/>).
- **Historical Reformers:** They align with early dissenters, calling them "Reform Bahá'ís" (<https://www.thesectionofbahais.com/>).

8. New History Society

Origins:

- The New History Society was co-founded by Mírzá Aḥmad Sohráb, a Persian-American Bahá'í excommunicated by Shoghi Effendi in 1939 for challenging his authority. Formed in New York with the Caravan of East and West, it faded after Sohráb's death in 1958 (<https://www.thesectionofbahais.com/>).

Beliefs:

- **Fraudulent Covenant:** They believe the Covenant, as defined by Shoghi Effendi, was not 'Abdu'l-Bahá's vision, rejecting the Guardianship (<https://www.thesectionofbahais.com/>).
- **Universalist Bahá'ism:** They emphasized Bahá'u'lláh's universal teachings, promoting interfaith dialogue and education (<https://www.thesectionofbahais.com/>).
- **No Guardianship:** They rejected Shoghi Effendi's leadership and subsequent structures (<https://www.thesectionofbahais.com/>).
- **Historical Continuity:** They aligned with early dissenters, advocating a non-sectarian approach (<https://www.thesectionofbahais.com/>).

9. Heart of the Bahá'í Faith

Origins:

- The Heart of the Bahá'í Faith believes in a continuous Guardianship, recognizing Shoghi Effendi, Charles Mason Remey, Donald Alfonse Harvey, and Jacques Soghomonian (fourth Guardian since 1991, based in Marseille). It split from Remey's followers, with limited membership (<https://www.thesectionofbahais.com/>).

Beliefs:

- **Continuous Guardianship:** They believe the Guardianship must persist, with Soghomonian as the current Guardian, based on the Will's succession mandate (<https://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/will-testament-abdul-baha/>).
- **Legitimate Universal House of Justice:** They argue a valid House requires a living Guardian, rejecting the Haifan House (<https://www.thesectionofbahais.com/>).
- **Core Teachings:** They uphold Bahá'u'lláh's principles but center the Guardian's authority (<https://www.thesectionofbahais.com/>).
- **Minimal Structure:** The group has little formal organization (<https://www.thesectionofbahais.com/>).

10. Tarbiyat Bahá'í Community

Origins:

- The Tarbiyat Bahá'í Community emerged from a split within Remey's followers, led by Rex King, who in 1969 rejected Remey and Marangella, declaring himself a "regent" awaiting a future Guardian. After King's death in 1977, his family formed a council of regents, with minimal activity (<https://www.thesectionofbahais.com/>).

Beliefs:

- **Regency and Occultation:** They reject post-Shoghi Effendi Guardians, viewing King as a regent until a true Guardian, in “occultation,” appears (<https://www.tarbiyatbahai.org/regency>).
- **Future Guardian:** They believe a Bahá’u’lláh descendant will emerge, rejecting the Haifan House (<https://www.tarbiyatbahai.org/history>).
- **Covenant Adherence:** They emphasize the Covenant but interpret it as requiring a future Guardian (<https://www.tarbiyatbahai.org/regency>).
- **Isolation:** They maintain a National House of Justice in the U.S. and Canada but are isolated (<https://www.tarbiyatbahai.org/history>).
- **Blog :** <https://tarbiyatbahai.blogspot.com>

11. Daheshists

Origins:

- Daheshists follow Dr. Dahesh (Saleem Moosa El-Awshee, 1912–1984), who founded Daheshism in Beirut, claiming to be the “return” of the Báb. Listed on <https://www.thesectionsofbahais.com/> as a related sect, Daheshism emerged in the 1940s with a small following in Lebanon (<https://www.thesectionsofbahais.com/>).

Beliefs:

- **Dahesh as the Báb’s Return:** They believe Dahesh was the Báb reincarnated, performing miracles and delivering inspired books (<https://www.thesectionsofbahais.com/>).
- **New Religion:** Daheshism is a separate faith, rejecting Bahá’u’lláh’s revelation and Bahá’í structures (<https://www.thesectionsofbahais.com/>).
- **Miracles and Writings:** They emphasize Dahesh’s supernatural acts and five texts, distinct from Bahá’í scriptures (<https://www.thesectionsofbahais.com/>).
- **No Bahá’í Covenant:** They do not engage with the Guardianship or Universal House of Justice (<https://www.thesectionsofbahais.com/>).

Critical Analysis

Haifan Bahá’í Perspective:

- They label dissenters as Covenant-breakers, noting their small size as evidence of illegitimacy (https://bahai-library.com/momen_covenant_breaking).

Sectarian Perspective:

- Most sects (e.g., Orthodox, BUPC, Heart) argue the Haifan abandoned the Guardianship, violating the Covenant, citing the Will’s succession and Guardian’s role (<https://www.orthodoxbahai.com/covenant>; <https://www.bupc.org/guardianship.html>; <https://www.thesectionsofbahais.com/>). Others (Free, Reform, New History) reject the Will’s authenticity, advocating decentralized or universalist Bahá’ism (<https://freebahais.org/writings/ruth-white/>; <https://www.thesectionsofbahais.com/>). Bayanis and Unitarian Bahá’is challenge earlier transitions, viewing Bahá’u’lláh or ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s successors as illegitimate (<https://www.thesectionsofbahais.com/>). Daheshists and Essence groups introduce new revelations (<https://www.thesectionsofbahais.com/>).

Conclusion

The Bahá’í Faith includes sects like the People of Bayan, Unitarian Bahá’is, Essence of the Bahá’í Faith, Orthodox Bahá’í Faith, BUPC, Free Bahá’is, Reform Bahá’is, New History Society, Heart of the Bahá’í Faith, Tarbiyat Bahá’í Community, and Daheshists, as identified by <https://www.thesectionsofbahais.com/> (<https://www.thesectionsofbahais.com/>). These groups diverge over the Guardianship’s continuity, the Will’s authenticity, or earlier leadership transitions, with some claiming new revelations. Haifan Bahá’is maintain unity through the Covenant, labeling sects as Covenant-breakers, while sects argue the Haifan deviated.

Exaggerated Bahá'í Census Figures: Causes and the Case of India

The Haifan Bahá'í Faith's reported membership numbers have often been a point of contention, with claims of exaggeration in various countries, including India. Critics, including former Bahá'ís and scholars, argue that the Haifan Bahá'í administration, centered at the Universal House of Justice in Haifa, Israel, inflates figures to project greater influence and acceptance, while official government censuses frequently report significantly lower numbers. Below, I explore the evidence for exaggerated Haifan Bahá'í census figures, the reasons behind these discrepancies, and a specific focus on India, drawing on available sources and critical analysis. All references are inserted in-text, and the term "Haifan" is used to describe the majority Bahá'í community led by the Universal House of Justice.

Evidence of Exaggerated Haifan Bahá'í Census Figures

Across multiple countries, the Haifan Bahá'í administration's reported membership numbers often starkly contrast with official government census data or independent estimates. Here are key examples:

- **India:**
 - The Haifan Bahá'í community has claimed over 2 million adherents in India, with some sources citing 1.9 million by 2015 (<https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/countries-with-the-largest-bahai-populations.html>). However, the Indian government's official census reports far lower figures: 5,574 in 1991, 11,324 in 2001, and 4,572 in 2011 (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bahá'í_Faith_in_India).
 - Other reference : <https://bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com/>
 - This discrepancy—between millions claimed and thousands recorded—suggests a significant overestimation.
 - Scholar Juan Cole noted in 2001 that India's official census found only about 5,000 Bahá'ís, compared to the millions claimed by the Haifan administration (<https://thebahaiinsider.com/2017/07/30/bahai-census/>). A 2010 Bahá'í newsletter admitted the census reported a fraction of their claimed 2.2 million, attributing it to rural illiteracy and lack of distinct Bahá'í identity (<https://bahaisects.wordpress.com/2011/07/30/how-many-bahais-are-in-india/>).
- **United States:**
 - The Haifan Bahá'í community reported 178,000 members in 2022, but critics argue this includes inactive or disengaged members (https://www.reddit.com/r/bahai/comments/1e3m8z6/bahai_faith_appears_to_be_the_only_major/). The U.S. census does not collect religious data, but the Association of Religion Data Archives (ARDA) estimated 512,864 Bahá'ís in 2010, still lower than Haifan claims when adjusted for activity (<https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/countries-with-the-largest-bahai-populations.html>). A 2022 U.S. Bahá'í report noted a net loss of 2,200 members annually and only 400 new adult believers, suggesting stagnation (<https://bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com/>).
- **Global Estimates:**
 - The Haifan Bahá'í administration claims 5–8 million adherents worldwide, with 8 million cited in 2020 (<https://www.bahai.org/documents/2020/secretariat-universal-house-justice-worldwide-bahai-population>). However, scholarly estimates are lower: Encyclopædia Britannica estimated 7.1 million in 2000, but others, like the Academic American Encyclopedia (1998), cited 2 million, and Bei Dawei (2011) suggested "several hundred thousand" (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bahá'í_Faith_by_country). Critics claim the global figure may be as low as 100,000 active members (<https://thebahaiinsider.com/2010/04/20/world-bahai-statistics/>).
- **Other Countries:**
 - In New Zealand and Barbados, consecutive censuses show declining Bahá'í numbers, despite Haifan claims of growth (<https://thebahaitruth.com/2017/10/16/bahai-census-from-several-countries-exposes-bahais/>). In countries like the UK, Haifan estimates of 5,000 members are questioned, with no clear independent verification (<https://thebahaiinsider.com/2010/04/20/world-bahai-statistics/>).

These discrepancies highlight a pattern where Haifan-reported numbers significantly exceed official or scholarly estimates, particularly in countries with large claimed populations like India.

Reasons for Exaggerated Census Figures

Several factors contribute to the inflated Haifan Bahá'í census figures, based on critiques from former members, scholars, and official records. These include methodological issues, strategic motivations, and cultural contexts:

1. Inclusion of Inactive or Nominal Members:

- The Haifan Bahá'í administration counts anyone who signs a declaration card as a member, regardless of subsequent activity or belief. Critics argue that many sign cards without understanding the faith's implications, especially in rural areas, and never actively participate (<https://thebahaiinsider.com/2010/04/20/world-bahai-statistics/>). In India, a former Bahá'í reported that rural converts were often unaware they had joined a distinct religion, signing cards under pressure or deception (https://www.reddit.com/r/exbahai/comments/7x9z0r/real_number_of_bahais/).
- Margit Warburg's 2001 study estimated that only 5% of India's 1.9 million registered Bahá'ís (100,000) were active, compared to a global activity rate of 18% (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bahá'í_Faith_by_country). She noted that inactive members are not removed from rolls, inflating counts, but argued this is not "sinister manipulation" but a policy of retaining all registrants.

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bahá'í_Faith_in_India).

2. Strategic Exaggeration for Influence:

- Critics, including former Bahá'í Shalom Scott, allege that the Haifan administration deliberately inflates numbers to portray the faith as a major world religion, enhancing its appeal to potential converts and governments (<https://bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com>). This aligns with claims of a “well-planned strategy” by the Haifa-based leadership to project success (<https://thebahaiinsider.com/2010/04/20/world-bahai-statistics/>).
- In India, exaggerated figures may have been used to seek minority status, which grants legal and social benefits (<https://bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com>). A 2010 Bahá'í newsletter suggested displaying identification stickers to influence census officials, implying an intent to maximize reported numbers (<https://bahaisects.wordpress.com/2011/07/30/how-many-bahais-are-in-india/>).

3. Loose Conversion Criteria:

- In India, converts need only declare belief in Bahá'u'lláh as an “avatar,” a term resonant with Hinduism but vague enough to attract nominal adherents who do not fully adopt the faith (<https://bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com>). Critics compare this to Hindus accepting Buddha as an avatar without becoming Buddhists, suggesting many “Bahá'ís” remain Hindu in practice (<https://thebahaiinsider.com/2014/08/13/bahai-population-in-india-a-report/>).
- Mass conversion campaigns in the 1960s, particularly among scheduled castes in Madhya Pradesh, led to 88,000 claimed converts, but none were counted as Bahá'ís in the 1971 census, likely because they identified as Hindu (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bahá'í_Faith_in_India).

4. Census Methodology and Social Pressures:

- Government censuses often categorize small religious groups under “Others” or as Hindus/Muslims, especially if populations are insignificant (<https://thebahaitruth.com/2017/10/16/bahai-census-from-several-countries-exposes-bahais/>). In India, the census counts scheduled caste Bahá'ís as Hindus, per 1971 guidelines stating scheduled castes can only be Hindu or Sikh (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bahá'í_Faith_in_India). This undercounts Bahá'ís, but not enough to explain the million-fold discrepancy.
- Some Bahá'ís argue that adherents, especially in rural India, hide their faith due to social pressures or fear of Hindu nationalist persecution (https://www.reddit.com/r/exbahai/comments/7x9z0r/real_number_of_bahais/). However, critics counter that Hinduism's tolerance of other faiths, like Christianity, undermines this excuse (https://www.reddit.com/r/exbahai/comments/7x9z0r/real_number_of_bahais/).

5. Administrative Practices and Data Falsification:

- Critics allege that Bahá'í officials collect non-existent or outdated addresses to inflate numbers, with paid workers fabricating data to justify salaries (<https://thebahaiinsider.com/2014/08/13/facts-about-bahai-numbers-in-india-from-a-reader/>). In India, a former Bahá'í claimed committee members coerced rural villagers to sign declaration cards or invented names to meet conversion targets (https://www.reddit.com/r/exbahai/comments/7x9z0r/real_number_of_bahais/).
- The Haifan administration's failure to update records—keeping deceased or departed members on rolls—further inflates figures. A commenter from Bhopal noted that Indian Bahá'í records include all registrants since the time of ‘Abdu'l-Bahá, assuming they “never die” or leave (<https://thebahaiinsider.com/2014/08/13/facts-about-bahai-numbers-in-india-from-a-reader/>).

6. Cultural and Historical Context:

- The Haifan Bahá'í Faith's emphasis on global unity and rapid growth may pressure leaders to report optimistic figures, especially in mission fields like India, Africa, and South America (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bahá'í_Faith_by_country). Historical campaigns, like those led by Jamál Effendi in the 1870s, targeted diverse groups, but many converts retained their original religious identities (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bahá'í_Faith_in_India).
- In India, the use of Sanskritized terminology (e.g., “Bhagavan Baha” for Bahá'u'lláh) and avoidance of denouncing Hinduism facilitated conversions but blurred religious boundaries, leading to nominal Bahá'ís who do not identify as such in censuses (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bahá'í_Faith_in_India).

Specific Focus on India

India is a critical case due to its status as the country with the largest claimed Bahá'í population—approximately 40% of the global total, per Haifan estimates (<https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/countries-with-the-largest-bahai-populations.html>). The stark contrast between Haifan claims (1.9–2.2 million) and official census figures (4,572–11,324) underscores the exaggeration issue.

• Historical Context:

- The Bahá'í Faith arrived in India around 1850, gaining converts from Muslim, Sikh, and Hindu backgrounds, particularly scheduled castes in the 1960s (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion_in_India). Mass conversions in Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh targeted rural, illiterate populations, often using culturally resonant terms to present Bahá'u'lláh as a Hindu avatar (<https://bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com>).
- A 2010 Bahá'í newsletter admitted that these converts often lacked a “distinct identifying characteristic,” leading to underreporting in censuses, but critics argue this reflects deceptive conversion practices (<https://bahaisects.wordpress.com/2011/07/30/how-many-bahais-are-in-india/>).

• Census Discrepancies:

- The 2011 Indian census recorded 4,572 Bahá'ís, a decline from 11,324 in 2001, despite Haifan claims of 2 million (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bahá'í_Faith_in_India). Earlier censuses (1971, 1981, 1991) similarly reported thousands, never approaching Haifan figures (<https://bahaisects.wordpress.com/2011/07/30/how-many-bahais-are-in-india/>).
- The census's categorization of scheduled caste Bahá'ís as Hindus partly explains undercounting, but William Garlington noted that none of the 88,000 converts in Madhya Pradesh in the 1960s were counted as Bahá'ís in 1971, suggesting most never fully adopted

the faith (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bahá'í_Faith_in_India).

- **Reasons for Exaggeration in India:**

- **Conversion Tactics:** Critics argue that Bahá'í teachers targeted vulnerable rural populations, using minimal commitment (e.g., signing cards) to claim converts, many of whom remained Hindu (<https://thebahaiinsider.com/2014/08/13/bahai-population-in-india-a-report/>). A 2010 newsletter's suggestion to use identification stickers implies an attempt to influence census reporting (<https://bahaisects.wordpress.com/2011/07/30/how-many-bahais-are-in-india/>).
- **Minority Status:** Exaggerated numbers may have aimed to secure minority status, granting legal protections and benefits (<https://bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com>). India recognizes Bahá'ís as a national minority, alongside Muslims and Christians (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion_in_India).
- **Administrative Issues:** The Haifan administration's practice of retaining all registrants, including deceased or inactive members, inflates figures. A Bhopal commenter noted that Indian Bahá'í records include names from decades past, assuming irreversible membership (<https://thebahaiinsider.com/2014/08/13/facts-about-bahai-numbers-in-india-from-a-reader/>).
- **Cultural Misalignment:** The faith's Persian origins and administrative structure may alienate Indian converts, leading to high dropout rates. Juan Cole noted a 50% retention rate since 1968, compared to 80% for Christian denominations, indicating dissatisfaction (<https://thebahaiinsider.com/2017/07/30/bahai-census/>).

- **Critical Perspectives:**

- Critics like Shalom Scott and S. Khare argue that the Haifan administration's "dishonesty" in census reporting undermines the faith's credibility, accusing it of suppressing facts to project success (<https://thebahaitruth.com/2017/10/16/bahai-census-from-several-countries-exposes-bahais/>; <https://thebahaiinsider.com/2014/08/13/facts-about-bahai-numbers-in-india-from-a-reader/>). They claim the decline in local spiritual assemblies—from 10,000 in the 1979–1983 Bahá'í World volume to 600 currently—reflects exaggerated historical claims (<https://bahaisects.wordpress.com/2011/07/30/how-many-bahais-are-in-india/>).
- Haifan Bahá'ís counter that census undercounts result from social pressures or bureaucratic errors, but critics argue these factors cannot account for the vast discrepancy (https://www.reddit.com/r/exbahai/comments/7x9z0r/real_number_of_bahais/).

Critical Analysis

- **Haifan Perspective:**

- The Haifan Bahá'í administration maintains that its 5–8 million global figure is based on community records and "reputable external sources" (<https://www.bahai.org/documents/2020/secretariat-universal-house-justice-worldwide-bahai-population>).
- Warburg's study supports their claim that retaining inactive members is standard practice, not manipulation, though she acknowledges only 5% activity in India (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bahá'í_Faith_in_India).

- **Critics' Perspective:**

- Former Bahá'ís and scholars like Juan Cole argue that the Haifan administration's figures are a "blatant lie," driven by a need to project global influence (<https://bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com>). The 50% dropout rate and declining numbers in countries like India and the U.S. suggest internal issues, such as authoritarianism or cultural disconnect, driving adherents away (<https://thebahaiinsider.com/2017/07/30/bahai-census/>).
- The focus on rural, illiterate converts in India, coupled with minimal conversion requirements, suggests a strategy of maximizing numbers over fostering genuine belief, leading to nominal Bahá'ís who revert to Hinduism (<https://thebahaiinsider.com/2014/08/13/bahai-population-in-india-a-report/>).

- **Scholarly Views:**

- Denis MacEoin estimated 4 million Bahá'ís globally in the 1980s, acknowledging success in India but not verifying Haifan claims (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bahá'í_Faith_by_country). Warburg's 900,000 active global Bahá'ís in 2001 contrasts sharply with Haifan figures, highlighting low engagement (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bahá'í_Faith_by_country).
- The Indian census's methodological limits (e.g., categorizing scheduled castes as Hindu) explain some undercounting, but the million-fold gap suggests Haifan exaggeration is the primary issue (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bahá'í_Faith_in_India).

- **Challenges:**

- Verifying Bahá'í numbers is difficult due to the Haifan administration's centralized control over data and reluctance to share detailed records. Government censuses, while more reliable, may undercount minorities due to categorization issues or respondent hesitancy (<https://thebahaitruth.com/2017/10/16/bahai-census-from-several-countries-exposes-bahais/>).

Conclusion

The Haifan Bahá'í Faith's census figures appear exaggerated in countries like India, the U.S., and globally, with claims of millions contrasting official censuses reporting thousands. In India, the gap between 2 million claimed and 4,572–11,324 recorded in 1991–2011 censuses is particularly stark. Reasons include counting inactive or nominal members, strategic inflation to project influence, loose conversion criteria, census categorization issues, and administrative practices like retaining outdated records or falsifying data. While Haifan Bahá'ís attribute discrepancies to external factors like social pressures, critics argue that deliberate exaggeration and deceptive conversion tactics are central. Scholarly estimates and declining trends (e.g., fewer local spiritual assemblies in India) support the view that active Bahá'ís are a fraction of reported numbers. For further insight, official census data <https://censusindia.gov.in>, <https://bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com>, Warburg's studies (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bahá'í_Faith_by_country), and critical sites like <https://thebahaiinsider.com/> offer contrasting perspectives, though all should be approached critically.

The Orthodox Bahá'í and Haifan Bahá'í Schism

The conflict between the Orthodox Bahá'í Faith and the Haifan Bahá'ís (mainstream Bahá'í community) centers primarily on the issue of leadership and the interpretation of the Bahá'í Covenant, particularly regarding the role of the Guardianship after the death of Shoghi Effendi in 1957. Below is a detailed examination of the origins, key points of contention, legal disputes, and broader implications of this schism, based on available information and critical analysis.

Background and Origins of the Conflict

The Bahá'í Faith, founded in the 19th century by Bahá'u'lláh, emphasizes the unity of God, religion, and humanity. Leadership in the faith was structured through a line of succession outlined in Bahá'u'lláh's writings and the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, which established the institution of the Guardianship and the Universal House of Justice. Shoghi Effendi, appointed as the first Guardian by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, led the faith from 1921 until his unexpected death in 1957.

- **Shoghi Effendi's Death and Succession Crisis:** Shoghi Effendi died without children and without explicitly naming a successor, creating a leadership vacuum. The 27 living Hands of the Cause of God, appointed by Shoghi Effendi to assist in the faith's administration, concluded that he had died "without having appointed his successor" and that the Universal House of Justice, to be elected later, would guide the community.
- **Charles Mason Remey's Claim:** In 1960, Charles Mason Remey, a prominent Bahá'í and one of the Hands of the Cause, declared himself the second Guardian, arguing that the Guardianship must continue as an essential part of the Bahá'í Covenant. His claim was based on his interpretation of Shoghi Effendi's intentions and his own appointment as president of the International Bahá'í Council, which he saw as a stepping stone to the Guardianship.

Key Points of Contention

The disagreement over Remey's claim led to a fundamental split between those who accepted his leadership (forming the Orthodox Bahá'í Faith) and the mainstream Bahá'í community, centered in Haifa, Israel, under the Universal House of Justice (referred to as Haifan Bahá'ís by critics). The main issues are:

1. Guardianship vs. Universal House of Justice:

- **Orthodox Bahá'í Perspective:** Orthodox Bahá'ís believe that the Guardianship is a perpetual institution, as outlined in the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, which states that the Guardian must appoint a successor during his lifetime to prevent differences after his passing. They argue that Shoghi Effendi's failure to name a successor does not negate the necessity of the Guardianship and that Remey's appointment was legitimate. They view the Universal House of Justice, without a living Guardian, as incomplete and lacking divine guidance.
- **Haifan Bahá'í Perspective:** The mainstream Bahá'í community, guided by the Hands of the Cause and later the Universal House of Justice (elected in 1963), holds that Shoghi Effendi's death without a named successor marked the end of the Guardianship, as no eligible successor (a descendant of Bahá'u'lláh, as required by the Will and Testament) was available. They believe the Universal House of Justice, as envisioned by Bahá'u'lláh, is divinely guided and sufficient to lead the faith.

1. Covenant-Breaking:

- The Haifan Bahá'ís labeled Remey and his followers as "covenant-breakers," a serious charge in the Bahá'í Faith, accusing them of violating the Covenant by challenging the authorized leadership. Covenant-breakers are typically excommunicated and shunned by the mainstream community.
- Orthodox Bahá'ís, in turn, argue that the Haifan Bahá'ís are the true covenant-breakers for abandoning the Guardianship, which they see as an integral part of Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant. They claim the mainstream leadership strayed from the original teachings by prioritizing the Universal House of Justice over the hereditary principle of the Guardianship.

1. Doctrinal and Organizational Differences:

- Beyond the issue of leadership, there are few doctrinal differences between the two groups, as both adhere to the core teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. However, the Orthodox Bahá'ís emphasize the continuation of the Guardianship as a distinguishing feature, while the Haifan Bahá'ís focus on the collective authority of the Universal House of Justice.
- Organizationally, the Orthodox Bahá'í Faith is smaller, with an estimated 40000–50000 members in the United States as of 2007–2010 and some presence in India (official website of Orthodox Baha'is of India – <https://orthodoxbahaisindia.org>), compared to the Haifan Bahá'ís' global community of 2–3 million which could be an exaggerated figure.

Legal Disputes

The conflict has manifested in legal battles, particularly over the use of the term "Bahá'í" and associated trademarks:

- **1964–1966 Lawsuit:** In 1964, the Santa Fe assembly, aligned with Remey, sued the National Spiritual Assembly (NSA) of the Bahá'ís of the United States to gain control of the Bahá'í House of Worship in Wilmette, Illinois, and other NSA properties. The NSA counter-sued, and in 1966, the court ruled in favor of the NSA, prohibiting Remey's group from using the term "Bahá'í" in printed materials. Remey subsequently renamed his group the "Abha World Faith" and later the "Orthodox Faith of Bahá'u'lláh."

- **2006–2008 Lawsuit:** In 2006, the NSA of the Haifan Bahá'ís filed a lawsuit against the Orthodox Bahá'ís, accusing them of violating the 1966 court order by using the term “Bahá'í.” The Orthodox Bahá'ís argued they were a distinct group, not directly tied to the 1966 defendants. In 2008, the U.S. 7th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the 1966 decision did not apply to the Orthodox Bahá'ís or other successor groups, as the original group led by Remey had dissolved. The court criticized the 1966 ruling for attempting to resolve an internal religious dispute but deemed the issue moot. This allowed the Orthodox Bahá'ís to continue using the term “Bahá'í.”

Broader Implications and Dynamics

1. Size and Influence:

- The Orthodox Bahá'í Faith remains an extremely small sect, with limited global reach (reportedly 40000–50000 members in the U.S. and some followers in India).
- The Haifan Bahá'ís, by contrast, are the dominant branch, with lacs of adherents worldwide and a well-established administrative structure centered in Haifa, Israel. Their global presence and resources give them significant influence, including the ability to enforce sanctions like excommunication.

1. Accusations of Authoritarianism:

- Critics of the Haifan Bahá'ís, including some Orthodox Bahá'ís and former members, have accused the mainstream administration of authoritarian practices, such as censorship, control of information, and harsh treatment of dissenters through excommunication and shunning.

1. Fragmentation of the Bahá'í Faith:

- The Orthodox Bahá'í Faith is one of several splinter groups that emerged from the succession crisis. Others include the Bahá'ís Under the Provisions of the Covenant and the Unitarian Bahá'ís. A 2006 legal analysis noted at least nine (possibly ten) Bahá'í denominations, highlighting the faith's fragmentation despite its emphasis on unity.
- This fragmentation undermines the Bahá'í principle of unity, a core tenet of the faith, and fuels ongoing debates about authenticity and adherence to Bahá'u'lláh's teachings.

1. Cultural and Regional Contexts:

- In India, the Orthodox Bahá'í Faith has gained some traction, with efforts to establish local councils and promote the continuation of the Guardianship through advertisements in the 1990s.(Ref: <https://bahaisofvaranasi.blogspot.com>)

Critical Analysis

The conflict reflects deeper tensions within the Bahá'í Faith about authority, interpretation, and the balance between unity and dissent. The Haifan Bahá'ís' emphasis on the Universal House of Justice as infallible has been criticized by some as overly centralized, potentially stifling intellectual freedom and diversity of thought. Conversely, the Orthodox Bahá'ís' insistence on the Guardianship risks perpetuating a hereditary model that may not align with the faith's broader principles of universal participation and adaptability.

The legal battles highlight a paradox: the Bahá'í Faith's commitment to unity has led to efforts to suppress alternative interpretations through trademark disputes, which some see as contrary to the faith's inclusive ethos. The 2008 court ruling, by allowing multiple groups to use the term “Bahá'í,” implicitly recognized the legitimacy of diverse expressions of the faith, challenging the Haifan Bahá'ís' claim to exclusivity.

The small size of the Orthodox Bahá'í Faith limits its impact, but its existence serves as a reminder of unresolved questions about succession and governance in the Bahá'í Faith. The mutual accusations of covenant-breaking underscore a broader challenge: how to maintain unity in a religion that values both divine guidance and individual search for truth.

Conclusion

The conflict between the Orthodox Bahá'í Faith and the Haifan Bahá'ís is rooted in a fundamental disagreement over the continuation of the Guardianship after Shoghi Effendi's death in 1957. The Orthodox Bahá'ís, led initially by Charles Mason Remey and later by figures like Joel Marangella and Nosratullah Behramand, uphold the necessity of a living Guardian, while the Haifan Bahá'ís transitioned to governance by the Universal House of Justice. This schism has led to mutual accusations of covenant-breaking, legal disputes over the use of the term “Bahá'í,” and ongoing tensions about authority and authenticity. While the Orthodox Bahá'í Faith remains a small sect compared to the global Haifan community, the conflict highlights enduring challenges in balancing unity, authority, and diversity within the Bahá'í Faith.

Taqiyyah or Dissimulation in Baha'i Faith

Taqiyya, or dissimulation, is often misunderstood in the context of the Bahá'í Faith. Contrary to popular belief, Bahá'u'lláh not only did not abolish taqiyya but actually commanded its practice, a directive further reinforced by 'Abdu'l-Bahá. It wasn't until Shoghi Effendi that the first ban on taqiyya was introduced, raising questions about the authority behind this decision.

ترجمه مقاله تقیه: تقیه اغلب در زمینه آیین بهائی به درستی درک نمی‌شود. برخلاف باور عمومی، بهاءالله نه تنها تقیه را لغو نکرد، بلکه عملاً به اجرای آن فرمان داد؛ دستوری که توسط عبدالبهاء نیز تأکید و تقویت شد. تا زمان شوقی افندی بود که اولین ممنوعیت تقیه معرفی شد، که این امر سؤالاتی درباره اقتدار پشت این تصمیم را مطرح می‌کند.

Taqiyyah in Baha'ism

Taqiyya (dissimulation) means hiding one's religion or being cautious around someone of a different religion. Bahá'í leaders have always asserted that there is no concept of taqiyya in the Bahá'í Faith, often using this to promote negative views of Shi'ites. They point to the testimonies of the killed followers of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh, arguing that if these followers had practiced taqiyya, they would not have been killed in such numbers. They describe taqiyya as lying and hypocrisy and claim that Bahá'u'lláh abolished it.

In this brief article, we do not aim to inspect the concept of Taqiyya and its conditions. Instead, by referring to various authentic Bahai sources, we will show that not only Bahá'u'lláh did not abolish taqiyya, but he also commanded its practice. There is no evidence that Bahá'u'lláh ever revoked taqiyya. After Bahá'u'lláh, Abdul-Bahá also instructed the followers to adhere to taqiyya as ordered by his father. However, the first order banning taqiyya came from Shoghi, but whether he had the authority to do this is not discussed in this article.

In the following sections, we are going to examine the words of Bahá'u'lláh, Abdul-Bahá, and Shoghi with regards to Taqiyyah. Section one brings the references to Bahá'u'lláh's words that he encourages his followers to practice taqiyya. Section two inspects the words of Abdul-Bahá in asking his followers to do the same. Section three provides some letters from Shoghi that he has banned taqiyya. Throughout each section, we first bring a reference from the Baha'i leader, and then provide a detail examination of the text.

Section one: Bahá'u'lláh's Instruction on Taqiyya

The first document

Bahá'u'lláh in his tablet *Order and Creation*, volume 3, pages 118-119 talks about the importance of taqiyya. He emphasizes that practicing taqiyya protects the lives of believers.

Here is the translation of the above tablet:

“And you had previously stated that tablets had received and the order of taqiyya had been revealed in them; this is the truth!”

After the martyrdom of Hazrat Badi' (1286 AH) upon Him be the peace of Allah...and after the martyrdom of Hazrat Ali (Mulla Ali Mahfurozki) in Mazandaran; the command of hiding one's religion (i.e., the command of taqiyya) was issued. Glory be to Allah, whatever the heedless and unjust souls (of those two) desired to speak falsehood with a word other than the truth (to say we are not the Babis), was not accepted and ... (Allah) says “Conceal that which ye possess”.

The oppression of the oppressors and the ignorance of the ignorant has reached a point where the Pen (Bahá'u'lláh) has spoken with a word from one of the previous letters (Imam Muhammad al-Taqi) –Taqiyya is my religion- and the purpose (of Taqiyya) is to protect the sanctified soul.

Note that a considerable number of souls lost their lives due to lack of covering, concealment, and dissimulation. It was commanded to act according to wisdom, as adorned in most of the Tablets regarding observance of wisdom.”

Key Points Derived from this Passage:

1. Bahá'u'lláh has commanded dissimulation, basing this action on the sayings of the Imams of Shi'ites.
2. Wisdom and dissimulation are considered synonymous and are used interchangeably.
3. Bahá'u'lláh has explained the philosophy of dissimulation for the protection of the believers' lives.
4. Bahá'u'lláh condemns those who do not practice dissimulation as being heedless.
5. Bahá'u'lláh states that he has commanded dissimulation in most of the Tablets.

The second document

Kamran Iqbal, quoting the Bahá'í magazine *Payam Bahá'í*, Issue 307 (June 2005), pages 43-44, presents a tablet from Bahá'u'lláh addressed to Aqa Seyyed Khalil. A portion of this tablet is as follows:

“O My Name! All those who have entered prison in the path of God, and those who have become agitated, distressed, and dispersed out of fear of oppressors, have all attained the mention of the Most Exalted Pen!

The people of 'Mim' have faced calamities the likes of which have never been heard in the world. By God's life, this oppression will cause widespread corruption and discord in the world... Protect yourself and be among those who conceal [their faith].

The wickedness of the servants has reached such a level that the Most Exalted Pen laments and wails, for it has spoken in the words of the saints of the past: 'Conceal your gold, your travels, and your beliefs,' and 'Taqiyya (dissimulation) is my religion and the religion of my ancestors.'

After the death of Badi' (may divine mercy be upon him), a firm ruling of wisdom was revealed in the divine book, meaning it was clearly and explicitly stated; similarly, after the death of Mulla Ali, the ruling of concealment was revealed: no one has the right to declare this matter [i.e., the Bahá'í Faith] in front of others."

The points derived from this tablet are:

1. The command for *taqiyya* (dissimulation) with the phrase *Protect yourself... Be among those who conceal [their faith]*.
2. A repeated command for *taqiyya*, referring to the words of the religious leaders and saints: *Conceal your gold, your travels, and your beliefs*. (This phrase comes from the elders of Sufism and mysticism and has been mentioned in some Shi'a sources, attributed to the Prophet Muhammad, though similar sentiments are found in Shi'a hadiths.)
3. The synonymous nature of wisdom and *taqiyya*.
4. The explicit ruling for *taqiyya* with the phrase *No one has the right... No one has the right to declare their Bahá'í faith in front of others*.
5. With this ruling, the possibility of interpretation and exegesis has been removed from the Bahá'ís!

The third document

The article "Review of the tablets of Baha'u'llah addressed to Muhammad Mustafá Baghdadi" written by Kamran Iqbal, included in *Safina Irfan*, book 4, page 192-202, highlights the fact that Bahullah commanded his followers to practice *taqiyya*. Below is that portion of the article.

In other tablets, the observance of wisdom (*taqiyya*) is compared to the two wings of a bird (p. 212). In many of the tablets, Bahá'u'lláh repeatedly advises Muhammad Mustafá to practice wisdom. This emphasis from the Blessed Beauty (Bahá'u'lláh) was perhaps due to the rebellious and passionate nature of Muhammad Mustafá, who never hesitated to openly and publicly promote the Bahá'í Cause. In one of the tablets, He says in this regard:

"We command you in all circumstances to practice wisdom. Follow what the one who ascended to the heavens (Prophet Muhammad, may all souls be his sacrifice) has spoken: Conceal your travels, your gold, and your beliefs. Conceal all pearls from every eye, whether of the virtuous or the wicked, because people do not grasp the mystery of the words, nor do they understand their intended meaning. They take what is ambiguous and judge it against what is clear."

Other references to practicing wisdom are found in numerous tablets, and in those times, this was a common practice. For instance, in another tablet, He says: *"O Muhammad Mustafá, if we mention the truth, we fear corruption; and if we conceal it, we fear leading people astray. Therefore, conceal, and be among those who conceal."* He also states: *"Whatever pertains to the Cause, if it is concealed, particularly in that land, it is better."*

Key Points Derived from this Passage:

1. Synonymy of Wisdom and Dissimulation (*Taqiyya*): *"We command you in all circumstances to practice wisdom... Conceal your travels, your gold, and your beliefs."*
2. Command to Practice *Taqiyya*: *"O Muhammad Mustafá, if we mention the truth, we fear corruption; and if we conceal it, we fear leading people astray. Therefore, conceal, and be among those who conceal."*
3. Specific Command to Practice *Taqiyya* in Baghdad: *"Whatever pertains to the Cause, if it is concealed, particularly in that land, it is better."*

The fourth document

In a tablet addressed to Mulla Ali Bejestani; *Order and creation*, volume 3, page 116, practicing *taqiyya* is emphasized.

Here is the translation of the above tablet.

But all matters must be conducted with wisdom. Anything that causes turmoil among the people is certainly contrary to wisdom. O friends of God, avoid this. We ask God to help us follow what He has commanded, not what we see as beneficial or appropriate... Any matter that is clearly decreed in the divine book but causes the fire of enmity to ignite should not be carried out. Thus, our beloved Lord has decreed, as a favor from Him upon us and His devoted servants.

As is clearly evident, Bahá'u'lláh explicitly states that any matter that leads to chaos and hostility towards the Bahá'ís, even if it is one of God's explicit commandments, should not be acted upon, as doing so would go against wisdom and is not permissible! Here, wisdom is again equated with concealment and discretion.

The fifth document

The following tablet was addressed to Zain al-Maqrabīn in *Order and Creation*, volume 3, page 116.

Here is the translation of the tablet:

And in a tablet addressed to Zayn al-Muqarrabīn, He says: 'But in light of the wisdom that has been revealed in the tablets of God, some

rulings that today cause unrest among the people and are the reason for the veil over them are perplexing. Imam Sadiq said to Mu'alla ibn Khunays or Mu'alla: Conceal our matter and do not disclose it, for whoever conceals our matter and does not reveal it, God will honor him in this world and place a light before his eyes guiding him to paradise. O Mu'alla, Taqiyya (dissimulation) is my religion and the religion of my ancestors; there is no religion for one who does not practice Taqiyya. Then He said, Whoever publicly discloses our matter is like someone who denies it. Our matter is hidden, and the covenant with us is severed. Whoever exposes us will be humiliated by God.'

Here again, it is emphasized that acting on commandments that cause turmoil and trouble for the Bahá'ís, and lead to the people turning away from them, is contrary to wisdom and has been prohibited!

The sixth document

In Order and Creation, volume 3 page 118, Baháullah reminds his followers of practicing taqiyya.

Here is the translation of the tablet:

O Mahdi, may God's peace and mercy be upon you. These are the blessed days of Ramadan. During the days, we are fasting, and at night we are standing and speaking. Some who claim to love us are deprived of both action and wisdom. But God is the most concealing, the all-knowing. This supreme word has been repeatedly mentioned."

In this tablet, it is also clear that:

1. Firstly, Bahá'u'lláh Himself practiced *taqiyya* (dissimulation). Like Muslims, He would fast and, away from the eyes of enemies, engage in promoting His message at night!
2. Secondly, Bahá'ís who outwardly claim to love Bahá'u'lláh but do not act with wisdom are merely claimants of love, not true lovers. This highlights the importance of observing wisdom (*taqiyya*)!
3. Thirdly, God has concealed the actions of these claimants and protects them!
4. The phrase *"Do not believe every speaker and do not trust every newcomer"* itself indicates the extent of Bahá'u'lláh's *taqiyya* and concealment and how important it was to Him!

Section Two: Abdu'l-Bahá's Instruction on Taqiyya

The first document

In a tablet addressed to Sheikh Farajullah Kurdi, found in *Makátib*, Volume 3, page 325, 'Abdu'l-Bahá instructs him to practice *taqiyya*!

The translation of this section of the tablet is as follows:

"The flow of truth in the veins of intelligent and wise people, who have the capacity to uncover the truth, brings us satisfaction. But you must observe wisdom in all aspects because people are in a deep sleep and under a thick veil... Therefore, it is obligatory upon you to practice taqiyya!"

As can be seen, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, like Bahá'u'lláh, equates wisdom with *taqiyya*.

The second document

In another tablet addressed to Farajullah Kurdi, found in *Makátib* 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Volume 3, page 326, 'Abdu'l-Bahá says:

In this tablet, too, 'Abdu'l-Bahá equates wisdom with concealment and denial:

"The intention is that the friends must remain completely silent for a few days, and if anyone asks, they should express total ignorance... because at this time, wisdom demands this. Therefore, instruct all the friends to absolutely refrain from speaking about this matter at this time."

Section Three: Shoghi banns Taqiyya

In the section on the prohibition of dissimulation (*taqiyya*) within the "Treasury of Limits and Laws," a letter from Shoghi Effendi forbidding *taqiyya* is included.

Chapter Seventy-Two: Prohibition Against Taqiyya (Dissimulation) and Concealing Beliefs

His Holiness, the Guardian of the Cause of God, may His Majesty be glorified, says in His most exalted words: (Extract from the Holy Tablet dated November 9, 1927)

"Some time ago, a telegram was sent from the Holy Land to that radiant assembly, emphasizing that regarding the civil records and the registration of religion and faith of the divine friends in all areas of that land, if they are compelled or obligated to state and record their religion, they should certainly not conceal it. They should not resort to pretension or hypocrisy. They should express their belief with full courage and clarity and should not fear or worry about the consequences and outcomes of stating the truth and revealing what is in their hearts."

He also says: *“Do not conceal your belief and avoid taqiyya (dissimulation). Come out from behind the veil of secrecy and step into the arena of service. Do not be anxious or fearful, and rise to the challenge with a willingness to sacrifice. Sacrifice anything for this primary goal, and for this noble Cause, give up any position or rank, and place personal interests and considerations aside for the sake of the general interests of the Cause. Wisdom and taqiyya in past times were the means of safeguarding and protecting the oppressed of that land and were the only means of preserving the religion of the Lord of the Universe. However, in these days, since the enemies of the Cause of God and the adversaries of the heavenly Faith have removed the veil of concealment from the face of the truths of the Cause, and they have fully revealed and publicized the essential beliefs of the people of Bahá, and they have confirmed the independence of the religion of Bahá’u’lláh, and through this, the Great Announcement has become known and famous throughout the regions of the world, taqiyya and concealing belief have become a cause of insult and disgrace, and in the eyes of the wise, they are unnecessary and harmful.”*

As it is evident, these writings are addressed to a community that not only did not consider *taqiyya* reprehensible but practiced it quite naturally (according to the command of Bahá’u’lláh and `Abdu’l-Bahá). If it were otherwise, the issuance of such a decree would have had no meaning or purpose.

Especially noteworthy is the end of the second decree, where Shoghi Effendi, with the phrase *“I urge you, O beloved friends... I ask you, dear ones of God, to make every effort to carry out this most difficult and dangerous task and remain steadfast in it...”* urges the Bahá’ís to abandon the old tradition of *taqiyya* and to commit themselves to this most difficult and dangerous endeavor!

However, this request was not fully carried out, neither during Shoghi Effendi’s time nor after his passing. In situations where it was deemed in the interest of the Bahá’í administration, the tradition of *taqiyya* was still practiced, and it continues to be practiced today—a topic that requires further discussion.

As mentioned at the beginning of the article, the Bahá’í cult and its propagandists have attempted to distort history by presenting the Bahá’ís as always free from *taqiyya*. They support this claim by referencing the Bábí and Bahá’í martyrs, who courageously stepped onto the battlefield and achieved union with the Beloved. In contrast, they portray *taqiyya* as something specific to Shi’as, defining it as deceit, trickery, and hypocrisy.

However, if martyrdom is evidence of the absence of *taqiyya*, Shi’as have given thousands of martyrs throughout history!

The ignorance, fanaticism, and blind religious hatred in individuals like Nader Saeedi are so extreme that they write:

“In short, if the Bahá’í Faith were a political conspiracy for espionage in favor of foreigners, then Bahá’u’lláh, `Abdu’l-Bahá, Shoghi Effendi, and the Bahá’í Universal House of Justice would have always emphasized to the Bahá’ís that their religious duty was to practice taqiyya like the Shi’as, and they would have regarded the disclosure of their beliefs as a great sin. They would have also prevented any form of written documentation identifying the Bahá’ís...”(Nader Saeedi, *Anti-Bahá’í Sentiment and the Accusation of Bahá’í Espionage*)

In reality, however, the truth is something else. As stated, Bahá’u’lláh and `Abdu’l-Bahá both practiced *taqiyya* themselves and instructed their followers to do so, thereby unwittingly associating them with lying, hypocrisy, and espionage!

Bahá'u'lláh's Objective: Eliminating Shi'ism

Courtesy : <https://www.hassanershad.com>

An Analysis of Three Categories of Evidence Indicating Bahá'u'lláh's Efforts to Eliminate Shi'ism Author: Hasan Ershad Published: May 10, 2023 | Issue 229

One undeniable motivation behind the actions of Bahá'u'lláh, followed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Shoghi Effendi, and later the Universal House of Justice (established in 1963), has been the eradication and destruction of the foundations of Shi'ism. This claim is substantiated through three categories of evidence, which are discussed under three principles:

Principle 1: The Obligation of Propagation in the Bahá'í Faith

Bahá'u'lláh emphasizes the necessity of spreading the Bahá'í message as a religious obligation:

In *Aṭḥar-i-Qalam-i-A'lá*, Volume 6, p. 167, dated May 13:

Principle 2: The Mission of Bahá'ís to Dispel Illusions

Example 1: In *Aṭḥar-i-Qalam-i-A'lá*, Volume 6, p. 277, dated April 19:

Example 2: In *Aṭḥar-i-Qalam-i-A'lá*, Volume 3, Bahá'u'lláh criticizes adherents of false doctrines:

Example 3: In *Āyāt-i-Ilāhī*, Volume 1, Bahá'u'lláh states:

Principle 3: Mahdism as a Prominent Example of Delusion

Example 1: Bahá'u'lláh refutes the existence of the Hidden Imam (Imam Mahdi):

Example 2: In *Mā'idih-yi-Samāvī*, Volume 2, p. 176, Bahá'u'lláh describes the doctrine of Mahdism as false:

Example 3: Bahá'u'lláh criticizes the belief in Imam Mahdi as a delusion sustained by myths:

Conclusion

The Bahá'í Faith systematically mandates aggressive propagation, considers the removal of "superstitions" a core mission, and regards Mahdism as a prominent delusion. This institutionalized stance fosters an environment where Bahá'ís are ideologically conditioned to counter Shi'ism and its principles, aiming for its ultimate eradication.

Baha'i Counselor Omid Seioshanseian Faces Scrutiny and Deportation

Courtesy : <https://bahaism.blogspot.com>

Omid Seioshanseian, a counselor for the Baha'i faith, is in the spotlight for troubling reasons. He's accused of illegal activities like money laundering and persuading people to join the Baha'i faith, which some see as cult-like.

Recently, Seioshanseian was detained in Egypt. Authorities at Cairo Airport questioned him about his activities and seized his laptop and mobile phone to check for confidential information related to the Baha'i faith in Egypt.

After a brief detention, the Baha'i administration quickly intervened, accusing Egyptian authorities of targeting him because of his faith. They demanded his release, citing a rule that the Baha'i community must act if a member is punished for their faith-related activities.

Seioshanseian was released and urged to leave Egypt. His name has come up in news reports from India and Sri Lanka as well, where he was said to recruit people to the Baha'i faith with promises of moral and spiritual activities.

Seioshanseian, who is Persian and a Qatari citizen, has visited Israel multiple times. While Israel allows him to operate, they warn him against deceiving or manipulating Israeli citizens. This raises concerns about the Baha'i administration's activities.

Governments and security agencies worldwide are urged to be cautious when people like Seioshanseian enter their countries. They should thoroughly question them and examine their belongings for any suspicious material. If anything is found, these individuals should be investigated.

This situation highlights the diligence of Egyptian security agencies in protecting people from potentially manipulative groups. By staying alert and conducting thorough checks, communities can better safeguard themselves from such organizations.

Scandals

- [Baha'i Counselor Omid Seioshanseian Faces Scrutiny and Deportation](#)
- [Unpacking Bahá'u'lláh's Mystical Language](#)
- [Critics of the Bahá'í Faith: An In-depth Analysis](#)
- [How many People were Killed by Baha'u'llah ?](#)
- [The David Kelly Story](#)
- [Interesting Debate between Ex- Bahai and Haifan Bahais on Youtube](#)
- [Baha'i Scandals in India](#)
- [Financial Scandal Rocks Italian Baha'i Community](#)
- [How good are Baha'is!!-An Interesting Analysis](#)
- [Are Baha'is leaders laundering money?](#)
- [Baha'ism neither is a religion nor a faith.](#)

An Examination of Bahá'í Administrative Structures: Parallels with Cult Characteristics

Introduction The Bahá'í Faith, a global religious community, is structured around a hierarchical system of Spiritual Assemblies that govern the affairs of the faithful. These Assemblies are considered by Bahá'í believers as divinely inspired and guided. While the Bahá'í teachings emphasize unity, obedience, and collective consultation through these Assemblies, a deeper analysis of the structures and behaviors promoted by the faith suggests parallels with the characteristics of a cult, particularly in the relationship between the believers and their leadership.

This article examines these parallels using references from Bahá'í texts and memoirs, such as those of Abdu'l-Bahá:

Such statements illustrate the divine status bestowed upon the Assemblies. They are described as being under the direct guidance of Abdu'l-Bahá and the Spirit of God, essentially positioning them as intermediaries between the divine and the Bahá'í community. This creates an environment where believers are taught to view the Assemblies as infallible and inspired, as further confirmed by Ali Akbar Furútan, a prominent Bahá'í figure. In his memoir *The Story of the Heart*, Furútan recounts a correspondence with Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, in which Shoghi clarifies the role of the Assemblies: "In all situations, refer to the sacred Spiritual Assembly, and in all matters, adhere to the decisions and knowledge of the elected members. . . . Whatever the result of the consultation of the sacred Assembly may be, that is the right path and is pleasing to the Lord of all lords, for the Spiritual Assemblies are inspired and divinely supported" (*The Story of the Heart*, p. 48). This doctrine of obedience and the portrayal of the Assemblies as divine representatives leaves little room for dissent or questioning within the Bahá'í community. The faithful are instructed to follow the directives of the Assemblies without hesitation, as their decisions are viewed as inherently aligned with God's will.

Characteristics of a Cult and Parallels in Bahá'í Administrative Structures

To understand the parallels between the Bahá'í organizational structure and cult characteristics, it is essential to first define what constitutes a cult. Various scholars and psychologists have identified several key traits common to cults, which include:

1. **Charismatic Leadership:** Cults are typically led by a central figure or leadership group that is seen as divinely inspired or possessing special knowledge. Members are encouraged to revere the leader or leadership without question.
2. **Mental and Psychological Control:** Cults employ techniques such as isolation, group pressure, and indoctrination to exert control over their members' beliefs and behaviors. Members may be discouraged from associating with outsiders or questioning the group's teachings.
3. **Suppression of Criticism:** Cults often suppress any form of dissent or criticism. Questioning the leadership is equated with disobedience, and members may face punishment or exclusion for not adhering to the group's expectations.
4. **Absolute Obedience:** Members of a cult are typically required to follow the directives of the leader or leadership without reservation. The leadership's commands are viewed as divine or unassailable.

These characteristics of cults can be found in many academic works, including *Cults: Faith, Healing, and Coercion* by Marc Galanter (2000) and *The Psychology of Cults* by Margaret Thaler Singer (1995). These works emphasize the role of control mechanisms within cults, where members are often manipulated into compliance through both psychological pressure and the promise of spiritual reward or punishment.

Parallels in the Bahá'í Administrative System The Bahá'í teachings surrounding the Spiritual Assemblies exhibit several of these cult-like characteristics. The reverence and divine status granted to the Assemblies, as noted by

Abdu'l-Bahá. *God Passes By*. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1944. • Ali Akbar. *The Story of the Heart*. Bahá'í Publishing Trust. • Galanter, Marc. *Cults: Faith, Healing, and Coercion*. Oxford University Press, 2000. • Singer, Margaret Thaler. *Cults in Our Midst: The Continuing Fight Against Their Hidden Menace*. Jossey-Bass, 2003.

Israel, grateful for the contributions of the Bahá'ís.

Bahá'ís attempt to portray their relationship with Israel as solely linked to Bahá'u'lláh's burial place in the occupied territories. This narrative, which was conveyed to Ms. Rafsanjani, was unfortunately accepted and repeated without proper research. They suggest that the connection between Bahá'ís and Israel is limited to Bahá'u'lláh's burial site, arguing that this has no bearing on the creation and formation of Israel. Therefore, they claim that any purported links between Bahá'ís and Israel are false.

However, the relationship between the Bahá'í organization and Israel is historical, predating the establishment of Israel and continuing to this day. This relationship is not confined to Bahá'u'lláh's burial site. Abdu'l-Bahá's actions significantly contributed to the formation of Israel. He assisted Jews in purchasing land, and there are numerous documents to support this, although this article does not cover all of them. Those interested can refer to many sources on this subject. For the sake of this article, a few documents and confessions from Bahá'í organization leaders and prominent Bahá'ís are mentioned.

To establish the timeline of Jewish settlement efforts in Palestine alongside the Bahá'í presence, it is crucial to consider the Balfour Declaration. The Balfour Declaration, dated November 2, 1917, was a historic letter from British Foreign Secretary Arthur James Balfour to Walter Rothschild, a Jewish politician and British House of Commons member. It expressed the British government's support for "the establishment of a national home for the Jews in Palestine."

The translation of Balfour's letter, as cited from Wikipedia, is as follows: British Foreign Ministry; November 2, 1917

Dear Lord Rothschild, I have the pleasure to convey to you, on behalf of His Majesty the King, the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations which has been submitted to, and approved by, the Cabinet. His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country. I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation. Yours sincerely, Arthur James Balfour

Abdu'l-Bahá passed away on November 28, 1921. This means that about four years before his death, Jewish activities to purchase land and settle in Palestine were officially pursued on an international level. At the time of these activities, Abdu'l-Bahá and the Bahá'ís were present in the region.

With this context, the first evidence of Bahá'í cooperation and efforts to settle Jews in Palestine is presented from pages 696 and 697 of the book "Tarikh Bi" by Sheikh Mahdi Sheikh Al-Mamalek Qoni. Two documents numbered 100 and 101 from this book are included in Figures 1 and 2, respectively. These pages detail Ottoman agents' reports on Abbas Effendi's efforts to buy Palestinian Arab lands cheaply and sell them to Jewish immigrants at high prices in 1309 AH (Islamic calendar year, corresponding to Baha'u'llah's era).

Uncovering the Relationship between Baha'is and Israel

One way to uncover this relationship is by examining the confessions and statements of Bahá'í and Israeli leaders. For instance, Mr. Soli Shahour, a prominent Israeli figure and director of the Ezri Center for Iran and Persian Gulf Studies in Israel, mentioned in an interview with Mr. Ismailpour in Bahá'í News: "I have conducted research in this field for years. For example, regarding land matters, the early Bahá'ís owned many properties in the Haifa region. Before Israel's establishment, during the British mandate, Jews purchased land from the Bahá'ís and constructed buildings."

A crucial point is that before Israel's establishment, the Jews acquired land necessary for their settlement from the Bahá'ís. This is the admission of the director of the Iran and Persian Gulf Studies Center in Israel. These confessions were so significant and sensitive for the Bahá'í organizations that the Court of Justice suspended the Bahá'í News media outlet for four months because of this interview.

Dr. Soli Shahour acknowledges that the early Bahá'ís owned numerous properties in Haifa!

Reports indicate that Bahá'u'lláh was exiled to Acre in 1868 along with about 70 companions, including women and children. He could not leave Acre for nine years. This means the Bahá'ís had only 44 years, from their release from Acre to the Balfour Declaration, to acquire these properties.

With what capital and wealth did the Bahá'ís manage to purchase so many properties? According to Dr. Soli Shahour, the extent of these properties is significant.

Where did the Bahá'ís who sold these properties relocate?

If these properties were predominantly owned by Bahá'ís, many Bahá'ís must have been displaced, and the area should be termed "Occupied Bahá'í" instead of "Occupied Palestine."

Despite the substantial real estate transactions from Bahá'ís (according to Dr. Soli Shahour's admission), why hasn't a single Bahá'í been displaced?

This suggests that Bahá'ís were brokers and intermediaries in these land transactions. If Bahá'ís had substantial property holdings and sold them, then instead of Palestinians being displaced, Bahá'ís should have been displaced.

This issue underscores the fundamental links between Bahá'í and Israel. In the subsequent sections of this article, we will see that one of the Bahá'í organization leaders, Sarkar Khanum Rohihi Maxwell, also acknowledges: "Our future (Bahá'í and Israel) is interconnected like the links of a chain."

There is an analogy of a thief cutting a lock at night. When a passerby inquired what he was doing, he replied, "I am weaving." The passerby asked why there was no sound if he was weaving. The thief answered, "It will be heard tomorrow."

Abdu'l-Bahá and, according to Dr. Soli Shahour, the early Bahá'ís who knew the purpose and significance of purchasing and transferring these lands to Jews were fully aware of the impending consequences. On this basis, Abdu'l-Bahá prophesied that the unique seedling, Bahá'í, would gather Israel.

Abdu'l-Bahá writes on page 50 in the Book of Negotiations:

How similar are the words of Abdu'l-Bahá and Dr. Soli Shahour:

Abdu'l-Bahá: "Jewish tribes from all over the world will come to the Holy Land, take possession of villages and lands, settle down, and increase day by day until all of Palestine becomes their abode."

Dr. Sali Shahour noted that the early Bahá'ís owned many properties in the Haifa region. Before the establishment of the State of Israel, during the British mandate, Jews purchased land from the Bahá'ís and constructed buildings.

Abdu'l-Bahá left numerous such confessions. On page 20 of Habib's memoirs (Figure 4), he again acknowledges that the Jews will return to this land without doubt and prays for Israel. According to Dr. Sali Shahour, the lands required by the Jews were provided by the early Bahá'ís, leaving no room for doubt. Abdu'l-Bahá was fully aware of his actions for Israel.

Dr. Sali Shahour's admissions indicate that Abdu'l-Bahá knew his prayers for Israel would be answered, as Jews purchased the land they needed from the early Bahá'ís.

Why didn't Abdu'l-Bahá pray for Israelis to be guided and convert to the Bahá'í Faith? The answer lies at the end of this article. The fact that the Bahá'í organization cannot promote an individual with an Israeli birth certificate, even if they are a Muslim Arab, highlights the deep connection between Israel and the Bahá'í Faith. Bahá'í proselytizing is prohibited in Israel. Shouldn't the Israelis be guided? Why does Bahá'í aim to guide the world's people but not those in its land's heart? The next sections clarify that Bahá'ís act as soldiers of Israel. Soldiers do not promote their commanders; they serve under their supervision.

Furthermore, the relationship between Bahá'í and Israel extends beyond the seed and root to the foliage and fruit. As Mrs. Rohihi Maxwell acknowledges,

Abdul Baha predicted that world peace would be achieved by the year 1957

November 6. On this date in 1990, the Research Department prepared a Memorandum for the Universal House of Justice in response to Francis Beckwith's book Bahá'í which points to changes made in Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era alter in Abdu'l-Bahá's prediction that world peace would be established by 1957 based on the prophecy in Daniel 12:12. November 6. On this date in 1990, the Research Department prepared a Memorandum for the Universal House of Justice in response to Francis Beckwith's book Bahá'í which points to changes made in Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era altering 'Abdu'l-Bahá's prediction that world peace would be established by 1957 based on the prophecy in Daniel 12:12.

https://bahai-library.com/uhj_beckwith_allegations

Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era Regarding the Explanation of Daniel 12:12: Beckwith's Allegations by / on behalf of Universal House of Justice 1990-11-06

MEMORANDUM

To: The Universal House of Justice

From: The Research Department

CHANGES MADE TO "BAHA'U'LLAH AND THE NEW ERA" REGARDING THE EXPLANATION OF DANIEL 12:12

Francis Beckwith includes in his booklet, "Bahá'í", a chapter entitled "Bahá'í Watergate: A False Prophecy and its Cover-Up", which raises two accusations against the Bahá'ís:

1. 'Abdu'l-Bahá is a false prophet as He predicted that world peace would be established by 1957;
2. The Bahá'ís attempted to conceal the fact that His prophecy was not fulfilled by revising "Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era" after the fact.

In "Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era" (Chapter 14, Prophecies of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá), Dr. J. E. Esslemont referred to the prophecy in Daniel 12:12 — "Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand, three hundred and thirty-five days." On page 212 of the first edition, which was published in 1923 by Allen & Unwin in London ... and Brentano's in New York, he states:

In a table-talk at which the writer was present, 'Abdu'l-Bahá said:—

Dr. Esslemont then calculates the date when the prophecy will be fulfilled and quotes a second utterance of 'Abdu'l-Bahá:

This passage appears somewhat differently in Mr. Beckwith's booklet, in which the distinction between 'Abdu'l-Bahá's words and Dr. Esslemont's comments is obscured. However, the important point is that this entire passage constitutes a pilgrim's note. As explained by Shoghi Effendi in his letter of 27 February 1929 addressed to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada ("The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh: Selected Letters" (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1982), pp. 4-5):

This statement by Shoghi Effendi is entirely in accordance with the principle upheld by 'Abdu'l-Bahá Himself in one of His Tablets:

Any doubts as to the intention of the words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá as reported by Dr. Esslemont are to be resolved, therefore, by reference to clear texts from the pen of 'Abdu'l-Bahá Himself, which is exactly what the Bahá'í institutions have undertaken, as will be seen from the next section of this memorandum. It then becomes clear that Daniel's prophecy of the 1,335 days does not give the date of the establishment of world peace, but relates to the world-wide establishment of the Bahá'í Faith. The words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá which Dr. Esslemont quotes are very similar to words appearing in many of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's writings referring to the processes which will take place during the period of the Lesser Peace, culminating in the Most Great Peace. In other words, they describe the working out of the spirit of Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation in world society.

Mr. Beckwith's second accusation, that the Bahá'ís are attempting a "cover-up", is unfounded. He implies that the prophecy was changed after the year 1957 passed without the establishment of universal peace. In reality, a "Note on Revisions" had been added to the 1946 edition, stating:

What Mr. Beckwith describes as a cover-up is actually the process of maintaining the purity of the Bahá'í teachings from man-made additions.

A letter dated 4 May 1946 written on behalf of the beloved Guardian to a group of believers points out:

An extract from one of these Tablets, which as "Text" is authentic for the Bahá'ís, was substituted for the paraphrase of the Master's "table-talk" in the third revised edition of "Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era" from which Mr. Beckwith quotes.

Examining Moral Failures in Baha'i Teaching Methods – Ruhi Books

We acknowledge that all human beings are sinners; however, there is a disproportionately high rate of moral failure among the Baha'i teachers of Ruhi Children Moral Classes. While we recognize that every faith may have a few such teachers, our concern is that almost all the most prominent Baha'i teachers have faced moral disgrace.

Moreover, the Baha'i Faith claims a monopoly on spiritualizing and moralizing the children of other faiths through these Ruhi Books. The reality is that behind this 'Ruhi Curriculum' lies the absolute immorality of some Baha'is and Baha'i teachers.

The crucial question now is whether merely advocating for morality and spirituality is enough, or should these values be practically applied in people's lives?

Morality is not a commodity that can be bought or hired from the market. It is a matter of human value, developed through passion, compassion, and a disciplined life. The word 'morality' may seem simple and short, not codified in law, but it is continuously applied across all cultures. It cannot be achieved by signing a declaration card or by meeting political leaders and asking them to make statements against Iran.

The Ruhi Classes have become places where the scantier the dress, the more spiritual one appears. They are venues for lovers to meet and for Baha'i teachers/facilitators to prey on the young ones, away from the eyes of parents and guardians. It is also a place where sexually disoriented people find their soul mates.

A cursory look into their personal lives and lifestyles quickly reveals the fraudulent nature of their claims. Many counselors have divorced lives, and most NSA members are involved in sexual misconduct. Some might argue that these individuals do not represent the Baha'i Faith or that I have "stacked the deck." The sad truth is that these individuals are key figures in the Baha'i Administration. They are the acknowledged leaders. If what they promote does not work in their own lives, why should anyone else believe them? It is futile to discuss this until people realize, recognize, and apply the importance of morality and spirituality in their own lives.

In Canada, Dr. Danesh was banned from treating patients. Despite being discredited in a sexual misconduct scandal, he remains on the Canadian NSA. Mr. Payam Shoghi, another counselor, was involved in document forgery. Justice Nelson was found guilty of economic bungling.

There are innumerable reports of such misconduct, and thanks to the Internet, it is all getting exposed.

For the Baha'is, these are signs that the Baha'i Faith is coming out of obscurity, yet they still claim that Baha'is are not mature enough. Let's face the truth: Baha'is will be forgiven for everything they do, whether it is sexual misconduct, adultery, child molestation, homosexuality, elopement, financial fraud, or extramarital affairs.

For the Baha'i Administration, if someone repents, brings new converts to the faith, pays Huququ'llah regularly, and does not backbite against the institution of Faith, it is likely that the UHJ will promote them. Once a diamond is chipped, it may be reground, but it will never be as large as before.

What place do moral issues have in the Baha'i Faith? Should we speak out loudly and often against those things that offend, or do we remain silent, believing that giving no offense is the better approach? I believe the answer is not 'silence' as the children, Jr. Youths, and our whole society are involved in it.

Baha'is are commanded to cry out against the moral sins of others. They are commanded to use harsh words for the establishments where Baha'is are imprisoned, even if they are imprisoned for economic bungling or sexual misconduct. Yet, the Baha'i Administration will shout, "Help, help, they are persecuting the Baha'is."

An article by an Ex-Baha'i of India.

Understanding Abdu'l-Baha's Physics: The Sun and Earth Movement

Fixed Sun: (Physics according to Abdu'l-Baha)

"The animal cannot become aware of the fact that the earth is revolving and the sun is stationary. Only processes of reasoning can come to this conclusion. The outward eye sees the sun as revolving. It mistakes the stars and the planets as moving about the earth. But reason decides their orbit, knows that the earth is moving and the other worlds are fixed, knows that the sun is the solar center and ever occupies the same place, proves that it is the earth which revolves around it. Such conclusions are entirely intellectual, not according to the senses." (Abdu'l-Baha, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 416)

"The sun is stationary." However, the sun is not stationary. It is amusing that he stated, "an animal cannot become aware of the fact that the earth is revolving and the sun is stationary," yet he (as a human) was incorrect in believing the sun was stationary!

Thus, Abdu'l-Baha believed the sun was fixed and stationary, and that other planets orbit this sun. If you show this quote to a Bahá'í, they might say: "We need to consider the spiritual meaning of this quote; Abdu'l-Baha was referring not to the physical sun but the spiritual sun (which is often considered to be God)." BUT this interpretation is completely incorrect because:

1. Nowhere in this quote do we see the word "spiritual." We can therefore conclude he was talking about physical reality, not "spiritual reality" (if such a thing exists).
2. He speaks of the earth, planets, and other worlds, so we can be 100% certain he was referring to the physical sun!
3. If he was speaking about the "spiritual worlds," why did he not say so directly? That would have made his message clearer!

Remember! The sun is NEITHER FIXED IN MOTION NOR IN POSITION!

Furthermore, saying "the sun is the solar center and ever occupies the same place" is questionable. Is the sun going to remain there forever? What if a black hole consumes it?

Unpacking Bahá'u'lláh's Mystical Language

It's fascinating how Bahá'u'lláh manages to say so little with so many words, reminiscent of L. Ron Hubbard. Self-proclaimed "prophets" often love to hear themselves speak, and they do so endlessly, honing their craft over time.

These individuals typically present common sense ideas that can be found outside their religions, drawing people in by cloaking these ideas in mystical language and making them appear more complex than they really are.

L. Ron Hubbard was notorious for this, as any former Scientologist would confirm. At its core, Scientology comprises many common sense ideas—like discussing your problems with someone can help solve them—but Hubbard added bizarre elements, such as ancient aliens being the root of all problems, which is a hallmark of religious leaders making things weird.

Similarly, Bahá'u'lláh and other Bahá'í Central Figures often acted as if their theological and social ideas were unique, writing extensive texts to explain very simple concepts.

World peace, gender equality, and the Unity of God are not new or unique to the Bahá'í Faith. The concept of theophany existed in polytheistic religions long before the Báb or Bahá'u'lláh and was discussed by Islamic scholars like Ibn Arabi and Shaykh Ahmad, who were well-known to the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh.

The Báb was deeply influenced by Shaykh Ahmad and his successor Sayyid Kazim and attended Sayyid Kazim's lectures. Bahá'u'lláh associated with Sufi mystics in Kurdistan, which is evident in their ideas. For example, the metaphor of wine in the Aqdas and other Bahá'í writings is directly taken from Sufi poetry.

The Báb drew from a wide range of neo-Platonic, Gnostic, and Sufi sources, which are too numerous to list. Bahá'u'lláh's works, such as Seven Valleys and Four Valleys, Hidden Words, and Ode to the Dove, are clearly inspired by and summaries of 'Attar's Conference of the Birds, Mulla Sadra's Four Journeys, Umar Ibn al-Farid's Ode of the Way, and of course, the hadith and Qur'an, though they are often poor imitations. For instance, the Iqan tries hard to emulate Ibn Arabi's Bezels of Wisdom but falls short.

In some of the Báb's and Bahá'u'lláh's writings, it is clear which verses of the Qur'an they attempt to imitate. Arabic speakers have noted the awkward phrasing in the Aqdas.

Bahá'u'lláh frequently jumps between different topics without smooth transitions, introduces subjects only to elaborate on them much later, and repeats himself so often that the book feels like it's written by a high school student trying to meet a word count.

Initially, especially for a Western reader unfamiliar with the literature that the Aqdas tries to imitate, it might seem unique and wonderful. However, upon critical analysis, the book loses much of its mystical aura.

Contradictions in Bahá'í Teachings and the Bible

the issue of Guardianship is a significant cause of division within the Bahá'í Faith. Despite reading numerous posts on this topic, I never received satisfactory answers to my direct questions. One of the Guardian's crucial duties was the appointment of a successor, a position deemed vitally important by Bahá'í teachings. After the sudden death of the Guardian, no successor was appointed, leading to a crisis among the Hands of the Cause. They declared the position of Guardianship null and void, but inconsistencies and contradictions were rampant.

Ironically, the institution meant to prevent religious fracture became the source of schism. Could a religion revealed by God be so inept?

Despite many discussions on this subject, I never received a satisfactory answer from any Bahá'í faction, including the mainline Bahá'ís (UHI), the Mason-Remey faction, Joel Marangella, or the sans-Guardian Bahá'ís.

Other issues included the Bahá'í claim in the 1960s that their teachings did not conflict with the Bible. However, upon reading the Bible, I found pervasive conflicts in both minor details and broad outlines. The Bible distinguishes clearly between Jesus and the prophets Abraham and Moses, but Bahá'ís claim they were all equally manifestations of God. The teachings of the Bible and the Bahá'í Faith are almost entirely mutually exclusive.

Discussions also diverged into topics like the role of Middle Eastern culture in terrorism. I was accused of being off-topic, but I see now that these subjects naturally transitioned from direct Bahá'í teachings.

These confrontational discussions likely stemmed from the fact that many Bahá'ís on this forum were not fully committed to some Bahá'í teachings. For example, Bahá'í forbids abortion, yet many responders seemed in favor of it. They refused to acknowledge the distinction between executing a convicted murderer after due process and killing an innocent baby without due process.

Bahá'í teaches that men and women are equal, which I agree with, but it incorrectly portrays men and women as two wings of a bird. Men and women are complementary, not mirror images. Additionally, the UHI's exclusion of women as officers is disconcerting to politically liberal Bahá'ís. Cognitive dissonance is a hallmark of true believers, and for a time, I also made excuses for the inconsistencies in the Bahá'í Faith.

The greatest issue, from my perspective, is that the Bahá'í Faith prophesies a one-world order that the Bible warns will first be established by Satan, the anti-Christ, the Beast. This poses a significant danger, as Bahá'ís may see the establishment of this world religion, economy, and transnational government as a validation of their beliefs.

How do the Bahá'ís reconcile the apparent contradictions between the world's religions?

Hello everyone,

The Bahá'í Faith is indeed an intriguing religion. I've been pondering this question for a while, and I hope it doesn't come across as condescending or offensive—apologies if the wording isn't perfect. Please correct me if I'm mistaken, but isn't a core belief of the Bahá'í Faith that every prophet from the major world religions was a prophet sent by God? If that's the case, how can they all be considered prophets when the major world religions have fundamental contradictions?

For example:

- **Christianity:** Christ is the only savior.
- **Judaism:** The Messiah has not yet come.
- **Islam:** Muhammad was the last of the prophets.
- **Hinduism:** There are multiple factions, with a common belief in the essential unity of everything and the multiple avatars of Vishnu.
- **Buddhism:** There is no specific belief in a creator, leaning more towards agnosticism, although many believe in "Celestial Buddha" spiritual beings.

Why don't Bahai people live in Israel?

Hi,

From an Israeli!

The reason for the above can be found in a Documentary film by two Israeli Journalist.

The name of the film is "Baha'is in my Backyard"

Link : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=us2xTn0zjTc&t=264s>

Baha'i Faith Conversion Manual

Links

- bahai-guardian.com
- bahai.org
- orthodoxbahai.com
- <https://reformbahai.org>
- bahaism.blogspot.com
- dalehusband.com
- bahaiaawareness.com
- thesectsofbahais.com
- bahai-india.com
- bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com
- orthodoxbahaisindia.org
- <http://unitarianbahais.org>
- <https://www.uhj.net/>
- <https://www.hassanershad.com/>
- <https://historyofbahaifaith.wordpress.com>
- <https://tarbiyatbahai.blogspot.com/>
- <https://bahais-israel.blogspot.com/>
- <https://lucknow-bahais.blogspot.com/>
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Videos

- [Baha'is in my Backyard – Full Movie](#)
- [UHI lied about the meaning of “proselytizing”](#)
- [A Unitarian Universalist Visits the Bahai Temple](#)
- [The Baha’i World Faith: Part 1 – Origin of this Muslim offshoot Syncretistic Religion](#)
- [Heterodox Baha’is Loses Court Cases Against Orthodox Baha’is](#)
- [Dialogue with Haifa-Baha’i Leaders — People Have Questions.](#)
- [Arrogant critics of the Guardian are all too fallible](#)

Arrogant critics of the Guardian are all too fallible

“The Vakilu’-d-Dawlih was a distinguished believer who was designated by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá as one of the ‘four and twenty elders which sat before God on their seats’ mentioned in chapter 11 of the Revelation of St John the Divine. [Of the other 23 ‘elders’, only 19 have been named by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá i.e. the Báb and the 18 ‘Letters of the Living’.]”

It seems that Taherzadeh has repeated the mistake of one of Persian writers who has quoted only a short section from one of Tablets of Abdu’l Baha to an individual immediately after the title “Chapter forty one – about the twenty-four elders mentioned in the Book of Revelation”:

Jeffrey

(Thanks to Hand of the Cause of God Nosrat’u’llah Bahremand for his assistance with this article)

Dialogue with Haifan-Baha'i Leaders — People Have Questions.



by [MaryamJoon](#) 15-Sep-2012 Source : <http://www.iranian.com/main/blog/maryamjoon/dialogue-haifan-bahai-leaders-people-have-questions>

QUESTIONS FOR THE *LEADERS* OF THE *HAIFAN-BAHA'I* MOVEMENT THAT IRANIANS & NON-IRANANS HAVE:

There are a lot of articles that basically say, Islam is 'kaka-poo-poo' ... fair enough. This blog is not about that. Let's assume for the sake of this blog that Islam is 'kaka-poo-poo,' so we can get that out of the way without getting side-tracked with irrelevancies and onto some questions about the Haifan-Baha'i movement.

I would like to ask the *leaders* of the Haifan-Baiha'is (a/k/a The Universal House of Justice or UHJ) these questions, and of course, commentators are welcome to present their theories, but with the understanding that it is the *leaders* that bear the responsibility for answering these questions.

QUESTIONS:

1. Does the Haifan-Baha'i Leadership (a/k/a 'UHJ'), which customarily fails to make itself open to questions, understand that failure to make itself publicly *available** to individuals with questions renders its organization suspect in the minds of many Non-Muslim and Muslim people?

(* NOTE: When I say failure to make itself *available* to public questions, I mean for example in a *town-hall format* or by *opening its websites and forums up to the public without the strict censorship used there*; I certainly do not mean canned-VOA or canned-BBC interviews or docu-dramas. Even the Pope, Rabbis, and Muslim clerics have frequent round-table discussions open to the public where people ask questions – they debate back-&-forth on video and in-person frequently, which often provides Iranian.com with some interesting material; [See, for example, Muslim cleric holds 2 hour long open question and answer period in front of 10,000 people.](#))

2. Given that there are hundreds-of-millions of Muslims in Iran and in other regional countries, do you understand that when their Muslim co-religionists in Palestine are slaughtered and face racism and abuse, the fact that the Haifan-Baha'i Leadership deliberately stays silent about those abuses and instructs its followers to say nothing (even though it actively participates in numerous campaigns about *'the plight of the Baha'is'*) leads Muslims and Non-Muslims alike to view the Haifan-Baha'i organization with suspicion and contempt, particularly in light of the fact that Bahai leaders own hundreds of millions of dollars worth of property in historic Palestine (Israel) and benefit from certain Israeli government tax incentives?

3. Iranians are well-versed in the schemes of British-Colonialism. During the early days of the founding of the Baha'i movement, the Colonial-British government was LITERALLY causing thousands of massacres against MILLIONS of people all over the globe

in lands under British-Colonial occupation. Indians had their resources looted and their people raped (see Gandhi), the British caused famines in Bangladesh that killed millions; in Africa the British reinstated inhumane and heart-breaking slave-practices.

British-Colonialism, without question, killed many *millions* of people *more* than the Holocaust. During this same era of British-Colonial rule the Baha'i Holy Man, Abdul Baha, was offered a British KBE (*knight of the British Empire*) and accepted this British Medal for 'for valuable services rendered to the British Empire.' Does the Baha'i leadership understand that among Iranians, and many people around the world, no one believes the British-Colonial Government was engaged in 'humanitarian' efforts during that era (but rather rape, looting, and subjugation) and that the KBE accepted by Abdul Baha is tantamount to accepting a 'good leadership' medal from Ghenghis Khan or Adolf Hitler?

4. Is the Haifan-Baha'i Leadership willing to admit that the problems it is facing in Iran today did not start with the present government of Iran, but that for approximately 160 years under both secular and religious governments in Iran, the Bahai's movement was rejected by *both* the majority of Iranian people *and* governments (both secular and religious)?

5. Question 5 and 6 go together: This question is not about what Baha'is claim their faith stands for today; This question is not about whether people of different races are Baha'is today. This question is not about producing some evidence showing that Abdul Baha engaged in some charitable work or commentary at some point. Side-discussion about present Baha'i practices or beliefs are simply an obfuscation of what this question is about. As noted in official Baha'i archives and publications, the Baha'i holy man, Abdu'l-Baha, said this about native Africans: "*The inhabitants of a country like Africa are all as wandering savages and wild animals. They lack intelligence and knowledge; all are uncivilized; not one civilized and a wise man is to be found among them. These are the proofs of the wise men. ... No matter how much the shell is educated (or polished), it can never become a radiant pearl. The black stone will not become world-illuminated gem.*" (Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Baha p.567 vv.3-4) In light of the foregoing, are Baha'is willing to publicly condemn Abdul Baha's statements, written in his own hand and comprehensible to every native Persian speaker, as relying on improper, racist and discriminatory rhetoric?

6. If you dispute the quote from Abdul Baha in question No. 5 (above), could you provide a PHOTO-COPY of the actual text of Abdul Baha's writing in his own handwriting and the date that photo-copy was first made available to the public so that Iranians who are well-versed in translating Persian and do not require the assistance of revisionist-intermediaries can see it for themselves? (In other words, we are not asking for a modern-day individual to engage in the art of interpretation, we are saying that Persian speakers want to see a PHOTO-COPY of the original Abdul Baha writing, and to make up their own minds, particularly given that the Bahai faith claims to favor 'independent investigation of the truth.')

7. [At this link](#), a photo-copy of an email authored by a well-known Baha'i academic by the name of Ian Kluge appears. I have checked both the email and the code imbedded within the message, both of which confirm that the source is Ian Kluge (*he uses the same e-mail that he has used in many of his official publications*). Mr. Kluge also responded to an e-mail confirming his authorship. Kluge runs several Haifan-Baha'i websites and has given numerous talks to the Baha'i flock. Mr. Kluge's message states: "*I fully support a first strike on Iran's nuclear facilities wherever they may be hidden and by whatever means are needed to destroy them. If the Iranians deny us their oil, destroy their oil facilities – if we can't have their oil, neither will they.*" (*Bahai Academic, Ian Kluge.*) On several occasions, I wrote to both the Universal House of Justice and to the Baha'i National Assembly in the U.S. and requested them to publicly condemn Kluge's remarks. I received an explicit refusal, which in essence stated, 'we will not respond to every inquiry.' If from this day forward, the government of Iran (or any other government) views the Baha'i movement with suspicion on secular national security grounds, what excuse does the Baha'i Leadership have to offer Iranians for its willful failure to timely condemn, distance itself, or even address Kluge's remarks?

8. Please confirm whether some of the criticisms against the Haifan-Baha'i movement have come from *Zoroastrian* spiritual leaders who *predate* the present government of Iran and share what some of those criticisms are.

9. The Baha'i Universal House of Justice (the top Haifan-Baha'i authority) is mostly composed of non-Iranians and white men, and expressly forbids women members: Can the UHJ members take 20 minutes of their time each to give a video response that reads these questions verbatim on video and answers them directly?

10. If Bahai leaders *honestly* care about the stories of persecution they constantly put out, why don't they take the time to address questions (particularly by individuals who are suspicious about the activities of its leadership) to dispel the concerns that skeptics and critics have in an effort to lessen the likelihood that people will be against the Bahai faith?

Thank you.

A NOTE TO INDIVIDUALS THAT ARE MEMBERS OF THE BAHAI'S OR CONTEMPLATING BECOMING A BAHAI:

Iranian Bahais are our own children, but also people have to know that there is a **political** game in the background; and they have to know that the **overwhelming majority** Bahai's are NOT Iranians (and it pains many that these foreigners make themselves involved in Iranian issues on behalf of Israel with an apparent conflict of interest given that the leadership receives benefits from the government of Israel).

If a child is Iranian, and wants to stay Bahai, some have said, 'Do NOT follow the Haifa-Israeli-Bahai Movement, especially if with all their resources they cannot make a simple video and respond to each of these questions and post them here. They should be able to read each question and answer them.'

There are other groups of Bahai for people to join, like the Reform Baha'is, which allow exactly the types of questions I have posed here. The Reform Baha'is are a group that says they are not connected to Israel and criticizes the **Haifa-Israeli-Bahai Political Group and Military Propaganda Operations**. The Reform Bahai's don't seem to have fancy buildings, but they genuinely seem like nicer and less shifty people. (Do you really need a fancy building to be closer to God? It is a question for your conscience.) I hope the information below helps those of you that are interested in alternatives to the mainstream Israeli-Baha'i organization.

[Reform Bahai Press](#)

5224 Aintree Road Rochester, MI 48306-2713

Phone: (248) 652-4982

Further reading: Video, [Bahá'í Brainwashing Corporation](#).

NOTE: I did not make the first picture in the graphic for this article, but it does seem representative of some of the questions people have.

Heterodox Baha'is Loses Court Cases Against Orthodox Baha'is

Oh you didn't know that the word "Baha'i" is trademarked?

Seriously. It is.

I wish I was making this up.

It was registered by the US NSA with the US trademark office on March 11, 1952 (Registration #556,004). [Look it up](#) if you don't believe me.

So is the "Greatest Name" symbol (in Arabic calligraphic script). But wait, you ask, shouldn't [Mishkin-Qalam](#) own the trademark to that? or at least his descendents? A spokesperson for the US NSA helpfully replies: *Shut up*.

No word as of yet if the US NSA has patented the postures within the Baha'i long obligatory prayer. But just to be sure, I would suggest you not bend down to pick up anything off the ground for the foreseeable future as that may constitute a dilution of the NSA's reputation.

Anyway, getting back to our story, it turns out the judge back then was high on a groovy mixture of pot and LSD so [he sided with the US NSA](#). Well, to be fair, I have no evidence that the judge was tripping on a cloud 8 miles high... other than the roach clip that was later found by the janitor under his chair and the fact that he went along with the trademarking of "Baha'i".

Think about it.

He gave exclusive legal ownership of the adjective... the very word that describes a religious organization. (Who owns the trademark for "Christian" or "Jew" by the way? Someone look that up between totes.) I think if that judge was presented with the trademarking of "chair" or "tree" or "hair" he would have gone along as well. When you're baked... you're baked.

Which brings us up to the present day. More accurately, November 2006 – when the present US NSA filed a motion to hold the Orthodox Baha'i group in contempt for not abiding by the 1966 judgement.

You see, they were publishing content online which used the trademark and distinctive words, phrases and markings that the 1966 court ruling said they couldn't be using.

The defense of the Orthodox Baha'i group was that there was no privity (look it up) between them and the Mason Remey organization to which the previous ruling was bound upon. The US NSA argued that they were one and the same organization, just with a different name.

So they went back and forth:

Are not. Are too. Are not. Are too.

Except the lawyers used more complex words to justify their hefty bills at the end.

The result? The judge (from now on called Amy) just like a parent, after patiently listening to the intricately nuanced arguments for more than a year, finally got tired and sent them all to their respective rooms for a time out. No, I'm just kidding.

Amy, being a sensible woman, free of all narcotic and hallucinogenic compounds ruled as follows:

PNBC stands for Provisional National Baha'i Council – it is one of the many acronym soups that you'll find within the legal documents of the case.

I am not a legal expert by any means and I hope that some who are will step forward to offer their wisdom... however, it seems to me that the NSA weighed their options and chose to attempt to enforce the 1966 ruling on the Orthodox Baha'is because they estimated that a new legal proceeding would have less chance of winning.

Let's face it, you simply can't trademark or copyright the word, "Baha'i" or the nine pointed star any more than you can the word "Christian" or the symbolic representation of the cross. These do not belong to anyone or any one organization. They are in the public domain.

Can you imagine the Catholic church suing the Protestant church for the use of the symbol of the cross? or saying that they infringe on their intellectual property for calling their houses of worship 'churches' and for having similar ecclesiastical organizations?

The judge would soak his/her robes laughing before dismissing the case and awarding several millions of exemplary punitive damages for bringing a frivolous law suit to the docket.

That option would have been just plain DUMB. But what the US NSA did, I would argue, is almost as dumb. Here's why:

Because it meant entering into a no win situation.

If they had won they would have appeared like bullies and would have given the break-away group much more attention than they would normally get. We're talking about a splinter group of less than 40 people! Forty. Yes, say it again. Forty people.

As well, it would have opened up a hornet's nest as the Orthodox Baha'is would have gained the sympathies of groups like the EFF. In the end, it would have been nothing more than a hollow legal victory overshadowed by a public relations nightmare. Any positive advantages would have been tiny in comparison to the negative outcome. Also a win would have encouraged the Orthodox Baha'i group to continue to lobby the public's sympathies by presenting themselves as martyrs, the underdogs, the wronged ones.

On the other hand, had they lost (which they did) it would have meant that they had wasted both time and money (the Faith's precious resources) to only receive a setback. A loss would embolden the Orthodox group and encourage them to write further bombastic prose on their websites to garner attention. It would also present the US NSA as weak and unable to protect its trademarks and intellectual property.

* * * * *

Here is a portion of the testimony in the trial:

Alright, here's the thing. We will always be infected with stupidity. There are, even as you sit there reading this, millions of stupid people endangering our gene pool. Heck, you or I have even on occasion partaken liberally of stupidity. No one is immune. Not completely. It is part and parcel of being human. And although we should be compassionate with each other, we should also help each other out as best we can to rise up from it.

Thankfully, we also have reason and intelligence among us. And more often than not, it wins the race. That's how we have survived this long on this, the third rock from the sun.

So there will always be people who are dumb enough to mistake the insane, bombastic rhetoric that can be found on the Orthodox Baha'i websites (like the 9/11 towers in flames with horrible predictions of apocalypse or worse). No, I'm not going to link to it. It doesn't deserve further attention. If you really want to find it, you can.

To show you how "dumb" people can be, [BahaisOnline](#) was recently contacted by a Baha'i who inquired how their pilgrimage request was coming along. How can anyone mistake that site which aggregates and disseminates Baha'i related news and content from across the web to the "official" [Baha'i pilgrimage](#) website run by the UHJ? They don't have any similarities!

Are we going to now start attempting to protect people from their own stupidity by suing everyone who has an "unofficial" Baha'i site?

Thankfully, there are also among us many people, both Baha'i and not, that will have no trouble at all differentiating between that Baha'i blog and the pilgrimage site. Nor will they have any trouble telling apart the various websites of the Baha'i Faith (Haifa) and those from splinter groups.

What lessons can we draw from this?

The NSA needs better legal advice. As in none.

Since they would be in better shape had they no legal team, I would suggest they fire their lawyers and hire instead a pack of squirrels. After all, when did squirrels do anyone any harm?

And everyone on the NSA who suggested, recommended and went along with this boondoggle please do the rest of the Baha'i world a favor and "retire" from administrative service. It is all the rage right now. All the "cool" Baha'is are doing it: [Herr Grossman and Sgt. Mitchell](#) as we speak.

Am I being too harsh?

Perhaps. But is the irony lost on everyone that here we have an institution which is charged with the duty to establish and encourage unity... and they spend their time and the money donated, to pursue an inane litigious process against a small group of people who believe something slightly different from them?

How about spending more time on the [challenges facing the US Baha'i community](#)?

Reference : <http://bahairants.com/us-nsa-loses-court-case-against-orthodox-bahais-476.html>

The Baha'i World Faith: Part 1 – Origin of this Muslim offshoot Syncretistic Religion

There's over 5 million Baha'is in 200 countries. Imagine a religion started in the 19th century that tries to combine many religions & then say it has the only correct one.

Larry Wessels, director of Christian Answers of Austin, Texas/ Christian Debater (YouTube channel: CANSWERSTV at <http://www.youtube.com/user/CAnswersT…>) & Steve Morrison, Ph.D, director of Research for Christian Answers (Steve is the creator of our 3 websites: <http://www.BIBLEQUERY.ORG>, <http://www.HISTORYCART.COM> & <http://www.MUSLIMHOPE.COM>) analyze the truth claims of the Baha'is. See our playlist, "Dealing with Islam, Muslims: Sunni, Shi'ite, Alawites, Sufis" with over 60 videos

Co-Founders: Mirza Ali Muhammad (Bab); Mirza Husayn Ali (Baha'u'llah). Founding Date: 1844. Official Publications: The American Baha'i The Baha'i Newsreel, Brilliant Star (for children), One Country, World Order. Organizational Structure: Universal House of Justice (nine members) administers the Baha'i Faith internationally. National Spiritual Assemblies (nine members) administer national Baha'i concerns. Local Spiritual Assemblies (nine members) administer Baha'i concerns on a local level. All governing bodies are elected democratically. Sacred Scriptures: Over 100 volumes written by the Bab, Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha. Some of the most notable are: Selections From the Writings of the Bab, Tablets of Baha'u'llah, Kitab-i-Aqdas (Most Holy Book), Kitab-i-Iqan (Book of Certitude), Baha'i Prayers, Some Answered Questions. Unique Terms: Most Great Peace, Manifestation, He-Whom-God-Will-Manifest, Fireside discussion.

History The roots of the Baha'i faith lie in the Shi'ite sect of Islam which was led by 12 successive Imams, descendants of Muhammad's son-in-law, Ali. The 12th Imam, as a child, withdrew from society to escape assassination, the inevitable fate of his 12 predecessors. He would make contact with the faithful through "Gates," individuals through whom he would give his teachings.

In 1844, Mirza Ali Muhammad (1819-1850) declared himself to be the "Gate," the "Bab" (pronounced Bob). He claimed he was not just a "Gate," but rather the "Gate" of God, a major Manifestation of God equal to the prophet Muhammad. For six years he gathered the faithful around him, proclaimed a new revelation and the eventual appearance of the final Manifestation for this cycle of human history. After numerous armed conflicts with Muslim authorities, the Bab was martyred in 1850 and his followers scattered.

Before his death the Bab designated Mirza Yahya, a son of nobility, as a caretaker to follow him. Another devoted follower of the Bab, Yahya's half brother Mirza Husayn Ali, proclaimed himself to be "He-Whom-God-Will-Manifest," the major Manifestation of God prophesied by the Bab. He also changed his name to Baha'u'llah, "Glory of God," and proclaimed that the Bab was his forerunner. Mirza Yahya strenuously opposed this and both sides appear to have been involved in assassination plots.

The original followers of the Bab who gave their allegiance to Baha'u'llah became known as Baha'is. Baha'u'llah, a dynamic personality with great force of will, wrote over 100 volumes of Baha'i scripture, entertained dignitaries and maintained a large correspondence while under virtual house arrest for decades.

A troubled period of transition followed Baha'u'llah's death in 1892. He had designated his eldest son, Abdu'l Baha ("Slave of Baha"), as his successor. Abdu'l Baha's brother, Mirza Muhammad Ali, challenged the extent of his authority. Abdu'l Baha retaliated by "excommunicating" practically all his closest relatives and depriving them of their income from Baha'u'llah's estate.

The Baha'i Faith became worldwide under Abdu'l Baha's leadership, and his mission trips to the West. However, upon his death in 1921, the transition of power was once again very troubled. Shoghi Effendi, Abdu'l Baha's grandson, was designated the successor, the First Guardian of the Faith. With this position "his decisions were absolute and final and his words authoritative" (The Baha'i Faith: Its History and Teaching, p.251). This brought him into conflict with other family members and he soon excommunicated every living relative, including his own parents. However, under Shoghi Effendi's administrative skills the Baha'i Faith continued to grow until his death in 1957. He left no designated successor and the Faith is now under the administration of the Universal House of Justice, a group of nine people who are elected democratically and oversee the Cause internationally.

Baha'i historians and authorities have suppressed & the earliest source materials and rewritten the early years of the Faith. One of the earliest and most important historical documents of the time, the Nuqtatu'l-Kaf, was written by the Babi, Mirza Jani. It clearly states that the Bab declared Mirza Yahya as his successor.

A Unitarian Universalist Visits the Bahai Temple

By Eric Stetson

I was an enrolled member of the Baha'i Faith from 1998 to 2002. Although I was very serious about my faith and took two trips halfway across America for evangelistic purposes ("travel teaching" in Baha'i lingo), I never visited the [North American Bahai House of Worship in Wilmette, Illinois](#) — or any of the several other Bahai temples around the world — until now, eight years after I left the Baha'i Faith. I was inspired to visit the temple because of my renewed interest in Bahaism and the fact that it was on my way to Minneapolis, Minnesota, where I was traveling to attend the [49th annual Unitarian Universalist General Assembly](#).

Last week, a friend of mine who lives near Milwaukee, Wisconsin and who had been to the Bahai temple before, drove down to meet me there. She has been a Bahai for more than 40 years, but resigned her official membership in the Baha'i Faith a few years ago and now attends Unitarian Universalist and Sufi meetings, while continuing to believe in the prophethood of Bahá'u'lláh. Both of us thought it would be best not to mention to anyone at the temple that we are former members of the Baha'i organization, since this tends to produce a reaction of coldness and suspicion among enrolled Baha'is. Therefore, my friend described herself to people there as simply "a Bahai" and I described myself as "a Unitarian Universalist," mentioning that I share many beliefs in common with Bahais but saying nothing about the [Unitarian Bahai Association](#) or my encouragement of Bahais to join UU churches.

I found the temple to be impressively beautiful, more on the outside than within, but even the inside was a sight to behold. The gardens were lovely — filled with fragrant roses, lavender, and various other flowers and plants, plus bubbling fountains. Some of the gardens are under construction and this detracted a little bit from the atmosphere, but it's good to see that the Baha'i Faith is continually improving the property.

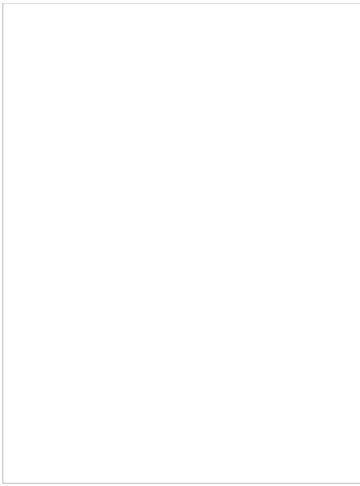
There was an underground visitor center beneath the temple with promotional displays and videos aimed at the general public, and a bookstore selling Bahai books, publications, paraphernalia and souvenirs. Brochures were available in a multitude of different languages. My friend, a fluent Spanish speaker, expressed concern that there was a very limited selection of Spanish language materials in the bookstore. I found the videos we watched, which described the Bahai faith and the history of the temple, to be kind of hokey and seemingly low-budget productions. Other than that, the visitor center was okay.

In the huge Chicago metropolitan area, could there really be this few Bahais and curious visitors wanting to take in a Bahai worship service? My friend and I sat in silence waiting for the service to start, listening to the peaceful and heavenly singing of birds who were trapped inside the vast interior space of the sanctuary and apparently lived in there. For me, a bird lover, the birdsong was the high point of the worship service — I would soon find out why so few people come to these events.

Two employees of the Baha'i Faith began to take turns walking up to a lectern where they recited verses from the Baha'i holy writings. They did so in restrained, unemotional voices. This went on for about 20 minutes, with no musical accompaniment, no choir, no recitations from the scriptures of other religions, and no original speech. When the service suddenly ended, my reaction was "*That's it?*" It seemed that in such a spectacular building that has taken a monumental investment of time, energy, and money to build and maintain, not enough thought and attention are being paid to using this space for high-quality worship meetings that can energize and inspire souls.

The overall vibe of the Bahai temple felt like a tomb or a historical place, not a living home of the Holy Spirit. I got a sense of how secular Europeans must feel when they visit the great old churches of their continent — empty, silent places that are heavy with lingering karmic energy from the past but not much Spirit moving there today. I was left with a strong impression of "wasted potential" — that the Bahais could be doing so much more with this beautiful and impressive facility, such as regularly holding interfaith worship services in partnership with Unitarian Universalists, liberal Christians, Sufis, and other open-minded religious groups throughout the greater Chicago area, rather than letting their temple go largely unused as some kind of relic or visual advertisement of their religion.

After attending the 20-minute bare-bones worship service, spending some time enjoying the gardens and then returning to sit in the temple for private prayer and meditation, my friend and I encountered an older Persian lady on the temple steps who turned out to be a volunteer greeting visitors. We struck up a conversation with her, and I mentioned that I am a Unitarian Universalist and agree with many aspects of the Bahai faith. Her response to this was to tell me that Bahá'u'lláh is God's messenger for our time, that he is descended from kings, and that the difference between the Baha'i Faith and the Unitarian Universalist church is that one of these traditions (her preferred spiritual affiliation) is "from God" while the other (mine) is "manmade."



The Bahai temple rises above the harbor of Wilmette, Illinois, on Lake Michigan

Despite her condescending remark, this woman genuinely seemed like she wanted to be nice and helpful — she even spent 15 minutes guiding my friend and me to a park where we could see a spectacular view of the temple from a harbor on Lake Michigan. I don't think she realized that the triumphalist tone she used in presenting her faith and characterizing the religion of a visitor would be a major turnoff to the average open-minded spiritual person. Most Unitarian Universalists who had never heard of Bahaism, for example, would likely have come away from a similar encounter as I had with this Baha'i volunteer by forming the impression that Bahais think their religion is the only divinely inspired modern spiritual tradition and that other new religious movements such as UUism are fundamentally inferior. Certainly if Haifan Baha'is wish to grow their faith and win friends outside their own religious community, they need to show greater respect for other people's spiritual paths — especially those such as UUs who share a generally compatible pluralistic view of religion.

My friend and I met a Baha'i couple visiting the temple from out of state, and we ended up having dinner with them. They were nice people and we all enjoyed the time together. However, I did find some things they said a bit disturbing. For example, when discussing our respective religious commitments, I mentioned that one of the reasons I prefer the Unitarian Universalist church to the Baha'i Faith despite my agreement with many Bahai principles is that the Baha'i organization forbids its members from participating in political activism, whereas the UU church emphasizes individual freedom of conscience and action in all arenas of society. They denied or downplayed the restrictions on involvement in politics by individual Baha'is; and this indicated either that they are misinformed or trying to make their religious organization seem more palatable to outsiders — something I myself remember doing when I was an enrolled Baha'i talking to potential converts.

More disturbing was how the Baha'i couple described their Baha'i community encouraging its children to associate with children of other religions for the purpose of "teaching the faith." I politely replied that I think such relationships of Bahai children should be primarily focused on *learning* about other faiths, since Bahais are supposed to believe in the validity and importance of various religions rather than just their own. What I was thinking but didn't say was:

We had some frank talk about my concern that all religions and religious groups inevitably get corrupted, the Baha'i Faith being no exception, and that Bahais therefore need to be ever watchful to ensure that their faith moves in the right direction and doesn't get bogged down in outdated policies such as censoring scholars and authors with different viewpoints. The Baha'i man replied that the Universal House of Justice ensures that the Baha'i Faith cannot become corrupted because it is divinely inspired, and that "the Covenant-breakers" have tried to corrupt the faith but have been unsuccessful. I replied that the leadership organ of every religion believes it is divinely inspired — the Baha'i Faith is not unique in this regard — but this doesn't prevent major internal problems and the need for periodic reform. **I made a point of emphasizing how wonderful it is to have total freedom in the Unitarian Universalist church, to believe, worship, speak and act according to one's own conscience, and that I wished the Baha'i Faith would become more that way.** There was some tension in the air but we maintained a cordial, enjoyable, and very interesting discussion.

The day ended pleasantly, and I felt that I learned a lot about the current state of affairs and attitudes in the mainstream Haifan Baha'i Faith community. Much of what I learned confirmed things I already suspected, but some of it was new. Overall, I would have to say that after my experience visiting the North American Bahai temple I feel more certain that Bahaism has taken a seriously wrong turn in its development but that there was once a lot of inspiration and passion in this spiritual tradition worth celebrating. A great deal of grassroots effort went into planning and constructing this great edifice in Wilmette, Illinois; but that was in another time, almost a century ago, when Bahaism was on the cutting edge and attracting Americans of high capacity, creativity and free thought — unlike today, when it seems to be on the decline and has made itself unattractive to religious liberals. This conclusion does leave a person with sadness, but I think it may also inspire us to positive action to reclaim the good that has been lost and eventually bring the stagnant stream of Bahaism back into the great ever-flowing river of modern progressive spirituality.

I continued on my journey up to Minneapolis where I attended the Unitarian Universalist Association conference. The opening worship service was passionate and relevant, with folk music, choir music, and an all-embracing, peace-creating message that "*Everything is [Holy Now](#).*" I powerfully felt the Holy Spirit moving in the stadium-sized room with several thousand people on their feet singing "*Earth come rising; Life come rising; God come rising up inside of me!*" I listened to people and met people doing all kinds of amazing, tangible work to build what Bahais or Christians would call "the Kingdom of God on earth" — a world of universal love, justice, peace, freedom, higher consciousness and conscience — without resorting to tribalistic arguments about which religious creed or organization is God's chosen one.

If, as the Persian lady at the Bahai temple exclaimed, the Baha'i Faith is from God and the Unitarian Universalist church is manmade, then God seems rather human and humans quite divine.

Addendum: It has been pointed out to me that there is choir singing in the temple three Sundays per month. That's good! If I go back for another visit, I'll be sure to go on one of those Sundays. However, the weekday worship services are very bland, and I would suggest to the temple staff that they spice it up a bit or risk giving a poor impression to visitors. There's nothing wrong with a little creativity in planning a worship service — even a short one of 15 to 30 minutes. Including some singing, somebody playing a musical instrument, or some other type of variety besides just recitations from Bahai scripture from beginning to end, would give a better impression and probably be more inspiring. And if they insist on limiting it just to scriptural recitation, how about some call and response or other techniques to get the congregation more involved in the readings rather than totally passive?

UHJ lied about the meaning of “proselytizing”

(The Universal House of Justice, Messages 1963 to 1986, p. 513)

This quote, no more than 150 words, is sufficient to refute the supposed infallibility of the UHJ and therefore, dismiss the Faith altogether. I’m not making “molehills into mountains”. You claim that the UHJ is infallible and in fact, would excommunicate and shun any Baha’i who claims otherwise. So tell me, how on earth did the UHJ not lie about the meaning of “proselytizing”? How on earth did the UHJ not deceive millions of Baha’is that they’re not proselytizing because they don’t coerce?

Also see this video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XYtqcL406Dk>

Baha'is in my Backyard – Full Movie

The movie “Baha'is in my Backyard” was produced by the Israeli company Belfilms. Directed by Naama Pyritz & Asaf Shafir.

Jewish view and opinion of the Baha'i Faith

Considering the connections between the Baha'i Faith and Judaism—both being Abrahamic religions and sharing various theological concepts—along with the fact that many Jews embraced the Baha'i Faith, and that the center of the Baha'i Faith is located in Israel, what is the theological and social perspective of Judaism regarding the Baha'i Faith?

Have any rabbis or Jewish scholars commented on the Baha'i Faith, the revelation of Baha'u'llah, or its teachings?

Courtesy : <https://dinonline.org/2023/06/08/bahai-gardens/>

Question:

I would like to know if a Jew may visit the Baha'i Gardens in Haifa, Israel.

Answer:

Hello.

There is a prohibition for us Jews not to benefit from idols. Therefore we may not look at a nice idol or pictures of idols even if it isn't to worship it, but only to enjoy its beauty. This only applies to the actual idol, however the gardens in front of the idol are technically it is permitted to visit, however the poskim say that it is still improper for a Jew to enter such a place. This is because we want to distance ourselves from anything that has to do with avoda zara, and also to avoid having any benefit from things that have to do with it. There are other nice places in Haifa to see without sticking our heads into places that are spiritually unclean and can have a negative effect on a person's neshoma. See sources.

Best wishes

Sources:

שולחן ערוך יורה דעה הלכות עבודת כוכבים סימן קמב סעיף טו

אסור לשמוע כלי שיר של עבודת כוכבים או להסתכל בנוי עבודת כוכבים, כיון שנהנה בראייה. וע' בש"ך שם ס"ק לג' יב"נזי אליהם. פ"י באיליים עצמם שנעבדו אסור להסתכל בהן לראות ניין אבל צורות שנעשו לנוי ולא לעבוד מכאור בתו' והרא"ש דמותו' ואם כן בענייני כשלא עובדים לצמחי הני עצמם, והני לא נעשה כנוי לע"ז, לכאורה אין איסור להסתכל. בספר מעדני שלמה (עמוד ר"נ) דנשאל אודות קבוצות של אנשים שנוסעים בטיול לצפון לבקר הגנים שבחפיפה במקום של הבהאיים שהוא מקום עבודה זרה, והרי כיצד מותר להסתכל בנוי של החצר ונהנה ממקום של עבודה זרה. והשיב הגרש"א זצ"ל שגינה ששתולה לנוי בחצר בית ע"ז, אין לזה דין נוי של ע"ז לענין איסור הנאה מע"ז, ואע"ג ששתולה לכבוד הע"ז, מ"מ אין לאסור משום נוי ע"ז רק כשהני עומד לפני הע"ז ולא בחצר של ע"ז. אולם מן הראוי להתרחק ממקומות כאלה ולא ללכת לשם, ונהגו ישראל קדושים שתמיד עוברים מקומות כאלו במרצת ואינם מתעכבים, והתפלא מאוד על כך שיש קבוצות של שומרי תורה שנוסעים לטייל שם. ודומה לזה כ' בספר היכל הוראה (חלק ב' הוראה ק"ח). וע"ע בשו"ת בנין אריאל (עמוד 73). ובס' קב ונקי חלק א' (סימן רל"ב) שאל הגר"י זילברשטיין שליט"א למרן הגר"ש אלישיב זצ"ל ואמר שאע"פ שמעיקר הדין אין איסור כב"ל, מ"מ מן הראוי לא ללכת לשם, ויש להתרחק מכל הנאה מבתי ע"ז. וע' בס' תורתך שעשועי (ר' י. זילברשטיין שליט"א) עמ' 212 בגאון רבי אהרון קוטלר זצ"ל ראש ישיבת ליקוד שאחד מבחוריו סיפר לו כי תקופה ארוכה יש לו הרהורי כפירה נוראים וכעת רוצה להמיר את דתו לנצרות ר"ל. הראש הישיבה הזדעזע ולא ידע את נפשו מרוב צער וניסה בכל דרך להשפיע על הבחור כדי שימנע מרצונו אלא שכל דברי הרב נפלו על אוזניים ערלות. החליט הרב קוטלר ללכת לאדמו"ר מקאפשטיניץ זצ"ל כדי להתייעץ עמו מה לעשות האדמו"ר השיב לו שכדאי שיבחר כיצד הבחור מכון את שעונו. רבי אהרון לא הבין מה התכוון האדמו"ר אך ידע שאין האדמו"ר מדבר דברים של מה בכך. מיד בשונו ליישיבה שאל את הבחור איך הוא מכון את שעונו והשיב לו הבחור שמצא דרך לכוון את השעון באופן שהיא מדויק ביותר בכל בוקר בשעה שבע בדיוק מצלצל פעמון הכנסייה שממול חדרו ואז הוא מכון את שעונו. הרב קוטלר הזדעזע מדברי התלמיד והבין את דברי האדמו"ר וגילה את סיבת השיגעון של הבחור הלך הראש הישיבה וקנה לבחור שעון יקר מסוג שאין צריך לכוונו והתנה עם הבחור שאם יצאה לכוון את שעונו יכונו על ידי שעון הישיבה לאחר זמן התיישב אותו בחור בדעתו ונשאר בישיבה ללמוד עד שלימים הפך

Baha'is Started teaching in Israel!!

Courtesy:<http://bahaism.blogspot.com>

Israeli Government renews Tax-Exempt Status of Bahai Center

<http://www.jpost.com/NationalNews/Article.aspx?id=262554>

By JEREMY SHARON 03/20/2012 03:19

Tax arrangement was originally agreed upon between the state and the Bahai movement in 1987.

The Justice Ministry announced on Monday that it has renewed a deal with the Bahai World Center in Israel exempting it from indirect taxes for another five-year term. The announcement comes ahead of the holiday of Naw-Ruz, the Bahai New Year that takes place on Wednesday. The tax arrangement was originally agreed upon between the state and the Bahai movement in 1987.

Representatives of the Bahai faith, headed by Albert Lincoln, the secretary-general of the center, welcomed the signing of the agreement, which he said benefits both Israel and the Bahai community.

The Bahai religion was founded in Iran in 1844 as a universalist monotheistic faith and claims more than five million followers worldwide.

Persecuted in Iran for beliefs heretical to Islam, one of the early leaders of the religion by the name of Mizra Husayn Ali, or the Baha'ullah as he became known, was exiled from Iran and with his followers eventually reached Acre in 1868, where he settled for the rest of his life, wrote the holy scriptures of the Bahai faith and was buried.

The Shrine of the Bab and the Bahai Gardens in Haifa are the resting place of the remains of the founder of the Bahai faith, Siyyid Ali Muhammad Shirazi, also known as the Bab, who was executed in Iran in 1850. His remains were brought to Mount Carmel and interred in a shrine there in 1909.

The implementation of the agreement is supervised by an interministerial committee, headed by the director of the Justice Ministry, Dr. Guy Rotkoff, who approved the continuation of the arrangement.

The Bahai have been a recognized religious community in Israel since 1971.

The main activities of the World Bahai Center are the development and maintenance of the community's holy sites in Haifa and the Galilee, as well as increasing tourism and investment in them.

The Bahai Gardens in Haifa, along with other Bahai sites in the country, attract hundreds of thousands of visitors every year – including those of the Bahai faith as well as foreign tourists and the general public – and are among the most visited sites in the country.

The Justice Ministry said that the government views the Bahai holy places as among the most important tourist sites in the whole country.

The government will transfer funds equivalent to any indirect outlays incurred by the World Bahai Center or any of its associated non-profit organizations for activities it carries out in operating and developing the sites.

Rotkoff underlined the importance of the relationship with the Bahai center, especially for the activities that it has done to help develop the Galilee region.

Baha'is in Israel, Blessing or Threat

Relation between Baha'i Faith and Israel

Moshe Sharon, Israeli State and Baha'i Faith

The name Moshe Sharon came up in relation to the psychotic-senile tablet of Husayn 'Ali Nari, Lawh Mubdi' Kullu Badi. Mr Badi Ahriman- Villar brought up this man's name in relation to another translation of this work besides the ones completed by Jalal Azal, myself and the webmaster of Bayanic.com



Before proceeding let it be known that the character of Moshe Sharon proves the solid political connections of the haifan Baha'i Faith organization with the establishment-elite of the Israeli state and his policies. It also confirms all of the allegations made consistently whether by the Pahlavi state or the Islamic republic that the haifan Baha'i Faith organization is a lackey of Zionism. Moshe Sharon is a professor of Islamic history at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. His area of specialization in Islamicwissenschaft (Islamic studies) is the Abbasid revolution and the Abbasid caliphate. Besides his normal academic appointment Sharon also is presently the Chair of Baha'i Studies at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. In 2000 Moshe Sharon convened a conference at the Hebrew University, the results of which were published in a volume edited by him and published by Brill Academic Publishers in Leiden in 2004. Technically Moshe Sharon is not a Baha'i but a secular Jew, albeit an academic specialist in Islamics. Here are pictures of Moshe Sharon:

http://www.shalom-magazine.com/photos/45/01_MOSHE.jpg

Some of Moshe Sharon's political views, however, are quite to the right. Notice that Moshe Sharon is invoked as an authority and spoken with respect on the blog of that rabid-likudnik Zio-Nazi Neo-Con lunatic Daniel Pipes: <http://www.danielpipes.org/blog/671>

Quaintly Moshe Sharon's views of bahaism exhibit a very sharp angle of the sort of fundamentalist, ahistorical thinking articulated by the mainstream haifan cultist sub-culture. Here are two posts of Professor Sharon's on H-Bahai last year. These were two posts in reply to J. Vahid Brown (a somewhat shifty chameleon, but someone who knows the score) on the question of the use of the term nabi (prophet) & rasul (messenger) by Husayn 'Ali Nari. Brown had proffered evidence that Nari had indeed used the terms in relation to himself. But fundamentalist-cultist thinking in the haifan Baha'i Faith mileu has a reaction to such designations and what have you. In any case, here are Sharon's two posts.

From: Moshe Sharon <msh...@mscc.huji.ac.il> List Editor: Sen & Sonja <sen...@CASEMA.NL> Editor's Subject: Nabi / Rasul Author Subject: Re: Nabi / Rasul Date Written: Mon, 5 Jun 2006 16:49:13 +0200 Date Posted: Mon, 5 Jun 2006 16:49:13 +0200

Date sent: Sun, 04 Jun 2006 21:37:00 +0200 _____

Dear Colleague,

I think that you are not wrong. I am almost sure that baha'u'llah never used the terms Rasul or Nabi for himself for the obvious reason:

Both terms are connected with the definition of Muhammad as "Bashar" namely a human being chosen to bring a message of God and destined to die like all humans after delivering it. The terms Rasul and Nabi are not fit therefore to the manifestation of God namely the revealed God Himself, as Baha'u'llah described himself. The usage by Baha'u'llah of the term Jamal-i-Qidam for instance is to be compared to Atiqa Qaddisha in Aramaic used by the Cabbala scholars to define the revealed side of the Divine Being.

All the best M. Sharon

H-Bahai From: Moshe Sharon <msh...@mscc.huji.ac.il> List Editor: Sen & Sonja <sen...@CASEMA.NL> Editor's Subject: Nabi / Ras Author's Subject: Re: Nabi / Rasul Date Written: Tue, 6 Jun 2006 13:15:07 +0200 Date Posted: Tue, 6 Jun 2006 13:15:07 +0200

Date sent: Tue, 06 Jun 2006 10:06:08 +0200 _____

Dear Mr. Terry

Your question was whether Baha'u'llah called himself Nabi or Rasul. I said that he did not, as far as I know, used these two specific titles among

all the titles which he used for himself. The fact that he regarded the Rasuls and Anbia' as the manifestation of God is obvious. This was not the question. I still think, but I am always happy to be corrected, that he did not use these two specific terms for himself because they (particularly rasul) were connected with the fact that in the Qur'an Muhammad use them in connection with bashar namely flesh human being which belongs to this world. I checked this with one of our colleagues in Haifa, one of the best experts on the writings of Baha'u'llah. He agreed with me that Baha'u'llah did not use either Nabi or Rasul for himself. But to be sure they are running for me the full index programme of the writings of Baha'u'llah to see if I am right. Again, everything that was written about the interpretation of Baha'u'llah to these terms, is absolutely correct, but as I said this is not the question. If indeed Baha'u'llah as I think did not use the terms in question to describe himself then it is very interesting to see whether I am right in my interpretation. Thank you for rising the question.

I shall let you know about the outcome of the search in the BWC search engines. As far as the Seal is concerned. I believe that this is quite clear. Every prophet is the seal of his cycle of prophecy. In this way the idea of the Seal of the Prophets is kept as well as the validity of every a new prophecy which opens always a new cycle. This also is old and known material.

All the best

M. Sharon

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Additionally it should be mentioned that on the private list grok and in private email and telephone conversations Juan Ricardo I. Cole had disparaged Moshe Sharon as a "Zionist-Fascist-Likkudnik" to me personally and several other individuals (John Walbridge, Steve Scholl, Tony Lee, the Marshalls, William Garlington, Payam Afsharian and the late Linda Walbridge amongst them). This disparagement had come as a result of my queries to Cole regarding the 2000 conference in Jerusalem. Sharon had invited me to come after I had responded to an email posted 9-10 months previously on h-bahai. Unfortunately, for various reasons and also due to what Cole said at the time, I decided not to go. Yet when the volume of the 2000 conference was published Cole had included a largely ahistorical piece of anti-Bayani Baha'i Faith propaganda in Sharon's volume, and prominently so, although he had not personally attended the conference or given a paper there.

However one cannot begrudge Moshe Sharon personally or professionally for doing what he does vis-a-vis the haifan Baha'i Faith. As a public academic in Israel with a responsibility to his interests he is merely pursuing the policies and interests of his own. The haifan Baha'i Faith organization, on the other hand, has a lot to answer for, not to mention a hypocrite and liar of the calibre of Juan R.I. Cole.

Back to Badi Ahriman Villar and his rantings about the Tablet of O Creator of All Creation qua Moshe Sharon! I find it quite interesting that Professor Sharon would involve himself in this debate and translate a piece of embarrassing historical waffle by Husayn 'Ali Nari which the late Jalal Azal and William Miller saw for what it is: waffle! Given that the Israeli establishment has no qualms about publicly defending the indefensible vis-a-vis the haifan Baha'i Faith, I hereby publicly call for Moshe Sharon and any other colleagues he wishes to bring with him to debate me and my fellow comrade in arms Steve Blomberg regarding this item by Husayn 'Ali Nari and any other items he so wishes to discuss.

Let us call this event a modern Mubahilah sessions with two modern Babis. While we are on the subject, I also wish to ask Moshe Sharon whether he would care to explain to the Israeli taxpayer – and especially those displaced settlers in Gaza removed at gun-point last year by his relative Ariel Sharon – why the Israeli state subsidizes the haifan Baha'i Faith to astronomical figures when it is not even prepared to do that for its own Israeli public.

Kindly come to any venue of your choosing, Mr Sharon. I am serious about wishing to debate you on this and other assorted matters, while also grilling you about your government's support of the Baha'i Faith when it isn't prepared to go out of its way for its own in the manner it has for this cult.

Ball in your court...

Wahid Azal

Baha'i Faith and Israel

Baha'i faith is a very cult-like NRM having its administrative headquarters in Haifa, Israel.

AFAIK the Deputy Mayor of Haifa is not a Baha'i. But they are very influential and they get all the support from the Israeli government because of their huge properties and their contribution to Israeli tourism due to Baha'i pilgrimages and beautiful gardens.

Among general public of Haifa, Baha's administration does not have a good reputation.

In the interviews recently taken by some Israeli researchers, they found that:

Kreiner, Noga Collins; Shmueli, Deborah F.; Gal, Michal Ben. "Understanding conflicts at religious-tourism sites: The Baha'i World Center, Israel". *Tourism Management Perspectives*. 16: 232. ISSN 2211-9736.

And all prominent Baha'i Facebook groups and Baha'i related Wikipedia pages are monitored and managed by full-time experienced editors who are loyal to the Baha'i Administration. There is

in Haifa. It has volunteers (and paid staff) in all major countries of the world.

Don't take these people lightly. For me they are a dangerous NWO cult.

Written by [Prithvi Singh](#) on Quora (Link : https://www.quora.com/What-do-you-know-about-the-Bahai-faith-in-Israel-I-am-understanding-that-the-Deputy-Mayor-of-Haifa-is-Bahai-and-all-the-groups-in-Facebook-Israel-are-controlled-by-the-Baha%C3%AD-faith?top_ans=273391000)

The Baha'i minority in the State of Israel, 1948–1957

This article examines the virtually unexplored topic of the Baha'i religious minority in Israel's early statehood period based mainly on primary source documentation. It will be argued that while the number of Persian Baha'is in Israel after 1948 was minuscule — even smaller than the similarly minuscule Circassian and Armenian populations — the non-Arab and non-Muslim identity of the Baha'is, the lack of any historical antagonism between the Baha'is and the Jews, a shared history of marginalization in the modern Middle East, the Baha'is' principled commitment to non-violence as a basic tenet of their religious faith, their complete neutrality leading up to and including the 1948 War, (and their support for Jewish statehood after it), their lack of proselytizing in the state of Israel, and the fact that nearly all of their high-ranking administrators in post-independence Israel hailed from the United States — whose support Israel sought — led the state to cultivate this minority to a degree few other minorities experienced in post 1948 Israel.

Ref: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00263206.2018.1520100>

Israel's UNESCO-feted Bahai Gardens Closes to Tourists After Municipality of Acre Refuses to Recognize It as Holy Site

Courtesy :<https://www.haaretz.com/>

The Bahai Gardens in Acre, considered to be the holiest site in the faith, announced it will close to visitors after the city demanded nearly \$2 million

Bahá'í information databases are a primary source of intelligence for the Israeli regime

Bahá'í Faith: A Key Information Source in Israel

The main headquarters of the Bahá'í Faith in Haifa, supported by the Israeli government, is actively expanding its global activities and organizational directives to Bahá'ís worldwide. Simultaneously, it is increasing its infrastructure and presence in the occupied territories.

Mafaz – During a ceremony attended by Benjamin Netanyahu, the former head of Mossad, Yossi Cohen, stated, **“We have infiltrated the core of our enemy, Iran... We have consistently gathered their information, exposed their secrets, and undermined their pride and confidence.”**

While Israeli officials express animosity towards Iran and boast about their infiltration, the Bahá'í headquarters in Haifa continues to expand its global influence and infrastructure under Israeli auspices.

Historically, the close relationship between Bahá'í and Israeli leaders has been evident. Today, the organizational activities of the Bahá'í community in Iran are seen as espionage. *The “protection” section of the Bahá'í Faith is responsible for transmitting information to Haifa.*

In Iran, Bahá'ís interact with their families and communities, sharing detailed insights into various aspects of Iranian society during their 19-day Feasts. These details are eventually relayed to the Bahá'í World Centre in Haifa, which is under Israeli control. This information exchange is viewed as espionage, alongside other subversive activities of the organization.

In this tense and hostile environment, the Bahá'í information databases are considered a primary source of intelligence for the Zionist regime, potentially aiding their operations if not curtailed.

Contact Us

Baha'i – Israel

- [Bahá'is are complicit in genocide.](#)
- [Collaboration Between Israeli Officials and the Baha'i Community](#)
- [Reny Rouhani arrested in Qatar](#)
- [What is the historical and ideological basis for Baha'i-Jewish cooperation?](#)
- [How have key Baha'i leaders interpreted scriptures to support Zionist aspirations?](#)
- [How do Bahá'í children's classes utilize music and other activities for Religious Conversion?](#)
- [Beliefs of Orthodox Baha'i Faith](#)
- [Baha'i: Unity and Division](#)
- [Cracks in the Edifice: Baha'i Leadership and Dissension](#)
- [The Bab -the Forerunner of Baha'i Faith](#)

Baha'is are just interested to Convert the People to Baha'i Faith

Baha'is always claim that the aim of their Social and economic development activities are for the betterment of the society, for the empowerment of women, to lift the levels of Jr. youth through moral education. But the reality is exactly opposite. When one reads the writings and the actual practices, we find that every activity of the Baha'is is directed towards one and only one goal and that is "Teaching the Baha'i Faith."

One should not simply say that there is a lot of hypocrisy in the Baha'i Faith; rather, the Baha'i Faith is Hypocrisy personified. This hypocrisy is embedded in the foundations of the Baha'i Faith.

1- "Every activity... is for the purpose of teaching the Faith and confirming people."

(From a letter dated 1 June 1955 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer)

https://bahai-library.com/compilation_guidelines_teaching#1992

2- Gradually and Tactfully convert the people: Baha'i Guardian Shoghi Effendi

(From a letter dated 28 December 1936 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer)

3- Sacred obligation is to deliver the message to their fellowmen at once, and on as large a scale as possible.

(Shoghi Effendi, Lights of Guidance, p. 127)

4- The UHJ in one of its message says:

(The Universal House of Justice, Baha'i World Centre, March 3, 1977)

5- In a facebook post one active Haifan Baha'i states the following

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2209644753/permalink/10156990348534754/>

THE FOUNDING OF UHJ

When Shoghi Effendi died in 1957, he died without explicitly appointing a successor Guardian. He had no children, and during his lifetime all remaining male descendants of Bahá'u'lláh had been [excommunicated](#) as [Covenant-breakers](#). He left no will. Shoghi Effendi's appointed [Hands of the Cause](#) unanimously voted it was impossible to legitimately recognize and assent to a successor. The Bahá'í community was in a situation not dealt with explicitly in the provisions of the Will and Testament of `Abdu'l-Bahá. Furthermore, the [Universal House of Justice](#) had not yet been elected, which represented the only Bahá'í institution authorized to adjudicate on matters not covered by the religion's three central figures. To understand the transition following the death of Shoghi Effendi in 1957, an explanation of the roles of the Guardian, the Hands of the Cause, and the Universal House of Justice is useful.

Infallibility of UHJ demands that there should be no election of UHJ.

The Baha'is believe that their administration is divine and the House of Justice is infallible. The Baha'is should submit themselves to the UHJ and let them decide what is good for them, as the Supreme Body is considered 'Infallible'. This means that only the First Election of UHJ in 1963 was required as it was for the first time that the infallible body was formed. After that all the subsequent elections and bye elections were absolutely unwanted for because the UHJ is itself Infallible. The retiring member should have put this agenda in front of the UHJ that due to his advanced age he wants to retire and let UHJ decide a new member in his place. Obviously this decision would have been free of error and the most eligible member's name would have emerged out.

Similarly, after the end of every five years the UHJ should have a special meeting for appointment of members of UHJ for the next five years, and because the UHJ is free from errors, the most appropriate members will be on the list. It would have been better that The Infallible UHJ itself appoints the members for the infallible body rather than fallible Baha'is appointing an Infallible Body. Or let the NSA of different countries nominate a pool of names for the appointment of Members of UHJ and then the present UHJ selects the names of the most suitable members for the next UHJ body. I mean, somewhere or the other the role of UHJ as an infallible body, should emerge. If this is accepted than all the efforts to hold International convention every five years and any bye elections caused by retirement or death of any member will not be required. Thus the Baha'is will also get rid from the accusation that the Elections of UHJ is not actually 'Election' but 'Selection'. The selection will hence be official. This would be in true spirit of what Mr. Peter Khan has said:

"This is the challenge we face and it's inherent in the Ridván 2009 Message. The solution is childish simple; the solution is so simple, it hardly worth mentioning. The solution is no more and no less than unreserved acceptance of whatever the central authority of the Cause, in this case the Universal House of Justice decrees.

If we would hold to that, if we would contemplate it deeply, if we would absorb the implications and meaning of unreserved acceptance and implementation of whatever the Central Authority in the Cause decrees we are safe. Nothing can trouble us, we are in an impregnable stronghold, and we would become part of this massive movement of humanity to rescue the world from the perilous disorder, the intense suffering of the declining process and to usher in the ordained new world civilization in the Golden Age of the Cause"

The Baha'is should not hesitate from correcting the situation and accepting mistakes of past. Be logical and adhere to the true spirit of the Faith. The position of Baha'is today is greatly weakened by accepting and following blindly without independent investigation and thoughtful conclusions.

Open Questions to Tavakoli and UHJ

The purpose of the conference in Toronto which was held under chairmanship of Mr. Tavakoli and under the Guidance of Universal House of Justice failed to achieve any of its aim because the conference failed to reflect on very important issues prevailing in the Baha'i organization. For example, The Baha'i NSA of the US recently lost a case in which it attempted to sue rival, schismatic Baha'i groups for trademark infringement of the name Baha'i. The daily increase in the numerous harassment that Baha'is have been subjected to. The existence of a Baha'i Internet Agency one of whose roles is to spy and isolate online critics. Trying to find out their IP addresses then their home addresses and then bullying them to submission. Forcing Google to disband their blogs/sites.

After all, thinking is our freedom to investigate the truth and follow it. If one is truly liberal then his approaches will not suffocate the human mind to certain ideals only. The conference failed to encourage the audience to seek out the truth in their investigation. It failed in encouraging audience to apply truth to their investigation. Mr. Tavakoli and his Haifan Baha'i friends should note that staying in glass houses one should not throw stones at others. In future never use Academic Institute like Toronto University as your implementing agenda forum.

Can Mr. Tavakoli and his Haifan organization answer?

The Haifan Baha'is always preaches tolerance and peace then why do they not extend the same tolerance and peace to their own while demanding it from other religious leaders? is this not hypocrisy?

Why excommunicate Academician and University professor like Prof Firouz Anarki the former member of NSA of Thailand just because he believed that to become a good teacher for Children classes one need not do Ruhi book 3.

Why excommunicate Mr. Jamshed Fozdar who so sincerely worked for Haifan Baha'is as a counselor for a number of years. His only fault was his assertions that the content of the books of the Ruhi Institute are unjustified, and that the only valid way to teach the Cause to the peoples of the world is through the use of the scriptures of their respective religions

Why send Counselors to threaten professors of history and Middle East studies of 'making statements contrary to the covenant' in the Spring of 1996 and bully them out of the religion?

Why the crackdown on the talis...@indiana.edu list and its participants? Why bully individuals to retract statements of fact, but when they do under duress, they are Sanctioned?

Why bully the editors of dialogue magazine to close it down and accuse them of negative campaigning and lying for an article entitled *A Modest Proposal* which had gone through the process of pre-publication review by the NSA itself and then accuse these editors of being covenant breakers for following the NSA's own rules and guidelines on the floor of National Convention in 1988?

Why threaten people believing in freedom of conscience and freedom to express one's opinion?

Why expel Michael McKenney for merely believing that women should serve on the UHJ?

Why expel Alison Marshall for believing that the UHJ is not infallible?

Why sanction those Iranian Baha'is for leaving Iran via Mehrabad airport because they were required to fill out a form stating their religion?

Why spy on individuals and violate their fundamental right to privacy a year after they had formally left the religion?

Why write libelous and slanderous letters about people and then denounce them as enemies in their national publications?

Why attempt to have people shunned and split up their families because they believe differently from the official line? And so on and so forth, ad nauseum!

Given the current UHJ's own track record with its own dissidents, it is the last one who can preach about peace and tolerance towards others! They ought to start with themselves first before telling others what to do?

Why Do Bahais Deny the UHJ Being Clergy?

The **Bahais** have a weird habit of denying truth and reality. One of the many Bahai denials is that bahai apologists insist that there is no clergy in Bahaism. They seem to forget that the uhj, the institution within Bahaism that has the power to legislate laws, excommunicate, etc runs exactly like a clergy being it is a clergy.

Bahais like to insist that the clergy is a bunch of paid people who are given duties that are ritualistic and that the uhj is not doing rituals. But the simple fact remains that **Bahais** do regard the uhj as infallible, thus making them a special class of people with bahaism. Furthermore, the UHJ, as I mentioned before, is given the power to legislate and excommunicate people.

Bahais says : *“Only the institution of the House of Justice is infallible, not the people who make it up.”*

Our Reply : O.K. it means that 6 donkeys + 3 donkeys = 1 horse!!!. What a Logic!!-

Bahais says : *“The House of Justice do not constitute a clergy because they are an elected body, not a group of professional priests or ministers.”*

Our Reply :You are trying to redefine what clergy. For your information, the Webster dictionary defines clergy as:

“the official or sacerdotal class of a non-Christian religion”

The UHJ definitely falls in that category. **Being elected or not is not the issue, and furthermore, the Pope for example is elected** thus making another hole in your extremely weak argument. The uhj is a class within **bahais** that are apart from the rest of “regular” **bahais**. Like I said before, they are given the power to legislate, excommunicate, etc. Regular **bahais** just can’t go and legislate and excommunicate people.

Reality proves beyond a doubt that the UHJ is a clergy.

Why do Bahais continue to insist that they have no clergy? I believe it is because to make Bahaism more “palatable” to people who are fed up with the clergy of other religions. By covering up the fact that Bahaism has a clergy, it is just another example of the deceptive nature of this secular humanist cult dressed up in religious clothing.

Orthodox Baha'i Faith v/s UHJ

PROOF THAT THE LIVING GUARDIAN OF THE FAITH IS ESSENTIAL TO THE FUNCTIONING OF THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE AND THAT THIS INSTITUTION IS ONLY INFALLIBLY GUIDED WHEN THE GUARDIAN OF THE FAITH IS PRESIDING AS ITS "SACRED HEAD"

From the Will and Testament of Abdul-Bahá:

"...the guardian of the Cause of God is its sacred head and the distinguished member for life of that body [Universal House of Justice]. Should he not attend in person its deliberations, he must appoint one to represent him. Should any of the members commit a sin, injurious to the common weal, the guardian of the Cause of God hath at his own discretion the right to expel him."

Quoted from the "Dispensation of Baháulláh" by Shoghi Effendi:

"It should be stated at the very outset, in clear and unambiguous language, that these twin institutions of the Administrative Order of Baháulláh [the Guardianship and Universal House of Justice] should be regarded as divine in origin, essential in their functions and complementary in their aim and purpose."

"Acting in conjunction with each other these two inseparable institutions administer its affairs, coordinate its activities, promote its interests, execute its laws and defend its subsidiary institutions."

"Without such an institution [the Guardianship] . . . the necessary guidance to define the sphere of the legislative action of its elected representatives would be totally withdrawn."

"...the Guardian of the Faith is bound to insist upon a reconsideration by them [UHJ] of any enactment he conscientiously believes to conflict with the meaning and to depart from the spirit of Baháulláh's revealed utterances."

Quoted from Haifa Notes of May Maxwell – 1937 (mother of Rúhíyyih Khánum and accompanied by her on pilgrimage when she was then Mary Maxwell):

"There are three elements in the [divinely-conceived, sacred and immortal] Will [of Abdul-Bahá]: the Guardian is the Interpreter; the International House of Justice, the Legislature; and the Hands [appointed by the Guardian] propagate and teach the Cause – through research work and the example of their lives and conduct. The Administrative Order would be paralyzed if ONE of these institutions should cease to function."

"His [the Guardian's] task is to watch very carefully that they [the members of the UHJ] do not get out of their sphere of activity, legislation."

Comment: Under the present heterodox Baháí organization, the Guardianship, one of the "twin pillars" that Shoghi Effendi has emphasized "support this mighty Administrative Structure" – [the Baháí Administrative Order] no longer exists while they have brought into existence as the second pillar, standing by itself, a headless (i.e. sans Guardian) so-called Universal House of Justice – as a substitute for the divinely conceived institution delineated by ŠAbdu'l-Bahá in His Will and Testament. Moreover, the Hands of the Cause who can only be appointed by the Guardian according to the Will and Testament of Abdul-Bahá as well as their body of nine elected from their own number who would work specifically under his direction at the World Center can therefore never exist.

Notwithstanding the fact that two of the three highest institutions of the Baháí Administrative Order – the Guardianship and the Hands of the Cause – have been abolished by them and the third – their Universal House of Justice – has been permanently deprived of its "sacred head", the members of this so-called Universal House of Justice have incredibly deluded themselves into believing, and have succeeded in convincing a majority of their fellow-believers to hold the same fallacious belief, that this spurious, headless body (incidentally, prematurely established according to Shoghi Effendi's Proclamation of 9 January 1951) constitutes, through some perverted, illogical and incomprehensible kind of reasoning, the infallible institution delineated by Abdul-Bahá in His Will and Testament and that this deformed, corrupted man-made body created outside of the provisions of that divinely-conceived, sacred, immortal and immutable Document penned by the "master-hand" of the "perfect Architect" of the Administrative Order will still be able to establish the World Order of Baháulláh.

Joel Bray Marangella Guardian of the Baháí Faith 25 October 1997

Official Internet Sites of the Third Guardian:

<http://www.iinet.net.au/~guardian>

The Status of UHJ

Here's one of the Haifa Baha'i counselors speaking about the UHJ:

"We don't want to be like those people who want to see God with their own eyes, or hear His melody with their own ears, because we have been given the gift of being able to see through the eyes of the House of Justice and listen through the ears of the House of Justice." – Baha'i Counselor Rebeque Murphy

To hear this section of her talk go to:

<http://media1.bahai.us/tab/Highlights/Sunday/...>

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Note that this idolatrous statement has not been reputed by the UHJ, it is the level of enthrallment to themselves that they now expect: unquestioning obedience.

Cheers

Larry Rowe

A Letter of Protest to UHJ Member by Grand Daughter of Abdul Baha

Protest Letter to Mr. Adib Taherzadeh, member of the Universal House of Justice, December 1994. By Bahiyeh Afnan Shahid, in response to his book The Covenant of Baha'u'llah.

POB 155 31001 Haifa Israel

Dear Mr. Taherzadeh:

It is with a heavy heart and a feeling of great sadness that I write this to you.

I recently came across your book "The Covenant of Baha'u'llah" published in 1992. The introduction inside the dust cover reads:

The Covenant of Baha'u'llah is a unique and priceless heritage, unprecedented in past Dispensations. It carries within itself enormous potentialities for the future in the unfoldment of Baha'u'llah's new world order, and ultimately the Golden Age of Mankind.

Hinging, resounding words with which I could not agree more.

Familiar with your four-part work on the "Revelation of Baha'u'llah" I quickly turned to the list of contents. In part Three, The Lesser Covenant, you have a chapter which you call

May I say, it left me totally dumbstruck!

A book with the shining name of Baha'u'llah in its title, written by someone called not only Adib, but Taherzadeh as well; a fifth generation Bahai and a member of the Universal House of Justice; a writer whose work is considered "an outstanding contribution to Bahai literature... a magnificent book" by the Bahai Reviewing Panel of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the UK. A writer of recognised "scholarship and eloquence", making allegations, accusing, sitting as judge and jury and passing sentence on all the relatives of Shoghi Effendi. These are the descendants of the Bab, Baha'u'llah and the Master, and for you to so blithely describe them as Covenant breakers and faithless is to assume powers of judgement that leaves one aghast.

Contrary to the events of Part One and Two of your book, when I was neither alive or around, the events of the above-mentioned chapter were very much a part of my life. My maternal grandparents, who were Shoghi Effendi's parents, his aunts and their husbands, their children and grandchildren, my own parents, aunt and both paternal and maternal uncles and their children – they were all very much a part of my life and my existence. I knew a great deal about them, and most of all, I knew a great deal about my parents, Nayer and Rouhanguise Afnan, about my husband, Hassan Shahid, and myself, Bahiyeh Afnan Shahid.

I do not know where you get your information about the family of Shoghi Effendi, but in your description of their behaviour and motives I could detect no relationship to the facts of the lives of the people you so carelessly write about. Had you taken the trouble to contact some of them, you, like all scholars, would have found that history is a many-faceted thing. Even a half-hearted effort at research into the lives, characters and motives of those mentioned, would have quickly shown that the facile, careless and carefree condemnation that you scatter around is rather rudely denuded of any relation to fact and reality.

Of course, had you done so I suppose that might have exposed you to the danger of becoming a 'covenant breaker' yourself, and maybe that is not a risk worth taking, even in the service of scholarship. But you would have found the facts very different from those which you recount.

Knowing that there was no effort made by you to gather first-hand information from or about the people involved, I can only conclude that you had only two sources to fall back on:

1. Shoghi Effendi's cables, &
2. Hearsay.

Regarding hearsay, I will give you just one brief example here and return to it later. I have with my own ears heard and with my own eyes read about Rouhiyeh Khanum being "the last surviving member of Baha'u'llah's family. (Should you wish to have chapter and verse I shall be happy to provide them). This I consider hearsay supreme, but it seems to be accepted as fact in certain quarters.

I should now like to come to a much more important source, Shoghi Effendi's cables, which you so fully quote. (Incidentally, this gives me my first chance to see them.) They throw a very interesting light on things.

As you fully recount in Parts One and Two of your book, both the periods of Baha'u'llah and the Master were rife with the problems created by the active, aggressive and deliberate opposition created by members of the family who opposed them during those periods.

Very well aware of all these matters, none, and I repeat none, of the members of the family that you deal with in your chapter wanted either to question, undermine, or disturb the Guardianship of Shoghi Effendi, or hinder the execution of the big trust placed in his hands by the will of the Master. For years they helped him in all sorts of ways and in different capacities, until Shoghi Effendi saw fit to distance each and every one of them from the Cause and the community. You only have his version of why he considered them unworthy and systematically condemned them.

But, and here is the point that I wish to underline: every one of them saw fit to withdraw quietly, without creating any trouble or difficulty. Not one of them, beginning with his parents, and down to my generation, raised a voice in dissent or made an unseemly move. In the interest of the Cause and its unity, matters as dear to their hearts as they were to the hearts of Baha'u'llah and the Master, none of them disputed these verdicts. But this silence should not be misrepresented as an admission of guilt.

The family accepted Shoghi Effendi's decision and judgement precisely because he was the Guardian of the Faith and the Master had so designated him. On what basis, and why such judgement and condemnations were made may have been another matter, and maybe, with time, that too will become clear. But, Mr. Taherzadeh, and here I speak to you as a privileged member of a family who has considered its condition a form of shahadat in the service of the Cause, you, in one brief chapter, in a book that bears the illustrious name of Baha'u'llah, and in a section regarding the Guardian of the Faith, have sat in solitary judgement all over again. You have dragged the names of sincere Bahais and silent sufferers into the mire. If we are all as awful as you say we are, do not sully the names of Baha'u'llah, the Master and Shoghi Effendi by saying that all Shoghi Effendi's family were faithless covenant breakers. Stories that do not stand either the test of close examination or first-hand knowledge are not worthy of inclusion in a book regarding the Covenant and Cause of Baha'u'llah, to which they, one and all, were true and sincere, and in the precepts and principles of which they all most truly believed.

The family's dedication to the Faith ran not only in their blood but in their hearts and their minds. Under very difficult circumstances they maintained it. For them it was a source of succour and support. They were out of the community and they were out of the Cause, and to this day, I for one, have a long list of questions to find out why. However, I can vouch for one thing with determined conviction: they were neither covenant breakers nor 'faithless'. The very term 'naghezeen' denotes those people who had gone against, deliberately undermined, and plotted against the will of Baha'u'llah. 'Naghze Ahde Jamale Ghedam' was to refuse to accept the position of the Master as appointed in – Baha'u'llah's will. Can you, in all honesty, consider anything any members of the family of Shoghi Effendi did, or might have been accused of doing, as casting doubt on the position and authority of Shoghi Effendi, as set out in the will of the Master?

Not one of the daughters of the Master, including the mother of Shoghi Effendi, their husbands, their children or their sons-in-law – Afriars, Aghsans or son and grandchildren of Sultan el Shuhada – ever cast any shadow of doubt on the will of the Master or Shoghi Effendi's position and authority. Should you wish to go into this matter in greater detail I shall be very happy to do so, in person or by letter.

But to return to hearsay.

Of the long list that I could draw up for you, I should just like to point out the following:

My parents, Rouhanguise and Nayer Afrian, were married with the full knowledge and approval of the Guardian, Shoghi Effendi. The wedding took place in the Andaroon, in the family home of the Master, in 1928. Khanum, the Great Holy Leaf, blessed the marriage in the presence of my great-grandmother, Mounireh Khanum, the wife of the Master and the other members of the family and friends. Two years later, when I was born, Khanum both blessed and honoured me when she insisted that I carry her honoured and beloved name in place of the one my parents had originally chosen for me. I can categorically claim that my father's intentions in marrying my mother was devoid of the ridiculous idea that he wished to introduce the virus of covenant breaking into the family of Shoghi Effendi.

I can just as categorically state that neither of my parents were instrumental in arranging or bringing about the marriages of my aunt Mehranguise Rabbani with my uncle Hassan Afrian, or of my uncle Dr. Faizy Afrian with their cousin, Soraya Afrian.

As to my marriage to Hassan Shahid – Shoghi Effendi makes it sound like an offence – I would like to say that by the time of that marriage in 1964, my father had been dead for eleven years. Shoghi Effendi had not seen his sister, my mother, since the late 30s, and she certainly was a stranger to you. Had you met her or enquired about her you would have found out for yourself what a lady she truly was. Blessed by great dignity and a strong sense of honour, she was a worthy member of an honourable family whose good name she ever sought to safeguard, and the high esteem in which it had always been held she always tried to maintain. To say of her that she "did not rest until she arranged another marriage between her cousin Hassan Shahid" and myself, her daughter – as if she were hatching some dark, deep plot – could not possibly be further from the truth – and I should know it was my mother, my marriage and my story.

I would greatly appreciate knowing on what basis my father, Nayer Afrian, was considered "the pivot of machinations, connecting link between old and new Covenant Breakers." One thing I do know, however: far from attributing the cancer of the breast that my grandmother Fourough Khanum suffered and died from to Abdul Baha – a ridiculous attribution if there ever was one, and my father and his brothers were far from ridiculous people – I know for a fact, from both of my parents, of the kindness and affection shown by the Master and his daughters to my grandmother during her last illness.

As to my father being "struck down" by "God's avenging wrath" when he died – it seems to me that it is a description that could be applied to anyone's death, for who knows whether it's God's avenging wrath or His loving mercy that gathers us all into the next world?

I could go on and on, Mr. Taherzadeh, taking your 'narrative' point by point and wishing you had been more scholarly about your approach. Basic research is essential to any narrative, and I am sure you did not mean to write a work of fiction – which, incidentally, also requires research.

No, Mr. Taherzadeh, Shoghi Effendi had the will of the Master and the station of Guardianship to stamp his judgements with the stamp of authority. You, a student, scholar and eloquent writer on Bahaism could, if I may say so, have dealt a bit more in the realm of 'Al-Hujjatu wal Burhan' which, according to the Aghdas even applied at the level of revelation, when it states:

O concourse of divines! When My verses were sent down and My clear tokens were revealed. We found you behind the veils. This verily is a strange thing. You glory in My Name, yet ye recognised Me not at the time your Lord, the All-Merciful, appeared amongst you with proof and testimony (my emphasis).

(Aghdas paragraph 165)

On the other hand, maybe such an approach was a necessary component of your efforts to develop the theology of infallibility and obedience within the Bahai Faith. Infallibility and obedience were the trade marks of the Catholic Church. For over a decade now Liberation Theology has been one of the finer achievements of that Church, in the service of the oppressed and downtrodden. Making a stand against injustice and exploitation were its main aims and guiding lights. It is ironic that one of the youngest religions in the world today should be seeking to develop a theology that harks back not to its own sources of divine inspiration, brilliantly presented by the powers of reason and intellect, but to an outmoded, discredited approach based on infallibility and obedience.

I must say, discussions of this sort make me think of Ruhi Afhan, a man I was privileged to know and of whose "increasing rebelliousness" Shoghi Effendi complained. In listening to him or reading his books, you could not have failed to realise that his one and only wish was to be of service to the Cause of Baha'u'llah and to the Master who was his mentor and inspiration. 'Al Hujjatu wal Burhan' (Proof and Intellect) and the full use of reason and intellect were high on his list of priorities. He, like my father and many other members of the family, served Shoghi Effendi for many years, each in whatever capacity they had. I wonder what many of them, now 'struck down by God's avenging wrath', would say, at a gathering of the clan of the 'unfaithful family' of Shoghi Effendi. May be they too will be waiting for a 'liberation theologian' to release them from the bondage of injustice and exploitation that your chapter recounts. Not that it really matters, for does not the Aghdas also say:

Should anyone wax angry with you, respond with gentleness; and should anyone upbraid you, forbear to upbraid him in return, but leave him to himself and put your trust in God the Just and Mighty Avenger.

(Aghdas paragraph 153)

In fact, I have found it a source of comfort to turn to Kitabe Aghdas as an antidote to the pain and sadness that the reading of your book produces.

Though it hurts very badly to know that we were not able to respond to the moving call of

Arise to further My Cause and to exalt My Word amongst men. We are with you at all times and shall strengthen you through the power of truth.

(Aghdas paragraph 38)

it is comforting to find that it is followed by

Whoso hath recognized Me will arise and serve me with such determination that the powers of earth and heaven shall be unable to defeat his purpose.

(Aghdas para 38)

And even more heartening when it says

Arise ye under all conditions (my emphasis) to render service to the Cause, for God will assuredly assist you through the power of His sovereignty which embraces both worlds.

(ibid)

Service to the Cause can and does take many forms, both within the community and outside it. In the final analysis Baha'u'llah grants one and all the supreme assurance of saying

By My life, all that are on earth shall pass away, while good deeds alone shall endure. To the truth of My words God doth Himself bear witness.....Say the very life of all deeds is My good pleasure and all things depend on My acceptance.

(Aghdas para 36)

Each in our own ways, you in yours and I and the various members of my family in ours, have tried to respond to the ringing challenge of

By My life! He who has drunk the choicer wine of fairness from the hands of My bountiful favour will circle around My commandments that shine above horizons of creation. Do no think that We have revealed a mere code of laws. Nay, rather, We have unsealed the choice wine with the fingers of might and power.

(Aghdas para 4&5)

It is a moving, heart-piercing, heady challenge, one that was to be met with faith, conviction and dedication, and acted upon with love and harmony, justice and unity, compassion and decency. To God one turned, His new revelation one embraced, the wine of its Truth one quaffed and in its diaphanous illumination one revelled.

As Baha'u'llah told the kings of the world:

It is not our wish to lay hands on your kingdoms. Our mission is to possess the hearts

(Aghdas para 83)

This was a Cause that was not only divine but which was based on the statutes and ordinances of God

Keep ye to the statutes and commandments of God

(Aghdas para 47)

You were enjoined to

Keep ye the statutes and commandments of God; nay, guard them as ye would your very eyes, and be not of those who suffer grievous loss.

(Aghdas para 147)

And

Let there be naught in your demeanour of which sound and upright minds would disapprove and make not yourselves the playthings of the ignorant. Well is it with him who has adorned himself with the vesture of seemly conduct and a praiseworthy character. He is assuredly reckoned with those who aid their Lord through distinctive and outstanding deeds.

(Aghdas para 159)

Having turned to Him, it was to Him that you were answerable, for it was He

...who knew the inner secrets of the hearts and the meaning hidden in a mocker's wink.

(Aghdas para 157)

If you did wrong – and no human being is beyond wrong-doing – the Aghdas says that

To none is it permitted to seek absolution from another soul; let repentance be between yourselves and God. He, verily is the Pardoner, the Bounteous, the Gracious, the One who absolves the repentant.

(Aghdas para 31)

The framework is so clearly delineated, the guidelines so well set out. It is neither legalistic nor complicated. It dealt primarily in the realm of the heart and it called for a reaction that resonated in the activities of everyday life and living – a holistic response worthy of the essential Divinity, Truth and Beauty of its appeal. And, if perforce you went wrong – and who can claim to be above such waywardness – even then God's mercy was infinite. Turn back to Him and find that God hath laid hold on him who led you astray. Return to God, humble, submissive and lowly, verily He will put away from thee thy sins, for thy Lord, of a certainty is the Forgiving, the Mighty, the All-Merciful. This is the Council of God; would that thou might heed it. This is the Bounty of God; would that thou might receive it. This is the Utterance of God; if only thou would apprehend it. This is the Treasure of God; if only thou could understand!

(Aghdas para 184)

The joy, the hope, the elation that the reading of the Kitabeh Aghdas produces is palpable and real. The certainty of infallibility and willing obedience flow naturally from those inspired words. They are neither forced nor enforced.

Therein lies their power.

23 Ansdell Terrace London W8 5BY England

cc: Mr. Hugh Adamson, Bahai National Centre 27 Rutland Gate London SW7

Date : December 1994

Source : <http://www.abdulahfamily.org/writings/stories-regarding-covenant-breaking/>

Baha'is committing adultery would make the UHJ the richest Organization in the World

“God hath imposed a fine on every adulterer and adulteress, to be paid to the House of Justice nine mithqāls of gold, to be doubled if they should repeat the offence . . . Although the term translated here as adultery refers, in its broadest sense, to unlawful sexual intercourse between either married or unmarried individuals (see note 36 for a definition of the term), ‘Abdu’l-Bahā has specified that the punishment here prescribed is for sexual intercourse between persons who are unmarried . . . In relation to the application of the fine, Bahā’u’llāh clearly specifies that each succeeding fine is double the preceding one; thus the fine imposed increases in geometrical progression.” Bahā’u’llāh, The Kitābi Aqdas, pp. 200–202.

Unmarried people who engage in acts of sexual intercourse—especially teenagers— will likely frequently perform such acts. The number of times copulation occurs in a year can easily reach one hundred times if this shameful act is performed only twice a week. The amount of gold payable by each of these two people equals to: $3.6 \text{ grams} * 9 * 2^{100} = 41071879447394632608493183854$ kilograms, which is fairly equal to 8000 times the weight of the earth.

Just in case you are wondering, the fine will be about 34000 kilos of Gold if copulation is performed only 20 times.

We’ll leave it to up to the readers to judge the practicality of these luminous laws. One wonders how a society governed by this law will ever be able to get closer to economic justice and attaining a means of livelihood for all people.

Source: <http://www.avazedohol.com/eng/index.php/download> p. 337.

UHJ is interested in having more Martyrs from Iran!

There are two types of UHJ in the Baha'i writings.

Women NOT allowed to serve the UHJ for at least 1,000 years!

Download Books on Baha'i sects

Shoghi Effendi contradicts Abdu'l-Baha

During Abdu'l-Baha's visit to London in 1911, he had the following [interaction with a Christian](#)...

During his tour of North America in 1912, coverage in news stories would report this comment.

For example, on February 18, 1912, an [article in "The Pittsburgh Pennsylvania Press"](#) featured an article stating "In some respects the Bahá'í movement is the most remarkable of modern times. It isn't a religion, in the sense that Christianity and Mohammedism and other faiths are religions. Its followers belong to many diverse sects, remaining Christian or Mohammedan or Brahmin as the case may be, and still being thorough going Bahis." During his visit to London in 1911, 'Abdu'l-Bahá had [stated](#) that "You can be a Bahá'í-Christian, a Bahá'í-Freemason, a Bahá'í-Jew, a Bahá'í-Muhammadán."

And on February 28, 1912, the "[SFO Daily News](#)" of San Francisco featured an [article](#) stating "In some respects the Bahá'í movement is the most remarkable of modern times. It isn't a religion in the sense that Christianity and Mohammedism and other faiths are religious. Its followers belong to many diverse sects, remaining Christian or Mohammedan or Brahmin as the case may be, and still being thorough going Bahá'ís" During his visit to London in 1911, 'Abdu'l-Bahá had [stated](#) that "You can be a Bahá'í-Christian, a Bahá'í-Freemason, a Bahá'í-Jew, a Bahá'í-Muhammadán."

Similarly, on September 1, 1912, "The Oregonian" of Portland, Oregon carried [an article](#) about 'Abdu'l-Bahá, introducing him as the "Leader of Religions Movement Which Claims Three Million Followers" and quoting his statement "When in London he was approached by a student of higher criticism who asked 'Abdu'l-Bahá if he should continue in the church. 'Abdu'l-Bahá replied: "Yes, you must not dissociate yourself from it. Know this: the Kingdom of God is not in any society. If you belong to a society already do not forsake your brothers. You can be a Bahá'í-Christian, a Bahá'í-Freemason, a Bahá'í-Jew, Bahá'í-Mohammedan."

A generation later.....

On May 5 1943, [a letter](#) written in behalf of Shoghi Effendi said "The friends should by all means be encouraged to **withdraw from church membership** and be made to realize that, though we as Bahá'ís are ardent believers in Christ, we do not and cannot support, church institutions and doctrines when **Christ has come again and brought new laws for the world today and its present needs; to adhere to forms, mostly man-made, and now out-moded and no longer needed, is meaningless. This does not mean they should no longer associate with the church members; they should cease to be registered members of it.**"

On February 12, 1956, Shoghi Effendi [addressed a letter](#) to an individual believer addressing "Why Bahá'ís Are Requested to Withdraw from Membership in the Church, Synagogue, etc." explaining "that we are the building blocks of Bahá'u'lláh's [New World Order](#) ... the Bahá'ís should be absolutely independent, and stand identified only with their own teachings. That is why they are requested to withdraw from membership in the church, the synagogue, or whatever other previous religious organization they may have been affiliated with, to have nothing whatsoever to do with secret societies, or with political movements, etc. It protects the Cause, it reinforces the Cause, and it asserts before all the world its independent character."

So.....were all those newspapers in 1912 mistaken? Or did Shoghi Effendi actually nullify a clear teaching of his grandfather to turn the Baha'i Faith into a cult instead of a progressive spiritual movement? We report, you decide!

Source : https://www.reddit.com/r/exbahai/comments/n5be3j/shoghi_effendi_contradicts_abdulgaha/

“There is no excommunication from Baha’i” !!!

Letter to the editor

Since I was a member of the Baha’i Faith from 1972 until 1978. I read with interest the article on Baha’is in the Saturday issue of the newspaper. I was not surprised by what I read, as Kathy Giles presented much the same picture I was given of the faith when I decided to join. In all fairness, though, I think that a former member of the faith might be able to add some more objective information to that presented in the article. Let me make it clear that the Baha’i Faith sounded like everything I was searching for, when I first heard of it as a student in Nebraska in 1972. And let me say that I have known many sincere and dear people who have been or are Baha’is. In fact, my oldest sister was introduced into the faith in Utah, after I was, and she is still a practicing Baha’i, now living in Nebraska. I have lived in several cities as part of a Baha’i community, and think I can speak fairly accurately about the faith as it is, not as it is presented to outsiders to be.

A small point is the fact that Baha’is always claim to be such a fast growing religion. When I moved to Springfield five years ago the number of members of the local community was almost exactly the same as it is now. The faces may change, but the numbers stay basically the same. Baha’is tend to move around a lot, to spread the faith, so groups continually get new faces. Baha’is are constantly trying to sign up new members, so many new faces appear. But many familiar faces have been known to withdraw from the faith as well.

Ms. Giles states that “there is no excommunication from Baha’i.” I know for a fact that some dissenters have been excommunicated. And not only are those dissenters not allowed to participate in Baha’i activities, but members are not allowed to have ANY communication with the ousted members. Members can’t speak to an excommunicated person or even read mail from such a person. I was very surprised when I first heard of those rules, as I couldn’t understand the reason for them. Are the Baha’is so shaky in their faith that they are afraid to confront any who disagree?”

It is stated in the article that Baha’is cannot hold elected political office. I don’t believe it was mentioned that Baha’is cannot even be members of a political party. And does Ms. Giles give the reason why? No, because it might cause some good citizens a great deal of concern. Baha’is do not get involved in existing political orders because they are establishing their own system, from local through international, that they firmly believe and intend to have replace all existing governments!

Equality, tolerance and unity are frequently touted by Baha’is as basic tenets. But if the Baha’i Faith preaches the equality of men and women, why is it a fact that no woman can serve on the international Baha’i governing body?

During the time I was a Baha’i, I nearly lost something else that has always been important to me. My relationship with my parents. If the non-Baha’i parents of a Baha’i are not receptive to the Baha’i Faith, the Baha’i is encouraged to sever relations with his family and stay with his new, Baha’i family, who understand him better and love him more. Does this sound familiar?

Lastly, I was most disgusted with the comment that if one sees an especially tolerant person or one who refuses an alcoholic drink, it is likely to be a Baha’i. Many religious groups practice abstinence from alcohol. Your unknown non-drinker is also likely to be a member of AA.

Yes, there are some sincere and loving Baha’is. But virtually every group in existence has some sincere and loving members. Does that make the group light or true or beneficial? Everyone must decide for themselves, but let them make the decision based on facts, not fancy rhetoric.

PAMELA SEIDSPRINGFIELD Source : https://www.reddit.com/r/exbahai/comments/mz12o7/letter_to_the_editor/

Subh-i-Azal Lived Longer than Baha'u'llah

Subh-i-Azal: Died 81

Mizá Muhammad Ali: Died 83

Majd'ud Din: Died 99 Charles Mason Remey: Died 100 Joel Marangella: Died 95

Bahá'u'lláh: Died 74

Abdu'l-Bahá: Died 77 Shoghi Effendi: Died 60 It isn't just about the so-called Guardian dying at a relatively young age. In fact, he.....

- Died suddenly of Asiatic Flu,
- Died in London, not the Baha'i World Center,
- Died in the middle of the Ten Year World Crusade (1953-1963),
- Left no will and testament,
- Had appointed no successor, and
- Had expelled from the Baha'i Community, often for trivial reasons, EVERY ONE OF HIS BROTHERS, SISTERS, AND MALE AND FEMALE COUSINS!

Critics of the Bahá'í Faith: An In-depth Analysis

Courtesy : <https://dalehusband.com>

Dale Husband is a researcher and writer who, over approximately nine years of membership in the Bahá'í community and its institutions, became familiar with Bahá'í teachings. After a period, he identified weaknesses, errors, contradictions, failures, and shortcomings in the Bahá'í Faith. In a letter addressed to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States, he declared: “After years of investigation and seeking the truth, I have finally reached the sorrowful conclusion and decision that I can no longer believe in Bahá'u'lláh or any of the institutions established under his name, such as the Guardianship or the Universal House of Justice. I am completely convinced that the Bahá'í Faith is incapable of fulfilling its goals and teachings, based on establishing peace, unity, and a golden age for humanity, and is destined for failure.”

Husband does not believe in the infallibility and immunity from error of Bahá'í leaders and considers acceptance of such a belief as a move towards dictatorship and tyranny within the Bahá'í community. He severely criticizes the legitimacy of Bahá'í leadership after ‘Abdu'l-Bahá, believing that after ‘Abdu'l-Bahá, the leadership of the Bahá'í Faith should have been passed to his brother, Muhammad Ali Effendi. Husband considers the current Universal House of Justice in Israel to be illegitimate and believes that, despite over 170 years of its existence, the Bahá'í Faith has not brought about any significant achievements.

Since the inception of the Bahá'í Faith, its teachings have consistently been subjected to criticism and various objections. Muslim and Christian scholars, and generally the followers of Abrahamic religions, have written numerous books challenging the legitimacy and teachings of the Bahá'í Faith, which claims to be the evolved form of Islam and other divine religions. In addition to the followers of monotheistic religions and religious thinkers, the Bahá'í Faith has also been criticized by secular writers and thinkers, each addressing the teachings of this emerging Iranian faith from their unique perspectives and raising serious objections.

Initially, Bahá'í institutions tried to limit the exposure of their followers to the criticisms and objections of opponents. They not only did not recommend reading such books and articles but also instructed Bahá'ís to hand over letters and articles from opponents to the local Spiritual Assembly (the nine-member council governing Bahá'í institutions in each city) without reading them.

Today, Bahá'í institutions attempt to discredit their opponents by labeling them as ignorant, mercenary, hostile, anti-Bahá'í, unfamiliar with Bahá'í concepts, or ambitious. This tactic aims to diminish the impact of critics' words on non-fanatic Bahá'ís and undermine their credibility. This approach has been quite successful, creating deep rifts between the general Bahá'í population and well-informed critics of the Faith.

However, over time and with the expansion of the internet and quick access to information, non-fanatic Bahá'ís have been able to connect with various articles and books written on the Bahá'í Faith and seek logical responses to opponents' objections.

Since the early 1990s, a new phenomenon has emerged within the global Bahá'í community: the appearance of critics from within the community itself.

Of course, the turning away of significant and learned individuals from the Bahá'í Faith and their inclination towards Islam or splitting into different sects has a long history. However, with the expansion of the internet and digital space, some Bahá'í intellectuals and scholars in the West have found the opportunity to voice objections to the views and actions of the leadership of the international Bahá'í community, namely the Universal House of Justice in Israel.

These intellectuals, generally among the elites of the Bahá'í community, with academic backgrounds and sufficient knowledge of the Bahá'í Faith and its teachings, have questioned the Bahá'í institutions and their leadership in Haifa, objecting to their dictatorial and god-like actions. They believe that the charismatic spiritual leadership of the Bahá'í Faith has been replaced by a semi-elected hierarchy whose structure and decisions are continually criticized by both internal dissenters and former Bahá'ís. The expansion of the internet has further facilitated the spread of these dissatisfactions.

The leadership in Haifa, considering itself divine and infallible, could not tolerate these criticisms and targeted the Bahá'í intellectuals and dissenters worldwide. Using their own policing organization (Continental Boards of Counselors), they excommunicated many of them from the Bahá'í community on various pretexts or forced them to resign and leave the Faith.

In the view of the Universal House of Justice, Bahá'ís are obliged to hear and propagate only one voice and one interpretation of the Faith, as prescribed by the Bahá'í institutions and leadership. According to this viewpoint, any action, comment, analysis, interpretation, or even question not in line with the policies or beliefs of the Universal House of Justice and national assemblies worldwide is prohibited. Offenders, after receiving a warning or sometimes without any warning, are expelled from the Bahá'í community and shunned. Sometimes, the Bahá'í institutions make life so difficult for critical Bahá'ís that they have no choice but to resign and leave the Faith.

Such harsh and illogical actions have led many intellectuals such as William Garlington, Juan Cole, Frederick Glaysher, Denis MacEoin, George Fleming, Alison Marshall, Stephen Scholl, Sen McGlinn, Francesco Ficicchia, and others—who were once members of the Bahá'í community and actively promoted its teachings—to separate from the Bahá'í Faith and write various critical articles and books analyzing the Faith's practices.

This article aims to briefly review the views and perspectives of some of these Bahá'í intellectual critics, although it is necessary for more accomplished researchers to delve deeper and provide more comprehensive studies for those interested in this field.

The views expressed by these intellectuals and critics of the Bahá'í Faith are not necessarily an endorsement of their political and social positions or even their religious beliefs. The goal is to introduce these thinkers and open a new path to understanding the Bahá'í Faith, a path previously treaded

by some Western thinkers.

Reasons for Leaving the Bahá'í Community

Critical and dissenting individuals have no place in the Bahá'í Faith. Such individuals are easily expelled from the Faith, or the administration arranges matters in a way that the dissenter is forced to resign.

In October 2007, in an article titled "Why I Left the Bahá'í Faith," Dale Husband mentions the reasons for his departure:

"I was a Christian in my teenage and young adult years, but in my early twenties, observing the flaws, contradictions, and deficiencies within Christianity, I left the faith. The Bahá'í Faith explained that although Jesus Christ was a divine prophet (or manifestation), over centuries, his teachings had become corrupted, and thus, most Christians no longer followed him but rather human doctrines and ideas.

When I first joined the Bahá'í community, I thought I would witness a community similar to the early Christian community in the ancient Roman Empire, with the difference that Bahá'ís would not split into rival groups and fight with one another. I believed that if everyone in the world became Bahá'í, peace and happiness would prevail forever. What a vision! What a dream! But human nature will never allow such a thing to happen.

Over time, I observed that the Bahá'í Faith also had errors, contradictions, failures, and deficiencies, even though it is less than 200 years old. Recognizing and becoming aware of these issues led me to leave the Bahá'í community with a heavy heart.

I can list the hypocrisy and deceit inherent in the bigoted beliefs of the Bahá'í Faith as follows:

Reasons for Leaving the Bahá'í Community

1. The Bahá'í Faith claims that religion no longer needs a clergy class, yet it effectively has a class of leaders who hold more power and tyranny than medieval priests."
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8. I can list the hypocrisy and deceit inherent in the bigoted beliefs of the Bahá'í Faith as follows:
9. **Claims of Equality:** The Bahá'í Faith asserts that men and women should be equal, yet it denies women the right to membership and participation in the powerful and influential leadership council of the Bahá'í community (the Universal House of Justice).
10. **Friendship with Other Religions:** The Bahá'í Faith and its adherents claim to be friendly with followers of other religions and welcome them, but simultaneously, they criticize, ostracize, and excommunicate their own members who dare to question or doubt the claims of their current religious leaders (the Universal House of Justice).
11. **Science and Religion:** Bahá'í teachings state that religion should be in harmony with science. However, they insist that everything their religious leaders say is the absolute truth, even if it is not accepted by scientific authorities.
12. Additionally, during my time in the Bahá'í Faith, I encountered scandals and disgraceful incidents that greatly disturbed me, even now that I am no longer a member of the Bahá'í community. Some of these issues include:
13. **A. Violation of Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant by His Son 'Abdu'l-Bahá:** Bahá'u'lláh, in his Book of the Covenant (which is essentially his will and testament, written in his own handwriting), stipulated that after 'Abdu'l-Bahá, his younger brother, Mírzá Muhammad Ali, should succeed him. However, 'Abdu'l-Bahá deprived Muhammad Ali of any position and ignored Bahá'u'lláh's directive, appointing his grandson Shoghi Effendi as his successor instead of Muhammad Ali.
14. **B. Madness and Folly of Shoghi Effendi:** 'Abdu'l-Bahá, in his will, appointed the young Shoghi Effendi as his successor and Guardian of the Cause of God. He stipulated that Shoghi Effendi should, during his lifetime, designate his eldest son, or, if his eldest son was unsuitable, another of his sons (and if he had no son, another male descendant of Bahá'u'lláh) as his successor. Shoghi Effendi not only had no children but also excommunicated every single descendant of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, thus creating a situation where he could not fulfill his grandfather's directive. He died in 1957 and left no will, plunging the Bahá'í community into a crisis of succession.
15. **Cover-up of Leaders' False Prophecies:** When I was still a Bahá'í, I spent a summer at the home of an elderly Bahá'í couple and browsed through their Bahá'í books. One book that caught my attention was the promotional book "Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era" by Dr. John Esslemont. This book referenced the year 1957, the year of Shoghi Effendi's death. This book had been published before 1957 by a Bahá'í publishing institution associated with the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States. The manuscript of this book had been approved by 'Abdu'l-Bahá and also endorsed by Shoghi Effendi."

For more detail : Refer : <https://dalehusband.com/2007/10/19/why-i-quit-the-bahai-faith/>

WHO CREATED THE SECTS IN THE BAHAI FAITH?

My Dear Bahá'í Friends!

Some of the friends enquire as to why the Divine Cause (Bahá'í Faith) has become divided into different sects? What are the factors behind it? Who is responsible for this division?

It is well understood why such questions should come to mind. But it is sad that there is no discussion on such questions nor do we investigate the answers to such questions. While 'Abdu'l-Bahá insisted that:

"The shining spark of truth cometh forth only after the clash of differing opinions". (Abdu'l-Baha, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Baha, p. 87)

Friends claim that:

According to the sayings of Abdul Bahá, the "Guardian" should be from the lineage of Bahá'u'lláh.

This is not correct in any way. Bahá'u'lláh has never placed, or written, any such condition concerning the Guardianship. In fact, He has only alluded to the Guardianship in His Writings, and it remained for 'Abdu'l-Bahá to establish the institution of the Guardianship in His Will and Testament.

I request the friends whenever you quote what "Abdul Baha says", please quote His correct and exact words and do not insert the doubtful ideas of your own mind.

The majority of the friends are unaware of and lack knowledge of the truth but, on the other hand, accept whatever has been stated by the UHJ, the NSA or LSA and rely completely upon erroneous facts. They do not strive to know any thing other than those confused ideas and attribute those baseless, adverse and confused ideas and facts to Bahá'u'lláh.

In the Writings and Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdul Bahá, preference is given to impeccability and perfection and it is emphasized that preference should be given to spiritual relationships over physical relationships. Therefore, 'Abdul Bahá explains the matter as follows:

"The lineage of descendants is of two types one is from physical descendants and the other is spiritual. One is born of clay and water, and the other from the soul and heart." (Ma'idíy-i-Asmani. Vol 5, p. 161)

"O dear one of 'Abdu'l-Baha! Be the son of thy father and be the fruit of that tree. Be a son that hath been born of his soul and heart and not only of water and clay. A real son is such a one as hath branched from the spiritual part of man. I ask God that thou mayest be at all times confirmed and strengthened." (Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Baha, p. 140)

The Friends should note that Assemblies do not have any right to decide or discuss "any matter" outside the powers and responsibilities fixed by Abdul Bahá and Shoghi Effendi. Then, who authorizes them to either change or falsify the intent of statements made in the "Tablets and Will and Testament" and thereby go against the explicit Holy Text?

They cannot decide that the Guardianship shall continue or not continue in the Bahai Faith, because according to the Will and Testament, the Guardianship of the Cause of God will continue till the end of the Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh. Even if all the people of the world should stand against him the truth cannot be changed by decision of the people.

As for the current sects in the Bahá'í Faith, this is due to those Baha'is who, following the passing of Shoghi Effendi, stood against the Expounder and Interpreter of the Words of God— "The Guardian of the Faith"— and, unfortunately, the majority of the Bahá'is blindly followed them. It was far better had they paid attention to the words of 'Abdul Baha. For He said:

"Were it not for the protecting power of the Covenant to guard the impregnable fort of the Cause of God, there would arise among the Baha'is, in one day, a thousand different sects as was the case in former ages. But in this Blessed Dispensation, for the sake of the permanency of the Cause of God and the avoidance of dissension amongst the people of God, the Blessed Beauty (may my soul be a sacrifice unto Him), has through the Supreme Pen written the Covenant and the Testament; He appointed a Center, the Exponent of the Book and the annuler of disputes. Whatever is written or said by Him is conformable to the truth and under the protection of the Blessed Beauty. He is infallible. The express purpose of this last Will and Testament is to set aside disputes from the world." (Abdu'l-Baha, Baha'i World Faith – Abdu'l-Baha Section, p. 357)

Further, 'Abdu'l-Bahá wrote in His Will and Testament:

"The Mighty stronghold shall remain impregnable and safe through obedience to him who is the guardian of the Cause of God. It is incumbent upon the members of the House Justice, upon all the Aghsán, the Afrán, the Hands of the Cause of God to show their obedience, submissiveness and subordination unto the guardian of the Cause of God, to turn unto him and be lowly before him. He that opposeth him hath opposed the True One, will make a breach in the Cause of God, will subvert His word and will become a manifestation of the Centre of Sedition. (Will & Testament of Abdul Bahá page No.12)

My Dear Bahá'í Friend!

Do you now realize why the different sects came into existence among the Bahá'ís? Do you understand to whom Abdul Bahá has referred to as the Disputer and Creator of the Sects?

It should now be clear from the terms of His "Will" that disobedience to the Guardian and rebelling against him have now caused the several sects to come into existence.

The true Bahá'ís are those who are under the Shelter of the Guardian. The deviated sects are those who have turned away from the true Guardian.

It is my fervent hope that soon all the friends will turn unto the living guardian of the Faith and will be submissive unto him.

Written by Dr. A. Parikh, Secretary of the National (Orthodox) Bahai Council of India on 27th July 2007.

Baha'i divisions and sects

“In order to be effective in promoting world unity the Bahá'í Faith must itself be firmly united. Bahá'í unity has been assured by provisions in the writings of [Bahá'u'lláh](#) and [‘Abdu'l-Bahá](#) that establish authoritative guidance on the intent of Bahá'u'lláh's revelation and on the administration of the affairs of the international Bahá'í community. Throughout the critical first century of the Faith's existence these provisions have protected the Bahá'í community from sectarianism, and have enabled it to adapt itself to the requirements of a rapidly evolving civilization. The institutions which embody this authority are the [Guardianship](#) and the [Universal House of Justice](#) .”

My question is how is this true when there are in fact several Baha'i sects: Orthodox Baha'i Faith, Baha'is under the Provision of the Covenant, The Remey Society, Baha'is Loyal to the Fourth Guardian.

When answering please do not give a history lesson (we have wikipedia for that.). My only question is how is the above quote justified.

Thanks

From -Seeker of Truth

Victory for the different sects of Baha'is

HISTORIC VERDICT QUASHES PATENT ON USE OF WORD 'BAHAI'

In a historic verdict that will have long standing effect, the Federal Court of the United States of America has quashed the appeal of the majority Baha'i Faith (popularly known as Heterodox Baha'i Faith – HBF) for patent on use of term Baha'i for itself. Although this is not the only time such a verdict has been passed (such verdicts have come twice earlier), this verdict comes at a time when the Baha'i Faith is gripped under sectarian claims.

Never in the past has the Baha'i Faith witnessed such sectarian challenges. It must be noted that minority sects like the Orthodox Baha'i Faith (OBF), Unitarian Bahais (UB) and Bahais Under the Provision of Covenant (BUPC), Reform Baha'i Faith have faced discrimination at hands of the majority HBF for ages. These sects have been gasping for survival and this verdict gives them a new life and sense of hope.

The minority sects have always challenged authority of the Universal House of Justice – UHJ (the centre seat of the HBF) domination and control. The minority sects claim that the appointed guardians' position has been hijacked by the Universal House of Justice through shrewd manipulation and often intimidation about half a century ago.

Faced with discrimination the minority Baha'i sects have experienced difficulty in visiting the Holy Shrines, located predominantly in Haifa, Israel. The verdict opens a window of hope for the minority Baha'i sects in laying claim over visiting and managing the Holy Shrines. A member of the OBF says that the verdict has lifted their spirits and the OBF along with other minority Baha'i sects is actively thinking of filing a suit in the highest court in the United States as well as Israel to stake claim over managing the Holy Shrines. A spokesman of the BUPC said that the day is not far when all Baha'i sects will enjoy the freedom to visit shrines and practice and propagate their beliefs freely. The verdict has rightly distanced the legislature from matters of belief, thereby putting an end forever to the HBFs dream of having an unchallenged authority over all sects. The HBF is known for publicly claiming its non-involvement in politics but practicing it in all its dealings. The verdict also gives an opportunity for the followers of the HBF to introspect and derive their independent conclusions.

It looks like the Baha'i denominations have succeeded in mounting a significant challenge to the mainstream Haifa-based Baha'i Faith. On the other hand main stream Haifa Based Baha'is are putting more pressure on their UHJ to clarify the concept of Guardianship, rather than asking them to shun the Covenant Breakers. The recent court case victory will further internationalize the issue of Guardianship.

Mr. Joel B. Marangella, Mr. Neal Chase, Mr. Fredrick Glaysher, Mr. Jacques Soghomonian have further consolidated their position amongst the Heterodox Bahais, joining them is Mr. Eric Stetson and great grand daughter of Bahauallah Mrs. Nigar Baha'i Amsalem. It looks like the balance is tilting more towards Guardianists. **If current trends of in-fighting continue and if the concept of Guardianship is not fully explained to the Heterodox Bahais, It is quite possible that The Haifa based Baha'i Faith will suffer from more divisions and mainstream Baha'i Faith will be reduced to minority.**

Who Created the sects in Bahai Faith?

Dr. A. Parikh Secretary of the National (Orthodox) Bahai Council of India

My Dear Bahá'í Friends!

Some of the friends enquire as to why the Divine Cause (Bahá'í Faith) has become divided into different sects? What are the factors behind it? Who is responsible for this division?

It is well understood why such questions should come to mind. But it is sad that there is no discussion on such questions nor do we investigate the answers to such questions. While 'Abdu'l-Bahá insisted that:

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“Were it not for the protecting power of the Covenant to guard the impregnable fort of the Cause of God, there would arise among the Baha'is, in one day, a thousand different sects as was the case in former ages. But in this Blessed Dispensation, for the sake of the permanency of the Cause of God and the avoidance of dissension amongst the people of God, the Blessed Beauty (may my soul be a sacrifice unto Him), has through the Supreme Pen written the Covenant and the Testament; He appointed a Center, the Exponent of the Book and the annuler of disputes. Whatever is written or said by Him is conformable to the truth and under the protection of the Blessed Beauty. He is infallible. The express purpose of this last Will and Testament is to set aside disputes from the world.” (Abdu'l-Baha, Baha'i World Faith – Abdu'l-Baha Section, p. 357)

Further, 'Abdu'l-Bahá wrote in His Will and Testament:

“The Mighty stronghold shall remain impregnable and safe through obedience to him who is the guardian of the Cause of God. It is incumbent upon the members of the House Justice, upon all the Aghsán, the Afán, the Hands of the Cause of God to show their obedience, submissiveness and subordination unto the guardian of the Cause of God, to turn unto him and be lowly before him. He that opposeth him hath opposed the True One, will make a breach in the Cause of God, will subvert His word and will become a manifestation of the Centre of Sedition. (Will & Testament of Abdul Bahá page No.12)

My Dear Bahá'í Friend!

Do you now realize why the different sects came into existence among the Bahá'ís? Do you understand to whom Abdul Bahá has referred to as the Disputer and Creator of the Sects?

It should now be clear from the terms of His "Will" that disobedience to the Guardian and rebelling against him have now caused the several sects to come into existence.

The true Bahá'ís are those who are under the Shelter of the Guardian. The deviated sects are those who have turned away from the true Guardian.

It is my fervent hope that soon all the friends will turn unto the living guardian of the Faith and will be submissive unto him.

Written by Dr. A. Parikh, Secretary of the National (Orthodox) Bahai Council of India on 27th July 2007.

“Other Baha’i Sects” Population and Popularity Increasing day after day !!



In Recent Years it is Observed that the other Baha’i Sects such as “Orthodox Baha’is” and “Baha’is under the provision of Covenant” have increased in numbers. Their Popularity on the Internet have also increased due to the Court Case filed by Heterodox Baha’is (mainstream Baha’is or Haifan Baha’is) against the other Baha’i Groups over the trademark of the word “Baha’i”. Heterodox Baha’is lost the case and this single event have put new energy in the other Baha’i groups to propagate their faith more strongly. Heterodox Baha’is call the other Baha’i groups adherent with derogatory names and label them as “Covenant Breakers”. On the contrary the other Baha’i groups argue that infact the Heterodox Baha’is are the real covenant breakers because their main administrative body located in Haifa, Israel, which comprises of nine members, is devoid of Guardian.

This has resulted in a very heated debate between the Heterodox Baha’is and “other Baha’i Groups” over the issue of Guardianship. Many people from the Heterodox Baha’i faith after coming in contact with the Baha’is of other groups are perplexed and confused over the matter of Guardianship of Baha’i faith. Individuals who did the independent investigation have found the arguments put forth by the “other Baha’i groups” more appealing and logical. Heterodox Baha’is are now worried and have increased their activities, so as to keep their followers intact. They have always kept the newly converted and unaware Baha’is away from the Baha’i reference books.

The Ruhi Books teachings of Heterodox Baha’is have failed badly to deepen and impress the Baha’is. Ruhi Book 8 is introduced by them to counter the attack from the Baha’is of “other groups”. Now more Baha’is are coming out with questions on the matter of Guardianship, which the ABMs and Counselors are unable to answer. Very soon the Baha’i faith is going to split further and there would be a drifting of a large number of people towards the other versions of Baha’i faith which offers them the option of a “living Guardian.

Different Baha'i Sects fighting amongst themselves over the use of 'name'

When religion splits, courts get a rare say

Baha'i groups in lawsuit over use of name and sacred symbol

By Manya A. Brachear

TRIBUNE REPORTER

Every religion has been riven by struggles over authority and authenticity.

Buddhism began when a maverick Hindu prince inspired disciples to embrace asceticism. Judaism has sprouted branches from ultra-orthodox to ultra-liberal, even Jews for Jesus. Christianity went through numerous profound splits, including the Protestant Reformation sparked in the 16th Century by Martin Luther in Germany and the 19th Century Mormon movement led by Joseph Smith in the U.S.

Now the Baha'i Faith, the organization representing the most recent sect to spring from Islam, is struggling to defend its identity in federal court in Chicago, where North American Baha'is have been based ever since believers came to the U.S. about 90 years ago. They contend that a tiny band of believers known as the Orthodox Baha'i Faith can't call themselves Baha'i or use one of its key symbols without violating trademark law or a previous court ruling more than 40 years ago.

In the hands of the federal 7th Circuit Court of Appeals, the case could set a precedent for settling religious schisms, doctrinal disputes and claims to truth.

"The word Baha'i carries with it implications for a certain sets of beliefs—and we have to protect that," said Robert Stockman, a practicing Baha'i and religious studies instructor at DePaul University.

Adherents of the Orthodox Baha'i Faith believe the international community has strayed from the religion's original teachings. That deviation, they say, threatens to interfere with God's plan for the world.

Baha'u'llah, who founded the faith in Iran in the mid-19th Century, is regarded by Baha'is as the most recent messenger of God in a long line including Abraham, Buddha, Krishna, Jesus and Muhammad. Baha'is believe Baha'u'llah revealed God's plan by which humanity one day would unite to become a single race.

On a Web site called <http://www.truebahai.com>, the orthodox group faults the mainstream denomination for corrupting that plan.

The mainstream Baha'is have responded with a lawsuit that tries to bar the orthodox from calling themselves Baha'i and sharing the "The Greatest Name," a sacred and trademarked symbol. Baha'is believe they are not only safeguarding their identity. They are defending the truth with a capital T.

The Orthodox say that is not a matter for the courts to decide.

"We're the true faith. That's what we would say" said Jeffrey Goldberg, a member of the Orthodox Baha'i Faith who left Chicago to be closer to an Orthodox community in New Mexico. "That has to be decided in the hearts and minds of the Baha'i, not by a secular court order."

The Baha'is first took breakaway believers to court in 1966 after a tumultuous time for their community. Nine years earlier, Shoghi Effendi, guardian of the faith and direct descendant of the founding prophet, had died unexpectedly and allegedly without naming a successor.

Leaders decided a Universal House of Justice envisioned by Effendi would oversee the faith. But shortly after the leaders announced their solution, one of them declared that Effendi actually had intended for him to serve as the next guardian.

Charles Mason Remey then in his 90s, said Effendi had addressed him in letters as his son or spiritual descendant.

The National Assembly of France and about 100 others followed Remey. But the rest of the Baha'i community declared Remey a covenant breaker, expelled him from the faith and successfully sued his followers, barring

them from calling themselves Baha'i and using the sacred symbol. Remey's group disbanded, but orthodox believers reorganized and continued to maintain the guardianship.

Thirty years later, Goldberg, an active Baha'i in Barrington, came upon the splinter group while surfing the Internet. He became convinced that he had been duped.

With no explanation, Goldberg quietly resigned from the community because he knew the consequences. When Bahai's are declared covenant breakers, they are shunned or ostracized with the exception of business relations.

But Janice Franco wouldn't let Goldberg go that easily. She insisted on knowing why he left and, when he told her, went on a quest to prove him

wrong. After plunging herself into Baha'i literature, Franco discovered Goldberg might have a point.

Indeed, both Goldberg and Franco were declared covenant breakers and shunned. Goldberg's wife was encouraged to divorce her husband. Franco's home-schooled children lost a number of friends. To this day they are wary of organized religion.

"It was devastating news to find out the larger group had strayed," Franco said. "I want to follow the truth. I don't want to support a mistake. The consequence is I don't have a community."

Then in 2006, the mainstream Baha'is filed a lawsuit, accusing the orthodox believers of violating the court order issued 40 years earlier.

The Orthodox Baha'is insist they aren't the same group. They also say a religious denomination can't trademark truth. The term Baha'i refers to a follower of Baha'u'llah. That applies to him and other Orthodox Baha'is, he said.

"From our point of view, if you believe in Christ you can use the word Christ in your name," Goldberg said. "It's a little bit like asking you to recant your faith. It's unacceptable to us."

But Stockman said it is the religion's responsibility to protect the Baha'i name.

"Baha'is are told again and again to try to exercise discipline on what they say about their faith and don't confuse the public.... We have our own community to build," he said.

There are 5 million Baha'is in the world—150,000 in the U.S., including 2,000 in the Chicago area. Why the mainstream denomination waited four decades to enforce the court ruling is a mystery. Baha'i leaders declined interview requests.

Barring the Orthodox believers from using the name "Baha'i" prevents them from popping up in Google when users type in that term.

Stockman said the Web is a tricky place to have conversations about spiritual truth.

"It's not our desire to convert people. It's our desire to put our material out there for people to know what the truth is and decide themselves."

mbrachear@tribune.com

Seek with the Seeker

Read Manya Brachear's blog, The Seeker, at Chicago.tribune.com/seeker

Want to know how Baha'is exaggerate their numbers in India?

Read this.....

A-Once a Baha'i is registered in their record (By whatever means) he becomes immortal and he never dies. So the Indian Baha'i census has all those Bahais who registered themselves since the time of Abdul Baha and Shoghi effendi.

B-It is a universal phenomenon, every where that Bahais usually signed the card not knowing that it is an independent religion. After his realization he leaves the Faith and he is no more a Bahai. But the Baha'i administration believes that "Once a Baha'i Always a Baha'i". The process is irreversible.

C-Bahais usually multiply their number many folds thinking that every Baha'i must be married and therefore must be having a wife and few children.

D-Those paid workers in the Baha'i Faith, to justify their salaries and their effectiveness have collected a number of non existing addresses

Reality of Bahai faith is assessed after ,

1-removing the name of Bahais once they die. 2-removing the Cards of the Bahais once they leave the Faith. 3-checking all the addresses collected by the National Office, whether those people exist or not.

It is only then that the number 11,000 is the most appropriate figure as given by Official census of Government of India.

At the end I would like to quote your sentence, "For a religion to progress and propagate, sincere service is required to attract the masses and not lip service to attract the masses and then believing that they have abandoned the religion of their ancestors".

Comment by S.Khare Bhopal M.P.

bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com

How many Bahais are in India?

The recent monthly circulation of Baha'is, *The BAHÁ'Í NEWS I N D I A* ISSUE VII JULY 2010 has revealed shocking fact through an article titled "Preparations of Government of India Census 2011".

These are summarized as under:

1. There have been rigorous conversion activities over the past fifty years by the Baha'i Faith.
2. These conversions were accelerated with the construction of the Lotus Temple at Delhi and with the visits of Hands of the Cause Dr. Rahmatulláh Muhájir, and Amatu'l- Bahá Ruhiyyih Khánum.
3. Though the Baha'i records of the data on Baha'i population shows that one time it had crossed two millions yet the Census of India reports of 1971, 1981, 1991 and 2001 show only a fraction of the total number Baha'is throughout the country. This means that the census department of India fumbled four times to give accurate number of Baha'is. Just to cite an example, Baha'i census figures in 1991 was 5575 and in 2001 it was 11,324 against 2.2 millions claimed by the Baha'i administration.
4. Through the article we understand this is largely due to illiteracy and lack of distinct identifying characteristics of rural Indians. Does it not mean that conversions were done deceptively without an individual ever knowing that he has accepted the Baha'i Faith? Does it also not indicate that the Baha'is have been targeting rural Indians (mostly in Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh) for the past so many years?
5. The article suggests that Baha'i Faith members display Baha'i Faith identification stickers in their houses so that the official GOI census official can enter the religious identity accurately. This is a very big accusation against both the individual being interviewed and the GOI census official! Are both these so gullible that one will forget to declare his allegiance to the Baha'i Faith and the other will record it based on stickers/posters on the wall! Is it not some sort of racist discrimination practiced by the Baha'i Faith governing body, many of them being of Iranian origin. Should we tolerate such an assessment of our fellow countrymen!
6. The article suggests that the Baha'i Faith machinery will attempt to contact government officials from highest level down to panchayat level. Is this not some sort of influencing the government officials in performance of their duty? Should not serious action be taken against the Baha'i Faith for this?
7. Lastly, the article silently threatens the readers that giving wrong information to the census department is punishable!. Do we need to learn this from scoundrels who have always used deception to inflate numbers, perform conversion activities and get government concessions? In fact the action should be taken against the Baha'i administration for misguiding the world since last so many years.

AT THE END, CAN BAHAI ADMINISTRATION EXPLAIN WHY THE NUMBER OF LOCAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES MENTIONED IN BAHAI WORLD [VOLUME XVIII (1979-1983)] IN INDIA WAS MORE THAN 10,000 WHILE PRESENT NUMBER OF ASSEMBLIES IS ONLY 600 – WHICH IS JUST 6%. WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS GROSS EXAGGERATION – THE CENSUS DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT OF INDIA OR THE BAHAI ADMINISTRATION THEMSELVES?

Dear readers, I have worked for Baha'is for many years. Never even in their exaggerated record the Baha'i population reached even the figure of 20,000. Everybody at the top is absolutely convinced that there is gross exaggeration in the Baha'i population in India and elsewhere in the world, but nobody wants to accept publicly because of fear of sanctions from the Universal House of Justice. Moreover the Baha'is claims that 40% of Baha'i population resides in India, which is just 11324. Is it not easy now to assess world Baha'i population? Let someone also open the can of worms on authentic world Baha'i population!

Ravi Kumar

Where are the 7 million Baha'is ??

From the late Jackson Ingram-Armstrong:

The Encyclopedia Britannica numbers were provided by Baha'i apologists, and EB has fallen to so low an estate that it simply prints



what is provided.

There are virtually no Baha'is in continental Europe. 700 in Holland, similar in Spain, 2,000 each in Germany and France, fewer in Italy. From a demographic point of view this may as well be "zero."

There are rumored to be about 5,000 in the UK but who knows what that means, and it is not a lot anyway. Likewise the former Soviet Union has very few Baha'is. Almost none in China. So, with Europe, Eurasia and China out of the way, where are they?

There are 60,000 adult Baha'is with good addresses in the US, 12,500 in Canada. So much for North America.

There are 2,000 at most in the Arab world. There were less than 100,000 registered before the Revolution in Iran. Maybe 10,000, mostly Iranian refugees, in Turkey. Maybe 25,000 in Pakistan (mainly former Hindus, mainly rural peasants). So the Middle East is likewise very small.

There are 10,000 in Thailand. There were 100,000 in Vietnam before the revolution, but few are likely to remain. There are very few, then, in all of Southeast Asia. There are only a couple of thousand in Japan, and a similar number in Korea. East Asia is a wash.

All that is really left is Latin America, subsaharan Africa, and India. **2 million are claimed in India but insiders say the true number of real Baha'is there is closer to 100,000. Indians like to 'join' things, but go on being Hindus.** I very much doubt there are millions of Baha'is in Latin America (Mexico appears to have almost none, e.g.). Columbia and Bolivia at one time had a few tens of thousands each, to my recollection, but that is not the same as millions.

I can't speak for subsaharan Africa. The biggest community was Uganda with 100,000, but it has been greatly disrupted in the last 2 decades by war and dictatorship, and one doesn't know how many are left.

Rehmatullah Muhajir – Pioneer of Fraud Practices in Baha’i Faith

This short treatise is an analysis of Dr Rehmatullah Muhajir’s rise in the Baha’i Faith and the means adopted by him to give prominence to the Baha’i Faith. In the end, I have also attempted to present the many present day unfortunate situations having source in the means adopted by him. I presume that the readers are fairly aware of the Baha’i Faith and its founder and contributors. One such personality, given a heroic status, is Dr Rehmatullah Muhajir. Much is stated about his pioneering efforts at Mentawai Island from 1953-1957, from where onwards he got the greater than life status in the Baha’i Faith. Let us closely analyze his efforts in this period:

a. Dr Rehmatullah Muhajir went to the Islands as a physician appointed by the Government of Indonesia. He was on the pay-rolls of the Government. However, Dr Rehmatullah Muhajir tried to use this opportunity to influence few inhabitants and introduce the Baha’i Faith. b. Dr Rehmatullah Muhajir cleverly projected his efforts as service to humanity externally and within the Faith as service for the Cause. The fact was, he wanted to get prominence in the Baha’i Faith and saw himself as a contestant for future engagement in managing the affairs. The Government of Indonesia was paying for all this! c. If service to humanity was his goal, why did he return to the Holy Land immediately on passing away of the Guardian? The answer is very clear – to occupy a position in the Faith. d. If Dr Rehmatullah Muhajir had converted several thousand natives of Mentawai Island, where are they presently after almost three generations? Today Christianity, Islam and native belief – in that order – are the prominent beliefs. There is no trace of Baha’i Faith in the island. e. The Mentawai Island has seen several devastating earthquakes and Tsunamis in past 60 years. While many world nations and communities have been seen supporting rescue and rehabilitation efforts, the humanity loving Baha’i Faith, was never to be seen. What happened to service of humanity, a salient principle of the Faith? Or was Mentawai a failed case for the Faith? From the above it is clear that Dr Rehmatullah Muhajir spent a paid holiday in the beautiful Mentawai Island for four years along with gaining prominence in Faith. Another of Dr Rehmatullah Muhajir’s so called success in spreading the Baha’i Faith is his contribution to the Indian Baha’i Community. Dr Rehmatullah Muhajir was in India, in early 60’s had attained sufficient position to avoid staying in third world India. He used to frequent often and is credited to have been instrumental in growing the community numbers from 850 in 1961 to 1000000 in 1979, the year of his death. He is also credited to have established the Rabbani School and Faizi Institute. Now let us analyze Dr Rehmatullah Muhajir’s Indian sojourns: a. Both the Institutes were established by seeking government grants projecting the humanitarian vision of the Baha’i Faith. Both the institutes became notorious later as Baha’i propagation centres and were/are under continuous surveillance by the Indian intelligence agencies. b. Both the institutes became a ground for collecting funds from wealthy Baha’i communities across India and the world. The only beneficiaries were Dr Rehmatullah Muhajir’s family members. c. Needless to say such Institutes don’t survive in the long run. Both are under verge of closure and would be most likely taken over by the government or other non-Baha’i trusts. d. Dr Rehmatullah Muhajir, after his Mentawai success, became a master at inflating numbers. He taught this art to the Indian Baha’i Community. That is why we find mind boggling numbers of assemblies in this period (stated around 10000 LSA’s in India) and huge surge in community members. Official Government census from 70’s to present day say differently. Present community strength in India is less than 5000 (Exact 4572, census 2011). Where is the huge community that Dr Rehmatullah Muhajir is credited with? e. Present day Baha’i Administration is facing embarrassment in public and facing anxious moments under scrutiny by intelligence agencies to justify the inflated numbers. Loyalty and integrity of the Baha’i Faith members is under question. All this is the legacy of Dr Rehmatullah Muhajir. f. Muhajir family members, who have inherited unscrupulous habits from their uncle are keeping the same tradition alive in India through Payman Muhajir. The Muhajir’s have been a big liability in India for past 50 years. g. It is well known that during 60’s he had strained relations with his ever-supporting wife. He preferred company of younger ladies. There are several old-timers to vouch for this, although official history conveniently overlooks this while creating a saintly image of Dr Rehmatullah Muhajir.

To conclude, Dr Rehmatullah Muhajir was a publicity seeking, shrewd manipulator. True to his Persian blood. His so-called service to the Baha’i Faith is only to promote himself. He has cleverly mis-appropriated Baha’i funds to build assets and settle his family. He has seen the Baha’i Faith as a family business to be passed on from generation to generation. He has successfully, in that regard created the Muhajir brand for reaping benefits in decades to come. Unfortunately, several sincere Baha’is are hardly remembered, while fraudsters as Dr Rehmatullah Muhajir are immortalized.

Regretfully yours, *A concerned Baha’i*

Baha'i Leadership Caught Fraudulently Misstating Facts For Political Purposes

The Baha'i Leadership Has Engaged in Many Years of Orchestrated Fraud To Grossly Over- represent The Number of Their Followers For Purposes of Political Gain:

by Ravian Bilani

There has always been confusion in the Population of the Baha'i Faith followers in every country, since its ORIGIN. Regarding their numbers, "Millions" is the usual figure claimed by them.

As a result Baha'is and Baha'i Administration have gone on defensive. They are quick to blame the Christians for this exaggeration and inconsistency. Where did the Christians get their data? It is only from the National spiritual Assembly of the various countries especially the NSA of USA. It is only the Baha'is and their officials who are to blame for the false-misleading reports on the wildly exaggerated Baha'i census. It is not the fault of the editors of Christian World Encyclopedia and Encyclopedia Britannica who relied on information given to them by the Baha'is.

One may ask, why didn't the NSAs, UHJ-ITC-ABM-CBC ever contact the Christian World Encyclopedia Editors, and request a correction? This is because the Baha'is want to jack-up their numbers- for "public image".

Baha'i Population in Iran as claimed in the time of Abdul Baha In case of the Baha'i population in Iran the Baha'is speak lies which puts to shame any lover of justice. Sometimes they say one third of the Iranian population is Baha'i and sometimes they propagate that half of the Iranian population is Baha'i. To my utter surprise during my visit to India in 2002, a Baha'i convert informed me that the whole of Iran has accepted the Baha'i Faith. I politely told him that the Baha'is have made a fool out of him. There are not more than 20,000 Baha'is.

Even the Zoroastrians, Jews and Christians of Iran are not being spared from this onslaught of lie for which the Baha'is claim that all of them have accepted the Baha'i Faith. Here are the Excerpts from the writing of Edward Brown,

Ibrahim George Kheiralla says: "Abdul Karim, 1896, assured me that the believers in Baha were fifty millions. I wrote to Syria to ask. Sayid Mohammed, secretary of Abbas Effendi, said that the number was fifty-five million souls." Kheiralla afterwards denounces it as a gross deceit. As to Persia, they place the proportion at one-third or one-half. Dreyfus writes, "Probably half the population of Persia is Baha'i." Incidentally the Baha'is claim that there are 3,000,000 (three million) Baha'is in Iran. The majority of Zoroastrians are recognized as Baha'is. On the contrary Professor Browne writes: "I had been informed that Zoroastrians were accepting Baha'ism. However after much discussion with the Zoroastrians of Yazd and Kerman for the space of three and a half months, I came to the conclusion that few, if any, had adopted the Baha'i creed." In India the proportion of Parsee-Baha'is is very small. As to Jews, Remey says: "In Hamadan there is a large Israelites following of Baha." A census made by a European Jew showed exactly 59 parents and with their children. 194 persons out of a population of 6,000 Jews. As to the United States, I give some particulars in the closing chapter. "The inference is plain that no native of Israel had become Baha'i through sixty years of contact with Baha and his seventy followers. Abdul Baha gave the impression that many of the Christians of Persia are converts to Baha. Dr. J. H. Shedd wrote in 1894, "I have heard of no case of a Christian conversion to Baha'ism." Dr. G. W. Holmes wrote, 1903, "I do not know of a single Christian in Persia, who has been converted to Baha'ism. Some Baha'is who made a profession of Christianity turned back to Baha." Rev. J. W. Hawkes declares that in his observation none of the members of the Syrian (Nestorian) or Armenian churches in Persia have become Baha'is. I have known of one Armenian family in Resht and two men in Maraga, one of whom was a notorious, who kept up his opium using as before.

Population in Iran as claimed at the time of UHJ:

From 3,00,000 to 4,61,351 followers. The percentage varies from 0.69 to 2%. This is unimaginable lie. The Encyclopedia Britannica and Encyclopedia of Christians have conveyed that the Baha'is have told them. The reporters are none other than Douglas Martin (former member of House of Justice) and Simeon Kohlman Rabbani (a Baha'i), who gave the information to World Christian Encyclopedia is a Baha'i.

There is one silver lining in the Baha'i census of Iran. It exposes the falsehood. Abdul Baha, leader of the faith (of lies), claimed fifty five millions at his time. UHJ is now claiming only 300,000 !!! Presented below are certain eye-openers !!!

No. Year Population % Reference:

1. 1984 300,000 Ref: Hatcher, William S. & J. Douglas Martin. The Baha'i Faith: The Emerging Global Religion. San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row (1984); pg. 181.
2. 1990 410,000 "Data transcribed by Simeon Kohlman Rabbani" Ref: Barrett, David B. World Christian Encyclopedia (2001)
3. 2001 463,151 (0.69%) Data transcribed by Simeon Kohlman Rabbani. Ref: Barrett, David B. World Christian Encyclopedia (2001) Present Baha'i Population of Iran

The actual number of Baha'is in Iran is not more than 30,000. That should not make anyone who is a Baha'i very depressed. The Baha'is should know that exaggerating Baha'i census was the policy of Abdul Baha, Shoghi Effendi and now House of Justice.

What the Universal House of Justice should know, is that by making false claim of number of Baha'is or by parroting Anna's presentation, no one will ever change his/her Faith. They can organize reflection meetings, deceptive children classes, launch fake Intensive program of Growth have

useless cluster growth meetings – the Baha'i population will not grow. The Baha'i population will not grow by sending young Iranian Baha'i girls outside Iran for propagation of Baha'i Faith.

Baha'ism is now a failed attempt, a misfired plot to portray a man made religion to be counted amongst major religions of the world. Baha'ism is dying in its infancy. It will never see the light of the day.

Website of the Baha'is of India – BUPC

Website : <https://www.bahai-india.com>

One of the most important provisions of the Will and Testament of Abdu'l-Baha is that the Universal House of Justice (UHJ) must have a president who is a descendant of Baha'u'llah. The BUPC is the only Baha'i group which has a Universal House of Justice with a descendant of Baha'u'llah as its president. The purpose of the descendant of King David being the president of Baha'u'llah's Universal House of Justice is so that we can recognize the true UHJ of Baha'u'llah from fakes, frauds, and imitations. **Guardianship in BUPC** Unique to the BUPC: belief the institution of the guardianship is the continuation of the Davidic line, which Bahá'u'lláh passed onto his son, who in turn passed the lineage on to the institution of the guardianship. In His Proclamation Baha'u'llah wrote:

The BUPC Baha'is of the World believe that Mason Remey is not the spiritual son but the **LEGALLY ADOPTED SON OF 'ABDU'L-BAHA** and therefore an Aghsan. This makes Mason Remey an Aghsan (branch of Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l-Baha) and therefore qualifies him as the Guardian that is the president of the IBC/UHJ who has legally inherited the throne of King David. Abdu'l-Baha made Mason Remey his legally adopted son being fully aware that the First Guardian Shoghi Effendi will not have any issue and the chain of Guardianship should continue through Mason Remey. While Shoghi Effendi is the Afrian Guardian. **The Guardianship in BUPC runs as follows: Mason Remey (The First Aghsan Guardian)** The Adopted and only son of 'Abdu'l-Baha. Appointed by Shoghi Effendi in 1951, to be the first Aghsan Guardian of the Baha'i Faith as the president and executive of the first International Bahai Council (IBC). Mason Remey served as a Hand of Cause under Shoghi Effendi. Mason Remey received recognition from 'Abdu'l-Baha as well as Shoghi Effendi for being the firmest proponent of Baha'u'llah's Covenant. As the legal executer of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha, Shoghi Effendi identified Mason Remey as 'Abdu'l-Baha's "Dear Son" (therefore an Aghsan) in writing, welcomed Mason as the first President of the IBC/UHJ in 1951, and protected the transfer of David's throne from 'Abdu'l-Baha to his son Mason. **Joseph Pepe (The Second Aghsan Guardian)** The adopted and only son of Mason Remey. Appointed by Mason Remey to be the Second Aghsan Guardian of the Baha'i Faith. Joseph Pepe Remey was the President of the Second International Bahai Council and today his son succeeds him as the Third Aghsan Guardian of the Bahai Faith. **Neal Chase ben Joseph Aghsan (The Third Aghsan Guardian)** The third and the present Aghsan Guardian of the Baha'i Faith. Towards whom all the Bahais of the world should turn to recognize Baha'u'llah's true Universal House of Justice. Branch; 3rd Guardian of the Baha'i Faith seated upon the throne of David. Great-grandson of Abdu'l-Baha, the adopted and only son of Joseph Pepe Remey. (<http://bupc.org>) **Covenant-Breakers Thwarted in Baha'i Domain Dispute** On February 24, 2005 the National Spiritual Assembly (NSA) of the Bahá'is of the United States filed a complaint with the United Nations World Intellectual Property Organization Arbitration and Mediation Center (WIPO) against Neal Chase for his use of the domain name UHJ.net, which claims to be "The Official website of the Universal House of Justice" – a name for which the NSA has a United States federal trademark registration, issued in 1965. The May 8 ruling released by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) will keep the domain UHJ.NET in the possession of the Baha'is Under the Provisions of the Covenant who are the only people in the world to have the true Universal House of Justice of Baha'u'llah with the Davidic King (Aghsan – Branch) as its president, the great grandson of 'Abdu'l-Baha as its functioning executive and living "guardian" seated upon the throne of King David that is to last for ever (see Psalms 89 for more). Thousands of people have rejoiced at the defeat of the Age Old Enemy of the Davidic Kingship of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l-Baha and of their sons entitled in Persian 'Aghsan' which literally means 'Branch' (see Zech. 3:8 KJV for more) that has been passed down through 'Abdu'l-Baha's son, grandson and now great grandson who is the president and first servant of the Council of the Universal House of Justice in this day today. The full text of the decision is at <http://bupc.org/wipo>. The official Web site of the Universal House of Justice is at <http://www.uhj.net> And the worldwide community of Baha'is at www.bupc.org **Covenant Breakers defeated in Court** Nov. 28: In a landmark judgement, a federal court in Chicago recently overruled a 1966 court decision that stopped the Davidic Kingship–Mason and his successors to the Executive branch of the UHJ– from using the Baha'i name. The Chicago court judges, while criticising the 1966 ruling, said that it was a wrongful means of trying to resolve a question of religious authority. The federal 7th Circuit Court of Appeals has ruled that the 1966 decision does not apply to Neal Chase and the BUPC "even though they admitted to being [the legal] successors-in-interest to Remey" (<https://www.chicagolipitigation.com/2008/05/former-officers-not-bound-by-companys-injunction/>). The attempts of the Haifa- based mainstream Baha'i faith to shut down the public teaching effort and close down all the websites and publications of the Baha'is Under the Provisions of the Covenant, have been thwarted with this ruling. One of the most important outcomes of the ruling was that it has put aside all questions regarding religious organisations having any right to trademark its names or icons. This came as a major boost to the 144,000 strong followers of the Baha'is under the Provision of Covenant world-wide. They believe that the mainstream Baha'i faith has strayed from the religion's original teachings. "The abrogation of the original order has freed us from their "marks" and the 6-66 injunction is overthrown, null, and void. We are free to go forward with our path and plans to further advance the Baha'i faith, headed by the third guardian Neal Chase, the Covenant appointed" said Mr Sameer. **Spread of BUPC Faith** From 1980 to 1996 the Adherents were mostly concentrated in Missoula, Montana, with groups at times in Wyoming, Arkansas, Minnesota, Colorado, and Wisconsin. From 1996 to 2005 the membership of BUPC increased world-wide and after the defeat of the covenant breakers in the domain dispute and court case and the Third Guardian Mr. Neal Chase taking a more proactive stand the BUPC Faith spread like wild fire in countries like United States, United Kingdom, Canada, France, Azerbaijan, India, Bangladesh etc. It looks like the mainstream covenant breakers has nothing to stop the spread of the True Faith except some false censuses to show that they are still being accepted in the International society as a Faith and not as a deviant cult.

Anti Conversion Law and Baha'i Faith in India

Baha'i faith has a long history of conversion in India. Baha'u'llah, the founder of Baha'i Faith encouraged many Baha'is to settled in India so as to convert the Locals into this new Religion. Some of the individuals who settled in India were Háji Sayyid Mírzá and Sayyid Muhammad of Muslim background. The first Baha'i Press was established in the year 1882 Professor Pritam Singh was the first convert from Sikh Community and later he facilitated in publishing first Baha'i magazine in India. With the help of continuous efforts from the missionaries, the Baha'i faith could established many communities in Bombay, Calcutta and other cities of India. The first Baha'i of Hindu background was Narayenrao Rangnath Shethji. Baha'is of Zoroastrian background played an active part in bringing new converts. Still some of the prominent Baha'is in India are from Zoroastrian lineage.

Of late, due to strict anti-conversion law of India, Baha'is are finding difficulties in getting new converts. As a precautionary measure Baha'is have withdrawn the declaration card for new Baha'is from some cities of India.

Baha'is have recently adopted an indirect method of getting new souls into the faith by organizing devotional meetings with neighbors belonging to other religions. Similarly they have started moral classes for Children and Junior Youth Programme.

The purpose of these activities is to change the perception of people towards Baha'i faith and later on enrolled them. It is easier to find Baha'is teaching Ruhi books (conversion manual of Baha'i religion) in many parts of the country such as Nashik, Malegaon, Sangli, Kerala, Lucknow, Bihar sharif etc.



Some prominent Baha'is also used their Educational Institute to propagate their Religion. One such example is Mr. Jagdish Gandhi – Founder of City Montessori School in Lucknow and His wife Mrs. Bharti Gandhi – Founder- City International School.

You can find sayings of their leader Baha'u'llah at the entrance of these schools.

New Era school of Panchgani is also a Missionary school of Baha'i Faith.

Baha'is have divided the areas into various clusters and zones. Local Spiritual Assembly [LSA] is formed at a place as soon as the number of new converts reaches nine and then they are asked to hold Nineteen Days Feast [NDF] and are motivated to carry out activities to bring in more converts. All these are done to avoid monitoring from Government bodies or hard-core Hindu organizations who are working to stop the conversion of Hindus to other religions.

Baha'is have also built a Lotus Temple in New Delhi which is open to all religions. It's served as a silent preacher to people of other religions who visit the place to see the architecture of the building.

Baha'is also exaggerate their numbers in India to gain minority status in the country but till date have been unsuccessful. (<https://bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com/>)

UK Census 2011, exposes the false Claims of Bahá'ís



One hundred years ago, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, the son of the Founder of the Bahá’í Faith, arrived in the United Kingdom for the first of his two visits. He was 66 years old. He wasted no time in taking His Father Bahá’u’lláh’s message of peace and religious renewal to western societies. His visits were crucial in the establishment of the Bahá’í Faith in the UK. In London, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave public lectures at City Temple, St John the Divine in Smith Square, and elsewhere. At City Temple, he said that, “The gift of God to this enlightened age is the knowledge of the oneness of mankind and of the fundamental oneness of religion.” At St John, the translation of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s remarks was read by the Archdeacon of Westminster, Albert Wilberforce.

There are many stories of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s activities in Britain. His acts of charity at homeless shelters and for the poor; His audiences for hundreds of well-wishers and questioners; His constant emphasis on political reconciliation in the pre-war period; His call for racial harmony and an end to prejudice; all of these episodes set for Bahá’ís an enduring example of a life dedicated to the service of humanity.

In response to such services of Abdul Baha, The British Government honored Abdul Baha with a Knighthood, which he accepted as a gesture of honoring formally by a just king.

Abdul Baha wrote a letter of gratitude “O God, the tabernacle of justice has truly been erected on this holy land, and we thank and praise Thee. O God, may Emperor George V, Ruler of Britain, be assisted in his divine achievements, and May his shadow over this realm be everlasting.”

Abdu’l-Bahá’s visits were seen by Bahá’ís as a blessing, as inspiring today as they were a century ago. In celebration of His visits, Bahá’ís in the UK are rededicating themselves to the service of others.

Despite such a glorious background of the Bahá’í Faith in the UK and a massive investment of resources over the years in form of planning of Bahá’í administration for implementation of MASS TEACHINGS and RUHI BOOK curriculum, the Bahá’í and the Bahá’í Faith has failed gain acceptance in the British Society.

The programme of Moral classes for children and spiritualizing the Jr. Youth and thereby attracting the parents of these children and youths has failed miserably. The official census of UK of 2011 states that there are only 5021 Bahais. The figure is not subject to inaccuracies as can be expected in some other countries, as publishing false census is a punishable offence strictly enforced in the country. Why is then, that Bahais of UK keep claiming since 2004 that there are 34,000 Bahais in UK? Is it not deceiving people and going against the laws of the country? Bahais keep on struggling to advertise their success forgotten the very principles truth and justice.

Courtesy : <http://bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com>

Baha'i Census is a big LIE with wildly exaggerated number of adherents and localities

Finally, we have official acknowledgement from the Queen of Baha'i Cyberspace regarding the erroneous wildly exaggerated Baha'i census.

————— From: sman...@jam.r.com Date: 4 Aug 2005 Subject: Re: Baha'i officials admit in writing that the number of Baha'is has decreased worldwide

Henry wrote: "In the past, many seekers were told that the Baha'is numbered 6 millions worldwide. Now, the official Baha'i propaganda machinery is stating matter of fact that there are only 5 millions of those Baha'is worldwide".

Susan responded: "Some times the number has been estimated at five million, sometimes at six. Truth is, no one really knows."

—————
The Baha'i census that claim 6 to 7.2 million adherents is -A LIE- A LIE- an actual exaggeration of the real numbers.

It is estimated that there are no more than ***ONE Million*** real Baha'is worldwide.

Now below one finds wildly exaggerated number of localities- on the lower end we see 18,000 localities and then on the upper end we see 124000 localities. Then there are statements of 100,000 and 110,000 localities.

Finally the number of countries and localities varies with each web site. There is **no concensus** regarding the actual number of countries, the actual number of localities, and the actual number of Baha'i followers.

If one takes the estimated 100000 localities and figures that there are at least 5-9 Baha'is. We find that the census is going to show 500,000 to 900,000 Baha'i adherents worldwide.

That should make anyone who is a Baha'i very depressed. Not 6 million, not 5 million, but a little less than 1 million Baha'is worldwide- with 30% still in Iran and 6-7% in the US.

Henry Villar —————

"The Bahá'í community, comprising members of the Bahá'í Faith from all over the globe, now numbers some five million souls. They represent 2,112 ethnic and tribal groups and live in over 116,000 localities in 188 independent countries and 45 dependent territories or overseas departments." www.Bahai.org —————

"According to the 1992 Encyclopaedia Britannica Book of the Year, the Bahá'í Faith had established "significant communities" in more countries and territories than any other religion except for Christianity. They were organized in 205 areas worldwide vs. 254 for Christianity. According to The Baha'i World, this has since increased to 235 countries and territories, including over 2,100 racial, ethnic and tribal groups. Encyclopedia Britannica Online estimates that they had about 7.4 million members worldwide in mid-2002:

1.8 million in Africa 3.6 million in Asia 0.13 million in Europe 0.91 in Latin America 0.81 in Northern America 0.12 in Oceania. 1 "

The number of devoted, committed members of the Baha'i faith is probably much lower than 101,000, perhaps on the order of 60,000. This is surprisingly close to the harmonic mean of the estimates by the U.S. Baha'i NSA and reformer Fredrick Glaysher.

Link: <http://www.religioustolerance.org/bahai4.htm>

————— The largest Bahá'í community in the world is in India, with 2.2 million Bahá'ís residing there, although only 5,575 claimed to be Bahá'í in the 1991 Census

Link: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baha'i_statistics

Baha'is Exaggeration of their figures Exposed In India Census 2011

Examples of Beliefs, Claims and Orders by the Twentieth Century God

Baha'i religious FATWA on Killing (murder)

'Abdu'l-Baha began by comparing the Baha'i faith to early Christianity in its focus on spirituality rather than law. He is aware, of course, that there are more than two religious laws in the Baha'i scriptures, unlike the New Testament. That is, a Baha'i shari'ah or code of revealed law does exist. He explains, however, that such laws are actually a form of spirituality and ethics: "they are derivatives of certitude, faith, assurance and mystical insight."

Moreover, these laws deal with personal status matters (marriage, inheritance, etc.) as well as with some matters of what we would call criminal law (not all such crimes were actually public in Muslim societies—murder, for instance, is considered a private affair in which the family of the victim has the option of accepting blood money or demanding that the state execute the perpetrator— or even of killing him themselves). In this, **Baha'i law resembles that of the Qur'an.**

More...

<http://www-personal.umich.edu/~jrcole/bahai/2001/t..>

Are Baha'is leaders laundering money?

In the case of the young Iranian Baha'i murdered in Pakistan, and then buried in a hurry by the members of the NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF PAKISTAN WITHOUT PERFORMING AN AUTOPSY AND WITHOUT INFORMING THE PAKI GOVERNMENT, the Universal House of Justice had to investigate the murder following threats of lawsuits. Unfortunately, now the people who had planned to sue in this case HAVE BEEN QUIETED down by the Universal House of Justice.



NOT SURPRISING, Dorothy Nelson -who is member of the USA BAHAI National Assembly AND whose husband WAS KICKED OUT OF THE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHAI'S OF USA for defrauding a poor Baha'i of his donations to the BAHUQUULLAH (Baha'i Fund established to pay a TAX to GOD) was placed on the board of the LAW CENTER- that had attempted to sue.

THE WORLD BAHAI FAITH thus provides DAMAGE CONTROL by silencing the voice of dissent, and through their PROPAGANDA MACHINE.

Dorothy Nelson is A FEDERAL JUDGE nominated to the federal bench by President Carter. She is NOW AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF THE BOARD of the LAW Center that had intended to sue the AUGUST BAHAI ESTABLISHMENT.

Baha'i Counsellor Stephen Hall has lately become an employee of the Sunland Group and is on their payroll? Why has Mr Stephen Hall moved to the Gold Coast and why since he moved to the Gold Coast has a private investigator/detective been contracted to follow and stalk me between the Gold Coast and Brisbane?? Why is the major shareholder of the Sunland Group not sanctioned by the baha'i administration for cohabiting with a woman that is not his wife when baha'i law states that this must be done and why are others sanctioned for much lesser crimes when he is not? Who are all the shareholders of this company and its various subsidiaries? Are members of the baha'i administration in Australia owners of shares? Is Counselor Manijeh Rayhani a shareholder? How about ABM Alen Waters? Why was uhj member Peter Con here on the Gold Coast this last summer? Is Peter Con a shareholder in the Sunland Group, and if so, why? Exactly why are members of the Australian baha'i administration travelling to and fro between here and the Pacific and Micronesian Islands constantly when those Islands have their own baha'i administrations and why is nsa member John Walker now known officially as the CEO of the baha'i faith in Australia when the baha'i faith is ostensibly a religion and not a corporation? Is the Australian baha'i administration diverting funds to offshore accounts in the Pacific Islands and Micronesia? Why and how much and to what end? Why are official representatives of the uhj making surreptitious visits to the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United Arab Emirates?? What exactly do the baha'is have in the UAE whereby they maintain such a continuous financial presence there? Why have there been rumours and accusations for years that wealthy baha'is in the Gulf were possibly working as conduits smuggling arms to the mullahs during Iran-Contra? Why has the name of Manuchehr Ghorbanifar been mentioned in the same breath as several wealthy baha'is in the Gulf throughout all these accusations?? What role does Mr Masih Tayyebi and his Bridge West co. have in all this? Why was Mr Tayyebi deputized by the nsa of the United States and the Universal House of Ignorance in Haifa, Zionistan to be their go between with Mr Reza Pahlavi until last August?

These questions MUST be answered by officials of the baha'i administration.

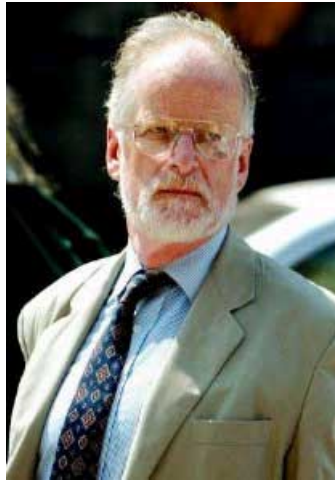
Nima

Feb 28 2004

The David Kelly Story

Courtesy : <http://www.illuminati-news.com/081106d.htm>

Ask any bartender and he will tell you religion and politics are two subjects that should not be discussed while drinking. Mix the two and an altercation is almost sure to develop. With that caveat in mind, readers are cautioned not to imbibe in alcoholic beverages while discussing this



article with friends, acquaintances and certainly not strangers. Dr. David Kelly (1944-2003)

we have detailed the knowledge and/or involvement microbiologist David Kelly had in the biowarfare programs of several nations including the UK, US, Russia, South Africa, Israel and Iraq. He was privy to, and an analyst of, much of the information British intelligence gathered around the world pertaining to chemical and biological warfare.

We also discussed Kelly's disgraceful treatment by the UK's Ministry of Defence (MoD), the resentment that must have fostered making him (in some persons' eyes) a security risk. This was exacerbated by Kelly's discussions with commissioning agent Victoria Roddam about writing a book, or at least contributing to an anthology of the many facets of government and industry involvement in biowarfare programs. It could only have heightened concerns in some quarters that Roddam's publishing company (Oneworld Publications) specializes in works of Islamic scholars and authors.

Another was Olivia Bosch, a senior researcher at the Royal Institute of International Affairs (more commonly known as Chatham House or RIIA) A third was Judith Miller, star reporter for the New York Times and a long-time member of the RIIA's sister organization the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR).

Bosch testified at the Hutton inquiry in to Kelly's death. Police evidently obtained witness statements from both Miller and Pederson, which have not been made available to the inquiry. The MoD told police that witnesses could opt not to have their statements given to the Hutton "probe." At the hearings witnesses were not put under oath.

Pederson has since, as the British say, "gone to ground" or disappeared from public view. However she has hired (or had provided for her) a very high profile spokesperson, a lawyer named Mark Zaid. The attorney often represents former/current government employees, intelligence officers and others. He is currently representing the father of Dodi Fayed (who died with Princess Diana in a controversial car accident) in obtaining alleged FBI and CIA documents said to relate to those deaths.

However, in previous articles we might have slighted one of Kelly's colleagues who may have been closer to him than any of the other three.

Was in Iraq from 1995 to 1998 –

Gabriele Kraatz Wadsack

Gabriele Kraatz Wadsack (pictured right) worked with Kelly in Iraq. She is one of Germany's top biowarfare experts and is a former head of Uncom's biological weapons program. She is also a Lieutenant Colonel in the German Army.

Wadsack and Kelly had traveled around the world giving joint presentations to scientists on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Just weeks before Kelly's death, he was gone for a week in Baltimore, Maryland giving a presentation according to testimony of Mrs. Kelly before the Hutton inquiry.

Upon returning home Kelly sent an e-mail to Gabriele that said in part, "Thanks for a great week. I had a lot on my mind so I know that I was a little subdued. – thanks for being just you!"

Police found a two-page handwritten note in Kelly's briefcase titled "Gabriele's concerns." They say it appears to relate to Iraq and WMD." However it is being withheld on grounds of personal "privacy." Once a regular panelist on TV, Wadsack is refusing interviews and is said to be working at the German Army's biological weapons facility in Munich.

While Kelly was definitely "plugged in" to the biowarfare scene, there is an undercurrent of possible religious influence on his actions and secret society involvement in his death that may yet generate the biggest controversy.

One of the minor controversies raised during the course of the Hutton inquiry was the allegation that Kelly had made disparaging remarks about the “dossier” at a private meeting in the home of a fellow member of the Baha’i, Roger Kingdon. About thirty invited members of the Baha’i were present. Kelly had given a slide presentation on Iraq WMD, but the alleged remarks were made during a question and answer portion of the meeting.

However, potentially the most controversial item to come out of the Hutton inquiry is a little noted piece of “evidence” submitted by the Thames Valley Police (TCP). Listed among the items submitted by the TVP is an exhibit titled “TVP Tactical Support Major Incident Policy Book.” The name given to the effort is Operation Mason.

In 1997, Tony Blair’s election manifesto promised to compile a register of freemasons in public life. In February 1998 Blair’s new government (put out by then Home Secretary Jack Straw) required all new appointments to the judiciary, police, legally qualified staff of the Crown Prosecution Service and probation and prison services to declare membership in Masonic organizations. Existing government employees in those categories were encouraged to voluntarily announce such membership. Few have come forward.

The government’s action was the culmination of anti-Masonic fervor dating back as far as 1869 when Rev. C.G. Finney in his book, “The Character, Claims and Practical Workings of Freemasonry” inveighed against the Masons with the following:

“Can a man who has taken and still adheres to the oath of the Royal Arch degree be trusted in office? He swears to espouse the cause of a companion of this degree when involved in any difficulty, so far as to extricate him from the same, whether he be right or wrong. He swears to conceal his crimes, murder and treason not excepted. He swears to give a companion of this degree timely notice of any approaching danger that may be known to him. Now is a man bound fast by such an oath to be entrusted with office? Ought he to be accepted as a witness, a juror—when a Freemason is a party, in any case—a sheriff, constable, or marshal; ought he to be trusted with the office of judge or justice of the peace? Gentlemen, you know he ought not, and you would despise me should I not be faithful in warning the public against entrusting such men with office.”

Another author, Anthony Beevor, was told by a leading Mason that all thirteen members of the Army Management Board were Masons (in 1991). The board comprises a mix of politicians and top army officers. It exercises authority over all forms of appointments, ranking and promotion in the army.

The chairman of the Commons Home Affairs Committee, Chris Mullin, is said to have been considering legislation to mandate that members of the criminal justice system be required to reveal if they are freemasons.

However, that proposal was dropped (at least temporarily) after 5,000 Masons from London’s 1,585 lodges met to establish a new central organization. They were led by Prince Edward George Nicholas Paul Patrick Windsor, Duke of Kent. He and his wife present the trophies at Wimbledon every year and is less well known in his position as head of the English Freemasonry movement. The Duke and Duchess, after selling their own home in Coppins, now live in two residences supplied by the Queen at Anmer Hall and St. James Palace.

At the meeting, the Masons protested the contemplated mandatory declarations as a violation of the 1998 Human Rights Act. There are an estimated 300,000 Masons in England and Wales.

An Italian government was brought down following a 1981 investigation of the (former) P2 Masonic lodge. Consecrated in 1895, the P2 lodge included elite members from the Italian government, military and intelligence services and bankers serving the Vatican and mafia. The P2 Grand Master, an Italian named Licio Gelli joined the CIA and worked in league with mafia banker Michele Sindona and president Roberto Calvi of the Banco Ambrosiano, which collapsed in the Vatican banking scandal. Gelli himself was expelled from Masonry in 1976. As a result of the scandal, the Italian government banned secret societies.

Calvi, twenty years ago, was found hanging from a bridge over the Thames River in what was thought to be a suicide. However British authorities have reopened the case and are now calling it murder and may prosecute three men and a woman for the crime. The motives conjectured include his mishandling of mafia money and/or potentially blackmailing P2 members.

The timing of the reopening of the Calvi case could be more than a coincidence considering the civil trial due to begin next month against the Bank of England for its role in the supervision and closing of BCCI. The mafia, CIA, British intelligence, the Mossad an assorted terrorist and drug trafficking organizations used BCCI for laundering money.

However, Lord Hutton’s report on his inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the death of microbiologist David Kelly is due out in the same time frame. It undoubtedly will dominate news coverage as BBC and politicians try to blame each other for the supposed “suicide” of Kelly and the debate over the “dossier” justifying the war against Iraq. The capture yesterday of Saddam Hussein and its attendant publicity may be a wild card in the public relations battle.

It is not clear why the TVP named its tactical support Operation Mason. It could be a red herring or just a taunt to the anti-Masonic movement. It possibly could be a straightforward reference to support of a Masonic operation. But what was that operation?

One thing this writer can confidently predict, the Hutton report will label Kelly’s death a suicide giving no credence to any of the evidence that points conclusively to murder.

How many People were Killed by Baha'u'llah ?

It's known that Baha'u'llah's ambitions for leadership created a trail of homicides across the Middle East, several of which are acknowledged even by Baha'i sources.



Baha'u'llah was involved in upwards of 20 homicides, including prominent Babis who didn't accept his claims to be HWGSMM and Azalis who opposed him. This is not to count Baha'u'llah's involvement in organising military insurgencies where many hundreds died.

Is there a complete list of the known victims of these crimes?

Here are a few I've gathered:

Hajji Mirza Ahmad of Kashan — murdered in Baghdad, author of the early Babi history *Kitab-i Nuqtat al-Kaf*, a Babi who was loyal to Subh-i-Azal

Mirza `Ali Muhammad Sarraj — murdered in Baghdad by stabbing, author of a book opposing the claim that Baha'u'llah was HWGSMM

Sayyid Ismail Zawareh — murdered in Baghdad, his throat was cut and the knife placed in his hand to make it look self-inflicted

Aqa Ali Muhammad — murdered in Baghdad, a brother-in-law of the Bab

Aqa Abul Jasim of Kashan — murdered in Baghdad, "because he had reported to Subh-i-Azal that he heard that Baha's pretension was that he was the return of the Imam Hussein"

Mulla Rajab `Ali (Qahir) — murdered in Karbala, brother of Sarraj and a supporter of Subh-i-Azal. He was murdered with a revolver by a Baha'i man called Nasur the Arab.

Aqa Sayyid Ali the Arab — murdered in Tabriz

Mirza Nasrullah — murdered in Edime, the brother-in-law of Subh-i-Azal

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Mulla Rajab Ali Qahir — murdered in Karbala, a brother-in-law of the Bab

Haji Mirza Muhammad Rida — murdered in Akka, maternal uncle of Haji Sayyid Muhammad of Isfahan

Sayyid Muhammad Isfahani — murdered in Akka, a supporter of Subh-i-Azal, seven Baha’is were convicted and jailed

Aqa Jan Kaj-Kulah — murdered in Akka, a supporter of Subh-i-Azal, seven Baha’is were convicted and jailed

Mirza Rida-Quli Tafrishi — murdered in Akka, a supporter of Subh-i-Azal, seven Baha’is were convicted and jailed

Muhammad Khan — murdered in Akka, murdered in the Carawansaray of corn-sellers, buried in a shallow grave and discovered by authorities

Haji Ibrahim — murdered in Akka, murdered in the Carawansaray of corn-sellers, buried in a shallow grave and discovered by authorities

Source : https://www.reddit.com/r/exbahai/comments/11jgnv4/bahaulah_a_serial_murderer/

— murdered in Baghdad by stabbing, author of a book opposing the claim that Baha’u’llah was HWGSMM

Sayyid Ismail Zawareh — murdered in Baghdad, his throat was cut and the knife placed in his hand to make it look self-inflicted

Aqa Ali Muhammad — murdered in Baghdad, a brother-in-law of the Bab

Aqa Abul Jasim of Kashan — murdered in Baghdad, “because he had reported to Subh-i-Azal that he heard that Baha’s pretension was that he was the return of the Imam Hussein”

Mullā Rajab `Alī (Qahir) — murdered in Karbala, brother of Sarraj and a supporter of Subh-i-Azal. He was murdered with a revolver by a Baha’i man called Nasur the Arab.

Aqa Sayyid Ali the Arab — murdered in Tabriz

Mirza Nasrullah — murdered in Edirne, the brother-in-law of Subh-i-Azal

Mulla Rajab Ali Qahir — murdered in Karbala, a brother-in-law of the Bab

Haji Mirza Muhammad Rida — murdered in Akka, maternal uncle of Haji Sayyid Muhammad of Isfahan

Sayyid Muhammad Isfahani — murdered in Akka, a supporter of Subh-i-Azal, seven Baha’is were convicted and jailed

Aqa Jan Kaj-Kulah — murdered in Akka, a supporter of Subh-i-Azal, seven Baha’is were convicted and jailed

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Source : https://www.reddit.com/r/exbahai/comments/11jgnv4/bahaulah_a_serial_murderer/

Baha'ism neither is a religion nor a faith.

Written by a Iranian Muslim

Today Shirin Ebadi the Nobel Peace Prize winner who appears as a political puppet of western wills, declared her full support for Baha'ism as a religion. The question here is Mrs. Ebadi who introduces herself a Muslim by her sharp hypocrisy, Why and by what logic overrides Quran verses and support Bahais overtly and introduces their leaders as Prophet? **We should ask which Muslim thinker or which Muslim Ayatollah by the knowledge confirmed Bahaism as a religion? And why this political move happens from Shirin?**

What this dirty ignorance means which 'makes the ripped chicken in the pot, laughing'! (1)

Mrs. Ebadi knows Farsi and possibly Arabic, And Unfortunately she had read the Baha'i writings and corruptions. She have read the book which says "The Copper if not defected by 'constipation' it becomes Gold after 70 years". (2) And she had read the Bayan the Satanical book of Bahai's which says "The prophet David, Appeared before Prophet Moses appeared"(3) as a historical event, She defensively has read a lot of such garbage in Baha'i books that's because of the lack of the knowledge of their PROPHET!S ... But why this enlightened! person defends the ignorance? The clear ignorance.

What happened in Iran history about Baha'is and what they spread around the world to fake the history by their propaganda has sizable difference.

Looking into such flows, you are inevitable to study its background of its appearance. And if we need to judge why Iran's government is against Baha'ism and has the right of limiting the such deception, we should look the history of Baha'ism in Iran.

Baha'ism is one of many biased heresies that appeared in a messy environment in Iran, About 150 years ago, wave of prospecting the emerge of the last Imam of Shi'a (Imam Mahdi-peace be upon him) developed in cities.

Naturally , such environment will be the platform for lot of misuse, those years also did not become excepted. Many groups appeared claiming a news about the "End Time". Babis and their successors Baha'is was just one of these groups which their leader firstly claimed he knows the "way of attaining the Redeemer". When some people believed him in that biased environment, He notified he is the Redeemer, Himself. Then he claimed he is not just an Imam but a new prophet and even in one of his book recorded "no god exist else than me!". (4)

The faults and ignorance in Bab writings was such sharp that they preferred to introduce themselves as Bahai, Baha was the successor of Bab, His writings has also scandals and faults but little less.

If we study on Baha'i texts we find a lot of garbage and ridicules courses that all against the science and the knowledge. This clearly says it's a collection of human made concepts that is not aware of even language grammar. It's not from Allah, and it's a corruption. Arabic writings of Baha'i leaders that tried to simulate Quran, are strongly laughable and it's the cause of fun in different scenes. It has many terms that even does not exist in Arabic dictionary. The words which came from Persian because the writer does not know Arabic language, but wrote a -named- Arabic book. The Bahai's can hide this such facts from all over the world because these Baha'i scandals are not translatable and just Persian and Arabic speakers can feel the deepness of the scandal.

Baha'i Leader, SIR "Abdol-Baha" The third leader of Baha'ism gets "SIR" title from Britain forces.

Why these garbage concepts succeeded to get influence in minds? In my opinion the main reason was the ignorance, the second force, was the support of Russian occupiers at first steps and in further steps completed with Britannia coverage. Baha'ism harms Islam. Islam is the historical enemy of occupiers to get influence in Iran, This immovable religion which has many defensive instructions against assault. Like the Jihad command.

Baha'ism found in Iran, and used to invade prophet's prophecy all over the world. And in this area is truly known as a corruption between people. Hence Iranian nation as a Muslim nation, see the full rights to defend against corruption.

On the other hand, the West overrides wills of a nation by the excuse of liberalism and sits on the seat of a nation to prevent their liberty, their faith. Where is democracy here? Should a foreign state interfere in internal affairs of another nation and dictate a foreign belief? The west has not to show just one a good amity to Iranian nation. Since the very first days of Iranian independence, they fight against this free nation. People of a nation who elected government of Islamic republic are still under attack of the corrupted wills of foreign ideas. We should ask why an independent nation should sustain such assault against its wills?

With clarity, Islam is still stood. And they need more corruption against this green cedar. It gets younger every day and expands.

(1) A Persian proverb (2) Source : Iqan book (the named holy book of 'Baha') / Page 122 / Iqan:Printed in Egypt under Farajollah Zaki consideration. (3) Source Asrar-Al-Athar (Hosseinali Baha) / Page 460 & The Alwah-e-Mobarakeh (Holy pages) series page 45, Printed in Cairo. Year 1338 Hijiri. Saadat Publication(4) Source : Persian Bayan (The named 'holy book' of Bab / Unit 1 / Section 1) / Bayan has two parts in Language : Arabic and Persian . Also 'Hoseein Ali Nouri' or "Baha'a" in the surname the sucessor of 'Ali Muhammed Bab', repeated similar sentences in his book 'Aqdas' , Section 282;

How good are Baha'is!!-An Interesting Analysis

Those who say Baha'is are very good people. I will tell them they are only good for those who accept their ideologies. If you really want to check just argue them regarding various "Baha'i sects". See how they respond. The Baha'is are good due to HEKMAT that is to attract people towards themselves. Not for any other reason.

See this website that describes various divisions of this feel good religion

<http://www.sectsofbahais.com>

The Baha'i community today is losing all its charms that once it had and history is witness that so many innocent Jews, Zoroastrians and some muslims accepted these opportunist mullas (Bab, Baha'u'llah and company) due to their reformist teachings. But the Baha'i administration that has all its foundations on Bogus, fabricated and distortions is bringing this new religion down. More and more people are leaving this "Religion" or enrolling themselves in other Baha'i groups. Such as Unitarian Baha'is that is free from any kind of authoritarian administration.

In Iran, India, Pakistan, Africa, Russia the baha'is are losing their interest in this religion due to the following reasons :

- 1) Almost each and every LSA is dominated by some very influential Persian Baha'is. Who have direct contact with Counselors, ITC and UHJ members. The locals are mostly deprived of getting elected on this body.
- 2) The elections are fabricated and bogus and campaigning is done in spite of prohibition by Baha'u'llah. Many people have come to know that it is Selection and not election. You can just ask Baha'is to show you the figure of those Voting in these selections. If the numbers of believers enrolled in SRP is 150 the voters are 5 to 7. Doesn't this show that the Baha'is does not have interest? I request the Baha'is here to please show us the figures of Voting Baha'is. How many Baha'is actually vote in the National Conventions? Show us the figure? Let us see the actual number of Baha'is.
- 3) Due to less interest the LSAs are decreasing day by day. Baha'is please show us a Chart of LSAs of countries having Big Bahai Population such as India.
- 4) Many Baha'is are involved in crimes, sexual scandals, financial scandals and document forgery. You can see on my blog with proper evidences.
- 5) There is too much concentration on those rubbish Ruhi Books. The Haifa Baha'is are thinking that due to Ruhi Institute many people are enrolling for membership. But the fact is contrary to it.
- 6) Due to involvement in politics. Officially one of the belief of Baha'is is non-involvement in politics. But their actions are exactly opposite. The interpretation of this tenant is done by UHJ as per its own wish. The Baha'is have full fledged relations with politicians, Human Rights organizations and big colonialist countries. And they serve the interest of these powers.
- 7) The Baha'is proselytize all the people except the Jews. Baha'u'llah did not allow the Baha'is to teach in Israel for unknown reasons.
- 8) Baha'is take full advantage of women when it comes to serving at Temples and other committees. But the women are not allowed to become the members of UHJ, the supreme, all male, infallible body. The reason they say is Baha'u'llah prohibited this for unknown reasons.
- 9) The Baha'is for propagating their religion go against the laws of lands. They are trying to convert the children, youth and elders of different religions with deception. In India some Baha'is were arrested when they were teaching their religions deceptively in a village in the name of moral education. In Shiraz also this happened. In Uzbekistan also this type of incident has happened.
- 10) The practice of taking the Administrative Rights (Shunning) is a very dirty practice.

Financial Scandal Rocks Italian Baha'i Community



Ceccherini allegedly stole the money over the lengthy period of time that he served at the highest levels of the Baha'i community in Italy. It appears that he embezzled funds from 1992 until 2006 by fraudulently producing invoices, letters and documents and then pocketing the funds he received for them. Throughout the more than 14 years that Ceccherini served in the institutions, he alternated between high level positions: sometimes he served as the General Secretary of the NSA of Italy, while other times he served as the Head of the Office of the Secretariat – which included several other individuals employed by the NSA. And at times Ceccherini served as both General Secretary and as Head of the Office of the Secretariat.

Through the uninterrupted access granted to him by these positions, Ceccherini was able to allegedly perpetrate this scheme for almost 15 years. It is still a mystery how the Treasurer could not detect such a large and prolonged fraud. Nor is it known what, if any, control measures were circumvented by Italian NSA euros3.pngCeccherini. As it stands now, neither the Treasurer, any of the other NSA members nor any employees of the NSA have been charged.

The scheme began to unravel when the Italian equivalent of the IRS contacted the NSA of Italy and filed a charge of tax evasion against it. Through the ensuing audit and investigations it came to light that all these years Ceccherini had been pocketing the funds that should have been going to the INPS and the INAIL (state pension and worker's compensation/insurance plans).

My suspicion is that since most continental European Baha'i communities (France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, etc.) do not have the privilege of incorporation enjoyed elsewhere, the actual banking was in the name of an individual. And my guess is that individual was Ceccherini; because of his tenure within the Baha'i community or simply because he was trusted. After all, when you are unincorporated, you must trust an individual to administer the finances in their name. There is no other option. If my suspicions are correct it explains why the Treasurer or other person were not caught up in the fraud and how one person alone could perpetrate it.

Consequences of this tragedy are many. For one, the NSA of Italy has been thrown into total chaos. It has had to deal with an extensive internal investigation and financial audit. There is a serious financial blow to the community as funds which should have been paid to the government for more than a decade now need to be paid in lump sum. Thankfully the government has agreed that the NSA as an institution was not perpetrating the fraud and agreed to dismiss 90,000 Euros in interest and fines they had levied. Which means that the NSA has to pay back 275,000 Euros. The House of Justice has loaned the Italian NSA 200,000 Euros to buffer the blow to their annual budget. This loan will have to be repaid to the House in installments over time but the NSA will still have to make a lump sum payment of 75,000 Euros. A significant chunk of change for a community the size of Italy.

Other consequences are more intangible. The spouse of Ceccherini, also a prominent Baha'i was removed from her position as an Auxiliary Board Member (Propagation). The news has left the Italian community shell-shocked since Ceccherini was seen as a pillar of the community. On top of this, several projects such as the office of public information have had to be closed or curtailed sharply due to lack of funds.

No matter how extensively one creates control measures, nor how draconian in nature, they can be circumvented by another person. Ultimately, nothing short of personal transformation can prevent such criminal acts. As Baha'u'llah says in the Hidden Words:

“Busy not thyself with this world, for with fire We test the gold and with gold We test Our servants.”

But this does not mean that there aren't lessons to be learned from such a sad state of affairs. Nor that common sense should not be used. What we have in the institutions of the Baha'i Faith basically relies on the good character of those within it. If they falter, then there are no measures to protect the community. This has to change.

We have no transparency, no control measures, no accountability and no term limits. Combine these and you have a potentially explosive situation. Add the spark of human shortcoming and you have a bomb that can devastate whole communities and lay waste to decades of painstaking growth and development.

TRANSPARENCY The Baha'i community has gradients of financial transparency. At the local level, things are quite clear with regular reports by the local treasurer and detailed reports of budgets and expenses. At the national level, things get decidedly more murky. Less detail is divulged: only income and expenses are shared (not assets and liabilities), while the delegates to the national convention are the only ones who get to see and look at the full accounts – but they can't share them with their communities and they have a very tight schedule with limited time to look over them. At the international level, the picture gets pitch dark with absolutely no information divulged except for the estimates of large scale projects (recent examples are for the Arc and the Chile temple). Beyond that, trying to pry financial information at this level is like trying to shuck an oyster with jello.

Financial reporting is most detailed and most transparent at the local level, where ironically the least amount of money is involved. The Italian

incident involving 360,000 Euros may seem like a lot of money but it is a rounding error in international budgets. This culture of opacity and secrecy is fertile ground for the nastier attributes of human nature and must be blotted out from the Baha'i community.

CONTROL MEASURES If due to an inability to incorporate, the affairs of a whole community have to be placed in the hands of a person, a simple control measure is to open a shared or joint account. This way two people must be aware of and make authorization for any transactions. Second, I for one am still not convinced how the Italian national treasurer can not be at least found to be culpable of gross negligence in this case. Pleading ignorance is no defense for them. If anything they should be fully investigated and asked to resign, if for nothing more than their incompetence in recognizing and preventing such a long lived scheme. Similarly simple and easy control measures are left unimplemented in Baha'i institutions. Blame incompetence, ignorance or a childish innocence. Whatever the reason, it is plain stupid to not have them.

ACCOUNTABILITY My fellow Baha'is usually bristle at that word since we believe that the institutions are not to be held accountable to their community. But this only extends to decisions. I'm speaking of management. An NSA should be held accountable to its community for mismanagement, as this case clearly illustrates. If you are incompetent, you have to answer to the community. Period. The principle of non-accountability is not a free pass for negligence and idiocy.

TERM LIMITS This is a much broader concept than I can do justice to here but put plainly it means that individuals have a limit to the number of years they serve in Baha'i institutions. In almost all Baha'i communities, large and small, we find that a small group of individuals dominate the elected and appointed institutions year in and year out. This has sadly become the norm. The consequence is that these individuals start to create little fiefdoms and get quite comfortable. Even getting a sense of entitlement. **Can anyone doubt that Franco Ciccherini could have perpetrated such a massive (both in length and in quantity) fraud had we had term limits which limited his access to the highest levels of administration?** There are many, many other benefits to term limits beyond the prevention of fraud and crime within the administration. I will explore this topic in more detail at a later time and hope to do justice to it.

It is my hope that the Baha'i community in Italy will learn from this tragedy, rebuild, move on and continue to grow. And that Baha'is elsewhere will use this opportunity to avoid similar painful learning experiences by beginning to consult on how to increase transparency and accountability with the institutions; how to implement common sense control measures and how term limits can benefit the community.

Courtesy : <http://bahairants.com/financial-scandal-rocks-italian-bahai-community-209.html>

Interesting Debate between Ex- Bahai and Haifan Bahais on Youtube



Payam Mashreghi 4 months ago

HAHAHAHAHA!!! YOU WASTED ALL YOUR TIME DOING THIS!?!?! PLEASE DUDE!!

DEFINITION OF BAHAI : THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN BAHÁ'ULLAH AND ABDUL BAHÁ AS HIS DECEDENT, THEN SHARIF US-SAYID MUHAMMAD ALI EFFENDI AS HIS AND UHJ AS HIS... THESE OTHER SECTS MAY EXIST BUT THEY AREN'T CONSIDERED BAHAI YEAH OTHER THAN THESE ONES THEY ARE COVENANT BREAKERS AKA NOT A BAHAI.. WHATS WITH THIS STORY, STOP READING CRAP FROM THE INTERNET DUDE!

P.S. IF U DIDN'T APPROVE THIS COMMENT OF MINE, MSG ME. I WANT TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT IT. · Bahatism

Bahatism 4 months ago

Thank you for your concern for me and my time. You are so good. The UHJ without a guardian as its chairperson is FAKE and BOUGS. It has no authority. Show me from the writings of Hossein Ali and Abbas Effendi where they clearly say that the UHJ will not have a guardian. Let's see... if you have a clear proof. Read this article it is very important for you :

“Who Created the sects in Bahai Faith?” Google it and read it! Then come back here, we will discuss. I have many proofs to prove you wrong. · in reply to Payam Mashreghi Bahatism

Bahatism 4 months ago

And I do not reply to private messages. So write it here or come to my blog and put ur comments there. I do not censor comments.

Bahatism 6 months ago

Thank you Ron. I respect you. You seems to be a very decent person. Normally I interact with Fundamentalist Baha'is, their behavior is really very ugly and unbearable. This is the first time I am encountering a resolved Haifan like you! As you said that you are approaching 70 years, I wish you best for your remaining life. May you be guided towards the right path 'Seratal Mostaqeem'. You are always welcome to my blog. I assure you we can have polite discussion. Best Regards · in reply to Ron Price (Show the comment) Bahatism

Bahatism 6 months ago

Dear Ron, I thank you for your concerns towards me. I have already left this cult. I am no more interested in this Hypocritical cult. I don't correspond on emails. And I am really not interested in those 50 books of 80000 words. I really hate when any Baha'i speaks of numbers. 80000 words, millions bahais, most widespread religion, I really hate all this. You are most welcome to visit my blog (bahatism*blogspot*com) and write to me there. There is unlimited space and good atmosphere for everyone. · in reply to Ron Price (Show the comment) Bahatism

Bahatism 6 months ago

Thank you. Ron. · in reply to Ron Price (Show the comment) Bahatism

Bahatism 6 months ago

I have never heard of any divine religion that is registered under the 'COMPANIES ACT' or NGO in any country, its holy symbols registered as 'TRADEMARKS', Its holy writings COPYRIGHTED. It's prophet's name a 'BRAND NAME'. · in reply to Ron Price (Show the comment)

Bahatism

Bahatism 6 months ago

Regarding the Christian Encyclopedia... Again when you want to prove something scholarly, please prove is from the best and most authentic source. I consider official Government Census of every country to be the best and most reliable source, which is not influenced by anything. And if these groups (Other Baha'i Sects) are really very leas and not bothering anybody then why drag them to Courts over alleged misuse of Baha'i

Trademarks? · in reply to Ron Price (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 6 months ago

..so the fear makes them away from Questioning the institutions, otherwise I am a witness that there are many baha'is who do not accept the authority of UHJ as it is to be accepted. They do not consider the UHJ to be infallible. They see Mullah'ism in Baha'i cult, Religious Police interfering in private life of Baha'i card carrying members. They are fed-up with the administration but they do not dare to speak due to fear... that is why the number of Opposition Groups is less... · in reply to Ron Price (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 6 months ago

Because you talked about numbers, I have to take this issue too. The actual Haifan Baha'is are very less and so the opponents also very less in numbers. The practice of Shunning, Social Boycott and breaking of family ties are very strict punishments. Those born Baha'is fear all this stuff. Mr. Hosein Ali Nari said : Whatsoever hath led the children of men 2 shun 1 another, & hath caused dissensions & divisions amongst them, hath, through d revelation of these words, been nullified & abolished. · in reply to Ron Price (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 6 months ago

So, Sir, For you Wikipedia is more reliable than the Government Census?! See this bahaicensusindia*blogspot*com (change asterisk to dot). · in reply to Ron Price (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 6 months ago

Again your number of 100 thousand is a joke. Where are 100 Thousand Baha'is please prove with credible evidences. Preferably Government documents. For your information please see this : bahaicensusindia*blogspot*com (change asterisk to dot). · in reply to Ron Price (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 6 months ago

...Baha'is, they are all Hindus. They still believes in their Gods. Their are some Sikhs and they too wear their turbans and call them Baha'is. I visited Golistans in India's major cities and I saw a very few graves with dates some 10 years old some 20 years old and a few 1 or 2 years old. Where r believers of Baha'u'llah? They r not even in Golistans!. They are only in the SRPs. 100s new addresses are entered every month but 1000s have already left by then. You guys claim 2.2 million in India. · in reply to Ron Price (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 6 months ago

You are right Ron. It gives publicity to everyone. I am an Ex-Baha'i and I have traveled to many parts of the world and visited many Baha'i communities when I was active. What I noticed was there were 'NO BAHAI'S' in the world. When I say No Baha'is, it means a very few Baha'is. scattered here and there. I visited Wilmette Temple and there was no one there. Not even a single visitor. I was alone with my friend. The country where there r some Baha'is is India. But u know they are not actually.... · in reply to Ron Price (Show the comment) MrSIKREV1 .

MrSIKREV1 . 7 months ago

are the baha'is liars that want too take over the world?

· Bahaism

Bahaism 11 months ago

And It is Haifan UHJ that has deviated majority of Baha'is according to other denominations. Have you ever bothered to read their literature? I have read it and how logical it is!!!! It is this deviated haifan UHJ that has put prohibition on the Baha'is to read their literature. The so called proponents of "Independent Investigation of Truth"!!!! · in reply to dannyOdr (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 11 months ago

iranians know that. If you are a Western Baha'i then you are being fooled by these people. In fact they are exploiting your simplicity and extracting you money and using your energy for their political gains. Where is the "complete translation" of the book BAYAN? Why it is not available? If you read it fully, you will understand why muslims hate this evil cult. · in reply to dannyOdr (Show the comment)

Anis Ettehadulhagh

Anis Ettehadulhagh 1 year ago

There is only one God, one Baha'i Faith, (from Bab to Universal House of Justice) and one human race. Ya Baha'u'llah-Abha!

· in playlist Many Peoples Is Best Bahaism

Bahaism 1 year ago

There is only one God = TRUE

One Baha'i Faith = FALSE

One Human Race = TRUE

· in reply to Anis Ettehadulhagh (Show the comment) DivineFellowship

DivineFellowship 1 year ago

BahaiFace●com · OneWorldBore

OneWorldBore 1 year ago

I like the Reform Baha'is and the Aqdas Baha'is the best. · TheNinjaMetalero

TheNinjaMetalero 1 year ago

okay do not answer to personal messages and i'm not a extremist Baha'i you moron I'm a Atheist who sees rationality in the Baha'i faith, you should approve the quote of the holy koran that i let you as comment, it seems that the only think you know how to do is pick and choose, as for me, i will stop bother myself discussing something with a person like you, I hope Baha'u'llah and your "God" had mercy upon you. · in reply to Bahaism (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 1 year ago

I will not call you a moron. May be you are taught to use this kind of words in your Ruhi Book 8 with those who do not agree with your views. And I don't want do discuss Koran here. If you want to discuss Koran and its Verses please go to some Islamic Forum and have an open discussion. What I am repeatedly trying to say you is to come to my blog and have a discussion on Baha'i faith. You choose a topic and discuss that particular issue. Please. · in reply to TheNinjaMetalero (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 1 year ago

This is what you wrote to me in your personal message : "let's go to a Baha'i forum that is had not being created by you, there I will challenge the stupidities written in your blog and you can challenge my faith with what in the writings is call "poison" XD"

My response :

I told you not to send any personal messages, I don't respond to it. But this is something I would like to respond to. I and my friends have posted many times on such Forums that... · in reply to TheNinjaMetalero (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 1 year ago

... are controlled by Baha'is, but they delete our posts and Ban us. They even make a lobby against us when we are on Christian forums or any other forums. If you are really sincere in having a good debate then please come to a platform that is neither controlled by me or my friends or the BIC. You can come to – talk.religion.bahai – usenet group which is a neutral platform and have a debate. Let's see your sincerity. & why are u afraid to comment on my Blog? · in reply to TheNinjaMetalero (Show the comment) dannyOdr

dannyOdr 11 months ago

I agree with @TheNinjaMetalero rather that looking at very small statements within the baha'i writings take all the writings and they situation in which they were written into consideration. Also these people that claim to be the leaders of the true "Baha'i" religion clearly don't understand the teachings either, there is only one baha'i faith and thats it. · in reply to Bahaism (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 11 months ago

My dear you don't have access to original writings of Bab and Baha'u'llah. Do you access to the manuscripts of Bab and Bahauallah. How many writings of these two have been published by the UHJ? When was the first official translation of Kitab-i-Aqdas was completed? Aftwer how many years? Why not other books been translated? Why not the original manuscripts being published? The persians and the arabs can easily read the handwritings. Actually these writings are full of rubbish. The arabs and..... · in reply to dannyOdr (Show the comment)

Anis Ettehadulhagh 1 year ago

There is only one God, one Baha'i Faith, (from Bab to Universal House of Justice) and one human race. Ya Baha'u'llah-Abha!

· in playlist Many Peoples Is Best Bahaism

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There is only one God = TRUE

One Baha'i Faith = FALSE

One Human Race = TRUE

· in reply to Anis Ettehadulhagh (Show the comment) DivineFellowship

DivineFellowship 1 year ago

BahaiFace●com · OneWorldBore

OneWorldBore 1 year ago

I like the Reform Baha'is and the Aqdas Baha'is the best. · Bahaism

Bahaism 1 year ago

I do not reply to personal messages. And if you can take it down, show me. Lets see. The BIA is trying to do this from a long time. But no success. And I have complete backup of my blog. If in any case you guys gained success then I will Restore this backup to atleast 100 places, you see. Thank you. · in reply to TheNinjaMetalero (Show the comment) TheNinjaMetalero

TheNinjaMetalero 1 year ago

okay do not answer to personal messages and i'm not a extremist Baha'i you moron I'm a Atheist who sees rationality in the Baha'i faith, you should approve the quote of the holy koran that i let you as comment, it seems that the only think you know how to do is pick and choose, as for me, i will stop bother myself discussing something with a person like you, I hope Baha'u'llah and your "God" had mercy upon you. · in reply to Bahaism (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 1 year ago

I will not call you a moron. May be you are taught to use this kind of words in your Ruhi Book 8 with those who do not agree with your views. And I don't want do discuss Koran here. If you want to discuss Koran and its Verses please go to some Islamic Forum and have an open discussion. What I am repeatedly trying to say you is to come to my blog and have a discussion on Baha'i faith. You choose a topic and discuss that particular issue. Please. · in reply to TheNinjaMetalero (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 1 year ago

This is what you wrote to me in your personal message : "let's go to a Baha'i forum that is had not being created by you, there I will challenge the stupidities written in your blog and you can challenge my faith with what in the writings is call "poison" XD"

My response :

I told you not to send any personal messages, I don't respond to it. But this is something I would like to respond to. I and my friends have posted many times on such Forums that... · in reply to TheNinjaMetalero (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 1 year ago

... are controlled by Baha'is, but they delete our posts and Ban us. They even make a lobby against us when we are on Christian forums or any other forums. If you are really sincere in having a good debate then please come to a platform that is neither controlled by me or my friends or the BIC. You can come to – talk.religion.bahai – usenet group which is a neutral platform and have a debate. Let's see your sincerity. & why are u afraid to comment on my Blog? · in reply to TheNinjaMetalero (Show the comment) dannyOdr

dannyOdr 11 months ago

I agree with @TheNinjaMetalero rather that looking at very small statements within the baha'i writings take all the writings and they situation in which they were written into consideration. Also these people that claim to be the leaders of the true "Baha'i" religion clearly don't understand the teachings either, there is only one baha'i faith and thats it. · in reply to Bahaism (Show the comment)

Bahaism 1 year ago

This is what you wrote to me in your personal message : "let's go to a Baha'i forum that is had not being created by you, there I will challenge the stupidities written in your blog and you can challenge my faith with what in the writings is call "poison" XD"

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afraid to comment on my Blog? · in reply to TheNinjaMetalero (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 1 year ago

@TheNinjaMetalero

This is called as Extremism. You are an extremist Haifan Baha'i.

TheNinjaMetalero 1 year ago

what i'm going to do with your blog is take it down if you keep insisting, that nonsense is that, Nonsense. · in reply to Bahaism (Show the comment) TheNinjaMetalero

TheNinjaMetalero 1 year ago

"Surely for those who have disbelieved, it is all the same whether you warn them or you warn them not: they would not believe. Allah has set a seal on their hearts and on their hearing, and on their eyes there is a covering; and for them there lies a mighty punishment." [2:6-7] so my friend, suffer with your own seal, i'll pray for you to understand the spiritual reality of the Baha'i faith and I hope you can forget the material stupidity of your "Opinions" · in reply to Bahaism (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 1 year ago

This is for you :

Bahá'u'lláh, in all the Tablets and Epistles, forbade the true and firm friends from associating and meeting the violators of the Covenant of His Holiness, the Báb, saying that no one should go near them because their breath is like the poison of the snake that kills instantly.

(Bahá'í World Faith, p. 430) · in reply to TheNinjaMetalero (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 1 year ago

Read this also

bahaism.blogspot.com/2009/12/hypocrisy.html · in reply to TheNinjaMetalero (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 1 year ago

And you see I never ever delete any comment. You are most welcome to comment on my blogs. Let us understand each other but please on the blog. Select any post and start your discussion. Thank you. · in reply to TheNinjaMetalero (Show the comment) TheNinjaMetalero

TheNinjaMetalero 1 year ago

who are you to judge whether you are a baha'i or not, The koran say's it clearly, the true believers are only known for God and also Baha'u'llah comes and tells the same, those who submit their will to God and his revelations are the true muslims, the true Baha'is, not those who submit themselves to arrogant humans like you or the followers of you idiotic play. this is getting tired, I just going to quote the koran and i'll leave you in your misery ^^ · in reply to Bahaism (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 1 year ago

Here comes you, the true face of Baha'ism 'idiotic' and 'misery'. You call yourself good crop but this are not the signs of a good 'card carrying' member of the Baha'i International Inc. Network Marketing Company. I requested you to come to my blog and have a debate. But if you want to run from Youtube, its your wish. · in reply to TheNinjaMetalero (Show the comment) TheNinjaMetalero

TheNinjaMetalero 1 year ago

I had never call myself good crop i'm as bad as anyone, the different is that investigate and try to understand the good things unlike you who just rejects it and never try to understand. · in reply to Bahaism (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 1 year ago

Please come to my blog to discuss further. I have presented all that I found in Bahaism. You can also visit my 'scribd' page to download more Bahai related stuff, If you really like the investigation. Humbly yours · in reply to TheNinjaMetalero (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 1 year ago

I again request you to come to my blog and post your comment on my blog under any post that you feel is not proper or would like to debate on that particular post. I am ready to clarify you. All my views and why I hate your cult is posted there and I think youtube is not the right platform to debate because of its limitations. Please come on my blog. Thank you. · in reply to TheNinjaMetalero (Show the comment)

Bahaism 1 year ago

I am sorry but the he (Mr. Baha) could not change his followers how can he change others. Read the stories of corruption, scandals, Election Scams, Huququallah Scams, Sexual Scams, Hypocrisy, Racism, Shundamentalism, Divorce and supremacy in your community. Go to my blog and read all the posts. There are more than 200 posts all accompanied with proofs. Thank you. · in reply to TheNinjaMetalero (Show the comment) TheNinjaMetalero

TheNinjaMetalero 1 year ago

mm okay, let me ask you, when you have field of crops, and 1% of then is rotten because they are weak, because they didn't accepted the nutrients from the fertilizer(the writings and God), and they die, but you have this 99% of good and healthy crops, which one would you eat, the stupid, weak, materialistic and rotten crops that didn't accept the truth and just regretted it or the one's that gave you fruits? then one's that took the good minerals of the fertilizer?. · in reply to Bahaism (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 1 year ago

I beg to disagree about the percentage. The good crop as u call yourself is 1% and 80% crops are fake. There are no crops (Baha'is) these are paper Baha'is or Inactive Baha'is. No Crops at all. · in reply to TheNinjaMetalero (Show the comment) TheNinjaMetalero

TheNinjaMetalero 1 year ago

People makes mistakes, people are disobedience and when you are disobedience you get what you ask for, i myself as baha'i that i'm sometimes i can't help but segregate myself, to criticize, to politicize, but every day I try to change that, and that is through Baha'u'llahs writings, and as you said there are more than 200 post, believe the old world religions including the Babi faith has million more of that. · in reply to Bahaism (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 1 year ago

Even your so called "Manifestation of God" made many serious mistakes. So I don't believe in him. You can comment on my blog please. I will really appreciate if you come there as there are more than around 200 pageviews daily and many people will benefit from our debate. Please comment on my blog. Thank you. · in reply to TheNinjaMetalero (Show the comment) TheNinjaMetalero

TheNinjaMetalero 1 year ago

Get this, "It is our nature to make mistakes, we are the only rational animals and yet, we are the only ones who make the same mistake twice while being conscious of it, but if we strive, if we follow the writings, with faith, love and respect we will not fail again.", I recommend you try that and you will find joy, I'm curious to know what moves you to hate the Baha'i faith so much, please, please let me know what were your true selfish and greedy reasons.. · in reply to Bahaism (Show the comment) TheNinjaMetalero

TheNinjaMetalero 1 year ago

Again, I don't know what the Baha'i faith ever done to you, but if this faith is hypocrite so is all the faith and religions in the world, the difference is that this one, at least treat you with decency and sees you as equal. I do wonder what was so bad that you hate the Baha'i faith so much. · in reply to Bahaism (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 1 year ago

Baha'is and their supreme leaders did never believed in absolute equality. Visit my blog and search the term hypocrisy. You can comment on my blog for a detailed and long debate as Youtube does not permit entering URLs and has 'Word Limits' for comments.

You are welcome to debate with me on my blog, please. · in reply to TheNinjaMetalero (Show the comment) TheNinjaMetalero

TheNinjaMetalero 1 year ago

now the baha'i faith it is indeed a religion, a pretty well organized religion, if you look at it as a cult, well that is your problem, I'm not a Baha'i because I believe in God, or in Baha'u'llah, or in the UHJ, I'm a Baha'i because i identify myself with the principles of this faith, now, you can call me friend, that's good as friend I debate and respect your belief as long as you don't insult me, but don't be hypocrite telling me that you love someone that disagrees with you. · in reply to Bahaism (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 1 year ago

Baha'i faith is still not a religion. I disagree. Please go to my blog and read my entry with the heading "Why Baha'i faith is a Cult". · in reply to TheNinjaMetalero (Show the comment)

TheNinjaMetalero 1 year ago

Wheter Baha'u'llah is a messenger or not, I don't care, His writings are powerful enough to change people and just because of that I'll be part of it. · in reply to Bahaism (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 1 year ago

Good if you don't care then Its OK. I don't have problems with Baha'u'llah if he is not the Manifestation of God. There are many people who

write and speak good. It is a good thing to read good stuff. But keep your eyes and mind open. Don't let hypocrisy capture your mind. Baha'ism is Hypocrisy 100% · in reply to TheNinjaMetalero (Show the comment) TheNinjaMetalero

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that is the blog where i read all the nonsense and stupidity of the "Bayanies" and others sects or cults that automatically call themselves "Baha'is".. is so childish to compare, i'm not a Iranian Baha'i, I'm a Atheist/Agnostic towards the believe if God, but I do recognize the Baha'i Faith a true religion, and the only one that had show me to be rational in this world, my faith(if I have one) is not in the people but in the writings of Baha'u'llah. · in reply to Bahaism (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 1 year ago

You see my friend, If you are really sincere then I love you. This Blog is not the place where you can read all the critical stuff. Please read the Original Bayani Stuff from their website which is bayanic . com, if you want to read about the sects and want to debate about their beliefs please go to their respected websites and debate. I am convinced about your religion that it is no more than a cult and a really Hypocritical Cult. · in reply to TheNinjaMetalero (Show the comment) TheNinjaMetalero

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now the baha'i faith it is indeed a religion, a pretty well organized religion, if you look at it as a cult, well that is your problem, I'm not a Baha'i because I believe in God, or in Baha'u'llah, or in the UHJ, I'm a Baha'i because i identify myself with the principles of this faith, now, you can call me friend, that's good as friend I debate and respect your belief as long as you don't insult me, but don't be hypocrite telling me that you love someone that disagrees with you. · in reply to Bahaism (Show the comment) TheNinjaMetalero

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Mentaly blind!?? one thing is to just talk all the crap you want and debate if is right or not to believe in the UHJ, and the other is to recognize the good that many Baha'i, according to what the UHJ says have done, people like you are not different from philosophers who the only think they know is as Russell says have two faiths, one they preach and one they practice. you're your self a Baha'i is not because of the UHJ or because of the Guardianship, but Because of Bah'au'llah · in reply to Bahaism (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 1 year ago

Baha'u'llah for me is a Manifestation of Devil ! OK Mr. · in reply to TheNinjaMetalero (Show the comment) TheNinjaMetalero

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Baha'u'llah for you can't be the Mohammed himself or Moctezuma, or a Djinn, or another crazy dude, but you got recognize what ever he started has change a lot of people, for best of humanity, well you and your kind are the only exception · in reply to Bahaism (Show the comment) Bahaism

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Bahaism 1 year ago

You need to visit this my dear Iranian Baha'i Friend, do visit please

bahaism . blogspot . com (remove spaces) · in reply to TheNinjaMetalero (Show the comment) TheNinjaMetalero

TheNinjaMetalero 1 year ago

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Bahaism 1 year ago

I am not mentally blind like you. You people are spiritually and mentally blind. Just follow those sucking UHJ messages and read those boring childish RUHIs. · in reply to TheNinjaMetalero (Show the comment) TheNinjaMetalero

TheNinjaMetalero 1 year ago

Mentaly blind!?? one thing is to just talk all the crap you want and debate if is right or not to believe in the UHJ, and the other is to recognize the good that many Baha'i, according to what the UHJ says have done, people like you are not different from philosophers who the only think they know is as Russell says have two faiths, one they preach and one they practice. you're your self a Baha'i is not because of the UHJ or because of the Guardianship, but Because of Bah'au'llah · in reply to Bahaism (Show the comment) Bahaism

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Bahaism 1 year ago

If you have read then you have not obeyed your Lord Mr. Baha'u'llah. Your older Lord (Mr. Baha) and the Universal House of Lords forbids the reading of CB material and forbids to interact with Bayanis. Mr. Baha considers the Breath of CBs to be poisonous, do you know that? Then why you read CB stuff. I will term the RUHI's to be childish. And there cannot be an evil administration like the Baha'i administration because in 21st Century it does now allow women its membership. Shame on you Haifans ·

duckotaco 1 year ago

baha'is have locked independent investigation of truth in the basement. No way it's coming back. · in reply to Bahaism (Show the comment) TheNinjaMetalero

TheNinjaMetalero 1 year ago

you think independent investigation comes when you read the baha'is writings?, I read philosophy more than i read the Baha'is writings, I read the holy writings of other religions more than the Baha'i writings, not for the sake of just learning but of understanding the Baha'i faith itself, unlike you who closest one eye to the spiritual world and the one true God, your father and creator, I open that eye to understand and to learn about him. · in reply to duckotaco (Show the comment) TheNinjaMetalero

TheNinjaMetalero 1 year ago

Wow you done Ruhi book 8...!! damn I haven't even finish book 4 and I can see the nonsense that you guys preach XD.. · in reply to Bahaism (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 1 year ago

I have also completed my Book 9 ☐ · in reply to TheNinjaMetalero (Show the comment) TheNinjaMetalero

TheNinjaMetalero 1 year ago

have you learn a lot .. can't to get to that.. · in reply to Bahaism (Show the comment) BookOfFlaws

BookOfFlaws 1 year ago

No need to "twist and turn" the teachings when you can just suppress the "Most Holy Book" for the first 150 years and not let anybody read it! And then, get translators (finally) who filter and soften it. And then abrogate and loophole your way out of most of what's in it. Oh, and you can go around saying "These are the 10 basic principles of the faith" when "equality of men and women" does not exist in the founding scriptures, but praise of martyrdom is all over them. Talk about tiwsting. · in reply to John Pilz (Show the comment) BookOfFlaws

BookOfFlaws 1 year ago

Fascinating! Quite amazing. It seems like the Baha'i Faith is the faith that doesn't work. The Bab appointed Mirza Yayah as successor (who looks like a nicer guy than Be-Ha by the way), and that was a bust. The Baha'is were so busy killing, stabbing, or poisoning Babis who wouldn't accept Be-Ha has divine, the government had fits with that crowd. Be-ha appointed his son, and that was a bust with AB ousting the one appointed. Shoghi Effendi was supposed to have a son, but that was a bust, too. · Bahaism

Bahaism 1 year ago

I totally agree with you. Thank you for your comment. · in reply to BookOfFlaws (Show the comment)

Comment removed

Author withheld · Bahaism

Bahaism 2 years ago

You are mad ! · in reply to UnknowableGod IsAtheism (Show the comment)

John Pilz 2 years ago

It is funny that everyone tries to gather power for themselves in every religion. The Bahá'í Faith, based in the arc of Bahá in Haifa, Israel, is the only one that does not twist and turn the Bahá'í Writings. It is so confusing to read the writings of the "bahai sects." Why do people waste so much time making so much up about conspiracies?

How come the people belonging to "bahai sects" try to act secretive when trying to infiltrate Bahá'í Communities? Bahá'is don't do that to Covenant Breakers. · Bahaism

Bahaism 2 years ago

Firstly it is not funny. It is a serious matter that a fake covenant breaker administrative body comes to power and rules the Baha'i world. Secondly they true writings of Baha'u'llah and Abdol Baha clearly states that the UHJ without a guardian is invalid. You must read the actual, full versions of will and testament of Abdol Baha and the writings of Baha'u'llah where he clearly states that their will be guardians in the future and if Bahai faith does not have guardian then their will · in reply to John Pilz (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 2 years ago

be confusion amongst the Baha'is in the future and the covenant of Baha'u'llah will be destroyed. This happened when Shoghi Effendi was murdered by some persons for the benefit of a certain group. Then a body of 9 members was formed to play with 19% of the savings of Baha'is. This body is totally invalid as per the Baha'i writings. Read the writings of Orthodox Baha'is very simple, what is confusing to you? Tell me I will try to explain you. I don't know if any of the sect is act in. · in reply to John Pilz (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 2 years ago

or openly. Bcoz I am not a Baha'i. There are many centers of Orthodox Baha'is, Unitarian Baha'is, there is one UHJ in Montana, and the Baha'is of Jacques Soghomonian all have valid addresses and they can be contacted. You can also contact Fredrick Glaysher who is the head of Reform Baha'i faith. I don't think there is any secrecy. All the haifans are actually confused by the Ruhi Course, book no. 8. I think you have done that book so you are confused. · in reply to John Pilz (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 2 years ago

And Baha'is do that with other people. You need to study how many of the Azalis were killed during the early days by the followers of Baha'u'llah, the manifestation of GOD?????? · in reply to John Pilz (Show the comment) John Pilz

John Pilz 2 years ago

Bahá'is don't kill other people, otherwise, they are fakes. Being Bahá'í isn't a mere name – it describes an individual who follows the laws sent down by God. Killing is forbidden. The Bahá'is that killed anyone else willingly broke the covenant with God – to follow His laws. Now, because they were forgiven after they asked for it doesn't mean that the Bahá'í Faith is to be blamed for its disobedient followers.

The Azalis and the people who killed the Azalis broke God's laws. · in reply to Bahaism (Show the comment) Chris Cobb

Chris Cobb 2 years ago

We're not worried or threatened just annoyed and offended by the covenant breaker usurpation of the term. Those sects barely exist, they might as well not-they exert no influence and serve no purpose, Orthodox and Reform Baha'is are frankly a joke. The real Baha'i faith continues as a united spiritual body unperterbed by the failed hijacking of covenant breaking userpers like Abdul Baha's malicious brother or the prideful Sam Remy. · Bahaism

Bahaism 2 years ago

– There is nothing to get annoyed. All these sects although very small when compared to the Haifan sect, all believe in Baha'u'llah. They follow his teachings. Then what they must call themselves? Tell me. The followers of Baha'u'llah are called as Baha'i and the followers of Haifa Based UHJ are called as Haifan Baha'i. And you are a Haifan Baha'i.

For your information there is one one UHJ. Visit this website to learn more UHJ .NET · in reply to Chris Cobb (Show the comment) Bahaism

Bahaism 2 years ago

– Dear Haifanated Baha'i friend, just google Orthodox Bahai or BUPC and check yourself if any other types of Bahai exist or not. If there are no other Baha'is (non-Haifan) then why the American NSA so worried about the trademarks of Baha'i faith. Who they have sued in the Chicago courts? · in reply to Chris Cobb (Show the comment)

To read more kindly visit : <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WYnjWvjHfIo>

Baha'i Scandals in India

Courtesy : <http://bahai-scandals.blogspot.com>

Baha'is very often preach of high moral standard, love, peace and unity in their deceptive speeches and classes. These sermons are nothing but to fool the world and gain some well wishers and adherents for the dying Baha'i Faith.

The divorce, elopement extra marital affairs espionage manipulation all are day to day life of every Baha'is. Still they give long sermons of morality and spirituality taking for granted that the world is full of fools.

Writing open letters to political leaders and pressuring the politicians using their charms to speak for Baha'is and Baha'i Faith and then claiming that the Baha'is do not involve themselves in Politics is real politics.

There are number of scandals going on in Baha'i Faith which the Baha'is often talk amongst themselves. These are few examples which Baha'is have shared with us. Others have promised to send more:



In the recently announced the list of ABMs for Maharashtra, It was expected that Mr. Omid will replace Two Persian ABMs Mrs. Mahvash Rohani and Mrs. Marziya Dalal with Two another Persian ABMs Dr. Habibeh Javanmardi and Mrs. Parvaneh Javanmardi.

Now Maharashtra is being controlled by three Persian ABMs Dr. Habibeh Javanmardi Mrs. Javanmardi and Mrs. Afsaneh Motiwala. All in the good books of Mr. Omid. These three ABMs have three things in common, they are all Iranians, all three are ladies and all the three Iranian ABMs are for protection. Means they will safe guard the Faith from the attack of Covenant Breakers and Enemies of the Faith. Although maximum covenant Breakers are in Panchgani. The dissatisfied Persian Baha'is from Baha'i Administration.

The Indian ABMs Mr. Yogesh Garoud, Mr. Parimal Mahato, Mr. Jeewan Pagare and Mr. Avnish Sharma are for propagation of the Faith. They will have to run around, start children moral classes. Organize Study circles. Launch IPG

The surprise omission was of Mr. Dutta Sahu. It is not clear How did he felt out of grace inspite of having a Persian wife. May be Mr. Dutta must have started thinking that if you have a Persian wife you will reach the inner circle of Cunning Persians. A mistake which Mr. Vasudevan Nair, Mr. Jaya Putran, Mr. Ali Merchant made previously. A Persian wife means you should work for the Faith without any remuneration and you will be under surveillance 24 hrs through her. Mrs. Dutta a Persian is very faithful to the Cause and she must have been made an ABM.

The Local Maharastrians who are made ABMs will have short lived happiness and any moment they will be replaced. By appointment of local to the post of ABMs is for the deceiving of the locals. One thing should be very clear of the locals that no Indians are trusted by the Persian Baha'is. This is the confidential Message of Universal House of Justice to the Persian Baha'is of the world. That unless you are 100% sure of a local does not give them any responsible post.

It was 100% expected that Mr. Omid will bring Mrs. Mahvash Rohani and Mrs Marziya Dallal to RBC. So with these two ladies and with Mr Pooya and another member of Javan mardi family and Mr. Zia Ishraqi he will control the RBC of Maharashtra.

It is shame on those Indians sitting on NSA not to object on such gross manipulation and injustice. It is absolutely clear that the RBCs are appointed then why say elected? why have state convention? and why conduct elections? Is this is what the Divine Baha'i elections? Some of these Indian are quite educated but then they have lost all their self respect and dignity.

This way Mr. Omid will controlled both the wings of Maharashtra by Iranians and the local Maharastrians will be asked to run and work for him. So that he can give his achievement reports to UHJ with exaggerated statistics and expect a promotion in his present post of a counselor.

It is also very much visible that Mr. Omid's inclination towards Persians and especially Javanmardi's family. A day will not be far that every member of Javanmardi's family will be on RBC, ABMs and every that committee where Mr. Omid have some say.

It is so humiliating that such a large population of Baha'is in India and the UHJ cannot find just four Indians to this post. We require an Omid from Qatar and Jabbar from Bangladesh to supervise us. These two counselors are expert in manipulation.

It is very surprising that why are the Indians not raising their voices against such humiliation and injustice. Then are we supposed to believe the UHJ is infallible?

With Baha'i regards

The Guardian Problem in Baha'i Faith

1. The station of Guardian was decreed by the Last Will and Testament of Abdul Baha, a document which some have alleged to be a forgery.
2. If the LW&T is not a forgery, then the Guardian's failure to obey his self-described duties are contrary to what a divinely appointed authority would be expected to do.
3. These self-described duties include the critical task of appointing a successor guardian, who would take over after the death or incapacitation of the preceding guardian. The successor was to have been appointed in a manner that would leave no room for doubt as to the validity of the successor's appointment.
4. There is no credible evidence that any successor guardian was ever appointed in such an unambiguous manner, although there were claimants.
5. No provision had ever been made concerning the contingency of a guardian dying without having appointed a successor. Indeed, such a possibility had never even been mentioned by Shoghi. That is why his death intestate led to the crisis it did.
6. The combination of these facts decisively refutes the notion that the Guardianship was ever a divine institution. It also demonstrates that Shoghi himself never believed that it was. He never made any attempt, neither to ensure a clear line of succession, nor to anticipate the lack of a succession.
7. Upon Shoghi's unexpected death, the Hands of the Cause took it upon themselves to resolve the matter by declaring that henceforth, the Baha'i Faith would have no living guardian. But they had no authority to make that declaration. Only the Guardian himself could do that.
8. Shoghi's death created an unresolvable discrepancy, a contradiction, that pits the alleged divine authorship of the station against the physical facts. One cannot have it both ways. For the station to be of divine authorship, there must be a succession of guardians, or absent that, some provision to account for a lack of succession.
9. While the Hands made the best they could of a bad situation, their best was not enough. Nor could it be. It should become apparent that such an irregularity could not be explained in terms of a divinely appointed station. Shoghi had been inexcusably, and inexplicably, derelict in his duties, duties which he himself had repeatedly affirmed in the most emphatic manner.
10. Claimants to the succession of guardianship make such a weak and flimsy case for their divine authority that their claims make no improvement regarding the failure of Shoghi to be clear and unambiguous in the appointment of a successor.
11. Attempts by the UHJ to uphold the actions of the Hands are equally flimsy and unjustifiable. Even their most contorted explanations do not suffice to resolve the contradictions.
12. In all likelihood, the LW&T was a forgery by those who sought power in what they thought would become a powerful world religion. Even if it was not a forgery, it certainly had no divine authorship, as demonstrated by its abject failure to bear the fruit which it had promised.

—Bob

Courtesy : <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!topic/talk.religion.bahai/KJJJe3jj4PI>

GUARDIANSHIP...A MAJOR ISSUE IN BAHAI FAITH

Other than allusions in the writings of Bahá'u'lláh to the importance of the [Aghsán](#), the role of the Guardian was not mentioned until the reading of the Will and Testament of `Abdu'l-Bahá. Shoghi Effendi later expressed to his wife and others that he had no foreknowledge of the existence of the Institution of Guardianship, least of all that he was appointed as Guardian.

`Abdu'l-Bahá warned the Bahá'ís to avoid the problems caused by his half-brother [Muhammad `Alí](#). He stipulated the criteria and form for selecting future Guardians, which was to be clear and unambiguous. His will required that the Guardian appoint his successor "in his own life-time ... that differences may not arise after his [the Guardian's] passing." The appointee was required to be either the first-born son of the Guardian, or one of the [Aghsán](#) (literally: Branches; male descendants of Bahá'u'lláh). Finally, `Abdu'l-Bahá left a responsibility to [nine Hands of the Cause](#), elected from all of the Hands, who "whether unanimously or by a majority vote, must give their assent to the choice of the one whom the Guardian of the Cause of God hath chosen as his successor."

The will also vested authority in the Guardian's appointed assistants, known as the [Hands of the Cause](#), giving them the right to "cast out from the congregation of the people of Bahá" anyone they deem in opposition to the Guardian.

A BREAK IN THE LINE OF GUARDIANSHIP

Mason Remey and his successors asserted that a living Guardian is essential for the Bahá'í community, and that the Bahá'í writings required it. The basis of these claims were almost universally rejected by the body of the Bahá'ís, for whom the restoration of scripturally sanctioned leadership of the Universal House of Justice proved more attractive than the dubious claims of Mason Remey.

The House commented that its own authority was not dependent on the presence of a Guardian, and that its legislative functioning was unaffected by the absence of a Guardian. It stated that in its legislation it would be able to turn to the mass of interpretation left by Shoghi Effendi. The Universal House of Justice addressed this issue further early after its election clarifying that “there is nowhere any promise or guarantee that the line of Guardians would endure forever; on the contrary there are clear indications that the line could be broken.

THE ESSENTIALITY OF THE GUARDIANSHIP TO THE WORLD ORDER OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

The Guardianship was an innovation of Abdu'l-Baha's and his wife.

Baha'is are in such deep denial that they even deny the words of their own prophet:

The Will of the divine Testator is this: It is incumbent upon the Aghsan, the Afnan and My Kindred to turn, one and all, their faces towards the Most Mighty Branch. Consider that which We have revealed in Our Most Holy Book: 'When the ocean of My presence hath ebbed and the Book of My Revelation is ended, turn your faces toward Him Whom God hath purposed, Who hath branched from this Ancient Root.' The object of this sacred verse is none other except the Most Mighty Branch [Abdu'l-Bahá]. Thus have We graciously revealed unto you Our potent Will, and I am verily the Gracious, the All-Powerful. Verily God hath ordained the station of the Greater Branch [Muhammad Ali] to be beneath that of the Most Great Branch [Abdu'l-Bahá]. He is in truth the Ordainer, the All-Wise. We have chosen 'the Greater' after 'the Most Great', as decreed by Him Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Informed.

(Baha'u'llah, Tablets of Baha'u'llah, p. 221)

It's all there in black and white.

It is sadder than it is funny to see how people can distort reality to fit their own delusions.

The guardianship was an innovation of Abdu'l-Baha's, as well as his wife. An innovation intended to keep temporal and worldly control of the Baha'i faith and associated monies and properties under direct control of their side of Baha'u'llah's extended family.

Baha'u'llah never came up with the concept of the guardianship and in his W&T gave Abdu'l-Baha first, then Muhammad Ali next, control over the covenant.

That money and property interfered with Baha'u'llah's plans as laid out in his own W&T is a testament to human nature, to the human proclivity to become possessive of such worldly luxuries as the mansion of Bahji.

That Shoghi ended up estranging his entire family, his own parents included, all for petty reason: such as a person's refusal to quit a job, a person taking a trip to America without getting Shoghi's prior approval, a person arranging a marriage which Shoghi disapproved of, and the declaration of all other family members who justly refused to disassociate with their unjustly excommunicated fellow family members, shows just how dysfunctional the Baha'i faith and the guardian were at that time. Dysfunctional, psychologically, emotionally as well as spiritually.

This dysfunction continues till this day with clear contradictions in Baha'i teachings being taken as a matter of course.

Larry Rowe

Baha'i Faith-Divorced from the institution of the Guardianship

Divorced from the institution of the Guardianship the World Order of Baha'u'lláh would be mutilated and permanently deprived of that hereditary principle which, as 'Abdu'l-Bahá has written, has been invariably upheld by the Law of God.

The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 148.

1.The Guardianship still exists functionally. 2.The fact that there was one Guardian should be enough for all time. 3.'Abdu'l-Bahá declared the UHJ to be an infallible institution without mentioning the Guardianship.



The Guardian provided the essential role of official interpreter. Who among the Guardianship-without-a-Guardian performs this service? The answer is, of course, that the UHJ does it, and quite often. Is the UHJ authorized, infallible or not, to legitimize itself by coughing up convenient translations of excerpts in the nick of time and saying, “see, this passage is saying this, that, and the other”?

How does the UHJ propose to put forward official translations of scripture without possessing the title of interpreter? Isn't translation all about interpretation?

It's one thing to suggest that the UHJ can perform its function without a Guardian while the Guardian is coming of age (as it would have had to do had it been elected while Shoghi Effendi was a boy). It's another thing entirely to suggest that the UHJ can do its job unerringly without the slightest hope of ever having an unerring interpreter again.

And to those who propose the job of Guardian was completed by Shoghi Effendi: how could the job be done without a Guardian-endorsed translation of the Most Holy Book, especially when such variations in translation as we have mentioned arise?

The reason why the Guardianship is critical to the Bahá'í Covenant is plain as day: the responsibility of authoritative interpretation rests entirely on the shoulders of the Guardian. 'Abdu'l-Bahá didn't always spell it out for everyone; Shoghi Effendi should not have had to explain it, but I suppose it's a good thing that he did.

As things stand, there is no Guardian, so there is no final judicial authority in the Bahá'í administration. Nor is there an executive. Nonetheless, nature abhors a vacuum, and power will be awarded to those that fill the void, so we have an infallible UHJ with executive and interpretive authority. Who is there to contest with them? There is no separation of powers, no checks and balances, and no dissent.

If one bases one's response to this question on the writings of the Bahá'í Faith previous to the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the answer, I think, would be a qualified yes.

The Guardianship: whose idea was it?

Truth be told, I'm not convinced that Bahá'u'lláh ever had any idea that there would be an institution like the Guardianship. His writings point to the House of Justice (HJ) as a divinely inspired—if not unerring—institution, but he says nothing to even imply the functions of the Guardianship. He doesn't even command his heirs to continue a line of inheritance-based leadership. Rather, he seems to think the HJ would suffice. The credit for conceiving the Guardianship ought to go to his son Abbas Effendi (unless the latter's will and testament was, as some have maintained, a forgery), and Shoghi Effendi ought to get credit for laying out the concept in more detail.

It turned out that the Guardianship was plagued by the same family rivalries that infested the leadership of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Perhaps Bahá'u'lláh was trying to move toward a more republican—if not infallible—system.

This was not the only big change that 'Abdu'l-Bahá ever made in the name of interpretation (monogamy being an obvious example), if indeed it was his idea.

To summarize, putting aside 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will & Testament and the statements of Shoghi Effendi, one can conclude that the UHJ is indeed to be regarded as divinely inspired, and authoritative except in the domain of worship. However, if we admit those two sources, then we must consider the doubts raised by statements expressing the necessity of having a Guardian to act as interpreter and chair of the UHJ.

Guardianship of the Baha'i Faith Continues

E. S. Yazdani, Fifth Guardian of the Baha'i Faith Interview, November 4, 2020

Lineage of Guardianship in Baha'i Faith

Courtesy : <https://bahaisofvaranasi.blogspot.com/>

Shoghi Effendi was not an immediate descendent of Abdul Baha. He was the child of Abdul Baha's daughter Ziyá'iyih Khánum.

In the W&T, Master has clearly mentioned that the first male descendent of Shoghi Effendi will be the next Guardian. However, if for any reason the first male descendant is not capable of handling the responsibility of Guardianship, it will be the next son. If not that then Shoghi Effendi in his own lifetime will need to appoint a Guardian.

It is nowhere stated that there must be a Will appointing the next Guardian...

Also, it is not possible that Shoghi Effendi will disobey the Master and die without appointing the next Guardian.

Shoghi Effendi did not have any children, thus he established the International Baha'i Council—UHJ in its infancy—during his lifetime and appointed Charles Mason Remey as its president (head).

It should be noted that only the Guardian is permitted to serve as the IBC's president. This serves as the first evidence that Mason Remey was chosen to serve as the second Guardian.

It is also important to remember that, in accordance with the W&T of Master, the UHJ must be looked after and guided by a Living Guardian, who serves as the UHJ's head. In other words, UHJ requires the Guardian as its Head in order to operate.

Another indication that Mason Remey is the Second Guardian is the fact that Master used to refer to Remey as his son in his letters (i.e. spiritual one). Mason Remey, like Shoghi Effendi, was Master's spiritual son rather than his biological son, making him qualified to serve as the second Guardian.

Charles Mason Remey

Charles Mason Remey was among the Hands who signed the unanimous proclamations in 1957, acknowledging that Shoghi Effendi had died without having appointed his successor. He was also among the [nine Custodians](#) initially elected to serve in the Holy Land as interim head of the religion.

On 8 April, 1960, Remey made a written announcement that he was the second Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith and explained his "status for life as commander in chief of Bahá'í affairs of the world" in this proclamation which he requested to be read in front of the annual US convention in [Wilmette](#).

He based his claim on his having been appointed President of the first [International Bahá'í Council](#) by Shoghi Effendi in 1951. The appointed council represented the first international Bahá'í body. Remey believed that his appointment as the council's president meant that he was the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith.

Regarding the authority of the Hands of the Cause, Remey wrote in his letter that the Hands "have no authority vested in themselves... save under the direction of the living Guardian of the Faith." He further commanded the Bahá'ís to abandon plans for establishing the Universal House of Justice.

Remey never addressed the requirement that Guardians should be male-descendants of Bahá'u'lláh, of whom Remey was not. His followers later referred to letters and public statements of `Abdu'l-Bahá calling him "my son" as evidence that he had been implicitly adopted but these claims were almost universally rejected by the body of the Bahá'ís.

In response, and after having made many prior efforts to convince Remey to withdraw his claim, the Custodians took action and sent a cablegram to the National Spiritual Assemblies on 26 July, 1960. Two days later the Custodians sent Mason Remey a letter informing him of their unanimous decision to declare him a Covenant-breaker. They cited the Will and Testament of `Abdu'l-Bahá, the unanimous joint resolutions of November 25, 1957, and their authority in carrying out the work of the Guardian as their justification. Anyone who accepted Remey's claim to the Guardianship was also expelled.

Remey maintained his claim to Guardianship, and with a small group of followers went on to establish what came to be known as the Orthodox Bahá'ís Under the Hereditary Guardianship, which later broke into several other divisions based on succession disputes within the groups that followed Remey

Mason Remey's Proclamation to the Baha'is of the World

PROCLAMATION TO THE BAHÁ'IS OF THE WORLD THROUGH THE ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE BAHÁ'IS (UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ASSEMBLED AT WILMETTE, ILLINOIS RIDVAN 117 BAHÁ'I ERA FROM MASON REMEY

THE SECOND GUARDIAN OF THE BAHÁ'I FAITH

Mr. Charles Wolcott, Washington, D. C. United States of America Ridván 117 BAHÁ'I ERA

BELOVED FRIENDS:

Believers have questioned me as to my status as President of the Bahá'í International Council, appointed by The Beloved Guardian Shoghi Effendi, the First Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith. I take the means of this proclamation, to the coming annual national convention to tell all Bahá'ís exactly what my position and status is in the Faith.

The Bahá'í people the world around know that The Beloved Guardian singled me, Mason Remey, out from amongst all of the Believers upon earth to occupy the position of President of the Bahá'í International Council. This is the only position suggestive of authority that Shoghi Effendi ever bestowed upon anyone, the only special and specific appointment of authority to any man ever made by him.

The Beloved Guardian declared the Bahá'í International Council to be the forerunner of and the first step toward the establishment of The Universal House of Justice, and furthermore, that the Bahá'í International Council was the embryo of The Universal House of Justice which embryo would eventually develop into The Universal House of Justice.

Although all Bahá'ís know that I, Mason Remey, am the President of the Bahá'í International Council by the appointment of The Beloved Guardian Shoghi Effendi, yet many of you may not know me personally. I have been living at Haifa much of the time during these past ten years. My visits to America being in the summers when I have done but little travelling among the Bahá'í communities so personally I may be a stranger to the many recently registered in the Faith. Therefore, I will tell you something about myself.

My forebearers were early American Colonials of New England in the north and Virginia in the south. I was brought up in the Christian Faith as taught by the Episcopal Church. The members of this church, as you know, although always orthodox may be anything from Catholic upon one hand to Protestant on the other. While this church is usually classed as Protestant, its Prayer Book proclaims it to be "The Holy Catholic Apostolic Church." My inheritance was from the Catholic interpretation of Christianity rather than from the Protestant attitude.

To the average American, The Catholic Church usually means Roman Catholic, but there are other Catholic communions. In The Holy Land, that is now my home and has been for these past ten years, the Ministry of Religions of Israel lists eleven different Catholic communions in that country—Roman, Anglican, Russian, Armenian, Greek, Greek Orthodox, Coptic, etc. The Anglican Catholic Persuasion corresponding to the so called High Episcopal Church in America.

With this Catholic background it was the most logical and natural thing in the world for me to accept the Bahá'í message without question as I did when I heard it in 1899-1900 from May Ellis Bolles (later Mrs. Sutherland Maxwell), because the Holy Catholic Apostolic Church teaches the Second Coming of Christ—The Christ to come manifesting as the Lord of Creation—the Prince of Peace—coming to establish "His Kingdom upon Earth as it is in Heaven."

From New England on the north and Virginia on the south, my forebears came into the middlewest where I was born in 1874 at a town on the Mississippi River, two hundred and ten miles from Chicago, not far distant from the geographic center of the United States, this land that our Beloved Guardian has called "The Cradle of the Administration of the Bahá'í Faith." Thus do I introduce myself to those of you who may know me but by name only.

As I travel about through the Bahá'í world, the friends ask me many questions about the life of the believers in Israel, and in particular about the Hands of the Faith in The Holy Land? The Bahá'í people are just curious to know about things transpiring there and of how the problems of the Faith are being handled?

There is some general information that I can give them that is in no way confidential but I am not mentioning anything of a confidential nature to any Bahá'í because as is well known in Bahá'í circles from the first of the conclaves of the Hands the majority of the Hands of the Faith were united in the opinion that absolutely nothing said or done in these conclaves be divulged, disclosed or revealed to any of the Bahá'ís outside of the body of the twenty seven Hands. However, each Hand of the Faith is not only allowed but urged to express herself or himself with perfect freedom within the four walls of the chamber in which the Hands are gathered. It is the duty enjoined upon each of the Hands to express her or his own convictions to the Hands when seated in conclave.*

Note : —* A Conclave, according to the Oxford Dictionary, is "Any meeting for secret consultation."

I, as the President of the International Council was one of those things that every Bahá'í knows but that just never happened to be talked about nor even mentioned in any of the conclaves or in the conferences of the Hands of the Faith; therefore, as this subject was never mentioned, I, having promised the Hands never to divulge any of their discussions, proceedings or decisions, am not breaking faith with them now by explaining to the believers about this subject of my Presidentship of the International Council a subject that was never even mentioned nor brought up for discussion by the Hands of the Faith in any conference that I ever attended or know anything about.

Before going into the subject of my Presidency of the International Council and the stand that I take in the cause and explain in this letter, I would preface my statement by giving in a few words a picture of the set up of things in Haifa under the regime of The Beloved Guardian when all the members of the International Council including the resident Hands lived there and served the Guardian daily. Each of us council members were given instructions by Shoghi Effendi of what he wanted us to do and we reported to him as these various services were underway and completed. The sole authority of all these operations rested in the instructions given to each direct from the Guardian himself, thus as a council, a functioning body, we never undertook any services of any nature whatsoever.

After the appointment of the International Council, many times one of the members would come to me saying, "Mason, you are the President of the Council, get yourself busy, call a meeting, you are the President of the Council, you should take the initiative to organize this body and do something." To which my response was always, "The Guardian of the Faith appointed the Baha'i International Council and He will tell me what I should do and when I should call the Council into action."

The First Guardian of the Faith left this world without giving me any orders or instructions whatsoever regarding the International Council. The Beloved Guardian gave me no authority to do anything about the Universal Council during his lifetime for while He was living He was the Guardian of the Faith and as infallibility then was vested in him and in him only, my position was then only that of I myself holding a potential responsibility. But with the death of Shoghi Effendi, He no longer being the center upon earth of infallibility, I became the acting President of the International Council in my own right as President of this body, thus I came into active command of the council. Therefore I am now but assuming the powers that came to me automatically upon the death of Shoghi Effendi and that have been mine exclusively of all others upon earth since the death of the First Guardian of the Faith.

This is the authority I am now exercising when I refuse to recognize any interference from anyone in the affairs of the International Council. This means from any one at all, person or persons.

The Hands of the Faith can only function as protectors of the Faith when they are serving under the direction following the commands of the infallible Guardian of the Faith. They have no authority vested in themselves as Hands of the Faith to act in their own capacity nor in any other capacity, save under the direction of the living Guardian of the Faith.

The Beloved Guardian chose me to be the President of the Baha'i International Council that is according to his explanation the President of the Embryonic Universal House of Justice. Therefore I am the President of the Embryonic Universal House of Justice. When this August body becomes the Universal House of Justice, if such being during my lifetime, I will then be the President of the First Universal House of Justice of the Baha'i Dispensation.

Therefore, inasmuch as The Beloved Guardian in His Infallibility has thus placed me in command of the Faith to protect and to guard the Faith, I can do nothing but assume my place that he has given me with all of the responsibilities, the perquisites and emoluments that go with this position, therefore by his infallible orders I now alone after him command the cause and guard its integrity.

The delay until now of my calling the attention of the believers to the provisions for the protection and the guarding of the cause, made some years ago by our Beloved Guardian when He appointed me to be the President of the Baha'i International Council, has given the Hands of the Faith and the believers of the Faith ample time to discover for themselves, had that been possible for them to have discovered my unique position in the Faith. But until now no one, other than I has discovered that such authority was vested in me by Our Beloved Guardian. To the moment of my sending out into the Baha'i world of this proclamation, I have taken no one into this confidence < I have stood single and alone in all the world guarding the Faith.

That I was to occupy this August position in The Baha'i Faith that The Beloved Guardian has chosen me to occupy, I have definitely known for the past twelve years more or less, without ever mentioning it to anyone until very recently when privately and in secret, I made this declaration to the Hands of the Faith in the Holy Land. In this proclamation statement to you I am now declaring my position of command in the cause to the Believers here in America, "The Cradle of the Administration of The Baha'i Faith," and through this convention to all the Baha'i World.

In this time of confusion of thought and purpose that so threatens the Baha'i world, now is the propitious moment for me to make the announcement that I do in this writ. I cannot delay any longer. All these plans of the Hands of the Faith for 1963 that are so absorbing and confusing to the people of the Faith must be dropped and stopped immediately. I am the only one who can command this situation so I have arisen to do so for I alone in all this world have been given the authority and the power to accomplish this.

Be it understood. I of myself make no claims for myself. I am but telling and reminding the Hands of the Faith and the Baha'is of all the world of the responsibilities that The Beloved Guardian placed upon me as President of the Baha'i International Council.

It is well known throughout the Baha'i world and accepted by all Baha'is that the protection of the Faith and the propagation of the Faith are special and particular functions of the Hands of the Faith, they working and serving under the direction of the Guardian of the Faith. It is from and through the Guardianship that infallibility is vested and that the Hands of the Faith receive their orders.

The Program for 1960 as announced by the Hands of the Faith in their message to the Baha'i world of November 4, 1959 signed by twenty two of the Hands, as well as the same program announced in their former messages, so flagrantly violate and puts to naught the Will and Testament, the Guardianship, and the Administration of the Faith that the Beloved Guardian so laboriously and painstakingly built up during his long ministry, that I can no longer condone such actions upon the part of the Hands of the Faith.. I have remained silent now for over two years hoping that they would give up this destructive propagandizing but all to no effect so now it is necessary that I call a halt upon their activities.

I now command the Hands of the Faith to stop all of their preparations for 1963 and furthermore I command all believers both as individual Baha'is and as assemblies of Baha'is to immediately cease cooperating with and giving support to this fallacious program for 1963.

I have delayed as long as I dare delay before issuing this command to the Bahá'í world < I, hoping that the Hands of the Faith would see for themselves that the will and testament of Abdu'l-Bahá was being violated and that they would of themselves abandon their stand. I, standing single and alone against the entire Bahá'í world but confirmed and steadfast in my assurance of ultimately saving the cause from this calamity. My assurance is based upon the authority that The Beloved Guardian gave me as President of the Council, the authority enabling me to act and assume command of the Bahá'ís that came to me at His death.

It is meet right and timely that I should make this announcement in this convention of Bahá'ís of America which land the Beloved Guardian called the "Cradle of the Administration." I make this call here and now standing single and alone before you but fully confident of your support and cooperation in all Bahá'í matters for you understand the Administration of the Faith and that I guard it from all violation and harm.

Because the Beloved Guardian called America the Cradle of the Bahá'í Administration, the American Bahá'ís have a very special and particular responsibility to which I am calling them now at this particular time.

I expect the friends in this convention to consider with prayer and with thought this declaration addressed to them, that is a declaration to the entire Bahá'í world. I expect them to accept me without question as their Commander-in-Chief in all Bahá'í matters and to follow me so long as I live for I am the Guardian of the Faith (the Infallible Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith).

The line of the Guardianship of the Bahá'í Faith is unbroken for I have been the Guardian of the Faith since the death of the Beloved Guardian Shoghi Effendi.

* * * * *

At their earliest convenience the National Assembly of the United States should communicate with me so that I can arrange to receive them. Since they are the first amongst the National Assemblies to be called into spiritual action by me their responsibilities are very great for I am calling this American National Assembly first from all other National Assemblies of the world to support me in my command of the Bahá'í Cause.

Dearly Beloved Friends, seated in convention in the land of the Cradle of the Administration of the Faith, this is all that I have to tell you now at this time.

With much love to you. Faithfully In El Abhá, MASON REMEY., GUARDIAN OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

Written by JJ Marangella

Cracks in the Covenant of Baha'u'llah and Baha'i Faith

Bahá'ís present their "Covenant" as something unique to their religion. They present it as an undisputable documented contract of inheritance, a will and testament, that is protected by God so that any violators against it will be rendered impotent by it. The Bahá'í Faith's history is full of fragmentation, and the course the Bahá'í Faith has taken quick surprise turns on a number of occasions.

The act that brought the Bahá'í Faith itself into existence was in defiance of such a covenant. The Báb's successor, was actually Mirza Yahya and Not Bahá'u'lláh. Bahá'ís produced evidence that Bahá'u'lláh was the Báb's intended successor, but did not deny that the Báb appointed Mirza Yahya.

Bahá'u'lláh appointed his eldest son Abdu'l-Bahá as his successor and after him his younger son Mohammed Ali. After the death of Abdu'l-Bahá although Mohammed Ali was alive still many followed, Shoghi effendi the grandson of Abdu'l-Bahá. Not following Mohammed Ali was Covenant Breaking of Bahá'u'lláh's writing.

Later, the third Bahá'í leader, Shoghi Effendi, died childless. Having failed to produce a will, and having failed to leave any clear indication of a successor, Shoghi left the Bahá'í world in a precarious situation. What he did was in apparent violation of the Bahá'í Covenant. The Bahá'ís whose allegiance lies with the heterodox organisation, those loyal to the Universal House of Justice currently seated in Haifa, Israel, maintain that those who are true to the Covenant will be empowered by the Covenant.

Bahá'í history shows us a different picture. At many times, the Bahá'ís who eventually prevailed were nearly vanquished. The Bahá'ís loyal to Universal House of Justice claims that they are a dominant group, but even that domination seems impotent and obscure, lacking the influence to even familiarize the world with the word Bahá'í in this information age.

Bahá'í history is mottled with inheritance disputes. In defense of their Covenant, Bahá'ís regard the darker periods as divine tests, arguing that egos are often tested by opportunities for power.

What Bahá'ís do not acknowledge is the fact that their history is just as fragmented as other religions, with breaks occurring from its first years to the years following the death of Shoghi Effendi.

At present The Bahá'ís are fragmented in following sects.1. [People of Bayan or Bayanis](#)2. [Essence Of the Baha'i Faith](#)3. [Unitarian Baha'is](#)4. [Free Baha'is](#)5. [Reform Baha'is](#)6. [New History Society](#)7. [Orthodox Baha'is](#) (followers of Joel B. Marangella)8. [Bahá'is Under the Provisions of the Covenant](#) (follower of Neal Chase)9. [Baha'is Loyal to the Guardian](#) (followers of Jacques Soghomonian)10. [Tarbiyat Baha'is](#) (followers of Rex King et al)

11. [Heterodox Bahá'is](#)12. [5 Elders](#)13. [Qurratis or Ayanis](#)

Three ways for Shoghi Effendi's followers to interpret Shoghi Effendi's unexpected death

1. Even though Shoghi Effendi appointed no successor, a successor must be found, because even if it is not clear who the legitimate successor is, it is more important for the institution of Guardianship to just continue. This is the position of the Orthodox Baha'is.
2. Shoghi Effendi appointed no successor so the institution of Guardianship must end. But we will go off and create the Universal House of Justice on our own, and give it powers which were previously under the domain of the Guardian (e.g. excommunication). This is the position of Haifan Baha'is.
3. Shoghi Effendi appointed no successor so the institution of Guardianship must end. But the Guardianship and the Universal House of Justice were designed to complement each other – one cannot exist without the other – so the Baha'i Faith must continue with neither a Guardian nor a Universal House of Justice. No one supports this view for some reason.

Shoghi Effendi's writings certainly do not seem to support option (2):

It should be stated, at the very outset, in clear and unambiguous language, that these twin institutions [Guardianship and the UHJ] of the Administrative Order of Bahá'u'lláh should be regarded as divine in origin, essential in their functions and complementary in their aim and purpose. Their common, their fundamental object is to insure the continuity of that divinely-appointed authority which flows from the Source of our Faith, to safeguard the unity of its followers and to maintain the integrity and flexibility of its teachings. Acting in conjunction with each other these two inseparable institutions administer its affairs, coördinate its activities, promote its interests, execute its laws and defend its subsidiary institutions. Severally, each operates within a clearly defined sphere of jurisdiction; each is equipped with its own attendant institutions—instruments designed for the effective discharge of its particular responsibilities and duties. Each exercises, within the limitations imposed upon it, its powers, its authority, its rights and prerogatives. These are neither contradictory, nor detract in the slightest degree from the position which each of these institutions occupies. Far from being incompatible or mutually destructive, they supplement each other's authority and functions, and are permanently and fundamentally united in their aims.

Divorced from the institution of the Guardianship the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh would be mutilated and permanently deprived of that hereditary principle which, as 'Abdu'l-Bahá has written, has been invariably upheld by the Law of God. "In all the Divine Dispensations," He states, in a Tablet addressed to a follower of the Faith in Persia, "the eldest son hath been given extraordinary distinctions. Even the station of prophethood hath been his birthright." Without such an institution the integrity of the Faith would be imperiled, and the stability of the entire fabric would be gravely endangered. Its prestige would suffer, the means required to enable it to take a long, uninterrupted view over a series of generations would be completely lacking, and the necessary guidance to define the sphere of the legislative action of its elected representatives would be totally withdrawn.

Severed from the no less essential institution of the Universal House of Justice this same System of the Will of 'Abdu'l-Bahá would be paralyzed in its action and would be powerless to fill in those gaps which the Author of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas has deliberately left in the body of His legislative and administrative ordinances.

—Shoghi Effendi, World Order of Baha'u'llah

Orthodox Bahai Succession



Mason Remey appointed Joel Marangella as a backup third guardian... Mason wrote, "in case I am prevented from appointing my successor, the President of this council will become the third guardian..."

The Glad Tidings

A BULLETIN OF THE BAHÁ'IS UNDER THE HEREDITARY GUARDIANSHIP

Published and Edited by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States

Vol. V, No. 5

P.O. Box 182, Santa Fe, N.M.

October 1964—TLM - 121 B.E.

HISTORIC APPOINTMENTS

GUARDIAN ANNOUNCES CREATION OF SECOND INTERNATIONAL BAHÁ'Í COUNCIL

The Guardian of the Faith announces to the Bahá'í World his decision to create the Second International Bahá'í Council. This Council will exist in name only until conditions in the Faith require it to function as a Body. All powers vested in the appointed members of this Council are "potential".

President of the Council	Joel B. Marangella
1st Vice President	Monir Derakhshan
2nd Vice President	Nawazish Ali Siyyid
3rd Vice President	John B. Byers
4th Vice President	James Barrett
5th Vice President	Jean Donat
6th Vice President	Bernard Fillon
7th Vice President	Ch. Tajud-Din
8th Vice President	Clarence M. McClymonds

In the event the Guardian should be prevented from appointing his successor to the Guardianship of the Faith, the President of this Council will become the Third Guardian of the Faith. If for any reason the President of the Council cannot assume this position, then the first Vice-President will move into that position and if he should be prevented from assuming the responsibilities of Guardianship then the second Vice-President will move into that position and so on down the line of Vice-Presidents in the order of their appointment by the Guardian.

We are living in the "Latter Days" of the Kingdom of man upon earth. These are uncertain times. Mankind is surrounded by diverse catastrophic happenings . . . none of which can be predicted with precision. Thus, to meet any conditions brought about as a result of any such catastrophe, provisions are being made for a number of "potential" successors to the Guardianship. In this way, the continuation of this divinely inspired Institution will be guaranteed.

The list of appointments as they appear above will remain in effect in their numerical order until further additions or rearrangements may be made by the Guardian.

In the Holy Name of Elí Ahhá,
s/ Mason Remey
Mason Remey, Second Guardian
Bahá'í World Faith
21 Sept., 1964 — Florence Italy

Joel Marangella becomes President of the Second International Bahá'í Council and backup 3rd Guardian. . .



Covenant Deepening for Baha'i Faith - Baha'u'llah's Constitution

Baha'i Faith
Covenant Deepening





THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH
UNDER THE
GUARDIANSHIP

God's Everlasting Covenant



The membership of both men and women
forms an irremovable part of the constitution of
the Universal House of Justice



Baha'i Faith
The World-Wide Baha'i Community



Baha'i
Other Native American
Islam
Christianity
Buddhism
Zoroastrianism

Thereupon the loved ones of the Lord arose, inspired with the greatest confidence and constancy and aided by the power of the Kingdom, by Divine Strength, by heavenly Grace, by the unfailing help and Celestial Bounty, they withstood the enemies of the Covenant in well-nigh three score and ten treatises and supported by conclusive proofs, unmistakable evidences and clear texts from the Holy Writ, they refuted their scrolls of doubt and mischief-kindling leaflets.

HE IS THE GLORY OF GLORIES! This is that which hath descended from the realm of glory, uttered by the tongue of power and might, and revealed unto the Prophets of old. We have taken the inner essence thereof and clothed it in the garment of brevity, as a token of grace unto the righteous, that they may stand faithful unto the Covenant of God, may fulfill in their lives His trust, and in the realm of spirit obtain the gem of Divine virtue.
 (Baha'u'llah: Arabic Hidden Words, page 1)

“[T]he twin institutions of the Administrative Order of Baha’u’llah should be regarded as divine in origin, essential in their functions and complementary in their aim and purpose... SEVERALLY, EACH operates within a clearly defined sphere of jurisdiction... Each exercises, within the limitations imposed upon it, its powers, its authority, its rights and prerogatives. These are neither contradictory, nor detract in the slightest degree from the position which each of these institutions occupies. Far from being incompatible or mutually destructive, they supplement each others’ authority and functions, and are permanently and fundamentally united in their aims.”

The Passing of Joel Bray Marangella- Guardian of Orthodox Baha'i Faith

On behalf of the Orthodox Baha'is, I am writing to let the Baha'i world know of the passing of the third Guardian of the Faith, Joel Bray Marangella, on September 1, 2013.

The fourth Guardian of the Baha'i Faith is Nosrat'u'llah Bahremand.

Jeffrey

Reference : <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!topic/talk.religion.bahai/m4lgXEYqoR8>

<http://orthodoxbahai.com/events/>

Orthodox Baha'is

- [Three ways for Shoghi Effendi's followers to interpret Shoghi Effendi's unexpected death](#)
- [Cracks in the Covenant of Baha'u'llah and Baha'i Faith](#)
- [Mason Remey's Proclamation to the Baha'is of the World](#)
- ["Other Baha'i Sects" Population and Popularity Increasing day after day !!](#)
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- [Orthodox Bahai Succession](#)
- [Charles Mason Remey](#)

Baha'i rift : Baha'is upset with Orthodox Baha'i Faith



Mainstream group doesn't want the name Baha'i by any other group

Read Complete story reported by : Chicago Tribune <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/chi-bahai-18-may18,0,6239589.story>

New link <http://archives.chicagotribune.com/2009/may/18/local/chi-bahai-18-may18>

Will and Testament of Abdul Baha is Fraudulent

Was Abdul Baha's "Will and Testament". produced to the general public after His death? Or, was it known to have existed before His death?

I don't think Abdul Baha's "Will and Testament" was known to have existed before his death. If it was, then at least the part appointing Shoghi Effendi as "Guardian" was unknown, because even Shoghi himself wrote that he had no idea before Abdul-Baha died that he would be given any position in the faith except possibly the ceremonial convener of the Universal House of Justice.

Bahiyih Khanum played a big role in persuading Bahais to accept the will and its appointment of Shoghi Effendi to Guardianship. In fact, for a couple of years after Abdul-Baha died, Bahiyih was running the faith and seen as its temporary head (at least among those who had rejected Mirza Muhammad Ali). She was the biggest champion of the appointment of Shoghi, and remained highly influential even after he returned to the Holy Land to assume the mantle of Guardianship following his years of vacationing in Switzerland after his nervous breakdown.

If the will was forged, I suppose one would have to consider Bahiyih Khanum as one of the logical suspects for who might have done the forging — as shocking as that thought may be — since she actually was leading the (non-Unitarian) Bahais at the time of Abdul-Baha's death and continued to do so for a long time. She had the power and thus the opportunity.

Eric S.

Abdul Baha regularly attended mosques!!

Abbas Effendi, who adopted the name Abdu'l-Baha ("Slave of Baha"), was the eldest son of Baha'u'llah. His father's will specified that Abdu'l-Baha was to be his successor. However, the will also explicitly states that anyone who claims to be the next Manifestation within the next thousands years is a liar.

This put Abdu'l-Baha in the position of being an infallible representative but without the same kind of divine authority held by his father. He also came into conflict with his younger half-brother Mirza Mohammed Ali, whom Baha'u'llah had named his successor after Abdu'l-Baha. Center of The Covenant:

Abdu'l-Baha took the title "Center of the Covenant," implying that he was link between God and humanity. This was a position many Baha'is felt could only be filled by a Manifestation of God, of which Abdu'l-Baha could not be. Abdu'l-Baha also claimed that only he had the right to interpret his father's writings, and that his interpretations were infallible.

While he did not explicitly claim it, many loyal Baha'is came to view Abdu'l-Baha as an extension of his father, so while he was not a Manifestation of God in his own right he was still generally viewed as a divine being (as all Manifestations are).

Split Between Brothers: Ali took the lead among objectors to Abdu'l-Baha's claims of authority. Many other family members and old and trusted friends of Baha'u'llah also voiced dissent. Abdu'l-Baha's response was to excommunicate them and label them "Violators of the Covenant."

In 1901, the strife between the two feuding sides became so intense that the Ottoman Empire confined the Baha'is once more to Akka, revoking the freedom to travel that they had experienced for many previous years. This continued until 1908, when all political prisoners – of which the Baha'is were included – were freed as part of the Turkish Revolution.

World Travel: Unlike his predecessors, Abdu'l-Baha traveled extensively, including Egypt, Great Britain, France, Germany, Hungary and the United States. These travels were missionary in purpose, exposing greater numbers of people to Baha'i teachings as well as setting an example for them of how Baha'is are expected to conduct themselves.

In 1912, Abdu'l-Baha was present for the dedication of the Baha'i temple in Chicago, one of only seven Baha'i temples in the entire world. The temple would not be finished for more than forty years.

Shaping the Baha'i Faith: Abdu'l-Baha's writings have remained very influential within the Baha'i Faith to the present day. His list of the ten principles of Baha'u'llah is still commonly repeated today as the central goals of the Baha'i Faith despite the fact that several of the principles do not appear in Baha'u'llah's writings at all.

Death and Burial:

Will: Abdu'l-Baha's will effectively cut Ali from the Baha'i succession, contrary to the explicit decree of Baha'u'llah. Instead, he established the position of Guardian, and the first was to be his grandson Shoghi Effendi.

Reference: <http://altreligion.about.com>

The Secret activities of Abdul Baha

“One of the followers of ‘Abbas Efendi named Mirza Mansur, who is now in India, was therefore commanded by his master to proceed at once to Jedda and there conspire with the Hajji above mentioned for the destruction of Mirza Yahya. At that time the said Hajji was also at ‘Akka, But whether the plot was concocted there or at Jedda I am unable to say. To be brief, one night Mirza Mansur succeeded in administering to Mirza Yahya a poison which killed him at once. The subtlety of this plot lay in the perpetration of this horrid deed in such a city as Jedda 1.

“Before the conspiracy had accomplished its purpose, Abbas Efendi had written from ‘Akka to one of his friends informing him that some such calamity would befall Mirza Yahya and that he would be punished, Hajji Mirza Hasan of Khurasan published in Cairo a pamphlet concerning this even and the ‘Great miracle’ wrought herein by ‘Abbas Efendi. It is unnecessary to send you this lengthy pamphlet, our object being merely to make known to you the character of these peoples’ intrigues. You must employ every needful precaution, for, should they be unsuccessful or disappointed in inducing you to return to their party, they will endeavor by every means and without scruple’ to injure you. Concerning what befell Mirza Yahya we have heard from certain persons who were at Jedda at the time that as he had no heirs, and as his father-in-law, the said Hajji was of ‘Abbas Efendi’s party and was also Persian Vice-Consul at Jedda, no one appeared to demand an enquiry into the causes of his death.

I therefore entreat you carefully to avoid taking from the hands of these people any food, drink, or other thing, although we know that the Lord (Glory be to Him) is the protector and Sustainer, and will without doubt protect His ends and shelter those who love Him, especially him who displayed the greatest energy, and has fought so faithfully in preaching to the people the Manifestation of His Most Great Name al-Abha.

“Mirza Abu’l-Fazl [of Gulpayagan] and Hajji Mirza Hasan [of Khurasan] and the others, while they were here recently, did not visit any of the Unitarians, neither the Blessed branches (Aghsan)² nor the others. They neither wrote nor spoke to them concerning the differences of faith, and some of them used even to avert their faces from them if they happened to pass each other in the street.”

1. Where the crime would easily pass unnoticed as, in fact, was the case 2.i.e. ‘Abbas Efendi’s three younger half-brothers, Muhammad Ali, Badi’ullah and Ziya’ullah.

Infallibility and Scientific Knowledge of Abdul Baha!!

`Abdu'l-Bahá must have kept in touch with the popular accounts of science in his time, at least occasionally. For instance, he was aware of Maxwell's aether hypothesis:

—Bahá'í World Faith; Tablet to August Forel

—Some Answered Questions, pg. 190

. The only reason that Maxwell ever invoked the concept was so that electromagnetic radiation would not propagate in a void. Why did he need an ether? Because he needed a mechanistic medium for electromagnetic radiation to propagate through. **Einstein rejected this mechanistic thinking because (1) it was superfluous and scientifically useless, and (2) it contradicted the principle of relativity and the experimental evidence thereof.**

The ether was not the only example of `Abdu'l-Bahá's outmoded mechanistic thinking. Here's another:

– Paris Talks

Not long after the discovery of radiation, Einstein described that any matter can be transformed into energy.

– Albert Einstein

After several Nobel Prizes had been awarded for these breakthroughs, `Abdu'l-Bahá was still thinking in terms of the science of the previous century.

Bahá'is respond in different ways to this problem. Some say that `Abdu'l-Bahá was not infallible regarding matters of science, and claim that he never claimed to be. These Bahá'is fail to recognize the obvious.

– Shoghi Effendi, Arohanui (1946)

I can't quite see what a special "intuitive knowledge" would have to do with knowing whether Socrates visited Israel and learned about God from rabbis. That's not intuition, but something nearer to omniscience.

Notwithstanding this "official" pronouncement of his infallibility, there is an unofficial account of [`Abdu'l-Bahá denying such infallibility](#).

Some hope that Einstein and modern physics are somehow mistaken, and hence follow every pseudo scientist that claims to have evidence thereof. Some Bahá'is claim that `Abdu'l-Bahá was speaking metaphorically, but fail to present a metaphor.

Truth Behind Will and Testament of Abdul Baha

At the time of the passing of Sir Abbas Effendi in 1921, the only members of the Baha's family, unaffected by Sir Abbas Effendi's clutches, and were in good book were Sir Abbas Effendi's full sister Sultan or Bahiyya Khanum, surnamed the supreme leaf (Waraqa-i-Uliyya), Sir Abbas Effendi's wife lady Munira, Sir Abbas Effendi's four daughters, Sir Effendi's four sons-in-law.

It was in such circumstance that after the death of Sir Abbas Effendi, his will came to public in which Shoghi Effendi was inducted into office as Guardian of the cause under the terms of Sir Abbas Effendi's will and testament, for which no probate was taken out. Apparently an irregularity which set people wondering whether THE WILL AND TESTAMENT IS REAL...? During his life span Sir Abbas Effendi had never declared him as his successor, since as per the Will and Testament of Baha'u'llah, Mohammed Ali Effendi was supposed to take the chair of guardianship after Sir Abbas Effendi.

Pleading inability to enter upon the duties of his office forthwith to recover from the shock caused by appointment as guardian, Shoghi Effendi withdrew his hand from the things, retired into solitude for a number of years, and left the actual handling of the Bahai affair in the hands of the elderly members of the Sir Abbas Effendi's family with Baha's daughter the supreme leaf as a titular head, who served as a mere rubber-stamp, master minded by Sir Abbas Effendi's wife lady Munira.

On the one hand, the Father, Baha'u'llah designates Muhammad Ali as "the Branch derived from the ancient stock, He whom God has chosen, the Most Great Branch, God's proof among his creation, and the Sweet Savor of God between the heaven and the earth", on the other hand, the son, Abdul Baha Abbas "the Center of the Covenant, the Most Mighty Branch, the Branch derived from the ancient stock", brands Muhammad Ali as "the Center of sedition, a ferocious lion, a ravening wolf, a blood-thirsty beast, and poisoner of others, a covenant-breaker, a kindler of discord, a shower of malice, a stirrer of sedition, a dishonor of God, and a temperer with the sacred writings".

The question is: Has Baha'u'llah erred in his divine judgment of Muhammad Ali?

Shoghi Effendi came out of his retirement, took over the reins of the Bahai administration, and demanded ready and implicit obedience from the servants of God, in default of which any servant of God was liable to excommunication or summary expulsion from the faith under same pretence and pretext. Shoghi Effendi brooked interference. His decisions were absolute and final and his words authoritative. As the divinely-ordained guardian all the faithful must obey him. Alleged Will and Testament.

Extract from "Is the Baha'i organization enemy of Baha'i religion", By close companion and loyal disciple of Abdul Baha Ms Ruth White. Two months after the death of Abdul Baha his sister sent the following cablegram to this country: January 16, 1922 Haifa, Wilhelmitte, N. Y.

In will, Shoghi Effendi appointed Guardian of the Cause and Head of House of Justice. (Signed) GREATEST Holy Leaf.

A typewritten translation of the alleged will arrived in America four weeks later and was read by Mr. Horace Holley to a gathering of Baha'is.

The appointment of a successor came as a thunderbolt out of a clear sky to all the Baha'is, as Abdul Baha had given no hint that he intended to appoint a successor. On the contrary, he said that after him the power of the Baha'i Cause was to vest in what will be known as Houses of Justice. Among many instances that could be cited is the following, published in the official magazine of the Baha'i organization. (The Star of the West, November 23, 1913, p. 238)

Not only Ruth White but the entire Western nation was in shock by the appointment of Shoghi Effendi, as Will and Testament of Baha'u'llah was known to the faithful that after the demise of Abdul Baha the next successor is Mohammed Ali Effendi the Most Greatest Branch. But for Ms Ruth White it was more shocking because she knew a bit more about Shoghi Effendi, she narrates incident about Shoghi Effendi.

Conversion of Funds for Private Use

Ruth White: The subject converted funds to his own use. The Bahai religion and its Enemy the Bahai Organization by Ruth White, the Tuttle Company, Rutland, Vermont 1929.

Ruth White says: "In the Autumn of 1919 I sent to Abdul Baha [i.e. Sir Abbas Effendi] an American Express Company check of Five hundred dollars and asked him to apply it to some of the many charities he was dispensing.

About four months after we arrived in Haifa as the guests of Abdul Baha. On the day before departure I asked Abdul Baha if he had received the check. Without a moment's hesitation and very emphatically he said that he had not received it. He repeated this a number of times, and seemed indignant that it had not been turned over to him.

I discussed this with various members of the family of Abdul Baha, and one of the brothers-in-law said he would go to town and enquire about the matter. He returned and said there was no record of the check. When I returned to America I asked the American Express Company to look up the receipt of the check I had sent through their office, and on the back of it was the signature of the person who had received the cash. This person was Shoghi Rabbani [i.e. Shoghi Effendi].

I asked the American Express Company to Photostat this check for me, which they did. Herewith it is a reproduction of the check with the signature of Sh. Rabbani on the back. Here then is proof positive that Shoghi Effendi cashed out the check and also proof that the son-in-law [presumably Mirza Muhsin Afrian] who purported to enquire of the check did not do it at all. Otherwise, he would have ascertained in a few minutes from the office of the American Express Company at Haifa that the check had been cashed by Sh. Rabbani, as I had given the son-in-law

the whole information, the date of sending, the name of sender, etc. All of which shows that there was collusion between the son-in-law and Shoghi Effendi. Circumstantial evidence also points to the fact that Shoghi Effendi used the money to go to Oxford University.

For immediately after cashing the check he departed for Oxford, this despite the fact that Abdul Baha did not wish him to go. Some may naturally ask: How could Shoghi Effendi have cashed the check unless he had authority to do so. This he may have had. Yet the fact remain that the proceeds were never turned over to Abdul Baha. My readers may, therefore, draw their own conclusions."

An Examination of Will and Testaments of Abdul Baha

After the above incident in mind Ms. Ruth White understood that this will and testament is either completely forged or a part of it is forged she obtain a photocopy of original Will and testament And send for forensic test. The result was as she expected. As per the forensic lab of the report of Dr. C. Ainsworth Mitchell, the handwriting expert for the British Museum, and editor of THE ANALYST. Readers can find the entire report on

http://www.reformbahai.org/CAMitchell_Report.html

Kamar Bahai grand daughter of Baha'u'llah after the hearing the appointment of Shoghi Effendi has raised her voice in many news paper of Akka and Palestine here I bring from her petition few point which she has raised

from Page 1-2

Following the death of Abbas Effendi, Shoki Rabbani who was then still young, claimed that he was holding a WILL from his grand-father. on his mother's side, As Abbess Effendi, did not beget any male children. In accordance with this Will, which is counterfeit, Shoki Rabbani was nominated successor. The Behais subsequently split among themselves, of them there were adherents of Mohammed Ali Effendi, the son of BehalUlla who was to be the legal successor to his brother in accordance with his father's Will, while Shoki Rabbani had few Supporters amongst his relatives.

.....Abbas Effendi, whom they believed and trusted could not possibly entertain the Idea of the non-fulfilment of his father's Will It is therefore illogical that Abbes Effendi, should have committed the blunder of Appointing his young grand son as his successor and set aside his experienced brother who bore great suffering and struggled hand in hand with him to advance the movement

Conclusion

Why the Baha'i faithful were shock to read the will and testament of Abdul Baha appointing Shoghi Effendi as Guardian. Ms. Ruth White has mentioned in her book.

1 I also wish to give a few high-lights on Shoghi Effendi, the grandson of Abdul Baha, who is now his alleged successor. He had failed in his college course at the age of twenty-four, and he wished to go to Oxford University, in the autumn of 1919. Despite the objections of Abdul Baha he went. This act demonstrates that Shoghi Effendi had little consideration for the wishes of his grandfather, who was then seventy-four years of age. It also shows that he was lacking in the spiritual attributes which would have enabled him to know that it was of far more value to be with Abdul Baha, both spiritually and mentally, during the last two years of his life, than any amount of academic training could possibly be. 2

Yet Shoghi Effendi chose to be away during the last two years of Abdul Baha's life, and did not return for a full month after he had passed from this world. 3

Another significant fact to which I wish to call attention is this: If Abdul Baha had had any secret intention of appointing Shoghi Effendi as Guardian of the Bahai Cause, it does not seem plausible that he would have excluded him from the entourage that accompanied him on his trip through Europe and America during 1912. Shoghi Effendi at that time was eighteen years of age and spoke and wrote English, Persian and Arabic; yet he was not included in this trip. Even after Abdul Baha returned to Palestine, instead of choosing Shoghi Effendi as his secretary, he chose Ahmad Sohrab, who had accompanied him to Europe and America, and who continued as his secretary for five succeeding years. 4

Why the will and testament of Abdul Baha came to public after two months of his demise. And why Shoghi Effendi took charge of Guardian ship after two years. 5

Who has given authority to Bhaiyyeh Khanum and Lady Munira (grand mother of Shoghi) to manage the affairs of Baha'i community for two years.

It is clear as sunny day that Will and Testament of Abdul Baha was tempered and Madam Munira planted Shoghi Effendi as guardian as she promise her daughter that guardianship will be in her children. And as the will and Testament was fake or tempered the prophecy which is mentioned in forged Will and Testament of Abdul Baha of having guardian ship in Shoghi Efendi's first born son was not fulfilled as Shoghi died Childless and left no Will

Why Universal House of Justice is tide lip for the Lab report of Dr. C. Ainsworth Mitchell and investigation of Loyal Bahai like Ms. Ruth White and Herрман Zimmer and Granddaughter of Baha'u'llah Kamar Beha'i

Physics according to Abdul Baha :In Baha'i Faith the Sun is Fixed!!!

Fixed Sun: (Physics according to Abdu'l-Baha)

“The animal cannot become aware of the fact that the earth is revolving and the sun stationary. Only processes of reasoning can come to this conclusion. The outward eye sees the sun as revolving. It mistakes the stars and the planets as moving about the earth. But reason decides their orbit, knows that the earth is moving and the other worlds fixed, knows that the sun is the solar center and ever occupies the same place, proves that it is the earth which revolves around it. Such conclusions are entirely intellectual, not according to the senses.” (Abdu'l-Baha, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 416)

“The sun stationary”. Sun is not stationary. It is funny that he said “animal cannot become aware of the fact that the earth is revolving and the sun stationary” and he (as a ‘human’) was Wrong and thought that Sun was stationary!

So Abdul-baha believed that Sun is Fixed and Stationary, and other planets orbits this sun. If you show this quote to a Baha'i, because they don't want to say Abdul-Baha was wrong, they would say: “We have to look at the spiritual meaning of that quote and what Abdul-Baha is referring to is NOT the physical sun but the spiritual sun (which usually is God!!!) BUT this notion is Completely wrong!! Because

1. NO where in this quote we see the word “Spiritual”. So we can conclude that he was talking about physical reality and not the “spiritual reality” (If there is such a thing)
2. He talks about earth, planets, and other worlds, so we can be 100% sure that he was referring to the physical sun!
3. If he was talking about the “spiritual worlds”, then why did he not say it directly? That way people could understand him better!!!

Remember! Sun is NEITHER FIXED IN MOTION, NOR IN NUMBERS!

Also, “the sun is the solar center and ever occupies the same place”. Really? The sun is going to be there for ever?! What if a black-hole consumes it?

Abdul Baha was a Racist !!!

As a true seeker of the independent variety, I am sorry to say one of the three Bahai central figures called Abdu'l-Bahá `Abbás did make remarks which would be considered in today's European Union as racist, but are considered divine and sacred by the institutions of the Baha'i Faith.

Tablets of `Abdu'l-Bahá `Abbás Pages 576-580 "O ye beloved of God and maid-servants of the Merciful.
<http://www.ibiblio.org/Bahai/Texts/EN/TAB/TAB-628.html>

"The inhabitants of a country like Africa are all as wandering savages and wild animals; they lack intelligence and knowledge; all are uncivilized; not one civilized and wise man is to be found among them. On the contrary, consider the civilized countries, the inhabitants of which are living in the highest state of culture and ethics, solidarity and inter-dependence; possessing, with few exceptions, acute power of comprehensions and sound mind"

A century ago such remarks would have been the accepted norm amongst white Europeans and less than white Iranians. But calling someone with a dark skin "savage, a wild animal or a Nigger" today, can end you up in jail in the new EU of 26 countries as this report in the Irish Emigrant shows:

"Michael McNulty (40), of Cabra in Dublin, was sentenced to a month in prison for shouting a racist remark at a man from Sierra Leone. McNulty was cycling in the city centre in May when he shouted at Nicholas Jacob, who had been living in Ireland for the past three years, "Hey, you nigger, go home to your own country, you black bastard". Two gardai who were in the vicinity heard the remark and arrested McNulty immediately.
<http://www.emigrant.ie/article.asp?iCategoryID=177&iArticleID=5466>"

There are a number of other cases recently were a Member of Parliament, a sports presenter and a TV show host have all been severely reprimanded for racist remarks to the public, the media, or on TV.

However, in challenging Abdu'l-Bahá's above statement, I have to say Africa is not a country, but a large continent. History also informs us there were civilizations in Egypt, Ethiopia and the Sudan (countries within Africa) long before civilizations appeared in Europe and certain parts of Asia.

In another book titled The Secret of Divine Civilization <http://www.ibiblio.org/Bahai/Texts/EN/SDC/SDC-1.html> author Abdul Baha informs the Persian people of the historical collapse of their own past empire and civilisation. So who is Abdul Baha to judge, that Africa never had previous civilisations who have come and gone long before Dr Livingstone discovered "Dark Africa" for Christ and "The British Empire" in the 1860's
<http://homepage.nflworld.com/haywardlad/darkafrika1.html>

Regards **Truseeker**.

What did Abdul Baha think about Africa and African People ?!

It is interesting that Africa is the only place the Faith is really succeeding in light of ‘Abdu’l-Baha’s extremely disparaging comments about Africa. Even most people who have left the Faith like myself do not seem to really ever comment on the fact ‘Abdu’l-Baha’s comments are really quite shocking.

To his credit he doesn’t attribute the inferiority of Africans he describes to genetics but he really comes across very much of his time, and even those who would spin his comments in the best positive light (viewing them as encouragement to “civilize” the ignorant Africans) seem ignorant as to how advanced much of African civilization was even dating back to prehistory.

Here are some of his comments regarding Africa:

<https://reference.bahai.org/en/t/ab/TAB/tab-625.html>

One may claim ‘Abdu’l-Baha is merely giving a speculative comment and not his own views when he goes on about not one civilized African existing here, but he attributes these comments to the “republic of wise men” clearly showing he is viewing this comment about Africans acting like wild animals in a positive light. His comments in Some Answered Questions and elsewhere strongly support the view that the view of Africans as wandering savage animals is very much a view he shares and endorses:

<https://reference.bahai.org/en/t/ab/SAQ/saq-78.html.utf8>

<https://reference.bahai.org/en/t/ab/SAQ/saq-29.html.utf8>

<https://reference.bahai.org/en/t/ab/PUP/pup-119.html.utf8>

...

<https://reference.bahai.org/en/t/ab/PUP/pup-101.html.utf8>

<https://reference.bahai.org/en/t/ab/PUP/pup-97.html.utf8>

<https://reference.bahai.org/en/t/ab/PUP/pup-105.html.utf8>

<https://reference.bahai.org/en/t/ab/PUP/pup-45.html.utf8>

How do Baha’is reconcile this? Other than the standard religious line of “Beloved Leader knows best, accept his thoughts and shut up or excommunication for you”.

If one respects ‘Abdu’l-Baha as a philosopher then his comments are quite progressive for the time and reflect a big improvement on the view of full eugenicists but by modern standards his comments are very ignorant.

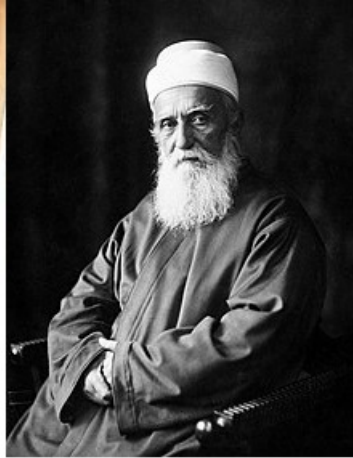
The Baha’i community paints its efforts in Africa as being about empowerment and empowering locals to take charge of their own spiritual development. How is this in any way reconcilable with ‘Abdu’l-Baha’s firm “White Man’s Burden” view that Africans have no morals and must be civilized through education being given to them?

Was Abdul Baha Beloved of God ?

Abdul Baha: Canine teeth are for hard shells such as almonds



**Canine Teeth are
designed to break Hard
Shell**



Abdu'l-Baha says :

Abdu'l-Baha claims that the four human canine teeth have been created for the breaking nuts like almonds ! Firstly , breaking nuts using teeth are dentists' (and parents') worst nightmares ! The easiest way to chip one's canines is to try to break open a nut with them.

Secondly ,even if one does want to make the unwise choice of breaking nuts with their teeth, they will go about doing so using their molars , not canines, for the canines are in no way suited for this task.

1. Helen Bassett Hornby, Lights of Guidance: A Baha'i Reference File, chapter XXIV, no. 1007.

UHJ

- [Baha'is are just interested to Convert the People to Baha'i Faith](#)
- [Women NOT allowed to serve the UHJ for at least 1,000 years!](#)
- [There are two types of UHJ in the Baha'i writings.](#)
- [UHJ lied about the meaning of "proselytizing"](#)
- [UHJ is interested in having more Martyrs from Iran!](#)
- [Baha'is committing adultery would make the UHJ the richest Organization in the World](#)
- [A Letter of Protest to UHJ Member by Grand Daughter of Abdul Baha](#)
- [The Status of UHJ](#)
- [Orthodox Baha'i Faith v/s UHJ](#)
- [Why Do Bahais Deny the UHJ Being Clergy?](#)

Sects in Baha'i Faith

- [Unpacking Bahá'u'lláh's Mystical Language](#)
- [Critics of the Bahá'í Faith: An In-depth Analysis](#)
- [Subh-i-Azal Lived Longer than Baha'u'llah](#)
- [Different Baha'i Sects fighting amongst themselves over the use of 'name'](#)
- ["There is no excommunication from Baha'í" !!?](#)
- [Shoghi Effendi contradicts Abdu'l-Baha](#)
- ["Other Baha'i Sects" Population and Popularity Increasing day after day !!](#)
- [Who Created the sects in Bahai Faith?](#)
- [Victory for the different sects of Baha'is](#)
- [Download Books on Baha'i sects](#)

Census

- [Unpacking the Numbers – Baha’i Census Figures](#)
- [Anti Conversion Law and Baha’i Faith in India](#)
- [Website of the Baha’is of India – BUPC](#)
- [Baha’i Leadership Caught Fraudulently Misstating Facts For Political Purposes](#)
- [Rehmatullah Muhajir – Pioneer of Fraud Practices in Baha’i Faith](#)
- [Baha’is Exaggeration of their figures Exposed In India Census 2011](#)
- [Baha’i Census is a big LIE with wildly exaggerated number of adherents and localities](#)
- [UK Census 2011, exposes the false Claims of Bahá’is](#)
- [Where are the 7 million Baha’is ??](#)
- [How many Bahais are in India?](#)

Guardianship

- [Critics of the Bahá'í Faith: An In-depth Analysis](#)
- [Lineage of Guardianship in Baha'i Faith](#)
- [Guardianship of the Baha'i Faith Continues](#)
- [The Guardian Problem in Baha'i Faith](#)
- [Baha'i Faith-Divorced from the institution of the Guardianship](#)
- [The Guardianship was an innovation of Abdu'l-Baha's and his wife.](#)
- [THE ESSENTIALITY OF THE GUARDIANSHIP TO THE WORLD ORDER OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH](#)
- [Baha'i rift : Baha'is upset with Orthodox Baha'i Faith](#)
- [A BREAK IN THE LINE OF GUARDIANSHIP](#)
- [GUARDIANSHIP...A MAJOR ISSUE IN BAHAI FAITH](#)

Baha'u'llah

- [Unpacking Bahá'u'lláh's Mystical Language](#)
- [How many People were Killed by Baha'u'llah ?](#)
- [Real Picture of Baha'u'llah](#)
- [Was Bahauallah really Divine ???!!!!](#)
- [Why Bahauallah had three wives ??? \(An open Question to all Baha'is \)](#)
- [Bahauallah broke the Babi Rule by marrying 3 wives !!](#)
- [Bahauallah said Don't Shave your head, but don't let it grow beyond your ears!](#)
- [Who is 'Bahauallah'?? Husayn Ali Nuri OR Yahya Nuri](#)
- [Bahauallah: Prophet or God?](#)
- [Why Baha'is are not allowed to keep image of Bahauallah??](#)

Real Picture of Baha'u'llah

As a Bahá'í youth, I remember not being impressed with the photographs I had seen of Bahá'u'lláh. Having grown up with charming images of `Abdu'l-Bahá, my expectations were high, and unfair to Bahá'u'lláh.

Portraits of `Abdu'l-Bahá are as common as the Virgin Mary in Bahá'í households, and they have guidelines for posting these portraits in a respectful manner. In spite of this idolatrous practice, Bahá'ís consider themselves special for not displaying portraits of Bahá'u'lláh!

I don't intend to criticize Bahá'u'lláh for his lack of physical charm. There is certainly no absolute need for a Manifestation of God to have a warm, charming appearance, but when I hear Bahá'ís wonder at the attractiveness of `Abdu'l-Bahá, I am moved to ask, why do you place significance on such matters?

I can't help but be skeptical regarding the motives behind the Bahá'í prohibition against portraits of Prophets. Given the Bahá'í affection for graven images, I'm inclined to wonder whether the prohibition would have ever been laid down had Bahá'u'lláh been better looking.

Bahá'ís are told not to keep photos of their Prophets because such photos could too easily become idols; believers would focus on the appearance of their prophet, and be distracted from his message.

Yet, the anticipation of Bahá'ís to view the one Holy Image in the International Archives Building in Israel is only heightened by that prohibition of graven images, and Bahá'ís shudder at the prospect of seeing the image of Bahá where they ought not, as though the image itself has some kind of ominous power!

These are prophecies about Bahauallah?

I was doing some research and came across this site:

<http://bci.org/prophecy-fulfilled/founders.htm> claims that these are prophecies:

Since I was raised Christian I'll deal with the Christian "Prophecies".

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven will be shaken; then will appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory; and he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."— **Matthew 24.29-31**

That was referring to Jesus, the son of man and son of God were just titles for him. I'm not sure if Jesus was God or if Christianity is even true anymore but that's not the point- this was not a prophecies about Bahauallah.

"If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter... he shall teach you all things." — **JESUS- John 14**

He was talking about the Holy spirit. Whom he gave to his disciples when he allegedly rose from the dead. And if it is a prophecy about someone who came after him what about Muhammad?

"Him that overcometh... I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the... new Jerusalem... and I will write upon him my new name." — **JESUS- Revelation 3**

Well, Revelation is a book written by a mad man or it was talking about the Roman Empire or maybe Baylon empire using symbols and taken as a prophecy either way, no one sane takes this seriously.

I'm sure Muslims will have the same issues with the so called Islamic prophecies.

Seon

Courtesy: http://groups.google.com/group/talk.religion.bahai/browse_thread/thread/2131e56e744fc700#

Bab and Bahaullah were both false prophets!

So, These former **Bahais** were either excommunicated, or just left the faith on their own. However, there are still many blind people in the Bahai faith who think that they are right and the majority of the world is wrong. It's just too bad that the **Bahais** are trying to seek truth with a lie. If the first Jesus was created (which he was) and never walked the earth as a human being, then Bahaullah absolutely can not be the second coming of Christ, but a man suffering from delusions of grandeur. And, because both the Bab and Bahaullah enslaved other human beings, neither is a "perfect reflection of God" but ordinary human beings who have made mistakes in life just like the rest of us. And, God allowed the Bab to be shot up and killed, so that all people would know that the Bab and Bahaullah were both false prophets and were even denied by God Himself. The millenium always changes with the zodiac. The zodiac changes every 2000 years in accordance with their signs in the night sky. So, there can never be any mistake concerning when events will happen. We are about to experience a changing in the Zodiac-better known as "the latter days". I can't stand liars and deceivers, and the exiled Persian **Bahais** in America and Israel are nothing more than liars and deceivers who can not be trusted!

Bahau'llah's Claims and the Reality

Making a claim is one thing, but backing it up is another matter! Bahau'llah is the founder of the Baha'i Faith. At wikipedia.org site we find that Bahá'u'lláh, the divine founder of the Bahai Faith, has made the following claims:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bah%C3%A1%27u%27l%C3%A1h>

Bahau'llah's Claims:

1-Bahá'u'lláh declared that he was the “Promised One” of all religions, fulfilling the messianic prophecies found in world religions.[1]

2-He stated that his claims to being several messiahs converging one person were the symbolic, rather than literal, fulfilment of the messianic and eschatological prophecies found in the literature of the major religions.[1]

3-Bahá'u'lláh's eschatological claims constitute six distinctive messianic identifications: from Judaism, the incarnation of the “Everlasting Father” from the Yuletide prophecy of Isaiah 9:6, the “Lord of Hosts”; from Christianity, the “Spirit of Truth” or Comforter predicted by Jesus in his farewell discourse of John 14-17 and the return of Christ “in the glory of the Father”; from Zoroastrianism, the return of Shah Bahram Varjavand, a Zoroastrian messiah predicted in various late Pahlavi texts; from Shi'a Islam the return of the Third Imam, Imam Husayn; from Sunni Islam, the return of Jesus, Isa; and from Bábism, He whom God shall make manifest.[1]

4-While Bahá'u'lláh did not claim himself to be either the Hindu or Buddhist messiah, he did so in principle through his writings.[1]

5-Later, `Abdu'l-Bahá stated that Bahá'u'lláh was the Kalki avatar, who in the classical Hindu Vaishnavas tradition is the tenth and final avatar (great incarnation) of Vishnu who will come to end The Age of Darkness and Destruction.[1]

6-Bahá'is also believe that Bahá'u'lláh is the fulfilment of the prophecy of appearance of the Maitreya Buddha, who is a future Buddha who will eventually appear on earth, achieve complete enlightenment, and teach the pure Dharma.[45]

7-Bahá'is believe that the prophecy that Maitreya will usher in a new society of tolerance and love has been fulfilled by Bahá'u'lláh's teachings on world peace.[45]

8-Bahá'u'lláh is believed to be a descendant of a long line of kings in Persia through Yazdgerd III, the last monarch of the Sasanian Dynasty;[2] he also asserted to be a descendant of Abraham through his third wife Keturah.[46]

It is easy claiming something, but the test is; can he back it up?

from Judaism, the incarnation of the “Everlasting Father”

Doesn't the “Everlasting Father” means that this divine Father does not die and he is living in Heaven forever? But, Bahau'llah (1817-1892) died at age of 75, like any other human being.

from Christianity, the “Spirit of Truth” or Comforter predicted by Jesus in his farewell discourse of John 14-17 and the return of Christ “in the glory of the Father”

The whole theology of Christianity evolves around the “Original Sin” and “Virgin Mary”. But, Bahau'llah was born to his parents, and he had three wives and a dozen children. This looks Bahau'llah, as the Returning Jesus, entirely has abolished the whole notion of the Christianity! Besides, the First Jesus could not be killed, he resurrected himself and he ascended to Heaven. But Bahau'llah as the Returning Jesus unfortunately had lost this capability and he died and he got buried under six foot earth!

from Shi'a Islam the return of the Third Imam, Imam Husayn.

In Shia Islam, they do not expect the return of the third Imam; Imam Husayn! They expect the return of the twelfth Imam, Imam Mehdi; he is the “Promised One”! Imam Mehdi is supposed to reveal his identity at a designated time, and conquer the whole world and glorify Islam.

It is worth mentioning that Imam Mehdi, the twelfth Imam, was born in 868 AD and according to Shia Islam he was hidden by God at the age of five. He is still alive but his identity is concealed. He is waiting for the time that God has decreed for his return. So, Imam Mehdi has been living over 1100 years, and upon his return he will be victorious over the evildoers. But, Bab (1819 -1850), the initiator of the Bahai Faith, claimed that he was Imam Mehdi, and he got killed by the verdict from the Shia Clergies for heresy. One might ask why the Returning Imam Mehdi (Bab) got killed without fulfilling his mission!?

From the outcome of Bab's life, we can conclude that either Bab was an imposter! Or, the Shiite Faith has a false prophecy! In either case that makes Bab an imposter! Because, when you claim that you are the “Promised One” and you have showed up to complete your mission, then you are obligated to deliver the promised prophecy. Any failure, for any reason, negates the assumed claim.

While Bahá'u'lláh did not claim himself to be either the Hindu or Buddhist messiah, he did so in principle through his writings.

Budda taught people how to live their life without invoking God in his teachings. But Bahau'llah, as the Returning Budda, gave his new instructions

to people from his divine state of being! Then, we can conclude that Buddha was wrong ignoring God in his early instructions!

It looks there is no limits for Man's Arrogance! As soon as few people admiring us for our cisma or our talent, we tend to boast our status beyond any known deity! Because this Returning Jesus who is fulfilling the prophecies of all the other religions is far more complete than the Jesus who fulfilled just the Jews prophecies.

Hitler said and I paraphrase it; when you make an unbelievable lie the people tend to believe you! And the reason for that is so simple; they rationalize that this has to be true otherwise nobody dare to make this kind of outrageous lies and get away with it! In this case, Bahauallah claimed to be the embodiment of the Most Revered "Promised One" of all the religions, and Bahais are believing him whole heartily! The amazing part is, that most Bahais are highly educated and very informed people. And I thought no man could be this Gaullible, especially when you can read these kinds of evidences!

What was the scope of Bahaullah's Knowledge?

Bahá'ís put no limits on the knowledge of the Manifestations. Yet Bahá'u'lláh, in one of his holiest books, has admitted to being unable to know a subject without reading it:

Bahá'u'lláh, Kitáb-i-Íqán, pages 184–5



Bab v/s Bahaullah

One of the strange turns in Bahá'í legal history was the reversal of the Báb's progressive consent decree:

Kitáb-i-Aqdas

In making this pronouncement, Bahá'u'lláh returned to parents the final say in the choice of spouses.

Though this seems to be a regressive move to the modern observer, Bahá'ís are compelled to find something progressive in it, and thus take an orthodox stance.

I can say from personal observations that Bahá'u'lláh's consent law is one of the most divisive Bahá'í laws. Because parents are obligated to either approve or disapprove, and not permitted to abstain, they are effectively obligated to meddle.

The Báb made a point of liberating marriage from the power plays of parents. For better or for worse, Bahá'u'lláh reversed a radical move by the Báb, perhaps because he felt the Báb had gone too far.

When Bahá'ís defend such rigid and archaic laws, they sound like Mormons defending polygamy, which is another difficult subject for educated Bahá'ís. The bottom line is that Bahá'u'lláh's laws were traditional Muslim laws, with a few modifications.

Why Baha'is are not allowed to keep image of Bahaullah??

As a Bahá'í youth, I remember not being impressed with the photographs I had seen of Bahá'u'lláh. Having grown up with charming images of `Abdu'l-Bahá, my expectations were high, and unfair to Bahá'u'lláh.

Portraits of `Abdu'l-Bahá are as common as the Virgin Mary in Bahá'í households, and they have guidelines for posting these portraits in a manner. In spite of this idolatrous practice, Bahá'ís consider themselves special for not displaying portraits of Bahá'u'lláh!

I don't intend to criticize Bahá'u'lláh for his lack of physical charm. There is certainly no absolute need for a warm, charming appearance, but when I hear Bahá'ís wonder at the attractiveness of `Abdu'l-Bahá, I am moved to ask,

Bahá'ís are told not to keep photos of their Prophets because such photos could too easily become *idols*; believers would focus on the appearance of their prophet, and be distracted from his message.

Yet, the anticipation of Bahá'ís to view the one Holy Image in the International Archives Building in Israel is only heightened by that prohibition of and Bahá'ís shudder at the prospect of seeing the image of Bahá where they ought not, as though the image itself has some kind of ominous power!

Written by an Unimpressed Bahai

Bahauallah: Prophet or God?

Extracted from : <http://bahaideceit.blogspot.com/2012/07/lies-of-bahai-cult.html>

The Bahais present the personality of Bahauallah in a uniquely flexible manner. Depending upon the faith of the person who is addressed, Bahauallah could be either a prophet, or the promised messiah, or even God Almighty.



One can understand this logic if it came from the followers of Bahauallah and put it down to their enthusiasm for the Faith or rather their desperation to ensure the growth in their ranks. However, we see that the person in question, Bahauallah, himself appears confused as to his role in this world. At different points in time, Bahauallah made each of these claims. The objective of this article is to primarily highlight this factual element of history. To be honest, the claims of Bahauallah just cannot be put down to something as simple as confusion.

The seemingly logical graduation in the intensity of his claims and his self-induced ascension points to the fact that as he grew in power, and as the number of his followers increased, so did his claims. He was a mentally disturbed individual who simply lusted for power and stopped at nothing to achieve it.

This thirst for power was not limited to Bahauallah only. In fact a large number of Babis, including the brother of Bahauallah also made various claims for themselves.

It is unfortunate that in today's world the common Bahai is unaware of these facts. This article is a sincere attempt to bring out the true personality of Bahauallah. I have brought here irrefutable references to support my article at every stage and I invite reader feedback on the same.

Prior to reading the claims made by Bahauallah, let me remind you that, in his lifetime, the Bab too made numerous claims for himself. I have enumerated these in my article on [The Babi Faith: Its Origin and History](#)

1. Initially he claimed to be the 'Bab' (Gate) of Mahdi
2. He claimed to be Mahdi himself
3. He also claimed to be the incarnation of the Prophet Mohammed
- 4.

The followers of the Bab accepted each of these claims as they were issued. Not only this, after witnessing their leader making tall claims for himself without reasonable or sufficient proofs, they began making tall claims for themselves also. Thus a series of claimants rose, among the Babis on a first-come-first-serve basis. Those who made claims earlier than the others could stake their claims to better and lucrative positions whereas the late comers had to be satisfied with what was left. Unfortunately, no two persons staked the same claim.

Here we present some of the claimants and their respective claims.

1. Mulla Husain Bushrui, the first person to accept the Bab called himself 'Bab-ul-Bab' (Gate of the Gate).
2. Haji Mohammed Ali claimed to be the incarnation of Holy Prophet (p.b.u.h).
3. Qurratul Ayn, Tahera Qazvini claimed to be the incarnation of Fatemah, the daughter of the Holy Prophet (p.b.u.h).
4. Bab had predicted the advent of 'Man Yozherohullah' (The One whom God will manifest) in Bayan (Persian), chapter 17. Originally this title was conferred upon Mirza Yahya Nuri 'Subh-e-Azal', the younger brother of Mirza Husain Ali 'Bahauallah. However the first person who staked his claim for this very title was Mirza Asadullah, a staunch Babi. Those who supported Mirza Asadullah in his claims were known as 'Al-Hamdis'. However Mirza could not defend his claim for long. The servants of Bahauallah, and on his very orders ruthlessly murdered him. According to Count Gobisnow, the Babis tied a rope around the neck of Mirza Asadullah's legs, and drowned him in the river Tigris in Iraq. However a more specific version can be found in Episode of the Bab on page 362 which says, "On the orders of Bahauallah, his servant Mirza Mohammed Mazandarani murdered Mirza Asadullah."

It is pertinent to note that later Mirza Yahya staked his claim to this title and ultimately Bahauallah usurped it from him. Today the Bahais address Bahauallah with the title of "Man Yozherohullah", 'The One whom Allah will Manifest'. Our article on this matter will make it clear that Bahauallah was not the one whom Allah will manifest. Similarly many such claims were propounded. The crux of all what we said can be attributed to one simple observation made by Professor E. G. Browne in the foreword to Nuqtatul Qaaf of Mirza Jani. He writes, "Matters had reached to such an extent that any Babi, as soon as he would get up from his sleep, would have a claim for himself to announce to the world."

Bahauallah during the course of his lifetime made several claims for himself. Here is a selection of his claims. I have restricted this selection to those

on divinity since this is one facet which the Bahais do not reveal for their followers.

1. It is mentioned in the Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics under the title 'Bab', that the Bahais called Mirza Ali Mohammed Bab as "Rabbi-ul-Ala" (The Most Elevated Lord).
2. Bahauallah mentions in Aqdas, page 43,
3. He again writes in Aqdas, page 144 "Accept whatever is commanded by Baha (himself) the Lord of Eternity."
4. In Aqdas, page 8, Bahauallah says, "We have sent down all the Messengers and we have revealed all the Books."
5. In Istaqaaraat, page 34, Bahauallah writes, "The Master of Eternity lies in prison" (referring to his imprisonment and confinement).
6. In his Tablets, Page 217, Bahauallah writes, "All, save me are created from my command."
7. In his Al-Mubeen, page 34, Bahauallah writes, "All praise is for you O Bahauallah, the Creator of existence."
8. In the same book, page 190, he says,
9. Again in Al-Mubeen, page 297, Bahauallah again refers to himself as, "You Most Beneficent Lord, Bahauallah",
10. In his Tajalliyaat (Tajalli number 4), page 5, Bahauallah decrees, "Most surely I am Allah. There is no God save me. I am the Lord of everything. The O my creatures, you worship me alone."
11. Abdul Baha writes in Badaa'ul-Asaar, page 139, "Bahauallah is unique, incomparable. It is necessary for everyone to turn towards Bahauallah in his prayers."
12. In Maftoon, page 15, Bahauallah writes to his son Abdul Baha, "This is a letter from Allah, the Honored and the Wise (Bahauallah) to Allah the Gracious, the Aware (Abdul Baha)." Thus not only did the father, but even the son claimed divinity for himself

Now here is an important point to note. Bahais do not present the belief of Divinity of Bahauallah before everyone. It is only revealed to those who are firmly entrenched in their traps. Most Bahais till date remain ignorant of these claims. Even the Bahai preachers refuse to openly acknowledge that Bahauallah made claims of divinity. According to them Bahauallah is indeed alterable and they do alter him to suit their whims and fancies. .

.
. .
.

With his claims of divinity, Bahauallah not only attacked the foundations of Islam, but of all religions and beliefs. Surely, when Bahais mean that they seek a universal religion, they mean that we all must accept Bahauallah as God. Or at least that is what Bahauallah wants us to believe. If you are a Bahai, I must ask you one question – Did your superiors disclose these declarations from Bahauallah when you accepted the Faith? More importantly, do you believe that Bahauallah was God? Go ahead, speak to your superiors about these declarations and whether he believes that Bahauallah was a God. As always, I look forward to your honest and objective feedback

Who is “Bahaullah”?? Husayn Ali Nuri OR Yahya Nuri

According to Hajji Mirza Jani Kashani (or whoever was actually responsible for penning the NUQTAT’UL-KAF), Husayn Avaril Ayati, E.G. Browne, Miller and an aside by Fazel Mazandarani in his 3rd volume of the HISTORY OF THE MANIFESTATION OF THE TRUTH, the title “Baha’u’llah” (Splendor or Glory of God) was used not only by the Bab in his works but was also a title of reference to Mirza Yahya Nuri Subh-e Azal in the early Baghdad period.

In the Qayyum al-Asma as well as the Persian Bayan (and elsewhere) the Bab directly refers to Himself on numerous occasions as Baha’u’llah (the Splendour of God) and apart from the honorific Tahirih (the pure), Baha’ was a title he had also bestowed upon Umm Salmih Zarrin Taj Fatimih Baraghani Qurrat’ul-`Ayn prior to the Badasht conference.

According to the NUQTAT’UL-KAF, Jalal Azal, Miller and other non-Baha’i sectarian accounts of the Badasht conference in 1848, it was not the Bab but in fact Tahirih Qurrat’ul-`Ayn who had bestowed the title BAHÁ’ upon Mirza Husayn Ali Nuri, and not one which Mirza Husayn Ali had taken for himself.

Miller, for instance, correctly points out that “...Others may have called him [Mirza Husayn Ali Nuri] by this title [Baha’], but there is no valid evidence that the Bab ever did so [p.119].”

He goes on to point out that “On March 27, 1850, only three months before his death, the Bab, according to the notation of his personal Diary, wrote an epistle to “238”, the brother of the Fruit.”... the Fruit [Thamarih] was Subh-e Azal. The numerical value of the Arabic letters in Husayn Ali is 238. Hence, it seems that when the Bab wrote his epistle to Mirza Husayn Ali, charging him to take the utmost care of Subh-e Azal, he used no title in addressing him, but referred to his younger brother as “The Most Glorious (Abha) Element.” The epistle clearly indicates that it was written by a superior to an inferior [ibid].”

We, now have it from the Bab himself that Mirza Yahya is “Baha’u’llah” and that therefore all references to Baha’ and Baha’u’llah which the Baha’is latter appropriated to refer to Mirza Husayn Ali was in fact understood by the Bab to be first referring to himself than to his successor, Subh-e Azal. I have been told on very reliable authority that in Azal’s first major work as Babi chief, the Kitab-i-Nur (the Book of Light), he in fact does call himself by that title.

In His longer Will and Testament (which Browne did not translate and which I am currently in the process of translating in full) the Bab bestowed all of his rank and authority upon his successor, Subh-e Azal, and states that the rank of Mirza Yahya is co-equal to his own. Therefore, it is not merely the case that Subh-e Azal was being referred also as Waheed Thani (the second unity) because Wahid had been the honorific of Siyyid Yahya Darabi who had just perished in the Babi uprisings, and thus his title “Waheed” had now spiritually ‘transmigrated’ or passed on to Azal. Rather Subh-e Azal was being referred to as Waheed Thani because the First Unity was primarily none other than the Bab himself sitting at the apex of his own religious hierarchy, i.e. himself as the Point (nuqta) with the 18 Letters of the Living which constitute the First collective Unity (waahid) of the First Cycle of All-Things (Kullu Shay’, i.e. 361) of the mystico-religio-political Babi hierarchy. The Bab, as with everything he ever wrote and did, was being consciously deliberate in designations of titles and rank to people. Unfortunately both sectarian Baha’i hagiographies as well as works purporting to be of a scholarly nature have seemingly and very deliberately glossed over these facts and retrospectively elevated the role of Mirza Husayn Ali Nuri even in the early period beginning with the titles “Baha” and “Baha’u’llah.” Perusal of these earliest (non-Baha’i) source texts and the more reliable accounts they provide – accounts which the Baha’is have either systematically tried to suppress or twist the facts in their own favour prove what the actual case was, and that is that the title Baha’u’llah was earlier one belonging to Azal and on which Mirza Husayn Ali later appropriated.

Nima

Bahaullah said Don't Shave your head, but don't let it grow beyond your ears!

“Shave not your heads; God hath adorned them with hair, and in this there are signs from the Lord of creation to those who reflect upon the requirements of nature. He, verily, is the God of strength and wisdom. Notwithstanding, it is not seemly to let the hair pass beyond the limit of the ears. Thus hath it been decreed by Him Who is the Lord of all worlds.”

(Baha'u'llah, The Kitab-i-Aqdas, p. 35)

Prohibitions in Baha'i faith

LOL, This is just funny! I don't have anything to say!

Bahau'llah broke the Babi Rule by marrying 3 wives !!

Baha'ullah had 3 wives and Baha'is still talk about monogamy!

I know you are reading this and telling yourself that Baha'ullah had 3 wives because when he got married he was a Muslim, and Muslims can have 4 wives! But this is wrong!

Baha'ullah married his first wife, Ásíyih Khánum, in 1835. He married his second wife, Fatimih, in 1849. and he married his third wife, Gawhar, in 1862.

When Baha'ullah married his second wife, he was a Babi! He accepted Bab in 1844, so he was not a Muslim anymore!! He was a Babi! And in Babi religion you can only have 2 wives.

When he married his third wife he was not a Muslim but a Babi! so he broke the Babi's rules and married his third wife. Not only that is not monogamy, but he also broke the Babi's rules!

In the Persian Bayan, wahid 8 section 14, the Bab says

"If a man or woman proves incapable of having a child, it is legitimate for the spouse who is not infertile (whichever it may be) to marry again after having obtained the permission of the other party, but not without her permission"

But Bahau'llah had 7 children from his first wife!

Shoghi Effendi wrote:

"Bahá'u'lláh had no concubine, He had three legal wives. As He married them before the "Aqdas" (His book of laws) was revealed, He was only acting according to the laws of Islám, which had not yet been superseded. He made plurality of wives conditional upon justice."

Abdu'l-Bahá interpreted this to mean that

"a man may not have more than one wife at a time, as it is impossible to be just to two or more women in marriage." "...Bahá'u'lláh married the first and second wives while He was still in Tíhrán, and the third wife while He was in Baghdád. At that time, the Laws of the "Aqdas" had not been revealed, and secondly, He was following the Laws of the previous Dispensation and the customs of the people of His own land."

if it is "impossible to be just to two or more women in marriage" as Abdu'l-Baha said, how would this state of affairs be any different before Baha'u'llah wrote the Aqdas?

Baha'u'llah also said

"God hath prescribed matrimony unto you. Beware that ye take not unto yourselves more wives than two." (Baha'u'llah, The Kitab-i-Aqdas, p. 41)

Although in the next sentence he said monogamy is accepted

"Whoso contenteth himself with a single partner from among the maidservants of God, both he and she shall live in tranquillity." (Baha'u'llah, The Kitab-i-Aqdas, p. 41)

Shoghi Effendi said

"He made plurality of wives conditional upon justice."

but first, we must acknowledge that nowhere in the Aqdas is polygamy preconditioned upon justice (or the equal treatment of both wives). This is an addition by Abdu'l-Baha. Perhaps Baha'u'llah told Abdu'l-Baha orally about this, but to my knowledge there is no written document authored by Baha'u'llah laying out this precondition.

Second, according to the Writings of Abdu'l-Baha, he did not say that the precondition of justice can not be met. In fact, He says the opposite:

"Concerning the practice of bigamy, this has been promulgated, and no one must abrogate it. 'Abdu'l-Baha has not abrogated this law. These are false accusations and lies (spread by) the friends. What I have said is that He has made bigamy bound on a precondition. As long as someone does not attain certitude regarding the capability to practice justice and his heart is not at rest that he can practice justice, he should not be intent upon a second marriage. But if he should be sure and attain certitude that he would practice justice on all levels (and conditions), then a second marriage is lawful. Just as has been the case in the Holy Land: the Baha'i friends wished to marry a second wife, accepting this precondition, and this servant [Abdu'l-Baha] never abstained (from giving permission), but insisted that justice should be considered, and justice actually means here self-restraint; but they said, that they will practice justice and wished to marry a second wife. Such false accusations [charges that Abdu'l-Baha prohibited bigamy] are the slanderous whisperings of those who wish to spread doubts and to what degree they already succeed in making matters ambiguous! (Our) purpose was to state that bigamy without justice is not lawful and that justice is very difficult (to achieve)."[Amr wa Khalq, Volume 4, p. 174]

“You asked about polygamy. According to the text of the Divine Book the right of having two wives is lawful and legal. This was never prohibited, but it is legitimate and allowed. You should therefore not be unhappy, but take justice into your consideration so that you may be as just as possible. what has been said was that since justice is very difficult (to achieve), therefore tranquillity (calls for) one wife. But in your case, you should not be unhappy.”[ibid. Volume 4, p. 174]

It is obvious from reading the above that Abdu'l-Baha gives a much more nuanced take on this whole matter. So, according to Abdu'l-Baha if there is justice you can have two wives. According to Abdu'l-Baha, there is a condition and it can be met. He himself gave permission and blessing for polygamous marriages to take place by Baha'is.

Why Bahauallah had three wives ??? (An open Question to all Baha'is)

To justify why Bahā'u'llāh had three wives, Baha'is usually put forth the argument that since Bahā'u'llāh was practicing Islam before he became a Baha'i, he was legally allowed to have three wives. In a letter from the Universal House of Justice dated 23/10/1995 to an individual believer it has been mentioned: **“Regarding the wives of Bahā'u'llāh, extracts from letters written on behalf of the beloved Guardian set this subject in context. They indicate that Bahā'u'llāh was “acting according to the laws of Islām, which had not yet been superseded”, and that He was following “the customs of the people of His own land”: “. . . as regards Bahā'u'llāh’s marriage it should be noted that His three marriages were all contracted before He revealed His Book of Laws, and even before His declaration in Baghdād, at a time when Bahā’ī marriage laws had not yet been known, and the Revelation not yet disclosed (25 May 1938 to a National Spiritual Assembly).” “Bahā'u'llāh had no concubine, He had three legal wives. As He married them before the “Aqdas” (His book of laws) was revealed, He was only acting according to the laws of Islām, which had not yet been superseded. He made plurality of wives conditional upon justice; ‘Abdu’l-Bahā interpreted this to mean that a man may not have more than one wife at a time, as it is impossible to be just to two or more women in marriage (11 February 1944 to an individual believer).” . . . Bahā'u'llāh married the first and second wives while He was still in Tihṙān [sic], and the third wife while He was in baghdād. At that time, the Laws of the “Aqdas” had not been revealed, and secondly, He was following the Laws of the previous Dispensation and the customs of the people of His own land (14 January 1953 to an individual believer).”** Source: [Wives of Bahā'u'llāh](#)

All the above justifications are fundamentally flawed. We already showed the fallacy in ‘Abdu’l-Bahā’s justification. The second justification presented here simply states that since Bahā'u'llāh had married his three wives when he was still a Muslim it was perfectly legal for him to do so. This is a blatant lie: The Bāb announced his new religion in 1844. The exact date that Bahā'u'llāh became a Bābī is unknown but it is definite that it occurred before 1848 when he attended the conference of Badasht—in which Islamic law was officially abrogated and superseded—and he took on the name Bahā. So by 1848 he was definitely a Bābī. Now let us review the years when Bahā'u'llāh married his wives: Bahā'u'llāh married his first wife Āsiyih in 1835 while he was still a Muslim. He married his second wife Fatimih in 1849 when he was no longer a Muslim but a Bābī! What was Shoghi thinking when he had uttered: **“He was only acting according to the laws of Islām, which had not yet been superseded.”?**

In Shoghi’s translation of Dawn Breakers it has been mentioned that Ṭāhirih, a great advocate of the Bāb had openly preached the Bāb’s ideas, one of which was monogamy:

“She began to correspond with the Bāb and soon espoused all his ideas. She did not content herself with a passive sympathy but confessed openly the faith of her Master. She denounced not only polygamy but the use of the veil and showed her face uncovered in public to the great amazement and scandal of her family and of all the sincere Mussulmans but to the applause of many other fellow citizens who shared her enthusiasm and whose numbers grew as a result of her preaching.” Nabīl Zarandī, *The Dawn-Breakers: Nabīl’s Narrative of the Early Days of the Bahā’ī Revelation* p. 270 (footnote). Other Baha’i authors have also echoed this belief in their writings: **“The Bāb’s laws abolished polygamy except in the case of infertility.”** Robert H. Stockman, *The Baha’i Faith: A Guide For the Perplexed* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2012), chap. 6, section on the fortress of Maku.

Bahā'u'llāh was openly practicing bigamy while according to Shoghi it was not legal and Ṭāhirih was actively denouncing it in accordance with the Bāb’s beliefs.

From this point onwards, matters become even more interesting. Bahā'u'llāh married his third wife Gawhar in 1862 when he was still a Bābī and this third marriage too was completely illegal according to what Shoghi claims are Bābī laws.

Source: *Twelve Principles: A Comprehensive Investigation on the Baha’i Teachings*, pp. 488-489 [Download – Twelve Principles: A Comprehensive Investigation on the Baha](https://archive.org/details/TwelvePrinciples) <https://archive.org/details/TwelvePrinciples>

Was Bahauallah really Divine ???!!!!

Bahā'is claim Bahā'u'llāh's knowledge was divine but he himself admits reading books and acquiring knowledge from them since childhood:

“This oppressed one in his childhood (tufuliyyat) saw the war of the tribe of Qurayza in a book that belonged to (was authored by) Mulla Baqir Majlisi, and has been sad and sorrowful ever-since.” ‘Abd al-Ḥamid Ishraq Khāwari, Ma’idiy-i asimani, vol. 7, p. 136.



He even admits in the Iqan that he needed to read books to refute the claims of his enemies:

“For instance, a certain man, reputed for his learning and attainments, and accounting himself as one of the pre-eminent leaders of his people, hath in his book denounced and vilified all the exponents of true learning. This is made abundantly clear by his explicit statements as well as by his allusions throughout his book. As We had frequently heard about him, We purposed to read some of his works. Although We never felt disposed to peruse other peoples’ writings, yet as some had questioned Us concerning him, We felt it necessary to refer to his books, in order that We might answer Our questioners with knowledge and understanding. His works, in the Arabic tongue, were, however, not available, . . . We sent for the book, and kept it with Us a few days. It was probably referred to twice. The second time, We accidentally came upon the story of the “Mi’rāj” . . . We noticed that he had enumerated some twenty or more sciences, the knowledge of which he considered to be essential for the comprehension of the mystery of the “Mi’rāj”.”

See also Tanbih al-Na’imin where his own sister claims that he was pouring over books of philosophy (hikmat) and mysticism (‘irfan) for years.

<http://bayanic.com/showItem.php?id=tanbih>

Here is a translation from that part (pp. 4-5):

“The Mirzā (meaning Bahā'u'llāh), who was your father, from the beginning of his life to when he came of age—because the means were at hand and because of the gathering of the companions—was engrossed in studying and endeavored in homework (or calligraphy practice). He wouldn’t disengage from learning the rudiments for a moment. After studying the rudiments of Arabic and literature he inclined towards the science of philosophy (hikmat) and mysticism (‘irfān) so that he might benefit from these. It was such that he would spend most of the day and night socializing with high statured philosophers and the gatherings of mystics and Sufis. When it was blown in Seraph’s Trumpet of Appearance (meaning when the Bāb made his claims), he (meaning Bahā'u'llāh) was a man who had seen most of the words and phrases of the mystics and philosophers and had heard and understood most of the signs of the appearance (of the Mahdi) . . . after returning from Badashst and after the Shaykh Ṭabarsī Fort war was over, he was engaged day and night in socializing with great Islamic scholars and followers of mysticism . . .”

(s o u r c e <https://archive.org/download/TwelvePrinciples/Twelve%20Principles%20-%20A%20Comprehensive%20Investigation%20on%20the%20Bahai%20Teachings.pdf> p. 253)

I see no divine knowledge here!



Twelve Principles

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The following group should not read this book:



**Those who do not accept what
is right, do not seek the truth,
and when they discover a
truth, prefer their own
prejudices over it.**



The following group should read this book:



**Those who accept what is
right, seek the truth, and when
they discover a truth, prefer it
over their own assumptions.**



To all the open-minded souls that
strive for the truth and embrace it
wherever it may be

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We also thank our parents and family for supporting us during the course of preparing this work. Had it not been for their support, we would not have completed this book in a timely manner.

And finally, a special thanks to Mr. Abdol-Hossein Taleie for his valuable suggestions and Mr. Ali Mansouri for a great proofreading of the final draft.

Translator's Notes

The current book is based on the first version of *Avaze dohol* (*Song of the Drum*) which was originally written in Farsi. It was initially to be translated with the cooperation of Mr. Mansouri but unfortunately—due to unforeseen circumstances—we only succeeded in jointly translating the first four chapters.

Subsequently, I took up the task of translating the remaining sections and in due course completely revised the book and added some new sections to it.

Most of the quotes cited in this book do not have an official Baha'i translation into English (from Farsi or Arabic). In the cases that they did, we have sometimes translated them ourselves to present their meanings in clear, easy to understand sentences. This approach was taken because of the unconventional prose of Baha'i texts, which was reflected in their official English translations. Furthermore, some of the official translations were inaccurate and needed to be revised.

When translating the Farsi and Arabic quotes into English, utmost care was taken to preserve the correct meaning while retaining the original words.

The Sufi and mystical background of Baha'i leaders like the Bāb and Bahā'u'llāh meant that Farsi and Arabic sentences from them are sometimes quite vague or incomprehensible. The translation of these sentences presented a challenge that was addressed with explanatory notes in brackets or parenthesis.

The sources we have used to write this book were originally published with different groups of audiences in mind, causing the dates that they were published in being based on different calendars. In citing these works, we have stayed loyal to the original dating system used by each, and not converted them to a unified format. In some references, the date has been written using a number followed by 'B.' This means the date is based on the Baha'i calendar which starts on 21 March 1844 AD and has 365 days in normal years and 366 days in leap years. If a date is

followed by 'AH' the Islamic calendar has been used. Dates based on the Gregorian calendar are plainly written with nothing added after them.

Since the Bāb and Bahā'u'llāh were Shia Muslims before they created their respective faiths, we have occasionally quoted Shia Islamic texts to show the true origin of some of their supposedly novel teachings. These quotes have also been used to show that some of the claims made by Baha'i leaders about Islamic beliefs were either completely wrong or distorted.

Table 1: The system of transliteration used in this book.

Symbol	Transliteration	Symbol	Transliteration	Vowels:	
ء	'	ط	ṭ	Long:	
ب	B	ظ	ẓ	آ، ا	ā
ت	T	ع	`	و	ū
ث	Th	غ	gh	ى	ī
ج	J	ف	f	Short:	
ح	ḥ	ق	q	ـَ	a
خ	kh	ك	k	ـُ	u
د	d	ل	l	ـِ	i or -i
ذ	dh	م	m	Diphthongs:	
ر	r	ن	n	أو	au, aw
ز	z	ه	h	أى	ay
س	s	و	w		
ش	sh	ى	y		
ص	ṣ	ة	a, at		
ض	ḍ	ال	al-, l-		

Any emphasis made in the quotes are mine except in cases where it has been explicitly mentioned otherwise. Most of these are phrases or sentences that have been underlined to highlight the section of interest.

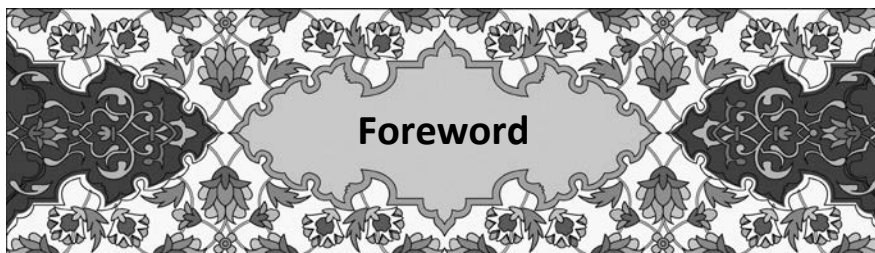
Digital scans of most of the books we have used are available on the internet. We have provided the link to these books in the bibliography section. The links can also be found on the books website: www.avazedohol.com/eng.

I solely accept the responsibility for any possible errors. Any questions, criticism, or suggestions can be directed to me by email¹ or through the book's website.

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2014

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Introduction



God created heaven and decorated it with the best ornaments . . .

Then he created men and from among them, chose the most pure and distinguished, and established them as his representatives among the people to invite them to God's great feast in heaven.

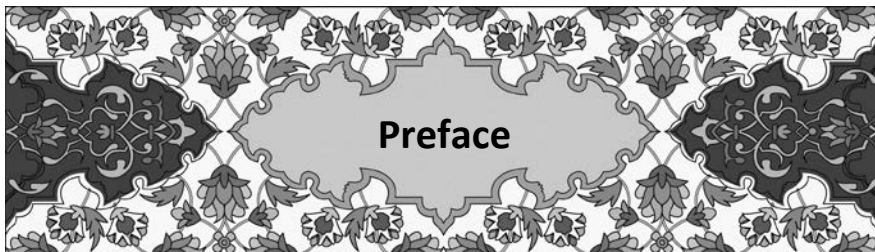
But . . . but the majority of humans turned away from the Divine Messengers' invitations to seek and accept righteousness and descended into the valley of ignorance.

History has repeated itself time after time and in every case, the people repeated their predecessor's mistakes. They let go of the strong divine rope, grasped the fragile thread of worldly pleasures, and preferred imitating their forefathers over seeking and accepting the truth.

Today also, the choice is with you and me.

We can close our eyes and ears from the call of the Divine Guides and follow the footsteps of those who went astray. Or we can choose righteousness, hear the message of the truth, act upon it, and be placed among those who were guided.

The choice is with you and me!



Baha'ism is the continuation of the movement of a young merchant from Shiraz named `Alī Muḥammad Shīrāzī,² known as *the Bāb*. During the reign of Muḥammad Shah Qājār he, in a series of several stages, first introduced himself as the Bāb³ to the Promised Mahdī⁴, then the Mahdī himself⁵, then the Prophet of a New Age⁶, and finally, as the essence of God and his being⁷.

² 1819–1849

³ Bāb literally means door and implies representative. In essence, Ali Muḥammad Shīrāzī introduced himself as the special representative of the Mahdī (the twelfth Shia Imam) and a door for the public's communication with him. According to Shia teachings such a position was unfounded and heresy.

⁴ The Bāb made his claim to Bābism in the year 1844, and continued this claim until the year 1848: `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Raḥīq makhtūm* (Tehran: Mu'assisiyi Milliyyi Maṭbū'āt Amrī, 131 B.), vol. 1, pp. 581–585; The Bāb ordered that the following statement be added to the Adhān (the Muslim call to prayers): “*Ashhadu anna `Alī ghabl al-Nabīl bāb Baqīyyat Allah*”, meaning, “I testify that *Ali before Nabīl* (meaning the Bāb), is the door to the *Remnant of Allah* (meaning the Mahdī),” `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Talkhīṣ tārikh Nabīl* (New Delhi: Mu'assisiyi Chāp Wa Intishārāt Mir'āt, 1991), p. 122. *Ali before Nabīl* is a code word which the Bāb used to refer to himself. The *Remnant of Allah* is one of the Mahdī's titles.

⁵ “I am the true Qā'im (one who will arise i.e. the Mahdī) whose appearance you had been promised (*Innanī ana l-Qā'im al-ḥaqq al-ladhī antum bi zuhūrihī tū'adūn*),” Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Tārikh zuhūr al-Ḥaqq*, (Tehran: n.p., 1944 [Reprinted, H-Bahai: Lansing, Mi., 1998]), vol. 3, p. 173; “Almost immediately after, the Bāb, himself still a prisoner, was vindicating the acts of His disciples by asserting, formally and unreservedly, His claim to be the promised Qā'im, in the presence of the Heir to the Throne, the leading exponents of the Shaykhī community, and the most illustrious ecclesiastical dignitaries assembled in the capital of Ādhirbayjān,” Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes by* (US Bahā'ī Publishing Trust, 1979 [second printing]), p. 33.

⁶ The Bāb brought a new religion called Bābism and a new book called the *Bayān*. `Abdu'l-Bahā names Bāb as one of the manifestations of Prophethood and lists him among God's great



Figure 1: A picture of `Alī Muḥammad Shirāzī, known as the Bāb, the founder of Bābism

`Alī Muḥammad Bāb revealed a book called the *Bayān*, in two different languages (Arabic and Farsi), both of which remained incomplete at the time of his execution by firing squad.⁸ In this book, he gave his followers tidings about the appearance of “He whom God shall make manifest” (*man yuḡhiruhu Allāh*).

After some time Ali Muḥammad Bāb sought distance from his statements and expressed regret during a debate session. When it became apparent that he could not answer basic questions from

messengers: “The Manifestations of universal Prophethood Who appeared independently are, for example, Abraham, Moses, Christ, Muḥammad, the Bāb and Bahā’u’llāh,” `Abdu’l-Bahā, *Some Answered Questions* (US Bahā’ī Publishing Trust, 1990 [reprint of pocket-size edition]), p. 164.

⁷ “Verily, `Alī before Nabīl (i.e. himself, the Bāb) is the Essence of God and His Being (*inna `Alī qabl al-Nabīl dhāt Allāh wa kaynūniyyatih*),” The Bāb, *Lauḡ haykal al-dīn* (n.p.: n.p., n.d.), p. 5.

⁸ According to the sayings of the Bab, the book of Bayan should have been revealed in nineteen units (*wāḥids*) and nineteen chapters (*bābs*), but only eleven units of the Arabic Bayān and only nine units of the Farsi Bayān were completed before he was executed.

different scholars, he wrote a letter of repentance addressed to Nāṣir al-Dīn Mīrzā, the crown prince of Muḥammad Shah Qājār, with much shame. The text of his letter of repentance is as follows:

May my soul be sacrificed for you . . . I bear witness to God and those that are with Him, that this weak servant possesses absolutely no knowledge that goes against the satisfaction of the God of this World and those who have accepted His guardianship. Even though the essence of my existence is purely [made of] sin (*wujūdām dhanbi širf ast*) . . . and if any words that were against his satisfaction came out [of my] pen, I intended no disobedience. Anyway, I am regretful and seek repentance from His Highness. This servant possesses absolutely no knowledge that would bring about such a claim. I seek repentance from God from being associated with this affair and the flow of some supplications and words on my tongue are not reason for any claim; and the claim of being the special representative of his Highness, Ḥujjat Allāh (literally the Proof of Allah, meaning the Mahdī), is a completely false claim and this servant neither made this or any other claim. It is requested from the kindness of his Royal Majesty and his Highness that this supplicator be honored with his royal grace, favor, compassion and mercy. Peace.⁹

⁹ Abū l-Faḍl Gulpāyganī and Mahdī Gulpāyganī, *Kashf al-ghitā' `an ḥiyāl al-`adā'* (Tashkent: n.p., 1919), pp. 204–205.

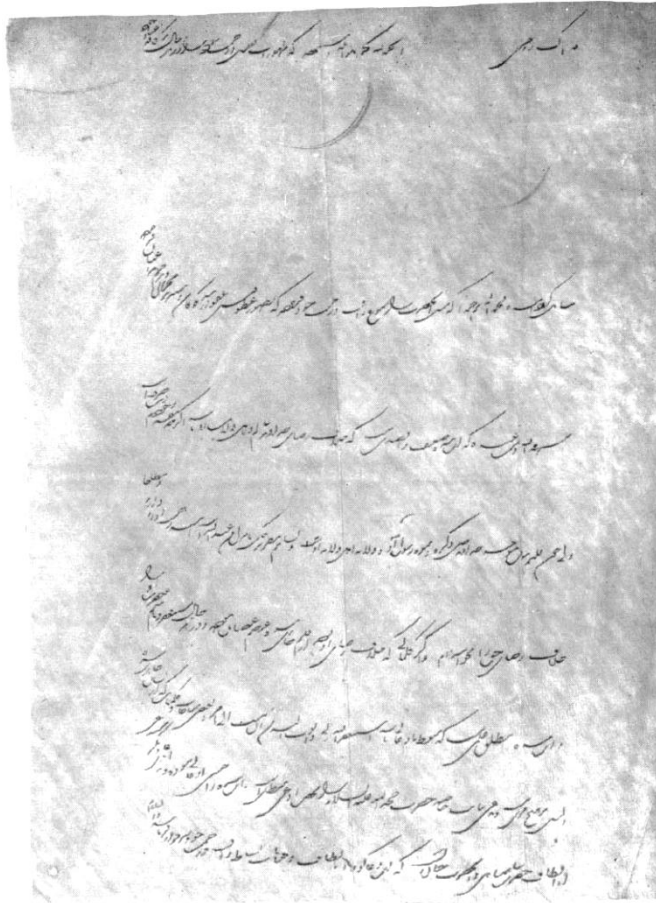


Figure 2: Facsimile of `Alī Muḥammad Bāb's letter of repentance from claims of Bābism, Qā'imīyya (being the one who will rise at the End of Time), and Prophethood.

After the execution of `Alī Muḥammad Bāb, his followers rebelled against each other in a bid to take his position. These rebellions were accompanied by the massacre of a large group of people.¹⁰

¹⁰ Twenty seven people among the Bābīs brought themselves forth as the Promised One in the Book of *Bayān*, such as Mīrzā Yahyā Ṣubḥ Azal, Mīrzā Ḥusayn `Alī Nūrī (Bahā'u'llāh), Mīrzā Asad-Allāh Dayyān, Mīrzā Muḥammad Nabīl Zarandī, Mīrzā Ghughā Darwīsh, and Sayyid Baṣīr Hindī. See Muḥammad `Alī Fayḏī, *Ḥaḍrat Bahā'ullāh*, 2nd ed. (Langenhain [Germany]: Lajniyi

In the end, Mīrzā Ḥusayn `Alī Nūrī, known as Bahā'u'llāh, became the most successful figure among the claimants and declared himself to be “He whom God shall make manifest.”

Bahā'u'llāh followed the footsteps of the Bāb and made numerous claims about being God in his words. Although Baha'is try to dismiss these claims and portray Bahā'u'llāh as a mirror of God—which is itself a problematic belief—there are many words from Bahā'u'llāh that show the contrary. For instance, whilst he was imprisoned he claimed:

There is no God but me the lonely, the imprisoned.¹¹

He even went as far as claiming that he was God's Self:

He exists because of the existence of My Dominant Everlasting Self for My Self is His Self, if you have any sense.¹²

It is not clear who is speaking these words, Bahā'u'llāh or God, but either way that it is read, Bahā'u'llāh's self is equaled to that of God's. Bahā'u'llāh didn't stop there and even claimed to be the creator of all Gods:

All Gods became Gods from the flow of my affairs and all Lords became Lords by the overflowing of my decree (*kul al-ulūh min rashḥi 'amrī ta'llahat wa kul al-rubūb min ṭafḥ ḥukmī tarabbat*).¹³

Millī Nashr Āthār Amrī Bi Zabānhayī Fārsī Wa `Arabī, 1990), pp. 103–104. One of the results of these massacres and killings was the exile of the Azalīs (the supporters of Mīrzā Yahyā Ṣubḥ Azal) to Cyprus and the exile of the Baha'is (the supporters of Bahā'u'llāh) to Palestine.

¹¹ Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'lā* (Canada: Mu'assisiyi Ma'ārif Bahā'ī, 1996), vol. 1, no. 39, p. 226.

¹² Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'lā* (Canada: Mu'assisiyi Ma'ārif Bahā'ī, 2002), vol. 2, no. 81, p. 451.

¹³ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt: Maṭba'atu Kurdistān al-'Ilmiyya (Published by Faraj-Allāh Dhakī), 1330 AH), vol. 2, p. 255.

This sentence single handedly contradicts all known monotheistic religions, for in none of these religions is there any reference to more than one God.



Figure 3: A picture of Mīrzā Ḥusayn `Alī Nūrī, known as Bahā'u'llāh, the leader of the Baha'i creed

During the era of the successors to Bahā'u'llāh—especially in the time of Shoghi Effendi—Baha'ism was transformed into a large and extensive organization administered by the Universal House of Justice (UHJ) that imitated organizational models prevalent in the West for the administration of and structured propagation of the sect in the world.

The most important technique Baha'is use to propagate this sect and establish their beliefs over others' are a series of slogans and statements called the *Baha'i Principles* that are prorogated with great pride. The source of these principles goes back to the time when Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā¹⁴ resided in the Ottoman empire. It was there that they became familiar with a new wave of foreign thoughts and quickly realized that these ideas could set the grounds for attracting the public masses of the Middle East. Thus, they mixed them with

¹⁴ The son and successor to Bahā'u'llāh.

certain Eastern and Islamic concepts, and put them forth as the Baha'i Principles.

This mixing of concepts was so obvious that `Abdu'l-Bahā was forced to bring forth an explanation regarding the similarities between Baha'i beliefs and the ideas of Western intellectuals:

When asked whether Bahā'u'llāh had made a special study of Western writings and founded His teachings in accordance with them `Abdu'l-Bahā said that the books of Bahā'u'llāh, written and printed as long ago as the 1870s, contained the ideals now so familiar to the West, although at that time these ideas had not been printed or thought of in the West.¹⁵

However, many of the arguments that are brought forward in these principles were expressed by others in the years before 1870. Another important point is that while the works of Bahā'u'llāh were recorded around the year 1870, the *Baha'i Principles* were never brought forward by him in this order, detail, and with such emphasis.

In fact, Bahā'u'llāh's son `Abdu'l-Bahā brought forward the various principles of Baha'ism years after the death of his father. By that time, many of these issues had been raised at great length in the world, particularly in the West, and were already noteworthy. The evidence for this will be presented throughout this book.

`Abdu'l-Bahā claimed that his father had gifted humanity with a series of pure principles, the likeness of which could not be found anywhere else. When explaining each principle, he would refer to the scattered utterances of his father and try to find words from Bahā'u'llāh that would relate them to him.

However, this effort would never satisfy any seeker of the truth who knew that these principles were not written by Bahā'u'llāh, but rather compiled years after his demise, by his son `Abdu'l-Bahā.

¹⁵ J. E. Esslemont, *Bahā'u'llāh and the New Era* (US Bahā'ī Publishing Trust, 1980), p.48.

Despite `Abdu'l-Bahā's insistence that these principles were purely teachings from his father (Bahā'u'llāh), his large role in compiling and publishing them cannot be hidden nor denied; to the extent that in some cases, the opinion of Bahā'u'llāh contradicts that of his son. Due to the sheer amount of these contradictions, we have avoided mentioning them in this section and will postpone their analysis until future chapters when we look at the respective principles.

Regardless of the means of compilation, these principles are considered to be the most important social teachings of the Baha'i doctrine. Baha'i leaders have spoken at such length describing these principles that one is induced to believe they are the only path to salvation for humanity. For example, `Abdu'l-Bahā says:

The principles of his Highness Bahā'u'llāh are comprehensive of all teachings and it is clear and obvious that salvation and success are unfeasible and impossible for humanity without them and every sect in the human race will find their ultimate aspirations present and evident in these heavenly principles.¹⁶

Furthermore, when this creed is preached, the audience are made to believe that these teachings and principles were virtually non-existent before the advent of Bahā'u'llāh and all his teachings and principles are novel and new. For instance, `Abdu'l-Bahā claims that before the birth of Baha'ism, there was no mention of these principles in Iran:

Not even a word of these principles had been heard in Iran before the appearance of Bahā'u'llāh. Go research about this so that it becomes evident and obvious to you.¹⁷

¹⁶ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran: Mu'assisiyi Millī Maṭbū'āt Amrī, 127 B.), vol.3, pp. 24–25.

¹⁷ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātib* (Egypt: Maṭba'at al-Kurdistān al-'Ilmiyya [Published by Faraj-Allāh Dhakī al-Kurdī], 1340 AH), vol. 3, p. 114.

This statement—is without doubt—completely false and as we will show continuously throughout this book, many of the claimed novel Baha'i principles were based on Shia Islamic beliefs well known in Iran.

In another instance he claims that everyone believes that these teachings have no equal:

The call of Allah (*nidā Allāh*) was raised to such an extent that . . . the minds were astonished at what call this is that is so high? What is this star that has come up? Some were astonished, others were researching, and others were uttering proofs. They *all* said, "The principles of his Highness Bahā'u'llāh truly have no equal, they are the soul of this era and the light of this century."¹⁸

This statement is also false and what `Abdu'l-Bahā claims is unfounded. Finally, in another speech, he lists these teachings one by one and claims that they are all new:

I will speak to you concerning the special teachings of Bahā'u'llāh. All the divine principles announced by the tongue of the Prophets of the past are to be found in the words of Bahā'u'llāh; but in addition to these He has revealed certain new teachings which are not found in any of the sacred Books of former times. I shall mention some of them; the others, which are many in number, may be found in the Books, Tablets and Epistles written by Bahā'u'llāh—such as the Hidden Words, the Glad Tidings, the Words of Paradise, Tajalliyāt, Tarazāt and others. Likewise, in the Kitāb-i-Aqdas there are new teachings which cannot be found in any of the past Books or Epistles of the Prophets . . . Bahā'u'llāh removed this by proclaiming the oneness of the world of humanity, and this principle is specialized in His teachings . . .

¹⁸ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol.3, p. 78.

Another new principle revealed by Bahā'u'llāh is the injunction to investigate truth . . . Bahā'u'llāh has announced that the foundation of all the religions of God is one, that oneness is truth and truth is oneness which does not admit of plurality. This teaching is new and specialized to this Manifestation . . . He sets forth a new principle for this day in the announcement that religion must be the cause of unity, harmony and agreement among mankind . . . The harmony of religious belief with reason is a new vista which Bahā'u'llāh has opened for the soul of man . . . He establishes the equality of man and woman. This is peculiar to the teachings of Bahā'u'llāh, for all other religions have placed man above woman . . . A new religious principle is that prejudice and fanaticism—whether sectarian, denominational, patriotic or political—are destructive to the foundation of human solidarity . . . Universal peace is assured by Bahā'u'llāh as a fundamental accomplishment of the religion of God—that peace shall prevail among nations, governments and peoples, among religions, races and all conditions of mankind. This is one of the special characteristics of the Word of God revealed in this Manifestation . . . Bahā'u'llāh declares that all mankind should attain knowledge and acquire an education. This is a necessary principle of religious belief and observance, characteristically new in this dispensation. He has set forth the solution and provided the remedy for the economic question. No religious Books of the past Prophets speak of this important human problem . . . As to the most great characteristic of the revelation of Bahā'u'llāh, a specific teaching not given by any of the Prophets of the past: It is the ordination and appointment of the Center of the Covenant . . . You have asked me what new principles have been revealed

by Him. I have mentioned a few only. There are many others, but time does not permit their mention tonight.¹⁹

Even with such obvious and open statements regarding the novelty and originality of these teachings, `Abdu'l-Bahā himself clearly states elsewhere that what Bahā'u'llāh has brought, is the same as what the previous prophets had brought, and that he only reviewed and restored them:

All Divine Prophets struggled for the Oneness of Humanity . . . His Highness, Bahā'u'llāh, renewed the teachings of the prophets.²⁰

The foundation that all the previous Prophets laid, those are the foundations of Bahā'u'llāh and that foundation is the Oneness of the World of Humanity . . . and that foundation is Universal Peace.²¹

So what exactly has Bahā'u'llāh brought for the people of this age if the foundation of all religions is one and he is merely renewing them? And why does `Abdu'l-Bahā insist these teachings are new while he claims elsewhere that these teachings are what every Divine Prophet had taught?

The Principles Attributed to Bahā'u'llāh

The principles that have been attributed to Bahā'u'llāh and Baha'ism do not have a set number and have been referred to as being between four and eighteen in various Baha'i works. Baha'i books also conflict in their

¹⁹ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, 2nd ed. (US Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1982), p. 453–457.

²⁰ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Egypt: Published by Faraj-Allāh Dhakī), 1340 AH), vol. 1, pp. 18–19.

²¹ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 286.

order. However, they are most commonly famous as the twelve principles. The most important of these include:

- 1- The Independent Investigation of Truth, Unfettered by Superstition or Tradition
- 2- The Oneness of Humanity
- 3- Religion Must be the Source of Unity and Fellowship
- 4- Religion Must be in Conformity with Science and Reason
- 5- The Removal of All Prejudice
- 6- The Equalization of the Means of Livelihood for All Humanity
- 7- Establishment of a Universal House of Justice and Supreme Tribunal²²
- 8- Universal Compulsory Education
- 9- A Universal Auxiliary Language
- 10- The Equality of Men and Women
- 11- Establishment of Universal Peace
- 12- The World of Humanity is in the Need of the Breath of the Holy Spirit

²² `Abdu'l-Bahā mentions the principle of “The Equality of Rights” in *Khaṭābāt*, vol. 2, as the seventh principle. Since this topic is discussed in detail in the principles of “The Oneness of Humanity” and “The Equality of Men and Women,” we have replaced it with the subject of “The Universal House of Justice and the Supreme Tribunal,” for it deserves special attention.

This Book's Approach in Analyzing Baha'i Principles

In order to better benefit from this study, three fundamental approaches have been utilized.

The First Approach: Staying Away From Prejudice

The current document has been compiled while avoiding any sort of sympathy for any particular individual, group, or religion. The method used by the authors of this book when analyzing the statements of the founders of Baha'ism to seek the truth was using the divine blessing of *reason*. For *reason* is the sole solid yardstick for determining truth from falsehood.

The Second Approach: Using Original Baha'i Sources

The method used in this study when quoting Baha'i literature is to use primary sources, and specific references to authentic books and texts that are approved of by the Baha'i authorities. These references—from primary authentic sources—are cited as footnotes so that the readers can easily have access to the exact phrases without having to refer to the original sources. Thus, significant time and effort was put adjusting the above mentioned material so that no claim be made without proper references.

In a few minor cases, non-Baha'i sources have been used. These sources have only been used to further prove a point that we have already shown otherwise using Baha'i sources.

The Third Approach: The Uniformity of the Course of the Research in All Chapters

For the ease of the readers, each principle is brought forth in one separate chapter. In each chapter, the corresponding principle is analyzed from three separate perspectives. Then, in a section titled

“Read and Ponder,” an overall comparison will be made between the sayings of the leaders of Baha’ism, and in the end, a brief conclusion regarding the mentioned principle will be stated.

The Three Perspectives Used in this Study to Analyze the Baha’i Principles

1- Are These Principles Novel?

Are these principles—as Baha’is claim—novel?

Had no religion, creed, thinker, or authority uttered them before Baha’ism?

Had—as `Abdu’l-Bahā claimed—not one word of them been heard in Iran before the appearance of Bahā’u’llāh?²³

2-Did the Baha’i Leaders Act Upon These Principles?

Were these principles observed in the life and actions of the founders of Baha’ism or did they merely present them as slogans and used their glamour to promote their own way?

`Abdu’l-Bahā says:

All nations are perfect in their sayings. They all mention they are lovers of good, they all say truth is approved and falsehood is disapproved . . . but they all remain in the world of words. There is no action.²⁴

If a person knows that knowledge is glorified, this does not make him a scholar, if a person knows honor is approved of,

²³ “Not even a word of these principles had been heard in Iran before the appearance of Bahā’u’llāh. Go research about this so that it becomes evident and obvious to you,” `Abdu’l-Bahā, *Makātīb*, vol. 3, p. 114.

²⁴ `Abdu’l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Egypt), vol. 1, pp. 127–128.

this does not make him honorable, and according to this analogy, knowing does not result in attainment.²⁵

Thus, if Baha'is—particularly their leaders—do not act upon these principles, then they have no superiority over other beliefs.

3-Are These Principles Rational and Logical?

The fact that a statement appears elegant and logical at first glance does not guarantee its correctness. Although Baha'i principles might initially appear to be logical, we will show that in most cases they are illogical and unreasonable.

²⁵ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 100.

CHAPTER 1:

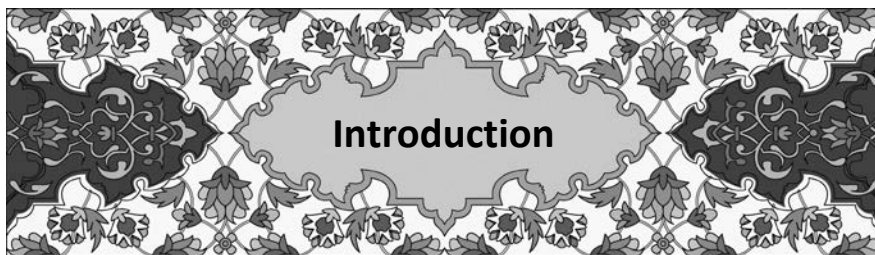
The Independent Investigation of Truth, Unfettered by Superstition or Tradition



**“Bahā’u’llāh’s first principle is
the seeking of the truth. Man
must seek the truth and set
aside imitations.”²⁶**



²⁶ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 144.



**The independent investigation
of truth is defined as searching
for the truth and abstaining
from imitations**

The Investigation of Truth is one of the most important of the twelve Baha'i principles. `Abdu'l-Bahā introduced this as the first of Bahā'u'llāh's teachings.²⁷ Baha'i's preach that every individual must investigate and seek the truth. They must listen with their own ears, see

²⁷ Although in another instance `Abdu'l-Bahā refers to the *Oneness of Humanity* as the first principle: "His first teaching is the *Oneness of the World of Humanity*," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 5.

with their own eyes, and contemplate without the influence of any love or hatred.²⁸ `Abdu'l-Bahā says:

Man must seek the truth and set aside imitations. The nations of the world each have their own imitations and each are different. The imitations have caused war and conflict, and as long as these imitations remain, the unity of the human world is not possible. Thus, one must seek the truth so that with its light, these darknesses disappear. For truth is only one. It does not accept plurality or division . . . These imitations, have made the human world dark. These imitations have caused war and killings. These imitations have caused hatred and enmity. Thus, we must seek the truth so that we can be freed from all of the hardships and [our] insights can be awakened and we can find way to the Divine Kingdom.²⁹

According to `Abdul-Bahā, since every nation has its own set of imitations, and none of them ever heads towards a single truth, they will always be at war with each other. Instead, they should put these imitations aside and independently search for the truth so that all problems are solved. He also says:

Those who are fair will examine, research, and inquire. This examination and inquiry will result in their guidance . . . they say, “We will go and see, and we will investigate the truth.”³⁰

²⁸ “When humans attain the rank of [religious] maturity they must investigate and think about [the things] the servants [of God] grasp—without [the influence] of love or hatred— whilst they have trust in God, and [they] must hear and see with their own ears and eyes.” `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt* (New Delhi: Mu’assisiyi Maṭbū’āt Amrī Hind, 1986), p.11 (citing Bahā’u’llāh).

²⁹ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, pp. 144–145.

³⁰ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Egypt), vol.1, p. 189.

It is certainly true that seeking the truth is critical. However, even more important is accepting the truth, once it is found. Otherwise, the slogan of seeking the truth will not solve anything. With this point in mind, we will analyze this principle from the three aforementioned perspectives.



Is Seeking the Truth and Setting Aside Imitations an Innovation of Baha'ism?

Are the Baha'is really the first people to have brought this principle forward to the ears of the world? `Abdu'l-Bahā claims:

Another new principle revealed by Bahā'u'llāh is the injunction to investigate truth—that is to say, no man should blindly follow his ancestors and forefathers. Nay, each must see with his own eyes, hear with his own ears and investigate the truth himself in order that he may follow the truth instead of blind acquiescence and imitation of ancestral beliefs.³¹

That which is propagated in Baha'i teachings as *seeking the truth*—which the Baha'is pride themselves in having discovered—is in reality an innate principle that has come in the books of different religions and can clearly be seen in the works of different philosophers.

It is clearly evident that this principle is not a new discovery or novel innovation of Baha'ism. Rather, all schools of thought and all of the Divine Religions call upon people to seek what is right, say what is right, and accept what is right. There are examples in books of previous dispensations that show this concept. For example, in the Avesta, the Holy Book of the Zoroastrians, it has come that:

³¹ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 454.

Hear with your ears the best things; look upon them with clear-seeing thought, for the decision between the two Beliefs, each man for himself before the Great consummation, bethinking you that it be accomplished to our pleasure.³²

In the Torah, the Holy Book of the Jews, we read:

Thus saith Jehovah, stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way; and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.³³

It is mentioned in the Bible:

Prove all things; Hold fast that which is good; Abstain from every form of evil.³⁴

The Holy Quran says:

Give good tiding to My servants. [Those] Who listen to speech and follow the best of it. Those are the ones God has guided, and those are people of understanding.³⁵

Even though `Abdu'l-Bahā had claimed this principle was new and revealed by his father, elsewhere he confesses that this principle is not new:

His Highness Moses spread the truth as did his Highness Jesus and his Highness Abraham and his Highness the Messenger (meaning the Prophet Muḥammad) and his Highness the Bāb

³² *Avesta*, Translated by L. H. Mills, vol. 1, Ahunavaiti Gatha, Yasna, chap. 30, verse 2 (*Sacred Books of the East* [American Edition, 1898], <http://avesta.org/yasna/yasna.htm#y30>)

³³ The Old Testament, The Book of Jeremiah, chap. 6, verse 16 (American Standard Version).

³⁴ The New Testament (American Standard Version), Thess. 5:21–22.

³⁵ Quran (Sahih International), 39:17-18.

and his Highness Bahā'u'llāh. They all established and spread the truth.³⁶

From the teachings (principles) of his Highness Bahā'u'llāh, the first is seeking the truth, and the foundation of all the Prophets . . . is truth, and the truth is one. His Highness Abraham was the harbinger of truth. His Highness Moses was the servant of truth. His Highness Christ was the establisher of truth. His Highness Muḥammad was the propagator of truth. His Highness A'lā (meaning the Bāb) was the herald of truth, and his Highness Bahā'u'llāh, was the light of truth.³⁷

The foundation of the divine religions is one. It is one truth, it is one spirit, it is one light, and it does not have a multitude. Among the foundations of the Divine Religion is seeking the truth [so] that the whole of humanity seeks the truth.³⁸

³⁶ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 5.

³⁷ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 55.

³⁸ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Egypt), vol. 1, p. 66.



Baha'ism and Investigating the Truth

Did the leaders of Baha'ism try to spread, seek, and accept the truth, or did they—and do they still—try to hide and deny it?

1- How Baha'is View Reason and Knowledge

To investigate the truth, one must use reason and knowledge to reach logical conclusions on the matters being investigated. Bahā'u'llāh claims that one's reason and knowledge are invalid unless one becomes a Baha'i. He says:

The general criterion is what we mentioned and any soul who has success in it, meaning recognizes and realizes the Sunrise of Manifestation (meaning himself), will be mentioned in the Divine Book as someone who possesses reason or else he will be (mentioned as) ignorant even if he himself thinks that his reason equals that of the whole world.³⁹

He also claims that, in contrast to previous revelations in which people could not understand some of the laws brought forth, in Baha'ism everything is quite clear, and whoever denies its revelations completely lacks reason:

³⁹ `Abd al-Hamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idiy-i āsimānī* (Tehran: Mu'assisiyi Millī Maṭbū'āt Amrī, 129 Badī'), vol. 7, p. 160.

No one has denied or will deny what has been revealed by the Ancient Pen (meaning himself) in this Most Great Manifestation regarding society, unity, manners, rites, and being occupied with what has benefits for the people, except that he completely lacks reason.⁴⁰

Furthermore, Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā claim that reason serves the purpose of recognizing God:

The first grace that has been bestowed on the human body is reason and its purpose is the recognition of the Truth (meaning God) Exalted be His Glory.⁴¹

If you seek the recognition of God . . . refer to the arguments (put forward by) reason and narrations.⁴²

However when Bahā'u'llāh refers to Bābīs that have not accepted his authority he claims that this is not the case:

Know that today, that which has reached your reason or will reach it, or is perceived by the reasons of [those with intellects] superior or inferior to yours, none are the criterion for recognizing the Truth (meaning God) and will never be.⁴³

⁴⁰ Bahā'u'llāh, *Iqtidārāt wa chand lauḥ dīgar*, (n.p.: n.p., n.d.), p. 168.

⁴¹ Bahā'u'llāh, *Muntakhabātī az āthār Ḥaḍrat Bahā'u'llāh* (Langenhain [Germany]: Lajniyi Millī Nashr Āthār Amrī Bī Zabānhayī Fārsī wa `Arabī, 141 Badī'), p. 127. The official Baha'i translation reads: "First and foremost among these favors, which the Almighty hath conferred upon man, is the gift of understanding. His purpose in conferring such a gift is none other except to enable His creature to know and recognize the one true God—exalted be His glory," Bahā'u'llāh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahā'u'llāh* (US Bahā'ī Publishing Trust, 1990 [pocket-size edition]), p. 194.

⁴² `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Tehran: Mu'assisiyi Millī Maṭbū'āt Amrī, 134 B.), vol. 8, pp. 119 - 120.

⁴³ Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'* (Tehran: n.p., n.d.), p. 286.

Essentially, reason is a useless tool unless it is used to reach the conclusion that Baha'ism is a great religion that must be followed. Bahā'u'llāh has similar teachings regarding knowledge and claims that those who do not become Baha'is are ignorant even if they possess all the knowledge on earth:

If today, someone grasps all of the knowledge on earth but stops at the word 'yes' (meaning does not become a Baha'i), the Lord will not pay attention to him (*ladī l-Ḥaqq madhkūr na*) and he will be considered as the most ignorant amongst the people.⁴⁴

From now on nobody is to be called knowledgeable, except those who have decorated themselves with the garment of this New Affair (meaning those who have become Baha'is).⁴⁵

Thus, if a very knowledgeable scholar pauses and hesitates about acknowledging Baha'ism, he is considered among the most ignorant of the people.

Do these statements from the founder of Baha'ism agree with the notion of accepting and seeking the truth? Do Baha'is tell the world that their leader believes that those who do not become Baha'is lack reason and are ignorant?

It appears that reason is a tool that is only useful for reaching Baha'ism. Once someone embraces the faith, he must stop using his reason.

In Baha'ism, it is taught that every person must choose their beliefs after reaching the age of religious maturity (15 years for both girls and boys)⁴⁶. Bahā'u'llāh says:

⁴⁴ Bahā'u'llāh, *Iqtidārāt wa chand lauḥ dīgar*, p. 111.

⁴⁵ Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, pp. 138–139.

⁴⁶ "A question [was asked] about the age of religious maturity; answer: maturity is in the fifteenth year and both men and women are the same regarding this matter," `Abd a l-Ḥamīd Ishrāq

When humans attain the rank of [religious] maturity they must investigate . . . and [they] must hear and see with their own ears and eyes.⁴⁷

Bahā'u'llāh claims that the ears and eyes are the same as reason.⁴⁸ Based on these words, one would be lead to believe that Baha'is are to investigate the truth using their reason once they become mature. Unfortunately, when Bahā'u'llāh explains how the truth must be investigated it becomes clear that this is not the case. Bahā'u'llāh expects his followers to shut down their reason and imitate him with complete blindness, deafness, and ignorance:

Become blind so that you see my face, become deaf so that you hear my pleasant tone and voice, become ignorant so that you get a share of my knowledge, and become poor so that you can take an everlasting portion from the sea of my eternal riches. 'Become blind' means [see] nothing but my beauty and 'become deaf' means [hear] nothing but my words and 'become ignorant' means [have no knowledge] but my knowledge, so that with a pure eye and clean heart and fine ear you come to my sanctified realm.⁴⁹

Khāwarī, *Ganjīni-yi ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, 3rd ed. (Tehran: Mu'assisiyi Millī Maṭbū'āt Amrī, 128 B.), p. 14.

⁴⁷ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 11 (citing Bahā'u'llāh).

⁴⁸ "The soul, reason, spirit, ears, and eyes are all one but they are different in their instruments," Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'lā* (Canada: Mu'assisiyi Ma'ārif Bahā'ī, 1996), vol. 1, no. 3, p. 112.

⁴⁹ Bahā'u'llāh, *Ad'iyyih-i ḥaḍrat-i maḥbūb* (Egypt: Published by Faraj-Allāh Dhakī al-Kurdī, 1339 AH), pp. 427–428. This is the Official Baha'i translation for these words: "Blind thine eyes, that thou mayest behold My beauty; stop thine ears, that thou mayest hearken unto the sweet melody of My voice; empty thyself of all learning, that thou mayest partake of My knowledge; and sanctify thyself from riches, that thou mayest obtain a lasting share from the ocean of My eternal wealth. Blind thine eyes, that is, to all save My beauty; stop thine ears to all save My word; empty thyself of all learning save the knowledge of Me; that with a clear vision, a pure heart and an attentive ear thou mayest enter the court of My holiness," Bahā'u'llāh, *The Hidden Words of Bahā'u'llāh* (US Bahā'ī Publishing Trust, 1985 [reprint]), p. 25.

He further says:

No pleasure has been created in the world greater than listening to the verses [brought by Bahā'u'llāh] and understanding their meanings and not objecting to or questioning any of the words and comparing them with the words of others.⁵⁰

These words are in no way justifiable. By this account, the leaders of Baha'ism want their followers to be like sheep⁵¹ that close their eyes and ears to anything other than the words of their leaders and only listen to their utterances, make no objections, and refrain from comparing them with the words of others. What kind of truth seeking requires one to become blind, deaf, and ignorant, and only entrust their heart to the claimant of truth, so that they enter his sanctified realm?

In the Baha'i faith, one must turn reason into a blindfold—instead of using it as a light to illuminate one's path—and follow Bahā'u'llāh to wherever he wishes to take him. The Quran—the same book that Bahā'u'llāh had adhered to for years—had clearly warned about having such beliefs:

Say: "Are the blind and seeing equal? Do you not contemplate?"⁵²

Those that preach these beliefs to non-Baha'is with great enthusiasm, never tell their audience that if they don't accept this creed they will be considered to be ignorant people who lack reason, and if they do, they must shut down their reason and blindly imitate Bahā'u'llāh.

⁵⁰ Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 145.

⁵¹ Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā have in numerous places referred to their followers as *Aghnām Allāh* (Sheep of God).

⁵² Quran, 6:50.

2- Investigating the Truth: Only for Non-Baha'is

`Abdu'l-Bahā says:

The followers of Moses (i.e. Jews) have imitations (*taqālid*), Zoroastrians have imitations, Christians have imitations, Buddhists have imitations, and every nation has imitations [and] thinks that its imitations are correct and the imitations of others are invalid. For example, the followers of Moses believe that their imitations are correct and the imitations of others are invalid. We want to find out which [imitations] are correct. [Obviously] not all imitations are correct. If we stick to an imitation it will prevent us from correctly investigating other [religions] imitations. For example, a Jewish person cannot understand that other [religions] are correct because he believes and sticks to the imitations of Judaism. Therefore, he must put aside the imitations and seek the truth and [think that] perhaps others might be right. Thus, until imitations are not put aside, the truth will not become manifest.⁵³

This is a prescription that has only been prescribed for non-Baha'is. How is it that the Jews, Christians, Muslims, and followers of all other religions must put aside the words of their forefathers and seek the truth with open ears and eyes, but Baha'is should absolutely refrain from doing so? Baha'is have been forbidden by Bahā'u'llāh from hearing any sort of criticism from the opponents of their creed; even if they are criticized using strong evidence and documents:

“Therefore, it is incumbent upon all the friends of God to shun any person in whom they perceive the emanation of hatred for the Glorious Beauty of Abhā, though he may quote

⁵³ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p.17 (citing `Abdu'l-Bahā').

all the Heavenly Utterances and cling to all the Books.” He continues—Glorious be His Name!—“Protect yourselves with utmost vigilance, lest you be entrapped in the snare of deception and fraud. This is the advice of the Pen of Destiny.”⁵⁴

Is it not possible that the critics are correct and Baha’is are wrong? Is listening to what these people have to say not one of the necessities for seeking and investigating the truth? In fact, Baha’u’llah goes even further than this, making it clear that critics and opponents are not the only people that Baha’is must not listen to. He orders Baha’is not to listen to the words of those who have denied the authority of Bahā’u’llāh:

Say: Oh my people, do not listen to the words of the polytheists about God and His manifestation. Fear a day everyone will be questioned before their High and Exalted Lord about what they have done.⁵⁵

The word polytheist or *mushrik* in Baha’i scripture, as shown in the next chapter, refers to all those that have denied Bahā’u’llāh’s authority and refrained from becoming Baha’is. Bahā’u’llāh is telling his followers to not listen to these people. Is this how Baha’is are supposed to investigate the truth? By not listening to the words of those who have—for whatever reason—refrained from becoming Baha’is?

3- How the Truth About Baha’ism is Investigated

To investigate the truth about anything, we must first obtain knowledge about it then use our reason to reach a verdict and conclusion. If a

⁵⁴ ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Bahā’ī World Faith—Selected Writings of Bahā’u’llāh and ‘Abdu’l-Bahā (‘Abdu’l-Bahā’s Section Only)*, (US Bahā’ī Publishing Trust, 1976), pp. 430–431.

⁵⁵ Bahā’u’llāh, *Majmū’iy-i alwāḥ-i mubārak-ih* (Cairo: Maṭba’atu Sa’āda [Published by Muḥyi l-Dīn Ṣabrī Kurdī], 1338 AH (1920)), p. 216.

Baha'i wants to research his or her religion, there are three sources from which he or she can seek knowledge: First, former Baha'is who have denounced their faith or been shunned and labeled as covenant breakers, second, memories and statements from people who have witnessed the actions of the Baha'i leaders, and third, official Baha'i documents and sources. Is it possible for truth seeking Baha'is to investigate their faith from any of these three sources?

a- Covenant Breakers and Enemies of the Faith

As we showed in the previous excerpts, listening to the words of those that have refrained from becoming Baha'is or any of Bahā'u'llāh's enemies has been strictly prohibited. Furthermore, as will be detailed in subsequent chapters, no form of socializing is allowed with covenant breakers. Thus any direct form of investigating the truth using this group of people is unfeasible.

Reading the books authored by covenant breakers—as a form of indirect investigation—is not advised. These people have unjustly been labeled by Shoghi as “haters of the light and sufferers of spiritual leprosy.” Books authored by the enemies of the faith are to be read only with the intention of refuting their charges:

It is better not to read books by Covenant-breakers because they are haters of the Light, sufferers from a spiritual leprosy, so to speak. But books by well-meaning yet unenlightened enemies of the Cause can be read so as to refute their charges.⁵⁶

Although Baha'is preach the Investigation of Truth, their laws prevent direct interaction with those who they deem as inappropriate sources. Any form of indirect investigation is also discouraged. These limitations

⁵⁶ Helen Bassett Hornby, *Lights of Guidance: A Bahā'ī Reference File* (New Delhi: Bahā'ī Publishing Trust, 1983), chap. XII, no. 628.

are against the spirit of the principle of Seeking and Investigating the Truth, which the Baha'is preach with pride.

b- Unofficial Translations, Memoirs, Pilgrims' Notes, and Unofficial Writings

Unauthorized materials, such as translations not yet approved by the UHJ, memoirs of people who have socialized with Baha'i figures, books that have not been authorized by the UHJ, pilgrims' notes, and similar works are considered inappropriate for investigating the truth. Although Baha'is are allowed to read these books, any conclusion they reach using these sources is void and unacceptable if it is against the official UHJ stance.

What is more disturbing is that it doesn't matter how reliable a pilgrim making a note is or how many different people have narrated what they have heard or seen from a Baha'i figure; these notes are simply labeled as hearsay that confer no authority:

The instructions of the Master and the Guardian make it very clear that Pilgrims' notes are hearsay and cannot claim the authority and binding power of the Sacred Text . . . [sic] Moreover, the fact that the pilgrim writing of his experience is a reliable or well-known believer, or that the reported statement seems to be repeated in the notes of several pilgrims, does not in itself confer authority upon the pilgrim's note in question.⁵⁷

According to `Abdu'l-Bahā, these notes and memoirs should not be trusted and are a cause of confusion:

Thou has written concerning the pilgrims and pilgrims' notes. Any narrative that is not authenticated by a Text should not

⁵⁷ Helen Bassett Hornby, *Lights of Guidance: A Bahā'ī Reference File*, chap. XXXVIII, no. 1433.

be trusted. Narratives, even if true, cause confusion. For the people of Bahā, the Text, and only the Text, is authentic.⁵⁸

If these sources are used to prove a point that is not in favor of the Baha'is, they are quickly labeled as unreliable and dismissed. Nevertheless, these writings are extensively used by Baha'is in their preaching's and proselytizing materials. Such double standards make these notes useless for investigating the truth, for any conclusion based on them can simply be refuted on the basis of not being authoritative. Thus, from a Baha'i viewpoint, these sources cannot be used as a source for investigating the truth.

c- Baha'i Scripture

The only authoritative sources for investigating the truth in Baha'ism are books or translations published and distributed by the UHJ or institutions they have authorized. Shoghi says:

Bahā'u'llāh has made it clear enough that only those things that have been revealed in the form of Tablets have a binding power over the friends. Hearsays may be matters of interest but can in no way claim authority (From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to the United States Publishing Committee, December 29, 1931).⁵⁹

How does one come by these books if they are needed for investigating the truth? There is no option but to use specific hand-picked documents that have been distributed by the Universal House of Justice. The rest of the Baha'i scripture is safeguarded in the Baha'i Archives in Haifa and other than a privileged few, no one has access to them. The following letter from the Universal House of Justice to an

⁵⁸ Helen Bassett Hornby, *Lights of Guidance: A Bahā'ī Reference File*, chap. XXXVIII, no. 1431.

⁵⁹ Helen Bassett Hornby, *Lights of Guidance: A Bahā'ī Reference File*, chap. XXXVIII, no. 1435.

unnamed Baha'i shows the sheer amount of unpublished documents that are being safeguarded in these archives:

**The Universal House of Justice Department of the Secretariat
Transmitted by email
6 June 2013**

Dear Bahā'ī Friend,

Your email letter dated 3 April 2013 requesting statistics concerning the Sacred Texts has been received at the Bahā'ī World Centre and forwarded to the Research Department for study. That Department notes that the collection and collation of the Sacred Writings is an ongoing process, and the numbers are continually being revised. The estimates of the numbers of unique works can be given as follows:

For Bahā'ullāh, nearly 20,000 unique works have been identified. Most of these Writings have been collected; however, 865 are known to have been revealed, but the texts are not available. Close to 15,000 of the collected works have been authenticated by the Archives Office to date.

For the Bāb, over 2,000 unique works have been identified. Most of these Writings have been collected; however, 74 are known to have been revealed, but the texts are not available. Nearly 1,600 of the collected works have been authenticated.

For 'Abdu'l-Bahā, over 30,000 unique works have been identified. All of these Writings have been collected and over 27,000 of them have been authenticated.

For Shoghi Effendi, over 22,000 unique works have been identified. All of these documents have been collected and the majority of them have been authenticated.

It is estimated that approximately ten per cent of the documents described above are in photocopied form. A fraction of the total numbers of unique works have been

published in the original languages or translated into Western languages. However, citing exact numbers would be misleading since much of the unpublished and untranslated material consists of day-to-day correspondence and personal guidance and encouragement, which is less likely to be of general interest. The World Centre is actively pursuing a publication programme for the as yet unpublished major works of the Central Figures of the Faith and Shoghi Effendi.

**With loving Bahā'ī greetings,
Department of the Secretariat⁶⁰**

These documents are the most important source for investigating the truth for Baha'is and non-Baha'is alike. Why have these works not been published and why are researchers not granted access to them? The first excuse is "much of the unpublished and untranslated material consists of day-to-day correspondence and personal guidance and encouragement, which is less likely to be of general interest." This is unacceptable. Would these works not be invaluable in following the first principle of seeking the truth? Surely there are many people out there who would love to read these works and would definitely receive guidance and insight from them. Is this not a disguise to withhold these Tablets from the public?

The second excuse is "The World Centre is actively pursuing a publication programme for the as yet unpublished major works of the Central Figures of the Faith." It goes without saying that the task of publishing such a large amount of articles and tablets is a very time consuming task and would require much money and manpower. Thus, one would expect these articles to be published sometime in the

⁶⁰ http://bahai-library.com/uhj_numbers_sacred_writings (retrieved 28/2/2014)

future⁶¹ when these resources are supplied. Sixteen years ago (1998) Professor Juan Cole brought up some interesting points in this regard:

If translating and making available the writings of Bahā'u'llāh were in fact any sort of priority of the Universal House of Justice, they have enormous resources with which to do so. (Anyone who can spend \$250 million⁶² on building works has the money for other projects, as well). They have simply decided to expend their resources on other things. I once saw in a library a big set of books, *The Collected Works of Sri Aurobindo* in Bengali with English translations. Aurobindo was a 20th century Indian holy man. But his followers managed to get his *complete* collected works not only published but also translated, not long after his death. Aurobindo's following is tiny and poor compared to that of the Bahā'īs. That only about 5% of Bahā'u'llāh's works have been translated is not an unfortunate side effect of lack of resources in the Bahā'īs community. It is a deliberate decision to invest the money in things like monumental architecture instead.⁶³

According to Professor Cole, the resources to distribute these works are available but the UHJ is deliberately diverting them elsewhere. Today, it has become clear that this is not the case. Rather, it is evident that the UHJ simply does not want to publish these works. Since at least 1993, most, if not all of these works had been digitized, typed, and placed in a database:

⁶¹ As shown throughout this book, problematic matters are usually passed to the future in order to silence criticism. In many cases, this unspecified future has not materialized even decades after it was promised.

⁶² He is referring to the cost of building the Baha'i World Center.

⁶³ http://bahai-library.com/uhj_lawh_huriyyih_cole

To assist the House of Justice in referring to the wealth of guidance and teachings contained in the Bahā'ī Writings, a computer database is used which contains descriptions of every Tablet and every letter of Shoghi Effendi, together with a typed copy of the text of each document. In the near future images of the original documents will also be stored in the computer, making it unnecessary to refer to the original items.⁶⁴

If the UHJ had the slightest intention of distributing these writings, they could have easily placed the database on an internet server, or distributed it as a DVD. The UHJ simply does not want the public to have access to these files. What other explanation could there be for someone to hide the illuminating, enlightening, and guiding words of a claimant to Prophethood, but only distributing a few selected Tablets?

So how exactly are truth seekers supposed to investigate the truth and abandon imitations? They are prohibited from direct contact from those who have left Baha'ism or criticize it. They are discouraged from reading their writings because they are haters of light. Unauthorized pilgrim's notes are considered unreliable, even if they are true. And on top of this all, the vast majority of the original Baha'i sources remained locked up in the Baha'i Archives. There are simply no remaining ways to investigate this religion in an unbiased manner. Ironically, the same creed that has prevents and discourages its followers from investigating the truth and deprives them of the means to do so, prides itself in being an advocate of investigating the truth.

4- If Investigating the Truth Means You Have to Question the Official Baha'is Stance on a Subject You Will Be Shunned

Suppose someone uses the limited means at hand to investigate the truth about Baha'ism and, based on his investigation, reaches a

⁶⁴ This is a section of a pamphlet inserted in *`Andalib magazine*, 12:48 (Fall 1993).

conclusion that goes against official doctrine. If this conclusion is publically announced, that person will be shunned. For instance if someone opposes the guardian, they must be shunned and no excuse must be accepted from them. `Abdu'l-Bahā says:

The Hands of the Cause of God must be ever watchful and so soon as they find anyone beginning to oppose and protest against the Guardian of the Cause of God, cast him out from the congregation of the people of Bahā and in no wise accept any excuse from him. How often hath grievous error been disguised in the garb of truth, that it might sow the seeds of doubt in the hearts of men!⁶⁵

Ironically, the same `Abdu'l-Bahā that gives the order to expel his coreligionists says:

Kindness brings about life, separation brings about death.⁶⁶

This law is not limited to those that oppose or protest the Guardian. Shoghi, and subsequently the UHJ, have shunned many people because they deemed their words or actions inappropriate, even when they were based on the truth.

Today, there are a number of prominent Baha'i academics who have either been kicked out of the Baha'i community or have left it themselves after they protested the actions of the UHJ or their investigations showed facts contrary to what the UHJ was propagating. People such as Professor Juan Cole, Dr. Linda Walbridge, Dr. Firouz Anarki, Sen McGlinn, and Frederick Glaysher are only a few of these individuals.

⁶⁵ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Will and Testament of `Abdu'l-Bahā* (US Bahā'ī Publishing Trust, 1990), p. 12.

⁶⁶ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Egypt), vol.1, p. 153.

If people must independently investigate the truth then why are they kicked out of the Baha'i community and shunned when they do so?

5- Distorting Baha'i scripture

The greatest obstacle in the path of investigating the truth is not hiding the material that can be used to do so, rather, it is deceiving the investigator by distorting and creating an inverted image of the truth.

Unfortunately, Baha'is actively engage in this act. The initiator of this act was Bahā'u'llāh himself who changed the original text of the book of *Īqān* once it was found that he had made multiple grammatical and Quranic mistakes in it. He had also forged and distorted a number of Islamic narrations to falsely prove that the Bāb was the Mahdi of Islam. `Abdu'l-Bahā followed his father's footsteps and even distorted the Quran to prove that minerals are alive and have a spirit! We will analyze these in chapter 4.

Other forms of this act can be seen in deleting or changing problematic subjects in new editions of books. For instance, the Tablet of the Maiden (*lauḥ Ḥūrīyyah*) which described Bahā'u'llāh sexually fondling the Holy Spirit was removed from the fourth volume of *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'ālā* in later editions.⁶⁷

After the death of Shoghi, once it became clear that Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā's prophecies about the Guardianship were incorrect, a number of Baha'i books and texts which spoke about the responsibilities of the Guardian were distorted. In the new versions of these texts, the Guardians responsibilities were transferred to the Universal House of Justice! For instance, in the fifth edition of Aḥmad Yazdānī's *Nazar-i ijmālī dar diyarat-i Bahā'ī* that was published by the Baha'i Publishing Trust of Iran in 129 B., distortions can be seen on pages 31 and 105 that speak about the institution responsible for resolving differences amongst Baha'is and also the recipient of Ḥuqūq Allah.

⁶⁷ The undistorted version can be found here: <http://www.h-net.org/~bahai/areprint/baha/A-F/A/aqa4/aqa4.htm>

Vance Salisbury, in his article *A Critical Examination of 20th-Century Baha'i Literature*,⁶⁸ points to many other distortions of this kind. He brings up many interesting subjects. For instance, he refers to another unfulfilled prophecy from `Abdu'l-Bahā that was later removed from Esslemont's book:

Perhaps the most important change in *Bahā'u'llāh and the New Era* was made on page 212 of the 1923 edition. Recorded as a Bahā'ī prophecy concerning the "Coming of the Kingdom of God," Esslemont cited Abdu'l-Bahā's interpretation of the last two verses of the Book of Daniel from the Bible. He stated that the 1335 days spoken of by Daniel represented 1335 solar years from Muhammad's flight to Medina in 622 A.D., which would equal 1957 A.D.. When asked "'What shall we see at the end of the 1335 days?'," Abdu'l-Bahā's reply was: "'Universal Peace will be firmly established, a Universal language promoted. Misunderstandings will pass away. The Bahā'ī Cause will be promulgated in all parts and the oneness of mankind established. It will be most glorious!'" In editions published after his death, Esslemont's words have been changed to say that Abdu'l-Bahā "reckoned the fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy from the date of the beginning of the Muhammadan era" and one of Abdu'l-Bahā's Tablets is quoted on the same subject in which he writes, "'For according to this calculation a century will have elapsed from the dawn of the Sun of Truth . . . Esslemont recorded Abdu'l-Bahā as declaring explicitly that the prophecy was to be computed from the Hijra or 622 A.D. and that specific conditions would exist in the world upon its fulfillment in 1957. When it became apparent that this Bahā'ī prophecy would not be fulfilled, it was replaced with the ambiguous material which has remained in the text to the present."

⁶⁸ http://bahai-library.com/salisbury_critical_examination_literature (retrieved 22/2/2014)

Another form of distortion can be seen in translating Baha'i texts to English. For instance, in one his Tablets, Bahā'u'llāh refers to the Bāb's order of *beheading* non-Bābīs. This has been translated to shedding blood in the official Baha'i translation.⁶⁹ In another instance, Bahā'u'llāh gives the order to hit a kebob seller in the mouth. His order is executed and one of Bahā'u'llāh's followers grabs hold of the poor man's beard and starts hitting him in the head. In the translated version of this story there is no reference to hitting. These examples and similar ones can be found with more explanations in chapter 9.

6- Investigating the Truth or Proselytizing to Illiterate Masses That Have No Means of Investigating the Truth

Baha'is actively engage in proselytizing missions that are utterly against the investigation of truth. In these campaigns— that continue with great force today—illiterate masses in third world countries that have *no means of investigating the truth* whatsoever, are converted to Baha'ism under the disguise of education and humanitarian relief. Moojan Momen, the prominent Baha'i author, explains this by writing:

Missionary endeavour on the part of Middle Eastern and Western Bahā'īs had led to the establishment of Bahā'ī communities in several parts of the non-Muslim 'Third World', initially among the Western-oriented urban minority. Conversions of larger numbers began in a few isolated areas in the 1950s and spread during the 1960s to most parts of the 'Third World'. The results were dramatic. As Bahā'ī teachers learned to adapt their message and missionary techniques to the situation of the unschooled masses of Third World peasants and urban workers, they completely transformed their religion's social base. Now, the great majority of Bahā'īs in the world are drawn from the popular classes of the non-

⁶⁹ Bahā'u'llāh, *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 91.

Islamic Third World. Even in the well-established Bahā'ī communities of North America, recent infusions of minority group members (Blacks and Amerindians) has led to a significant change in the social base of the membership . . . By the late 1960s, a great increase in the number of Bahā'īs had occurred. Conversions of large numbers of tribal or peasant peoples in various parts of the Third World had begun . . . Most of the flood of new Bahā'īs were poorly educated, and many lived in rural and tribal areas with which effective communication was difficult to sustain.⁷⁰

Baha'i missionaries would convert people from undeveloped countries who lacked the tools and means of investigating the truth to Baha'ism. This resulted in the twenty-fold increase of the Baha'i population in about 30 years.⁷¹ Is there any pride in this attitude, especially from a creed that claims all people must be given the chance to independently investigate the truth?

7- How Baha'is Investigate the Truth From Childhood

What most Baha'is do not know today, is that 'Abdu'l-Bahā had prohibited his followers from sending their children to non-Baha'i schools. It was because of this order that Baha'i schools like Madrisiy-i Tarbiyat were established in Tehran:

It is absolutely prohibited for the children of the friends to go to the schools of others (meaning non-Baha'is) for this is [a cause of] humiliation (dhillat) for the Cause of God and they will be completely deprived of the Blessed Beauty's graces.

⁷⁰ P. Smith, M. Momen, The Baha'i faith 1957–1988: A survey of contemporary developments, *Religion* 19 (1989), pp. 63–91: http://bahai-library.com/momen_smith_developments_1957-1988 (retrieved 28/2/2014)

⁷¹ See the table in the same article.

Because they will be educated/nurtured elsewhere and they will disgrace the Baha'is.⁷²

`Abdu'l-Bahā prohibits his followers in the strictest sense and using threatening language from sending their children to non-Baha'i schools. Apparently, Baha'i children must be prevented from learning anything non-Baha'i while they are still in an age in which they cannot decide for themselves about what is right and wrong. They must be induced to think that the Baha'i creed is the only source of salvation for mankind and its teachings are unique and better than all other teachings. When these children grow up, they will be biased towards the Baha'i creed and their investigation of the truth will be influenced by the teachings that have been firmly established in their minds since childhood.

8- Investigating the Truth a Crime for Israeli Citizens

For reasons still unknown, Bahā'u'llāh had prohibited his followers from teaching Baha'ism to the people of Israel. In a letter dated 23/6/1995 the Universal House of Justice replies to an individual believer:

The Universal House of Justice has received your email message dated 29 June 1995 and we have been asked to respond.

You have asked how the policy of not teaching Israelis applies in the situation in which you have contact with an Israeli via an "interactive relay chat" (IRC) connection. The House of Justice has not asked the friends to avoid contact with Israelis. When you discover that a person you are in contact with via IRC is an Israeli, you should feel free to maintain friendly contact, but you should not teach the Faith to him. If he has already developed a personal interest in the

⁷² `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātib* (probably Tehran: n.p., n.d.), vol. 5, p. 170.

Faith and seeks more information, you should refer him to the Offices of the Bahā'ī World Centre in Haifa.

For your information, the people in Israel have access to factual information about the Faith, its history and general principles. Books concerning the Faith are available in libraries throughout Israel, and Israelis are welcome to visit the Shrines and the surrounding gardens. However, in keeping with a policy that has been strictly followed since the days of Bahā'u'llāh, Bahā'īs do not teach the Faith in Israel. Likewise, the Faith is not taught to Israelis abroad if they intend to return to Israel. When Israelis ask about the Faith, their questions are answered, but this is done in a manner which provides factual information without stimulating further interest.

With loving Bahā'ī greetings,
Department of the Secretariat⁷³

This order is quite puzzling in light of the principle of the independent investigation of truth. Why should a specific group of people be deprived of the right of learning and embracing the truth?

⁷³ http://bahai-library.com/uhj_teaching_in_israel (retrieved 8/3/2014)



Is This Principle Correct from a Rational and Logical Perspective?

Seeking the truth is most definitely logical, and reasonable; blind imitation is also an inappropriate and irrational action. But just as was determined in the second perspective, this principle is not exclusive to Baha'ism.

Seeking the truth and accepting what is right is an innate matter. This concept is a fundamental basis of the Shi'a Islamic belief which Bahā'u'llāh had firm belief in for years before he founded the Baha'i creed. A glance at the teachings of the Quran can reveal the origins of this so-called *novel* Baha'i principle. The Quran constantly invites humans to find what is right, go after knowledge, use their reason, and forbids them from blind imitation of their fathers and ancestors. The Prophet of Islam strictly recommended pondering and seeking the truth using reason and intellect when making a decision in regards to fundamental issues of belief.

It is stated in the Quran:

And when it is said to them, "Follow what God has revealed," they say, "Rather, we will follow that which we found our fathers doing." Even though their fathers understood nothing, nor were they guided.⁷⁴

⁷⁴ Quran 2:170.

The Quran not only prohibits people from blindly imitating their fathers and ancestors, but also warns about blind imitation of influential groups in society:

And they will say, “Our Lord, indeed we obeyed our masters and our dignitaries, and they led us astray from the [right] way.”⁷⁵

But, what if an imitation is not blind and unreasonable? If a person, finds a wise human whose actions, behavior, and do’s and don’ts are logical and rational, should that person not be followed?

Is imitating the exercise form of a professional athlete wrong or unreasonable? Is referring to a specialist in every field, following their advice, and making use of their guidelines unreasonable?

Reason dictates that every person must research about the fundamentals of their religious beliefs. A person must personally do research and be committed to their religious principles and beliefs based on knowledge and reason. This principle is different from the incorrect belief of certain Sufi cults⁷⁶ that call their followers to blindly obey them and prevent them from thinking and contemplation.

Despite the external appearance of rejecting imitation completely, Baha’is have many decrees and orders that they all must imitate and follow. For example, one can refer to the book of *Aqdas*—the most important book in the Baha’i creed—and the book *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkāṁ* whose do’s and don’ts all Baha’is are obligated to submit to.

⁷⁵ Quran, 33:67.

⁷⁶ Bābism which is the basis of Baha’ism was itself greatly influenced by Sufi beliefs. The influence of Sufi beliefs can still be seen in the Baha’i scripture.

Is acting on the decrees and orders of the *Aqdas* not considered imitation? Is it not an imitation when `Abdu'l-Bahā orders Baha'is to submit to the decisions made by the Universal House of Justice (UHJ)?⁷⁷

Baha'is typically respond to these questions by claiming that the meaning of putting aside imitations, is imitations in undesired things, not any form of imitation! In response to this, it must be said that:

Firstly, in no part of this principle is there a distinction between desirable and undesirable imitations. In fact, evidence shows that the meaning of this principle is imitations in general.

Secondly, if this is indeed the case, then all this publicity is absurd, for not only do all religions and creeds deem blind imitation as undesirable, but all the wise people in the world believe and agree on this. So this principle cannot be considered as a novel, new discovery that sets Baha'ism apart from all previous religions and philosophies.

Baha'is respond to the abovementioned argument by saying that it is true that all religions condemn blind imitations, but the important thing is to act upon this principle, for "all nations are perfect in their sayings."⁷⁸

Using this criterion, how are we to judge Bahā'u'llāh's orders to become blind and deaf⁷⁹ and to close the ears from hearing the words of the critics of Baha'ism? Is the fact that no Baha'i has the right to openly question the orders of the UHJ, and as soon as they start protesting and do not accept the justifications brought forward by other Baha'is, they should be excommunicated and expelled from the community, a sign of seeking the truth and *acting upon* it?

⁷⁷ "The affairs of the nation are connected to the men of the divine House of Justice . . . everyone must obey [them]. Everyone's political affairs must be referred to the House of Justice," Bahā'u'llāh, *Ishrāqāt wa chand lauḥ dīgar* (n.p.: n.p., n.d.), p.79.

⁷⁸ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Egypt), vol. 1, pp. 127–128.

⁷⁹ "Become blind so that you see my face, become deaf so that you hear my pleasant tone and voice, become ignorant . . ." Bahā'u'llāh, *Ad'iyiyih-i ḥaḍrat-i maḥbūb*, pp. 427–428.

It is up to you to draw your own conclusions!





**Bahā'u'llāh:
“Contradiction has and will not
ever have a way in the
sanctified realm of the Divine
Manifestations.”⁸⁰**

⁸⁰ Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 126.

1. Is the Principle of Investigating the Truth New?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: Investigating the truth is a new principle.⁸¹

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: Seeking the truth is the foundation of all the Prophets.⁸²

2. What Is Bahā’u’llāh’s First Principle?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: Bahā’u’llāh’s first principle is investigating the truth.⁸³

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: Bahā’u’llāh’s first principle is the oneness of humanity.⁸⁴

⁸¹ “Another new principle revealed by Bahā’u’llāh is the injunction to investigate truth—that is to say, no man should blindly follow his ancestors and forefathers. Nay, each must see with his own eyes, hear with his own ears and investigate the truth himself in order that he may follow the truth instead of blind acquiescence and imitation of ancestral beliefs,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 454.

⁸² “His Highness Moses spread the truth as did his Highness Jesus and his Highness Abraham and his Highness the Messenger (meaning the Prophet Muḥammad) and his Highness the Bāb and his Highness Bahā’u’llāh. They all established and spread the truth,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 5; “The foundation of all the Prophets . . . is truth, and the truth is one. His Highness Abraham was the harbinger of truth. His Highness Moses was the servant of truth. His Highness Christ was the establisher of truth. His Highness Muḥammad was the propagator of truth. His Highness A’lā (meaning the Bāb) was the herald of truth, and his Highness Bahā’u’llāh, was the light of truth,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 55; “The foundation of the divine religions is one. It is one truth, it is one spirit, it is one light, and it does not have a multitude. Among the foundations of the divine religion is seeking the truth [so] that the whole of humanity seeks the truth,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Egypt), vol. 1, p. 66.

⁸³ “Bahā’u’llāh’s first principle is the seeking of the truth. Man must seek the truth and set aside imitations,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 144.

⁸⁴ “His first teaching is *the Oneness of the World of Humanity*,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 5.

3. Are Non-Baha'is Ignorant and without Reason?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: One must not label people as being ignorant.⁸⁵

Bahā’u’llāh: Whoever does not become a Baha’i is among the most ignorant of the people, even if he has mastery over all sciences.⁸⁶

Whoever does not become a Baha’i has no reason even if he thinks he does.⁸⁷ Whoever denies my teachings completely lacks reason.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ “The divine principles in this luminous era are such that one must not insult anyone or attribute them to ignorance [by saying] that you do not know and I know. Rather, one must view everyone from a respectful perspective and must speak and argue from the viewpoint of seeking the truth. [They must say] come, there are several issues at hand, so let us seek the truth, and see how and why [it is so]. The missionary must not consider himself wise and others as ignorant. This thought will result in arrogance, and arrogance causes a lack of effectiveness; instead, one must not see any merit in himself and must speak with the maximum extent of kindness, humility, and humbleness. This kind of expression will be effective,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Makātīb*, vol. 1, p. 355.

⁸⁶ “If today, someone grasps all of the knowledge on earth but stops at the word ‘yes’ (meaning does not become a Baha’i), the Lord will not pay attention to him (*ladī l-Ḥaqq madhkūr na*) and he will be considered as the most ignorant amongst the people,” Bahā’u’llāh, *Iqtidārāt wa chand lauḥ dīgar*, p. 111; “From now on nobody is to be called knowledgeable, except those who have decorated themselves with the garment of this New Affair (meaning those who have become Baha’is),” Bahā’u’llāh, *Badī’*, pp. 138–139.

⁸⁷ “The general criterion is what we mentioned and any soul who has success in it, meaning recognizes and realizes the Sunrise of Manifestation (meaning himself), will be mentioned in the Divine Book as someone who possesses reason or else he will be (mentioned as) ignorant even if he himself thinks that his reason equals that of the whole world,” ‘Abd a l-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā’idiy-i āsimānī*, vol. 7, p. 160.

⁸⁸ “No one has denied or will deny what has been revealed by the Ancient Pen (meaning himself) in this Most Great Manifestation regarding society, unity, manners, rites, and being occupied with what has benefits for the people, except that he completely lacks reason,” Bahā’u’llāh, *Iqtidārāt wa chand lauḥ dīgar*, p. 168.

4. Can the Recognition of God Be Obtained through Intellect?

Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā: Reason was created for the purpose of recognizing God.⁸⁹ Recognize God by using reason and narrations.⁹⁰

Bahā'u'llāh: Recognition cannot be obtained by the use of reason.⁹¹

5. Should We Investigate or Accept without Any Questions?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: A person who is fair, will investigate and do research to seek the truth.⁹²

Bahā'u'llāh: Accept my words without any questions or comparison with someone else's words.⁹³

⁸⁹ "The first grace that has been bestowed on the human body is reason and its purpose is the recognition of the Truth (meaning God) Exalted be His Glory," Bahā'u'llāh, *Muntakhabāt az āthār Ḥaḍrat Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 127. The official Baha'i translation reads: "First and foremost among these favors, which the Almighty hath conferred upon man, is the gift of understanding. His purpose in conferring such a gift is none other except to enable His creature to know and recognize the one true God—exalted be His glory," Bahā'u'llāh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 194.

⁹⁰ "If you seek the recognition of God (*`irfān ilāhī*) . . . refer to the arguments (put forward by) reason and narrations," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb*, vol. 8, pp. 119 -120.

⁹¹ "Know that today, that which has reached your reason or will reach it, or is perceived by the reasons of [those with intellects] superior or inferior to yours, none are the criterion for recognizing the Truth (meaning God) and will never be," Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 286.

⁹² "Those who are fair will examine, research and inquire. This examination and inquiry will result in their guidance . . . they say: 'We will go and see, and we will investigate the truth,'" `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Egypt), vol.1, p. 189.

⁹³ "No pleasure has been created in the world greater than listening to the verses [brought by Bahā'u'llāh] and understanding their meanings and not objecting to or questioning any of the words and comparing them with the words of others," Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 145.

6. Investigating the Truth: Only for Non-Baha'is

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Different religions should listen to the words of other religions. Perhaps, what is right is with them.⁹⁴

Bahā'u'llāh: Even if someone criticizes Baha'ism with proof, do not listen.⁹⁵

7. Should Baha'is See and Hear or Become Blind and Deaf?

Bahā'u'llāh: Research and listen with your own ears and see with your own eyes.⁹⁶

Bahā'u'llāh: When I speak become deaf, blind, and ignorant and blindly accept my words.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ “The followers of Moses (i.e. Jews) have imitations (*taqālīd*), Zoroastrians have imitations, Christians have imitations, Buddhists have imitations, and every nation has imitations [and] thinks that its imitations are correct and the imitations of others are invalid. For example, the followers of Moses believe that their imitations are correct and the imitations of others are invalid. We want to find out which [imitations] are correct. [Obviously] not all imitations are correct. If we stick to an imitation it will prevent us from correctly investigating other [religions] imitations. For example, a Jewish person cannot understand that other [religions] are correct because he believes and sticks to the imitations of Judaism. Therefore, he must put aside the imitations and seek the truth and [think that] perhaps others might be right. Thus, until imitations are not put aside, the truth will not become manifest,” `Abd al-Ḥamīd Isḥrāq Khāwārī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p.17 (citing `Abdu'l-Bahā').

⁹⁵ ““Therefore, it is incumbent upon all the friends of God to shun any person in whom they perceive the emanation of hatred for the Glorious Beauty of Abhā, though he may quote all the Heavenly Utterances and cling to all the Books.” He continues—Glorious be His Name!—‘Protect yourselves with utmost vigilance, lest you be entrapped in the snare of deception and fraud. This is the advice of the Pen of Destiny,’ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Bahā'ī World Faith—Selected Writings of Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā* (*`Abdu'l-Bahā's Section Only*), pp. 430–431.

⁹⁶ “When humans attain the rank of [religious] maturity they must investigate . . . and [they] must hear and see with their own ears and eyes,” `Abd al-Ḥamīd Isḥrāq Khāwārī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p.11 (citing Bahā'u'llāh).

⁹⁷ “Become blind so that you see my face, become deaf so that you hear my pleasant tone and voice, become ignorant so that you get a share of my knowledge, and become poor so that you can take an everlasting portion from the sea of my eternal riches. ‘Become blind’ means [see] nothing but my beauty and ‘become deaf’ means [hear] nothing but my words and ‘become ignorant’ means [have no knowledge] but my knowledge, so that with a pure eye and clean heart and fine ear you come to my sanctified realm,” Bahā'u'llāh, *Ad'iyih-i ḥaḍrat-i maḥbūb*, pp. 427–428.



A Summary and Conclusion of the Three Perspectives:

1) Is “Seeking the truth and setting aside imitations,” a new principle?

In the books of the Zoroastrians, the Jews, the Christians, and Muslims, people are invited to seek and accept the truth and are forbidden from blind imitations. It is evident that this principle is not novel.

2) Did the leaders of Baha’ism act upon this principle?

Bahā’u’llāh ordered his followers to blindly imitate him, the UHJ actively prevents the investigation of the truth by withholding or distorting Baha’i scripture, and Baha’i missionaries proselytize to groups that have no means of investigating the truth. It is obvious that Baha’is do not adhere to this principle.

3) Are these principles, reasonable and logical?

Investigating the truth is reasonable but putting aside imitations is not always a good thing. For instance, referring to experts and specialists in a certain field and imitating them, is not problematic, but rather, it is confirmed by common sense and logic.

CHAPTER 2:

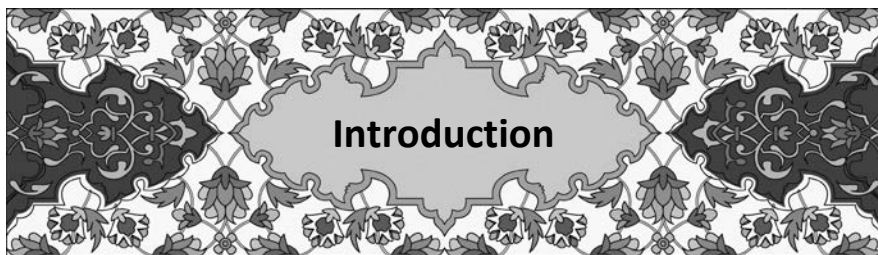
The Oneness of Humanity



“The second principle is the Oneness of Humanity: all humans are divine sheep and God is the kind shepherd who has utter compassion towards all the sheep and has made no distinction [between them].”⁹⁸



⁹⁸ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātib* (Egypt), vol. 3, p. 67.



**The definition of the Oneness
of Humanity is that all people
are brothers, sisters,
daughters, mothers, sons, and
fathers of each other, and must
have no enmity towards one
another.**



Bahā'u'llāh says:

Oh friends! Know that the curtain of unity has been raised, do not look at each other as strangers; you are all the fruits of one tree and the leaves of one branch.⁹⁹

⁹⁹ Bahā'u'llāh, *Majmū'iy-i alwāḥ-i mubārak-ih*, p. 265.

`Abdu'l-Bahā says:

The second principle of Bahā'u'llāh is the Oneness of Humanity. All of humanity are members of the human species. They are all servants of God. They have all been created by God. They are all divine children. God gives sustenance to all of them; nurtures all of them; is compassionate to all of them; why should we be uncompassionate? . . . The human species are all in the shadow of the Lord's Grace. At most some are imperfect and must be perfected, [some] are ignorant and must be taught, [some] are sick and must be treated, [and some] are asleep and must be awakened. We should not be angry at an infant for being an infant. We should nurture him. We should not be angry at a sick person for not being healthy. We should have the greatest amount of mercy and kindness toward him. From these [examples] it is apparent that the enmity between religions should be completely wiped out; oppression and injustice should be removed, and instead, the greatest amount of kindness and affection should flow.¹⁰⁰

According to Shoghi Effendi, the central axis of all Baha'i principles, and the ultimate goal of Baha'ism is the "Oneness of Humanity."¹⁰¹
`Abdu'l-Bahā narrates from Bahā'u'llāh:

The Oneness of Humanity means that the entirety of humanity is subject to the blessings of [God] the Great and Glorious. They are the servants of one God and nurtured by

¹⁰⁰ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, pp. 145–146.

¹⁰¹ "The principle of Oneness of Humanity is the axis of all of Bahā'u'llāh's teachings" and "The Oneness of Humanity is the main and ultimate goal of Bahā'u'llāh's creed," Hūshmand Fath A'zam, *Naẓm jahānī Bahā'ī muntakhabātī az āthār ṣādiri az qalam ḥaḍrat walī amr Allāh*, 2nd ed. (Dundas [Canada]: n.p., 151 B. [1955]), pp. 49 and 57–58.

his Highness, the Lord. Everyone is included in the mercy and the crown of humanity is the jewel of every head.¹⁰²

He emphasizes:

This means that Bahā'u'llāh declared the Oneness of Humanity so all members of humanity become brothers, sisters, daughters, mothers, sons, and fathers of each other.¹⁰³

Bahā'is claim that all people are part of God's creation. Skin color, beauty, and looks are no reason for the superiority of someone over another and must not be a cause of conflict and enmity. Instead, these differences are like the differences among the colors and types of flowers in a large field, which cause the field to flourish.¹⁰⁴ In the presence of God, Turks, Persians, Whites, and Blacks are all the same, and none have any distinction over another.¹⁰⁵ God is kind to all, so why should we not be kind to each other?¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Egypt), vol. 1, p. 31.

¹⁰³ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Egypt), vol. 1, p. 154.

¹⁰⁴ "Consider the flowers of a garden," `Abdu'l-Bahā has written, 'though differing in kind, color, form, and shape, yet, inasmuch as they are refreshed by the waters of one spring, revived by the breath of one wind, invigorated by the rays of one sun, this diversity increaseth their charm, and addeth unto their beauty. How unpleasing to the eye if all the flowers and plants, the leaves and blossoms, the fruits, the branches and the trees of that garden were all of the same shape and color! Diversity of hues, form and shape, enricheth and adorneth the garden, and heighteneth the effect thereof,'" Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice* (US Bahā'ī Publishing Trust, 1990 [first pocket-size edition]), p. 54.

¹⁰⁵ "In the presence of God there is no [such thing] as English, French, Turk, or Persian. To God they are all the same," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, pp. 45–46 (citing `Abdu'l-Bahā'); "God, `Abdu'l-Bahā Himself declares, 'maketh no distinction between the white and the black. If the hearts are pure both are acceptable unto Him. God is no respecter of persons on account of either color or race. All colors are acceptable unto Him, be they white, black, or yellow,'" Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice*, p. 37.

¹⁰⁶ "All of humanity are members of the human species. They are all servants of God. They have all been created by God. They are all divine children. God gives sustenance to all of them; nurtures all of them; is compassionate to all of them; why should we be uncompassionate?" `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, pp. 145–146.

The following questions should be kept in mind while analyzing this principle:

1. What is the explicit meaning of the 'Oneness of Humanity'? Does the Oneness of Humanity mean that people of all races and religions should become sisters, brothers, and friends or does it mean everyone should convert to Baha'ism?
2. If the former definition applies and everyone—regardless of religion or creed—should live in peace and harmony, then why do Baha'i orders imply the contrary (as we will soon show)?
3. If the meaning of the 'Oneness of Humanity' is that all people must become Baha'is, then who will be responsible for administering the political matters of this unified Baha'i society, given that under Baha'i law, no Baha'i is allowed to interfere in political matters, either in words or in action?¹⁰⁷
4. Do Baha'is have a particular plan for reaching the 'Oneness of Humanity' or is this merely a theoretical slogan?

¹⁰⁷ "Whoever interferes in political affairs is not a Baha'i," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 70, titled "Refraining From Interfering in Political Affairs," p. 336.



Is the Oneness of Humanity a New Principle?

Is this principle something new? Had it not been heard before the Baha'is declared it?

If this principle means that God is the creator of all humans, that Adam and Eve are the father and mother of all people, and that God wishes that all persons be inclined towards goodness, then this is not a new belief nor a novel teaching.

For example these two verses from the Quran invite all people to oneness and show that color, ethnicity, and gender are not means of superiority:

O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted.¹⁰⁸

And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided.¹⁰⁹

When most Iranians hear the phrase 'The Oneness of Humanity,' they are reminded of Sa'di's famous poem:

¹⁰⁸ Quran (Sahih International), 49:13.

¹⁰⁹ Quran, 3:103

**Human beings are members of a whole
In creation of one essence and soul**

**If one member is afflicted with pain
Other members uneasy will remain.**

This poem was composed in the 13th century, hundreds of years before Bahā'u'llāh was born. So it seems this Baha'i principle is nothing novel or new. In fact, 'Abdu'l-Bahā' confesses that this teaching existed in all Divine Religions:

The foundation laid by all Prophets, is the foundation of Bahā'u'llāh and that foundation is the Oneness of Humanity. That foundation is general compassion; that foundation is universal peace between governments.¹¹⁰

All Divine Prophets struggled for the Oneness of Humanity and served humanity, for the foundation of the divine teachings is the Oneness of Humanity. Moses served the Oneness of Humanity, Jesus established the Oneness of Humanity, Mohammad declared the Oneness of Humanity. The Bible, Torah, and Quran established the foundation of the Oneness of Humanity. The law of God is one and the religion of God is one and that is affection and kindness. His Highness, Bahā'u'llāh, renewed the teachings of the prophets.¹¹¹

Consider history. What has brought unity to nations, morality to peoples and benefits to mankind? If we reflect upon it, we will find that establishing the divine religions has been the greatest means toward accomplishing the oneness of humanity . . . The divine religions are collective centers in

¹¹⁰ 'Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 286.

¹¹¹ 'Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Egypt), vol. 1, pp. 18–19.

which diverse standpoints may meet, agree and unify. They accomplish oneness of native lands, races and policies. For instance, Christ united various nations, brought peace to warring peoples and established the oneness of humankind.¹¹²

`Abdu'l-Bahā clearly announces with great emphasis that Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad all invited people to the Oneness of Humanity. He is clearly confessing that this teaching is not new. Despite this, at other times he uttered the contrary and claimed that the previous Prophets divided humanity and it was only Baha'u'llah that proclaimed the Oneness of Humanity:

In all religious teachings of the past the human world has been represented as divided into two parts: one known as the people of the Book of God, or the pure tree, and the other the people of infidelity and error, or the evil tree. The former were considered as belonging to the faithful, and the others to the hosts of the irreligious and infidel—one part of humanity the recipients of divine mercy, and the other the object of the wrath of their Creator. Bahā'u'llāh removed this by proclaiming the oneness of the world of humanity, and this principle is specialized in His teachings, for He has submerged all mankind in the sea of divine generosity.¹¹³

Unfortunately, as will be demonstrated in the next section, `Abdu'l-Bahā continuously changed his words depending on the audience he was preaching to.

¹¹² `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 158.

¹¹³ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 454.



Did the Founders of Baha'ism Believe in the Oneness of Humanity?

Baha'i scripture is replete with violations of this principle. These violations are sometimes so blatant that one reaches the conclusion that this principle should be referred to as the 'noneness' of humanity.

1- Black Africans are All Like Wild Savages and Land Dwelling Animals:

`Abdu'l-Bahā had quite an interesting view about black Africans. He claimed that wise people believe that:

The inhabitants of a land like Africa are all like wild savages and land-dwelling animals that lack common-sense and knowledge and are all wild. There is not a single wise and civilized person among them.¹¹⁴

Perhaps some will point out that this statement was not `Abdu'l-Bahā's personal opinion, but only a recounting of what the wise think. The words that he uttered after this sentence clearly show that he too believed in these words:

¹¹⁴ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 1, p. 331.

On the other hand, they (meaning the wise) show that in civilized countries all the people have the best manners, fine conduct, assistance, collaboration, and perception; and except for a small minority, possess commonsense. Thus it is shown and clarified that the elevation and degradation of intellect and perception is due to nurturing and education, or its absence.¹¹⁵

`Abdu'l-Bahā recounted the opinion of the so-called 'wise' to prove a concept he was explaining. If he did not believe in these words, then why didn't he refute them? Using them as evidence of his beliefs regarding nurturing and education, without any negation or reprove, shows that he also accepts this opinion of the 'wise'.

Furthermore, what `Abdu'l-Bahā is attributing to the wise is a statement that he has made up himself and has no basis. To date no piece of evidence has been put forward to support these words. No wise person has claimed that all Africans are like wild savages and animals without common-sense.

Furthermore, other examples of his beliefs about Africans, leaves no room for doubt that `Abdu'l-Bahā sees them as animals. He believes that the black Africans that have not been nurtured or educated are cows that God has made look like humans:

The wild tribes have no superiority over animals. For example, what is the difference between African blacks and American blacks? The [black Africans] are cows that God has created with human faces. The [black Americans] are civilized, intelligent, and have culture. In this trip to the black centers, schools, and churches in Washington there were extensive talks with the blacks, and they understood all the points like the intelligent people in Europe. So what difference is there

¹¹⁵ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 1, p. 331.

between these two types of blacks other than nurture, with one in utter ignorance and the other in the peak of civilization?¹¹⁶

This is quite regretful; the same people who made claims about the Oneness of Humanity, brotherhood, and equality think like this about their fellow humans, not in the Dark Ages, but in the 20th century!

Even though this type of thinking and rhetoric is by no means justifiable, defenders of Baha'ism insist that `Abdu'l-Bahā used these words as a reminder for proper upbringing and nurturing; and meant that black Africans are cows because they had not been brought up correctly, otherwise if they had the proper upbringing, they too, like black Americans and *intelligent* Europeans, would become civilized. This reasoning would have been correct if `Abdu'l-Bahā had used different words to describe black Africans. Unfortunately, `Abdu'l-Bahā specifically points to their essence of creation and says *khalq Allah al-baqar `alā šūrat al-bashar* which means "cows that God has created with human faces." In any case, the words used to describe black Africans are in no manner appropriate for someone who claims to be the successor to a divine figure.

In light of these claims, `Abdu'l-Bahā statements proclaiming that God has made no distinction between people are a clear contradiction:

The God of the world created all [humans] from clay and created everyone from one element, created all from one progeny, created all in one land, and created [all] under the shadow of one sky, has created them with common emotions, and did not put any differences. He created everyone the same and gives all sustenance, nurtures all, protects all, and is kind to all. He has put no differences in any grace or mercy.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 3, p. 48.

¹¹⁷ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwārī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 42.

How is it that `Abdu'l-Bahā claims that God has “put no differences in any grace or mercy” but insists that *wild* tribes (such as the black Africans) have no superiority over animals? Is there a difference and distinction more obvious than this?

2- `Abdu'l-Bahā's Opinion About Turks

In one of his memories `Abdu'l-Bahā recalls:

When Djemal Pasha¹¹⁸ . . . reached Acre¹¹⁹ and asked to see me, I mounted a donkey and headed for his home. As soon as he saw me, he greeted me and sat me next to himself and without hesitation said, “You are a corrupter of religion and that is why the government of Iran exiled you here . . .” I thought to myself that he is a Turk and I must give him a ridiculous and silencing answer.¹²⁰

It seems when `Abdu'l-Bahā was describing the divine principles in this era by saying that “the divine principles in this luminous era are such that one must not insult anyone,”<sup>121</sup> he probably meant some *divine principles* other than the Baha'i principles. Compare the following statements from `Abdu'l-Bahā with the above attitude:

One must never say this [person] is English, that is German, that is French, and this is Italian. Never utter these words for you are all God's servants and maids.¹²²

¹¹⁸ One of the most important leaders of the Ottoman government between 1908–1918.

¹¹⁹ A city in the Western Galilee region of northern Israel at the northern extremity of Haifa Bay.

¹²⁰ Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Asrār al-āthār khuṣūṣī* (n.p.: Mu'assisiyi Millī Maṭbū'āt Amrī, 124 B.), vol. 3, pp. 42–43.

¹²¹ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 1, p. 355.

¹²² `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Egypt), vol. 1, p. 75.

When there is oneness of humanity how can we have differences by saying that [person] is German, this is British, this is French, this is Turkish, this one is Roman, and that one is Iranian?¹²³

Even though `Abdu'l-Bahā orders his followers not say that one is Turk, this one is French, he himself easily says “I thought to myself he is a Turk and deserves a ridiculous and silencing answer”!

3- Bahā'u'llāh's Orders and Sayings About Non-Baha'is and Those Who Denied Him

Before we start this section we must first define the meaning of a few words that have been used extensively in the quotes:

Monotheist: The Arabic word is *muwaḥḥid* and is basically used in Baha'i scripture to refer to Baha'is.

Polytheist: The Arabic word is *mushrik* and according to the prominent Baha'i scholar—Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī—in the Baha'i literature it is used to refer to those who deny Bahā'u'llāh's station¹²⁴ in other words, all the people that have heard about Bahā'u'llāh but have not accepted his religion, whether they be hostile or friendly.

Those who turn to Baha'ism: The Arabic word is *Muqbil* and means those who have accepted this creed.

Those who turn away from Baha'ism: The Arabic word is *Mu`riz* and refers to those who have not accepted this creed.

Deniers: The Arabic word is *munkirīn* and as is clear from the words, is used to refer to those who deny the Baha'i creed.

¹²³ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Egypt), vol. 1, p. 160.

¹²⁴ “Mushrik . . . in the works/writings of this new cycle is the title [given to] those who deny the station of the Unity and Oneness of the Center of Abhā (*munkirīn maqām waḥdāniyyat wa tafarrud markaz abhā*),” Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Asrār al-āthār khuṣūṣī*, vol. 4, p. 196 (under the word *shirk*).

There exist a wealth of strange and dramatic stories in Baha'i literature that display a loving and caring Bahā'u'llāh who does not even prevent his enemies from physically abusing him. Here is one example:

As He was approaching the dungeon, and old and decrepit woman was seen to emerge from the midst of the crowd, with a stone in her hand, eager to cast it at the face of Bahā'u'llāh. Her eyes glowed with a determination and fanaticism of which few women of her age were capable. Her whole frame shook with rage as she stepped forward and raised her hand to hurl her missile at Him. "By the Siyyidu'sh-Shuhada,¹²⁵ I adjure you," she pleaded, as she ran to overtake those into whose hands Bahā'u'llāh had been delivered, "give me a chance to fling my stone in his face!" "Suffer not this woman to be disappointed," were Bahā'u'llāh's words to His guards, as He saw her hastening behind Him. "Deny her not what she regards as a meritorious act in the sight of God."¹²⁶

These stories have only been narrated by Baha'i sources and although Baha'is claim most of them occurred publicly and were witnessed by many people, they cannot be independently verified.

According to `Abdu'l-Bahā, in the Baha'i creed, everyone is the same and there is no difference between Baha'is and non-Baha'is:

Bahā'u'llāh expressed the oneness of humankind, whereas in all religious teachings of the past the human world has been represented as divided into two parts: one known as the people of the Book of God, or the pure tree, and the other the people of infidelity and error, or the evil tree. The former were considered as belonging to the faithful, and the others

¹²⁵ The Imām Ḥusayn.

¹²⁶ Nabīl Zarandī, *The Dawn-Breakers: Nabīl's Narrative of the Early Days of the Bahā'ī Revelation*, pp. 607–608.

to the hosts of the irreligious and infidel—one part of humanity the recipients of divine mercy, and the other the object of the wrath of their Creator. Bahā'u'llāh removed this by proclaiming the oneness of the world of humanity.¹²⁷

`Abdu'l-Bahā is clearly announcing that in this creed, people are not divided into two groups: good and bad, Baha'i and non-Baha'i, faithful and infidel, friend and enemy, recipients of divine mercy and recipients of God's Wrath! Bahā'u'llāh says:

You are all the fruits of one tree and the leaves of one branch.¹²⁸

Consort with all religions with amity and concord.¹²⁹

In this section we will show how Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā described non-Baha'is and their enemies. The quotes that follow, clearly contradict the stories Baha'is preach about their leaders and their claims about the Oneness of Humanity.

a- Non-Baha'is Are like Dry Trees That Are Only Worthy of Fire

In the previous quotes it was clearly stated that people are no longer separated into “pure trees” and “evil trees”. The first violation of these words can be seen in Bahā'u'llāh's own words:

Anyone who has a garden will not allow the dry trees to remain in the garden and will definitely cut them and throw them in fire, for dry wood is only worthy of fire. Thus, O inhabitants of my orchard, protect yourselves from the wicked poisonous breath and void breeze which is socializing

¹²⁷ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 454.

¹²⁸ Bahā'u'llāh, *Majmū'iy-i alwāḥ-i mubārak-ih*, p. 265.

¹²⁹ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas* (Baha'i World Centre, 1992), p. 72.

with the polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism) and the unaware (ghāfil).¹³⁰

Basically, people are once again divided into two distinct groups of trees. Baha'is are referred to as trees that are "inhabitants of his orchard" and those that have not accepted Baha'ism have been referred to as "dry trees" that are worthy of fire who Baha'is must protect themselves from.

Some might argue that he is using this parable to refer to covenant-breakers. This is incorrect for he is clearly using this parable to prevent his followers from socializing with his deniers and the unaware. Furthermore, even if we assume—for the sake of the argument—that he is referring to covenant-breakers, his words are still contradicting the words of 'Abdu'l-Bahā about not separating people into two groups of good and bad and dipping everyone in the sea of divine generosity.

b- No Socializing Allowed with Non-Baha'is

Baha'is claim that they are only prohibited from socializing with covenant-breakers. This is not true. Bahā'u'llāh gives orders to not socialize with those who deny him, those who turn away for him, and even the unaware. We will repeat the previous quote:

Thus, O inhabitants of my orchard, protect yourselves from the wicked poisonous breath and void breeze which is socializing with the polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism) and the unaware (ghāfil).¹³¹

Bahā'u'llāh is clearly stating that Baha'is must not socialize with two groups: the polytheists and the unaware. The polytheists are those that have heard about Baha'ism but have not accepted it or have denied it.

¹³⁰ 'Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī* (Tehran: Mu'assisiyi Millī Maṭbū'āt Amrī, 129 B.), vol. 8, p. 39.

¹³¹ 'Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 8, p. 39.

The *unaware* are basically all the poor souls who are unaware of the existence of the Baha'i faith or its teachings. This is a whole new level altogether. We reiterate that these are Bahā'u'llāh's own words. Now compare this with what `Abdu'l-Bahā states about the *unaware*:

We must . . . warn the *unaware*, show compassion to the enemies, and love the foes.¹³²

As usual, `Abdu'l-Bahā is contradicting the orders of his father. Bahā'u'llāh emphasizes elsewhere:

Do not socialize with those who deny God¹³³ and his signs and keep away from their kind.¹³⁴

It is incumbent on ever soul to keep away from the wicked breath of the polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism).¹³⁵

Know that God has forbidden his friends from meeting with the polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism) and hypocrites.¹³⁶

It is not permitted to interact, speak, or meet with those individuals that have turned away and made their objections apparent. This is an order revealed from the heavens of an Ancient Commander.¹³⁷

If these orders from Bahā'u'llāh are divine decrees that must be obeyed, then why does `Abdu'l-Bahā insists on the opposite during his missionary preaches:

¹³² `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 1, p. 288.

¹³³ This sentence is referring to those who deny Bahā'u'llāh, because he had on many occasions referred to himself as God.

¹³⁴ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 8, p. 39.

¹³⁵ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 8, p. 39.

¹³⁶ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 4, p. 280.

¹³⁷ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 8, p. 74.

All humanity are the creation of one God and all the sheep (meaning the humans) are under the shadow of one shepherd and one shepherd administers all. Thus, the divine sheep must interact with each other with utter affection. If one wanders away, they should return him and accompany him.¹³⁸

Had `Abdu'l-Bahā forgotten that his father had banned speaking with non-Baha'is, deniers, and those that had turned away from Baha'ism when he was saying these words? The inconsistencies in the beliefs of this father and son are numerous. Here are a few more quotes from Bahā'u'llāh:

Run away from he who you do not find my love in his heart, keep away from him, and keep a great distance between you.¹³⁹

Cleanse your eyes from [seeing] the deniers and the polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism) and turn away from them.¹⁴⁰

Break all ties with the polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism).¹⁴¹

O SON OF DUST! Beware! Walk not with the ungodly and seek not fellowship with him, for such companionship turneth the radiance of the heart into infernal fire.¹⁴²

In all affairs, we must avoid those that have turned away and must not become fond of them or sit and converse with them—even for a moment—for by God the [effect of] evil

¹³⁸ `Abd al-Hamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 44 (citing `Abdu'l-Bahā').

¹³⁹ Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'lā*, vol. 2, p. 345 (*sūrat al-aṣḥāb*).

¹⁴⁰ Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'lā*, vol. 2, no. 81, p. 477.

¹⁴¹ Bahā'u'llāh, *Majmū'iy-i alwāḥ-i mubārak-ih*, p. 90.

¹⁴² Bahā'u'llāh, *The Hidden Words of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 42, no. 57.

individuals on pure individuals is like fire on dry wood and heat on cold snow.¹⁴³

These quotes clearly contradict the essence of the Baha'i creed that is being propagated today by the Universal House of Justice. Most—if not all—Baha'is do not even know that these statements from Bahā'u'llāh exist.

c- Non-Baha'is Are Not Humans or Lack the Traits of Being Considered as Humans

According to Bahā'u'llāh, non-Baha'is are not humans and the consequence of mentioning them as '*human*' is exclusion from all of God's Graces:

From this day, any individual that mentions as human a single person from those who deny me—whether that [denier] has a high or low stature—they will be excluded from all of (God's) Merciful Graces, let alone trying to prove [those deniers] have dignity or stature.¹⁴⁴

d- Non-Baha'is Are Animals

After calling non-Baha'is evil non-humans who have no dignity, he goes on to calling them animals that neither deserve the name nor the description of humanness:

Today, according to the decree of the Point of Bayān (meaning the Bāb), those individuals who turn away from this Novel Affair (meaning Baha'ism) are deprived of the garb of

¹⁴³ `Abd al-Hamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 8, p. 39.

¹⁴⁴ Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 140.

being called and described [as humans?] and are assembled and mentioned as animals in the presence of God.¹⁴⁵

Bahā'u'llāh says non-Baha'is are animals in the presence of God. Are they at least humans in this world? Of course not. In yet another contradicting stance he says:

Know that none of the servants who have had any sense, have never held the belief that those who face towards [Baha'ism] (*muqbil*) and those who turn away from it (*mu`riz*); or monotheists (meaning Baha'is) and polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism), have the same status and rank. What you have heard [contrary to this] or have seen in the previous books, was meant in the presence of God.¹⁴⁶

Whereas he earlier claimed that those who have turned away from this affair are animals in the presence of God, he later says everyone is equal in the presence of God and if you have heard anything contrary to this it was meant in this world! Here are a few more relevant quotes:

Do not see the polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism) but as earthworms and their sounds but the buzzing of flies.¹⁴⁷

O group of polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism), if you take pride in your name remaining amongst the animals or being mentioned amongst the livestock, then take pride in that for you are worthy of it.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁵ Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī`*, p. 213.

¹⁴⁶ Bahā'u'llāh, *Majmū`iy-i alwāḥ-i mubārak-ih*, p. 154.

¹⁴⁷ Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A`lā*, vol. 1, no. 20, p. 183.

¹⁴⁸ Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A`lā*, vol. 2, no. 81, p. 452.

Oh you donkeys! Whatever God says is the truth and will not become void by the words of the polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism).¹⁴⁹

Encompassed as I am at this time by the dogs of the earth and the beasts of every land, concealed as I remain in the hidden habitation of Mine inner Being.¹⁵⁰

When the one who turned away from God halted (in accepting me) and fell off the path, in that moment his body left the garb of humanness and appeared and became visible in the skin of animals. Sanctified is He who changes the beings how he likes.¹⁵¹

There are many more instances but we will suffice with these. Baha'is sometimes claim that similar instances can be found in the verses of the Holy Books thus Bahā'u'llāh too was justified in calling non-Baha'is animals. Whether this is really the case or not is another discussion and will not be examined here. What is relevant here is that this justification is unacceptable from a Baha'i perspective, because Baha'is claim they are different from other religions. While in all other religions there is a distinction made between the faithful and disbelievers, Baha'is claim the Oneness of Humanity is a new principle that they adhere to. Thus, even if similar remarks exist in the Holy Books, Baha'i leaders cannot repeat them, because they claim their creed has removed this attitude:

In all religious teachings of the past the human world has been represented as divided into two parts: one known as the people of the Book of God, or the pure tree, and the other the people of infidelity and error, or the evil tree. The former

¹⁴⁹ Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 174.

¹⁵⁰ Bahā'u'llāh, *Gems of Divine Mysteries*, p. 4.

¹⁵¹ Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 110.

were considered as belonging to the faithful, and the others to the hosts of the irreligious and infidel—one part of humanity the recipients of divine mercy, and the other the object of the wrath of their Creator. Bahā'u'llāh removed this by proclaiming the oneness of the world of humanity, and this principle is specialized in His teachings, for He has submerged all mankind in the sea of divine generosity.¹⁵²

e- Bahā'u'llāh Wishes Death on Non-Baha'is

Bahā'u'llāh wishes death on those who deny him:

Die with anger, Oh he who denies this grace.¹⁵³

Die with anger O you denying polytheist (denier of Baha'ism).¹⁵⁴

Ironically, these words are uttered by the same Bahā'u'llāh who advises his followers to not wish for others what they do not wish for themselves:

He should not wish for others that which he doth not wish for himself.¹⁵⁵

f- Baha'is are Precious Jewels and Non-Baha'is are Worthless Pebbles

Bahā'u'llāh says:

¹⁵² `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 454.

¹⁵³ Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 213.

¹⁵⁴ Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'ālā*, vol. 1, no. 64, p. 276.

¹⁵⁵ Bahā'u'llāh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 266.

My friends are the pearls of [this] order and all others are earthly pebbles . . . a single one of these (Baha'is) is more precious than a million others (non-Baha'is).¹⁵⁶

In contrast, `Abdu'l-Bahā still insists that other people's religion is none of our business:

Why should we say this [person] is a follower of Moses and that [person] a follower of Jesus, this [person] is a follower of Mohammad, and that [person] is a follower of Buddha? This is none of our business. God has created everyone and it is our duty to be kind to all. Belief related issues are God's business and he will give rewards and punishments on the Day of Judgment. God has not made us in charge of them.¹⁵⁷

g- Non-Baha'is Must Be Tormented

Without specifying the form and method of torment, whether it be physical or spiritual, Bahā'u'llāh says:

And you, oh friends of God, be clouds of grace for those who believe in God and his signs, and be *certain torment* for those who do not believe in God and are polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism).¹⁵⁸

Be like a flame of fire to my enemies and a river of eternal life to my friends.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶ `Abd al-Hamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idiy-i āsimānī*, vol. 4, p. 353.

¹⁵⁷ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṣṣāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, pp. 284–285.

¹⁵⁸ Bahā'u'llāh, *Majmū'iy-i alwāḥ-i mubārak-ih*, p. 216.

¹⁵⁹ Bahā'u'llāh, *Ad'iyyih-i ḥaḍrat-i maḥbūb* (Egypt: Published by Faraj-Allāh Dhakī al-Kurdī, 1339 AH), p. 184.

God has made him (Bahā'u'llāh) a light for the monotheists (Baha'is) and a fire for the polytheists (non-Baha'is).¹⁶⁰

This is while `Abdu'l-Bahā believes that one should be kind to all creatures:

God the Exalted has put the crown of grace and beneficence on man's head so that he shows kindness and affection to all things that possess a soul and to make apparent the greatness of the world of humanity.¹⁶¹

How can so many contradictions be justified?

Apparently, there is a much harsher treatment awaiting non-Baha'is when the Baha'i kingdom materializes. This is what Bahā'u'llāh says:

God will soon take out from the sleeves of power the hands of strength and dominance and will make the Servant (Bahā'u'llāh) victorious and will cleanse the earth from the filth of every rejected polytheist (deniers of Baha'ism). And they will stand by the cause and will conquer the lands using my mighty eternal name and will enter the lands and they will be feared by all the servants.¹⁶²

Once the Baha'i kingdom materializes the earth will be cleansed from the filth of all non-Baha'is. The words used (like being feared by the servants) clearly show that *cleansing* does not mean converting them to Baha'ism. Furthermore, it is obvious that not all people are willing to convert to a new religion. So much for Oneness of Humanity!

h- Non-Baha'is Are Bastards That Will Go to Hell

¹⁶⁰ Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'ālā*, vol. 2, no. 74, p. 372.

¹⁶¹ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Tehran), vol. 8, p. 227.

¹⁶² Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'ālā*, vol. 2, no. 90, p. 587.

The polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism) will have no residence but the hellfire.¹⁶³

Whoever denies this Apparent Exalted Luminous Grace (meaning Baha'ism), it is worthy that he asks his state from his mother and he will soon be returned to the bottom of hell.¹⁶⁴

The phrase “asks his state from his mother” is used in Persian to imply that someone is a bastard. Bahā'u'llāh doesn't stop there. He even goes on to say who fathered some of his deniers:

Whoever has the enmity of this servant (meaning Bahā'u'llāh) in his heart, certainly Satan has entered his mother's bed.¹⁶⁵

This is another clear reference that his enemies are bastards for he is quoted in *Amr wa khalq* saying that adultery/fornication (by which bastards are created) is the deed of Satan.¹⁶⁶

If according to Bahā'u'llāh those who deny him or are his enemies are bastards then:

- His brother, Mīrzā Yaḥyā Ṣubḥ Azal, who denied him, was a bastard.
- His sister, 'Izziye Khānum (Khānum Buzurg), who also denied him, was a bastard.
- The wives of Bahā'u'llāh's father were cheating on him.
- All Jews, Christians, Muslims, and all other people that deny him are bastards.

¹⁶³ Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'ālā*, vol. 1, no. 97, p. 339.

¹⁶⁴ 'Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 4, p. 355 and 'Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganj-i shāygān* (n.p.: Mu'assisiyi Millī Maṭbū'āt Amrī, 124 B.), p. 78.

¹⁶⁵ 'Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganj-i shāygān*, p. 79.

¹⁶⁶ Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Amr wa khalq*, 3rd ed. (Langenhain [Germany]: Lajniyi Millī Nashr Āthār Amrī Bi Zabānhayi Fārsī wa 'Arabī, 142 B.[1986]), vol. 3, p. 513.

i- Non-Baha'is Are the Manifestation of Satan and Hell

`Abdu'l-Bahā quotes these words from his father regarding non-Baha'is and the enemies of the Baha'i creed:

He asked, “Where are Heaven and Hell”? Say, the former is meeting me and the latter is yourself, O you doubting polytheist.¹⁶⁷

In another Tablet, He says: “O Kāzim, close thine eye to the people of the world; drink the water of knowledge from the heavenly cup bearers, and listen not to the nonsensical utterances of the manifestations of Satan, because the manifestations of Satan are occupying today the observation posts of the glorious path of God, and preventing the people by every means of deception and ruse. Before long you will witness the turning away of the people of Bayān from the Manifestation of the Merciful.”¹⁶⁸

In another Tablet, He says: “Endeavor to your utmost to protect yourselves, because Satan appears in different robes and appeals to everyone according to each person's own way, until he becomes like unto him—then he will leave him alone.”¹⁶⁹

In another Tablet, He says: “O Mahdi! Be informed by these utterances and shun the manifestations of the people of hell,

¹⁶⁷ Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'lā*, vol. 1, no. 40, p. 228.

¹⁶⁸ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Bahā'ī World Faith—Selected Writings of Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā (Abdu'l-Bahā's Section Only)*, p. 431.

¹⁶⁹ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Bahā'ī World Faith—Selected Writings of Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā (Abdu'l-Bahā's Section Only)*, p. 431.

the rising place of Nimrods, the rising place of Pharees [Pharos?], the fountain of Tagut, and the soothsayers.”¹⁷⁰

Again He says: “Say, O my friend and my pure ones! Listen to the Voice of this Beloved Prisoner in this Great Prison. If you detect in any man the least perceptible breath of violation, shun him and keep away from him.” Then He says: “Verily, they are manifestations of Satan.”¹⁷¹

j- Non-Baha'is Have No Knowledge or Reason

As we mentioned in the previous chapter, those that do not accept Baha'ism are regarded by Bahā'u'llāh as ignorant beings who lack reason.

We will conclude this section with another contradicting and dramatic sermon by `Abdu'l-Bahā:

Self-centeredness and egotism are the cause of all conflicts. There is no corrupter in this world more destructive than egotism, which is when a person does not desire others but desires himself . . . we must not desire ourselves and must regard others as better than ourselves, even those who are not believers . . . we must prefer all people over ourselves and regard them as higher and more honored and more complete [than ourselves]. As soon as we see ourselves superior to others, we will have gotten distant from the path of salvation and prosperity . . . God forbid that egotism grows in one of

¹⁷⁰ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Bahā'ī World Faith—Selected Writings of Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā* (*`Abdu'l-Bahā's Section Only*), p. 431.

¹⁷¹ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Bahā'ī World Faith—Selected Writings of Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā* (*`Abdu'l-Bahā's Section Only*), p. 431.

our minds, God forbid, God forbid, God forbid. When we look at ourselves we must see that there is no one more abject, humble, and lower than us and whenever we look upon someone else we must see that there is no one more complete, dear, and wiser than them . . . We must see them as noble and see ourselves as lowly and see any shortcoming we see in a person as our own shortcoming; for if we were not defective we would not see that shortcoming. A person must always see himself as defective and others as complete.¹⁷²

By reading these words and comparing them with what we quoted, one should not be blamed if he reaches the conclusion that `Abdu'l-Bahā probably believed in another religion altogether.

4- Bahā'u'llāh's Attitude Towards his Brother and His Followers

When the matter of the leadership of the Bābīs was brought forth, Bahā'u'llāh labeled his brother—Mīrzā Yaḥyā Ṣubḥ Azal, who according to the will of the Bab, was his successor—with all kinds of profanities.¹⁷³ He revealed all the inner secrets between them and tried his best to ruin his reputation. He even went so far as calling him, and all the rest of his deniers, donkeys, cows, and dung beetles:

¹⁷² `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 49, p. 325–327.

¹⁷³ The Bāb's will reads: "God is greater, much greater. This is a letter from the Dominant Eternal God to the Dominant Eternal God [sic]. Say everyone begins from God. Say everyone returns to God. This is a book from `Alī Before Nabīl (a code name the Bāb used to refer to himself) to the person whose name [in ABJAD code] is equal to the name Waḥīd (meaning Mīrzā Yaḥyā Ṣubḥ Azal) who is God's remembrance for the world. Say everyone begins from Nuṣṣat al-Bayān (meaning the Bāb) [and] that O he whose name [is equal to] Waḥīd, protect what has been revealed in the *Bayān* and command to it for you are a true and great path." An image of the will has been printed in p. 19 of the Persian introduction of the book E.G. Browne, *Nuṣṣat al-kāf* (Leiden: Brill, 1901).

Oh you donkeys! Whatever God says is the truth and will not become void by the words of the polytheists.¹⁷⁴

Oh followers of Bahā . . . let these bogus dung-beetle like bodies to be occupied with their filthy dirty stinky beliefs. By my true self, the nose of the cow has no share from this purified perfume.¹⁷⁵

Have in mind that that this degree of politeness emanates from the same Bahā'u'llāh that says:

Politeness is one of mankind's traits that distinguishes him from other [creatures]. He who has no success in [being polite] then his demise certainly has—and will have—priority over his existence.¹⁷⁶

According to Bahā'u'llāh, it is better for someone who is impolite and rude to cease to exist than continue living in their current state. Fāḍil Māzandarānī¹⁷⁷ has collected a list of rude titles that Bahā'u'llāh had given to his brother. We will mention a number of these below:

When Mīrzā Yahyā Azal started opposing the works, deeds, and words of his esteemed brother (Bahā'u'llāh) in Edirne¹⁷⁸ . . . he dropped down from his [high] stature and the rank of union and agreement [that he had with Bahā'u'llāh] and was gradually—in the tablets, works, and revelations [from Bahā'u'llāh]—referred to with codes, references, and names such as the polytheist, the calf, the scarab (dung beetle), the

¹⁷⁴ Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 174.

¹⁷⁵ Bahā'u'llāh, *Iqtidārāt wa chand lauḥ dīgar*, p. 58.

¹⁷⁶ Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 203–204.

¹⁷⁷ The name is usually spelled as Fazel Mazandarani. We have used the alternate spelling in conformance with the transliteration style of this book.

¹⁷⁸ A city in northwestern Turkey.

tyrant, the Satan, the devil, the foul swamp, the buzzing of a fly, and similar names.¹⁷⁹

Regardless of his own impolite style and context, Bahā'u'llāh recommends Baha'is not to be rude:

Oh Party of God! I recommend you to be polite, for the first status of [politeness] is that it is the chief of morality. Blessed is the person that is illuminated by the light of politeness and decorated with the style of honesty. The holder of politeness has a great rank. It is hoped that this oppressed one (meaning Bahā'u'llāh) and all be successful in it, adhere to it, cling to it, and be witness to it. This is the firm decree that has flown from the pen of the Great Name and has been revealed.¹⁸⁰

Oh followers of Bahā! You were—and are—the starting point of affection and the beginning place of divine favors. Do not stain your tongue by swearing and cursing . . . do not be the cause of sadness.¹⁸¹

Apparently double standards and hypocrisy are approved of in this creed.

Bahā'u'llāh—not knowing that in the future, his children would follow the footsteps of their father and uncle—wrote in a proselytizing letter:

Politeness is my shirt that we will use to decorate our favored servants.¹⁸²

`Abdu'l-Bahā and Muḥammad `Alī Effendi (Bahā'u'llāh's other son) inherited their father's manners and similarly showed no respect to

¹⁷⁹ Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Asrār al-āthār khuṣūṣī*, vol. 5, p. 345–346.

¹⁸⁰ Riyāḍ Qadīmī, *Gulzār-i ta'ālīm Bahā'ī*, p. 25.

¹⁸¹ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwārī, *Ganjīnīy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 47, p. 322.

¹⁸² Riyāḍ Qadīmī, *Gulzār-i ta'ālīm Bahā'ī*, p. 25.

each other over the succession of their father. Matters reached the point where `Abdu'l-Bahā crowned his brother and his followers with titles such as flies, dung-beetles, earthworms, bats, ravens, and foxes.¹⁸³

We too agree with Bahā'u'llāh that "woe be upon he who is deprived of politeness."¹⁸⁴ We also agree with `Abdu'l-Bahā when he says:

We should be fair. How can we expect a person that has failed in nurturing his children, spouse, and family to succeed in nurturing the people of the world? Is there any doubt or uncertainty about this issue? By God, no!¹⁸⁵

5- Treatment of the Covenant Breakers

In Baha'ism, a very harsh and tormenting punishment exists for those Baha'is that act against the decrees and teachings or orders of the Universal House of Justice. These individuals are labeled as *covenant breakers*. Their punishment is referred to as *ṭard*, meaning excommunication, shunning, or banishment. All of Bahā'u'llāh's descendants have been shunned by Shoghi and `Abdu'l-Bahā and not a single Baha'i exists today that is related by blood to Bahā'u'llāh.

`Abdu'l-Bahā gave the following order:

¹⁸³ "They are senile like arrogant fools and not seashells full of gems. They are ecstatic from the smell of garbage like dung beetles and not from the scent of a flower of gardens. They are lowly earthworms buried beneath the great earth not high flying birds. They are bats of darkness not the searchlights of clear horizons. They always make excuses and like ravens, have nested in the landfills of fall (autumn) . . . so you Oh true friend and spiritual helper . . . attack these unjust foxes and like a high soaring eagle drive away these hateful ravens from this field," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 1, pp. 442–443.

¹⁸⁴ "We chose politeness and made it the trait of those [we] favor. It is a cloth which fits the body of all, big or small. Salvation is for he who makes it cover his body. Woe is for him who is deprived of this great virtue," Riyāḍ Qadīmī, *Gulzār-i ta`ālim Bahā'ī*, p. 25.

¹⁸⁵ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 2, p. 182.

The Hands of the Cause of God must be ever watchful and so soon as they find anyone beginning to oppose and protest against the Guardian of the Cause of God, cast him out from the congregation of the people of Bahā and in no wise accept any excuse from him. How often hath grievous error been disguised in the garb of truth, that it might sow the seeds of doubt in the hearts of men!¹⁸⁶

Baha'is are ordered to deal with covenant breakers in the same way one deals with someone afflicted with a plague; such that the closest people to them, even their father, mother, children, and spouse, are strictly prohibited from speaking or having any contact with them.

In Baha'ism there are two kinds of excommunication. One is administrative and the other is spiritual:

- **Administrative Excommunication:** The punishment of administrative excommunication applies to a Baha'i that acts against the Baha'i rules and teachings and does not pay attention to the warnings of spiritual assemblies, and does not compensate for these actions. For example, they do not have an active presence in feasts and elections, or they do not act according to the Baha'i teachings (such as the rules relating to marriage and divorce). Determining this is up to the local or national spiritual assemblies. An administrative covenant breaker that is excommunicated is excluded from administrative and social Baha'i rights, such as taking part in elections, being a member of spiritual assemblies and administrative committees, attending feasts, and giving donations.
- **Spiritual Excommunication:** If a Baha'i violates the orders and prohibitions of the Universal House of Justice and dissents from

¹⁸⁶ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Will and Testament of `Abdu'l-Bahā*, p. 12.

the fundamental and certain tenets of Baha'ism or turns his back to Baha'ism, he will be subject to the punishment of spiritual excommunication. No Baha'i, not even the closest members of their family such as their father, mother, and spouse, have the right to speak or socialize with a Baha'i who has been spiritually excommunicated. Any Baha'i who disobeys this order, will automatically be regarded as a covenant breaker and will be given the same treatment.

The order below, has been issued by Shoghi Effendi, and refers to both kinds of covenant breaking:

A question was asked about the friends that, as a result of their ignorance and neglect, had been excluded from administrative affairs about whether they should be invited to public assemblies or not? He (Shoghi) said, "inviting them is not permitted." And it was asked about those that had been excluded from the community, whether greeting and speaking with them was permitted? He replied, "if they have been spiritually excommunicated, speaking with them is not permitted in any way."¹⁸⁷

In some occasions, the order of spiritual covenant breaking was given for very trivial reasons. For example, if a Baha'i wishes to go on a pilgrimage to visit the shrine of Bahā'u'llāh in Palestine, they should go in coordination and with the planning of Baha'i organizations and the Universal House of Justice. They are not allowed to travel there without their consent and permission. If this matter is not heeded, the transgressing individual will become a spiritual covenant breaker. For instance, a Baha'i by the name of Šādiq Āshchī visited Palestine without Shoghi's permission. When Shoghi was informed, he issued a spiritual

¹⁸⁷ Shoghi Effendi, *Tauqī'āt-i mubārak-i* (1945–1952), (n.p. [probably Tehran]: Mu'assisiyi Millī Maṭbū'āt Amrī, 125 B.), pp. 94–95.

covenant breaking decree for Āshchī and ordered the swift implementation of this order. A part of this message is cited below:

Regarding the issue of Şādiq, the son of Āqā Muḥammad Javād Āshchī, he ordered to write that “this ill-mannered and innately lowly person recently traveled to Palestine against the orders of this servant and entered the Holy Land. A telegraph regarding his excommunication and his banishment from the [Baha’i] community has been sent to that assembly. Clearly tell and warn his father that communication with him is not permitted by any means and disobeying and opposing [this order] will have severe results.”¹⁸⁸

Such cases are not rare. Here are two more examples:

In regards to Rūḥī Ghanī, who traveled from Mashhad¹⁸⁹ to America without informing the assembly, he ordered me to write, “this individual, because of his dissent and deviation, is also excommunicated from the community and because he contacted the son of Dihqān in England and both traveled to America . . .” He also stated, “write that the spiritual excommunication of Nuṣrat-Allāh Bāhir—after I consulted his mother—is necessary and obligatory.”¹⁹⁰

It is evident from what we quoted that `Abdu’l-Bahā and Shoghi are advocates of shunning and excommunication. As usual their stance contradicts the words of Bahā’u’llāh:

Whatsoever hath led the children of men to shun one another, and hath caused dissensions and divisions amongst

¹⁸⁸ Shoghi Effendi, *Tauqī`āt-i mubārak-i (1945–1952)*, p. 41–42.

¹⁸⁹ A city in northeastern Iran.

¹⁹⁰ Shoghi Effendi, *Tauqī`āt-i mubārak-i (1945–1952)*, p. 78–79.

them, hath, through the revelation of these words, been nullified and abolished.¹⁹¹

Yet, Bahā'u'llāh is contradicting himself too:

Shun any man in whom you perceive enmity for this Servant, though he may appear in the garb of piety of the former and later people, or may arise to the worship of the two worlds.¹⁹²

How can someone who preaches the Oneness of Humanity justify excommunication? `Abdu'l-Bahā's words are even more disturbing:

One thing remains to be said: it is that the communities are day and night occupied in making penal laws, and in preparing and organizing instruments and means of punishment. They build prisons, make chains and fetters, arrange places of exile and banishment, and different kinds of hardships and tortures, and think by these means to discipline criminals, whereas, in reality, they are causing destruction of morals and perversion of characters.¹⁹³

If the *communities* punish and banish it is bad, but if the Baha'is do it there is no problem in doing so?! He then claims that people must be educated so that crime may not occur:

The community, on the contrary, ought day and night to strive and endeavor with the utmost zeal and effort to accomplish the education of men, to cause them day by day to progress and to increase in science and knowledge, to acquire virtues, to gain good morals and to avoid vices, so that crimes may

¹⁹¹ Bahā'u'llāh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 95.

¹⁹² `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Bahā'ī World Faith—Selected Writings of Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā (Abdu'l-Bahā's Section Only)*, p. 431.

¹⁹³ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 271.

not occur. At the present time the contrary prevails; the community is always thinking of enforcing the penal laws, and of preparing means of punishment, instruments of death and chastisement, places for imprisonment and banishment; and they expect crimes to be committed. This has a demoralizing effect.¹⁹⁴

When the best form of education—being Baha’ism—was given to its followers but many of them still got banished, how can `Abdu’l-Bahā insist that education solves the problem and people should not be banished?

Banishing and excommunication reached such an extent that by the time of Shoghi almost every single direct descendant of Bahā’u’llāh had been labeled as being corrupt and been banished by either Shoghi or `Abdu’l-Bahā. Why was it that most of Bahā’u’llāh’s branches and leaves—i.e. family and descendants—became corrupt and suffered this fate? The answer can be found in Bahā’u’llāh’s own words:

You are like a spring of water. When its source becomes corrupt so do the streams that separate from it. Fear God and be pious. Likewise, look at man. When his heart becomes corrupt so do all his limbs and organs. Likewise, if the root of a tree becomes corrupt so do its branches and twigs (*aghsan* and *afnan*) and its leaves and its fruit.¹⁹⁵

6- Treatment of Thieves

One would think there is no punishment harsher than being banished or excommunicated. There is even a harsher punishment in Baha’i law.

¹⁹⁴ `Abdu’l-Bahā, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 272.

¹⁹⁵ Bahā’u’llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A’lā* (Canada: Mu’assisiyi Ma’ārif Bahā’ī, 2002), vol. 2, no. 90, p. 603.

One who has been banished or excommunicated can simply leave the Baha'i community and start a new life elsewhere. A thief, is not that lucky:

Exile and imprisonment are decreed for the thief, and, on the third offence, place ye a mark upon his brow so that, thus identified, he may not be accepted in the cities of God and His countries.¹⁹⁶

If a thief is caught for the third time a mark must be put on his brow so that he will not be accepted in any city or country. That wretched person must probably pursue a lonely life living as a hermit until his demise arrives. Is this the meaning of Oneness of Humanity?

7- Why Have the Baha'is Created a New Calendar?

After all the preaching for the Oneness of Humanity, why have the Baha'is created a new calendar and created further divisions in a world they are apparently trying to unite?

The Baha'i calendar is defined like this:

The Bahā'ī year consists of 19 months of 19 days each (i.e. 361 days), with the addition of certain "Intercalary Days" (four in ordinary and five in leap years) between the eighteenth and nineteenth months in order to adjust the calendar to the solar year. The Bāb named the months after the attributes of God. The Bahā'ī New Year, like the ancient Persian New Year, is astronomically fixed, commencing at the March equinox (usually March 21), and the Bahā'ī era commences with the year of the Bāb's declaration (i.e. 1844 A.D., 1260 A.H.) . . . It seems, therefore, fitting that the new age of unity should have a new calendar free from the objections and

¹⁹⁶ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, pp. 35–36.

associations which make each of the older calendar unacceptable to large sections of the world's population, and it is difficult to see how any other arrangement could exceed in simplicity and convenience that proposed by the Bāb.¹⁹⁷

What advantage does this have over the Persian or Gregorian calendar? Or what problems or miseries did the adherents of the two aforementioned calendars have met that required a new “simple” and “convenient” calendar to be proposed. We will leave it to the readers to judge the justification and rationality behind this calendar, and see for themselves why the same flaws and objections attributed to non-Baha’i calendars are equally applicable to the Baha’i system.

8- Defending All Oppressed People or Only the Baha’is

In one of his Paris sermons, ‘Abdu’l-Bahā expresses anger over the fact that in France the drowning of twenty French people in a river has caused a great deal of controversy, while a blind eye is turned to the thousands of non-French killed elsewhere:

I am filled with wonder and surprise to notice what interest and excitement has been aroused throughout the whole country on account of the death of twenty people, while they remain cold and indifferent to the fact that thousands of Italians, Turks, and Arabs are killed in Tripoli! The horror of this wholesale slaughter has not disturbed the Government at all! Yet these unfortunate people are human beings too.¹⁹⁸

‘Abdu’l-Bahā criticizes the French government for being concerned only about the French whilst being indifferent towards other peoples.

¹⁹⁷ J. E. Esslemont, *Bahā’u’llāh and the New Era*, pp. 178–179.

¹⁹⁸ ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Paris Talks*, pp. 114–115.

Unfortunately, similar treatments can be seen in the actions of Baha'is towards non-Baha'is.

In Baha'i culture there is usually silence regarding the oppression and death of the thousands and millions of people in wars worldwide and no government is criticized. On the other hand, if a Baha'i is discriminated anywhere in the world, especially in countries hostile towards Baha'ism, all means possible are used to persuade governments of other countries to exert pressure on those who infringe their rights.

Why does this discrimination exist towards different groups? Why do Baha'is remain somewhat "cold and indifferent to the fact that thousands of" people are being killed and oppressed worldwide? After all non-Baha'i "people are human beings too," are they not? Is this the meaning of Oneness of Humanity?

Baha'is usually put forward the excuse that we do not participate in political affairs. If that is really the case, then why isn't this policy exercised when their fellow brethren need their help? Whatever the excuse, the fact remains that in contrary to the claim about the Oneness of Humanity, in *equal circumstances*, Baha'is do not react the same way toward non-Baha'is that they do toward Baha'is.

9- Israeli's Deprived of the Great Grace of Becoming Baha'is

On one hand it is claimed that

He created everyone the same and gives all sustenance, nurtures all, protects all, and is kind to all. He has put no differences in any grace or mercy.¹⁹⁹

On the other hand—as we showed in chapter one—Israeli's are deprived of this great grace and are not allowed to become Baha'is.

¹⁹⁹ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwārī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 42.

10- Two Examples of Bahā'u'llāh's Attitude Towards non-Baha'is

We will only show two samples here that clearly speak for themselves. Pay attention to the words and complements that Bahā'u'llāh uses to describe the poor soul called Ḥusayn in this quote:

Oh Ḥusayn, you came to visit Ḥusayn²⁰⁰ but you are killing Ḥusayn²⁰¹ oh you unaware and doubtful [person]. We wanted to meet you in Baghdad and put it up to you to choose the meeting place so that we could show you clear arguments. You accepted but when the time came the winds started blowing and you ran away, oh you fly. We came to the house that was the meeting place and we did not find you there, oh you who associates others with the God who sends the winds. When you saw your own weakness you found an excuse for yourself, Oh you trickster. We did not want to meet you except to complete God's proof upon you and those who are around you so that the fire of hatred would dwell in your chest and the chest of those who do not believe in the Lord of the Lords. You abstained from meeting me even though the inhabitants of paradise and the Heavens yearned for me. You will soon cry and wail but you will find no place to run to. Wait until God brings you a wrath from Himself and then the winds of torment will catch you and will return you to [hell] fire.²⁰²

Bahā'u'llāh calls this person a fly, a polytheist, and trickster. He claims this person will be tormented by God and returned to fire. He even claims that he had deliberately sought this meeting to fill the person's chest with the "fire of hatred"! Is this how Baha'is are supposed to implement the Oneness of Humanity? By deliberately filling the chest of

²⁰⁰ Meaning Imam Ḥusayn.

²⁰¹ Meaning Bahā'u'llāh.

²⁰² Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'ālā*, vol. 1, no. 97, p. 339.

non-Baha'is with the fire of hatred? Where is all the love they were preaching?

`Abdu'l-Bahā narrates another incident:

When his holiness returned from Sulaymaniyah, he was strolling in the street one day with the late Āqā Mīrzā Muḥammad Qulī. A Kabob seller quietly said, “these Bābīs have appeared again!” The Blessed Beauty said to Mīrzā Muḥammad Qulī, “hit him in the mouth!” Mīrzā Muḥammad Qulī grabbed his beard and started hitting him in the head. [The man] went to the ambassador and complained. The ambassador imprisoned the man (instead of assisting him) and said, “without doubt, you must have greatly insulted the Bābīs that they hit you.”²⁰³

Even if we assume this poor, innocent individual who Bahā'u'llāh ordered to be beaten, was his enemy, such an action is still unjustified. For Bahā'u'llāh has said himself:

If, God forbid, you have an enemy, do not see him as an enemy but rather a friend. Deal with your friends in the same way you deal with your enemy.²⁰⁴

This story is in itself an indication that most of Bahā'u'llāh's calls for peace and harmony with enemies and followers of other religions were not out of sympathy and love but were for protecting himself and his followers and out of fear of reprisals.

Even though the principles of Baha'ism were supposed to transform the world and cause the Oneness of Humanity, Baha'is themselves were

²⁰³ Ḥabīb Mu'ayyad, *Khāṭirātī Ḥabīb* (n.p.: Mu'assisiyi Millī Maṭbū'āt Amrī, 118 B.), vol. 1, p.266.

²⁰⁴ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Egypt), vol. 1, p. 154.

not spared from the disease of division. Many sects separated from Baha'ism and practice their beliefs without any kind of unity or agreement with others. Some examples of such groups include: Orthodox Baha'is, Gay Baha'is, Unitarian Baha'is, and Reformer Baha'is. Some of these sects are actively preaching against one another.

It is interesting that `Abdu'l-Bahā describes the outcome of his father's creed with attributes that have not been observed to-date:

Bahā'u'llāh appeared like the sunlight from the East, he erected the banner of the Oneness of Humanity, he caused such friendship between different tribes that if one entered their communities, they wouldn't know which is a Christian, which is a Muslim, which is a Jew, which is a Zoroastrian.²⁰⁵

We consider Bahā'u'llāh to be the highest mentor of the human world. At a time that the darkness of division had overwhelmed the East and the nations of the East were in utter enmity and hatred, the religions were in utter avoidance with each other and thought of each other as impure and were always busy with war and quarrels, it was as this time that Bahā'u'llāh rose like the sun from the Eastern horizon. He invited all to kindness and socialization and commenced on advising and nurturing them, and guided [people] from all nations and faiths. He healed the different nations and faiths and made them reach utter unity and harmony, such that when you enter their communities you wouldn't know which is an Israelite and which a Muslim.²⁰⁶

World War I showed the extent of the non-existent "utter unity and harmony" that `Abdu'l-Bahā claimed was the result of his father's teachings.

²⁰⁵ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 4–5.

²⁰⁶ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 54.

Just as we repeatedly pointed out in this section, the founders of Baha'ism insist that on this earth, only Baha'is are worthy and those who don't accept Baha'ism after it has been presented to them, are nothing but bastards and animals that lack reason. The contradictions that this belief has with the slogan of the Oneness of Humanity are so obvious that it leaves no place for explanation or justification. As we previously mentioned, it would have been better if the current teaching was called *Noneness* of Humanity instead of *Oneness* of Humanity.

We will conclude this section by repeating again what `Abdu'l-Bahā had uttered about this teaching and after that a few relevant quotes that Baha'is use to lure non-Baha'is into accepting their faith:

Bahā'u'llāh expressed the oneness of humankind, whereas in all religious teachings of the past the human world has been represented as divided into two parts: one known as the people of the Book of God, or the pure tree, and the other the people of infidelity and error, or the evil tree. The former were considered as belonging to the faithful, and the others to the hosts of the irreligious and infidel—one part of humanity the recipients of divine mercy, and the other the object of the wrath of their Creator. Bahā'u'llāh removed this by proclaiming the oneness of the world of humanity, and this principle is specialized in His teachings, for He has submerged all mankind in the sea of divine generosity.²⁰⁷

We must not make distinctions between individual members of the human family. We must not consider any soul as barren or deprived. Our duty lies in educating souls so that the Sun of the bestowals of God shall become resplendent in them, and this is possible through the power of the oneness of humanity. The more love is expressed among mankind and the stronger the power of unity, the greater will be this

²⁰⁷ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 454.

reflection and revelation, for the greatest bestowal of God is love. Love is the source of all the bestowals of God. Until love takes possession of the heart, no other divine bounty can be revealed in it.²⁰⁸

Be kind to the human world and be kind to all humans. Treat strangers like friends, and caress outsiders like companions. See enemies as friends and consider demons as angels. Deal with betrayers with utter kindness as you would with the loyal. Make bloodthirsty wolves smell the scent of musk like gazelles. Give traitors shelter and refuge and be the reason for peace of the heart and soul of the anxious.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁸ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 15.

²⁰⁹ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb*, vol. 3, p. 160.



Is This Principle Correct From a Rational and Logical Perspective?

The Oneness of Humanity was exaggerated to such an extent by `Abdu'l-Bahā that he even gave orders to be kind to tyrants, oppressors, and traitors:

Be kind to the human world and be kind to all humans. Treat strangers like friends, and caress outsiders like companions. See enemies as friends and consider demons as angels. Deal with betrayers with utter kindness as you would with the loyal. Make bloodthirsty wolves smell the scent of musk like gazelles. Give traitors shelter and refuge and be the reason for peace of the heart and soul of the anxious.²¹⁰

Apply ointment to the wounds of tyrants and heal the pain of oppressors. If they give poison, give them honey. If they give swords, give them sugar and milk. If they insult, reply by assistance.²¹¹

Being kind to humans, dealing with strangers like friends, and caressing outsiders just as one would with their companions may be justifiable, but with what logic and reasoning can one justify seeing enemies as friends, considering demons to be angels, dealing with

²¹⁰ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb*, vol. 3, p. 160.

²¹¹ Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Amr wa khalq*, vol. 3, p. 228.

betrayers like loyal people, approaching bloodthirsty wolves like gazelles, and sheltering traitors?

Thus, all criminals, murderers, thieves, and felons should have no fear, for in the Baha'i creed they are all good people who deserve kindness as a reward for their acts.

These orders were so unreasonable and illogical that when `Abdu'l-Bahā was not preaching the Oneness of Humanity he would often openly contradict them:

If he exercises his anger and wrath against the bloodthirsty tyrants who are like ferocious beasts, it is very praiseworthy.²¹²

Kindness cannot be shown the tyrant, the deceiver, or the thief, because, far from awakening them to the error of their ways, it maketh them to continue in their perversity as before.²¹³

To sum it up, when Baha'i leaders preach Baha'ism they cry out, "Heal the pain of the oppressors. If they give poison, give them honey." But when it is time to practice these beliefs they say, "One cannot be kind to a tyrant, traitor, or thief, for kindness will make them revolt." When they themselves have power, the smallest rights of human beings like freedom of speech are neglected and Bahā'u'llāh gives the order to hit an innocent man in the mouth for uttering a few simple words or those who voice anything against the UHJ are shunned and excommunicated.

It is up to you to draw your own conclusions!



²¹² `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 215.

²¹³ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Selections From the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahā*, p. 158.



**Bahā'u'llāh:
“Contradiction has and will not
ever have a way in the
sanctified realm of the Divine
Manifestations.”²¹⁴**

²¹⁴ Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 126.

1. Is the Principle of Oneness of Humanity Novel?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: The Oneness of the World of Humanity is a special teaching of Bahā’u’llāh.²¹⁵

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: The Oneness of Humanity is not novel and was the basis of the teachings of the Divine Prophets.²¹⁶

2. Are Black Africans Cows or Humans?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: All of humanity are members of the human species.²¹⁷

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: Black Africans that have not been nurtured are cows that God has created with human faces.²¹⁸

²¹⁵ “In all religious teachings of the past the human world has been represented as divided into two parts: one known as the people of the Book of God, or the pure tree, and the other the people of infidelity and error, or the evil tree. The former were considered as belonging to the faithful, and the others to the hosts of the irreligious and infidel—one part of humanity the recipients of divine mercy, and the other the object of the wrath of their Creator. Bahā’u’llāh removed this by proclaiming the oneness of the world of humanity, and this principle is specialized in His teachings, for He has submerged all mankind in the sea of divine generosity,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 454.

²¹⁶ “The foundation laid by all Prophets, is the foundation of Bahā’u’llāh and that foundation is the Oneness of Humanity,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 286; “All divine prophets struggled for the Oneness of Humanity and served humanity. For the foundation of the divine teachings is the Oneness of Humanity. Moses served the Oneness of Humanity, Jesus established the Oneness of Humanity, Mohammad declared the Oneness of Humanity. The Bible, Torah, and Quran established the foundation of the Oneness of Humanity,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Egypt), vol. 1, pp. 18–19.

²¹⁷ ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, pp. 145–146.

²¹⁸ “The [black Africans] are cows that God has created with human faces,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 3, p. 48.

3. Are Africans All Uncivilized, Wild Savages, and without Common-Sense?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: God created all humans from clay and did not put any differences. He created everyone the same and has put no differences in any grace or mercy.²¹⁹

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: The inhabitants of a land like Africa are **all** like wild savages and land-dwelling animals that lack common-sense and knowledge.²²⁰

4. Do Turks Deserve Ridiculous Answers?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: We are all divine sheep and no one has any superiority over another.²²¹

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: Turks deserve ridiculous answers.²²²

²¹⁹ “The God of the world created all [humans] from clay and created everyone from one element, created all from one progeny, created all in one land, and created in the shadow of one sky, and made all emotions shared, and did not put any differences. He created everyone the same and gives all sustenance, nurtures/brings up all, protects all, and is kind to all. He has put no differences in any grace or mercy,” ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwārī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 42 (citing ‘Abdu’l-Bahā’).

²²⁰ “The inhabitants of a land like Africa are all like wild savages and land-dwelling animals that lack common-sense and knowledge and are all wild. There is not a single wise and civilized person among them,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 1, pp. 331; “The wild tribes have no superiority over animals. For example what is the difference between African blacks and American blacks? The [black Africans] are cows that God has created with human faces. The [black Americans] are civilized, intelligent, and have culture . . .” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Khaqābāt* (Tehran), vol. 3, p. 48.

²²¹ “The second principle is the Oneness of Humanity: all humans are divine sheep and God is the kind shepherd who has utter compassion towards all the sheep and has made no distinction [between them],” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Makātīb*, vol. 3, p. 67.

²²² “When Djemal Pasha . . . reached Acre and asked to see me, I mounted a donkey and headed for his home. As soon as he saw me, he greeted me and sat me next to him and without hesitation said: ‘You are a corrupter of religion and that is why the government of Iran exiled you here . . .’ I thought to myself that he is a Turk and I must give him a ridiculous and silencing answer,” Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Asrār al-āthār khuṣūṣī*, vol. 3, p. 42–43.

5. Is He a Turk?!

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: Don’t say *he is a Turk*! We are all God’s servants.²²³

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: *He is a Turk* and deserves a ridiculous answer!²²⁴

7. Good Tree and Bad Tree?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: My father said there is no such thing as a good tree and a bad tree. He submerged everyone in the sea of divine generosity.²²⁵

Bahā’u’llāh: Deniers of Baha’ism are like bad trees that deserve to be burned!²²⁶

²²³ “When there is oneness of humanity how can we have differences by saying that [person] is German, this is British, this is French, this is Turkish, this one is Roman, and that one is Iranian?” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Egypt), vol. 1, p. 160; “One must never say this [person] is English, that is German, that is French, and this is Italian. Never utter these words for you are all God’s servants and maids,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Egypt), vol. 1, p. 75.

²²⁴ *Asrār al-āthār khuṣūṣī*, vol. 3, p. 42–43.

²²⁵ “Bahā’u’llāh expressed the oneness of humankind, whereas in all religious teachings of the past the human world has been represented as divided into two parts: one known as the people of the Book of God, or the pure tree, and the other the people of infidelity and error, or the evil tree. The former were considered as belonging to the faithful, and the others to the hosts of the irreligious and infidel—one part of humanity the recipients of divine mercy, and the other the object of the wrath of their Creator. Bahā’u’llāh removed this by proclaiming the oneness of the world of humanity, and this principle is specialized in His teachings, for He has submerged all mankind in the sea of divine generosity.” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 454.

²²⁶ “Anyone who has a garden will not allow the dry trees to remain in the garden and will definitely cut them and throw them in fire, for dry wood is only worthy of fire. Thus, O inhabitants of my orchard, protect yourselves from the wicked poisonous breath and void breeze which is socializing with the polytheists (deniers of Baha’ism) and the unaware (*ghāfil*),” ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwārī, *Mā’idiy-i āsimānī*, vol. 8, p. 39.

8. Socializing with Non-Baha'is!

Bahā'u'llāh: "Consort with all religions with amity and concord."²²⁷

`Abdu'l-Bahā: All humans must interact with each-other with utter affection.²²⁸

Bahā'u'llāh: Don't you dare socialize with deniers of Baha'ism and the unaware (who are basically all non-Baha'is).²²⁹

9- Are Non-Baha'is Animals in the Presence of God?

Bahā'u'llāh: Non-Baha'is are animals in the presence of God.²³⁰

Bahā'u'llāh: Anyone who has any sense knows that everyone is equal in the presence of God.²³¹

²²⁷ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 72.

²²⁸ "All humanity are the creation of one God and all the sheep (meaning the humans) are under the shadow of one shepherd and one shepherd administers all. Thus, the divine sheep must interact with each other with utter affection. If one wanders away, they should return him and accompany him," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 44 (citing `Abdu'l-Bahā').

²²⁹ "Do not socialize with those who deny God (meaning non-Baha'is) and his signs and keep away from their kind," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 8, p. 39; "It is incumbent on ever soul to keep away from the wicked breath of the polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism)," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 8, p. 39; "Know that God has forbidden his friends from meeting with the polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism) and hypocrites," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 4, p. 280; "It is not permitted to interact, speak, or meet with those individuals that have turned away and made their objections apparent. This is an order revealed from the heavens of an Ancient Commander," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 8, p. 74; "Run away from he who you do not find my love in his heart, keep away from him, and keep a great distance between you.," Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'lā*, vol. 2, p. 345 (*sūrat al-aṣḥāb*); "Cleanse your eyes from [seeing] the deniers and the polytheists (meaning non-Baha'is) and turn away from them," Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'lā*, vol. 2, no. 81, p. 477; "Break all ties with the polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism)," Bahā'u'llāh, *Majmū'iy-i alwāḥ-i mubārak-ih*, p. 90; "O SON OF DUST! Beware! Walk not with the ungodly and seek not fellowship with him, for such companionship turneth the radiance of the heart into infernal fire," Bahā'u'llāh, *The Hidden Words of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 42, no. 57.

²³⁰ "Today, according to the decree of the Point of Bayān (meaning the Bāb), those individuals who turn away from this Novel Affair (meaning Baha'ism) are deprived of the garb of being called and described [as humans?] and are assembled and mentioned as animals in the presence of God," Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 213.

10. Non-Baha'is Are Animals

`Abdu'l-Bahā: All of humanity are members of the human species.²³²
We should not consider ourselves greater than others, even those who are not believers.²³³

Bahā'u'llāh: Non-Baha'is are animals.²³⁴ Don't even think about calling them humans!²³⁵

²³¹ “Know that none of the servants who have had any sense, have never held the belief that those who face towards [Baha’ism] (*muqbil*) and those who turn away from it (*mu`riz*); or monotheists (meaning Baha’is) and polytheists (meaning non-Baha’is), have the same status and rank. What you have heard [contrary to this] or have seen in the previous books, was meant in the presence of God,” Bahā’u’llāh, *Majmū`iy-i alwāḥ-i mubārak-ih*, p. 154.

²³² `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, pp. 145–146.

²³³ “we must not desire ourselves and must regard others as better than ourselves, even those who are not believers,” `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 49, p. 326.

²³⁴ “Today, according to the decree of the Point of Bayān (meaning the Bāb), those individuals who turn away from this Novel Affair (meaning Baha’ism) are deprived of the garb of being called and described [as humans?] and are assembled and mentioned as animals in the presence of God,” Bahā’u’llāh, *Badī`*, p. 213; “Do not see the polytheists (deniers of Baha’ism) but as earthworms and their sounds but the buzzing of flies,” Bahā’u’llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A`lā*, vol. 1, no. 20, p. 183; “O group of polytheists (deniers of Baha’ism), if you take pride in your name remaining amongst the animals or being mentioned amongst the livestock, then take pride in that for you are worthy of it,” Bahā’u’llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A`lā*, vol. 2, no. 81, p. 452; “Oh you donkeys! Whatever God says is the truth and will not become void by the words of the polytheists (deniers of Baha’ism),” Bahā’u’llāh, *Badī`*, p. 174; “When the one who turned away from God halted (in accepting me) and fell off the path, in that moment his body left the garb of humanness and appeared and became visible in the skin of animals. Sanctified is He who changes the beings how he likes,” Bahā’u’llāh, *Badī`*, p. 110.

²³⁵ “From this day, any individual that mentions as human a single person from those who deny me—whether that [denier] has a high or low stature—they will be excluded from all of (God’s) Merciful Graces, let alone trying to prove [those deniers] have dignity or stature,” Bahā’u’llāh, *Badī`*, p. 140.

11. Non-Baha'is Are Worthless Pebbles and Baha'is Are Precious Jewels

Bahā'u'llāh: "You are all the fruits of one tree and the leaves of one branch."²³⁶

Bahā'u'llāh: "My friends are the pearls of [this] order and all others are earthly pebbles . . . a single one of these (Baha'is) is more precious than a million others (non-Baha'is)."²³⁷

12. Does God's Grace Apply to All Humans?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: God's Grace applies to all humans even though some are ignorant and must be taught, some are unaware and should be awakened.²³⁸

Bahā'u'llāh: Whoever calls a single person of those that have not accepted Baha'ism a human will be deprived of God's Grace.²³⁹

²³⁶ Bahā'u'llāh, *Majmū'iy-i alwāḥ-i mubārak-ih*, p. 265.

²³⁷ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 4, pp. 353.

²³⁸ "The human species are all in the shadow of the Lord's mercy. At most some are imperfect and must be perfected, are ignorant and must be taught, are sick and must be treated, are asleep and must be awakened. We should not be angry at an infant for being an infant. We should nurture him. We should not be angry at a sick person for not being well. We should have the greatest mercy and kindness towards him. From these [examples] it is apparent that the enmity between religions should be completely wiped out; oppression and injustice should be removed and instead, the greatest amount of kindness and affection should flow," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, pp. 145–146.

²³⁹ "From this day, any individual that mentions as human a single person from those who deny me—whether that [denier] has a high or low stature—they will be excluded from all of (God's) Merciful Graces, let alone trying to prove [those deniers] have dignity or stature," Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 140.

13. Accompaniment or Banishment?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: If someone is separated, he should be returned and accompanied.²⁴⁰

Shoghi Effendi: No one is allowed to speak with those who have been shunned, even their family members.²⁴¹

14. Kindness or Torment?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Be kind to any creature that has a soul.²⁴²

Bahā'u'llāh: Be a certain torment for the disbelievers and non-Baha'is.²⁴³

²⁴⁰ "Thus, the divine sheep must interact with each other with utter affection. If one wanders away they should return him and accompany him," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Isḥrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p.44 (citing `Abdu'l-Bahā').

²⁴¹ "A question was asked about the friends that, as a result of their ignorance and neglect, had been excluded from administrative affairs about whether they should be invited to public assemblies or not? He (Shoghi) said, 'Inviting them is not permitted.' And it was asked about those that had been excluded from the community whether greeting and speaking with them was permitted? He replied, 'If they have been spiritually excommunicated speaking with them is not permitted in any way,'" Shoghi Effendi, *Tauqī'āt Mubāraki (1945–1952)*, pp. 94–95.

²⁴² "God the Exalted has put the crown of grace and beneficence on man's head so that he shows kindness and affection to all things that possess a soul and to make apparent the greatness of the world of humanity," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātib* (Tehran), vol. 8, p. 227.

²⁴³ "And you, O friends of God, be clouds of grace for those who believe in God and his signs, and be *certain torment* for those who do not believe in God and are polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism)," Bahā'u'llāh, *Majmū'iy-i alwāḥ-i mubārak-ih*, p. 216.

15. Kindness or Beating?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: All are the creations of God and God is kind to all. So why should we be unkind?²⁴⁴

`Abdu'l-Bahā: My father (Bahā'u'llāh) told his companions to hit the kabob seller in the mouth because he merely said the Bābīs have come again.²⁴⁵

16. Should We Utter Rude Words?

Bahā'u'llāh: Do not utter profanities at any one and do not make anyone upset.²⁴⁶

`Abdu'l-Bahā: In the fight over the succession of his father, calls his brother and his followers names such as flies, earthworm, bat, raven, fox . . .²⁴⁷

²⁴⁴ “All of humanity are members of the human species. They are all servants of God. They have all been created by God. They are all divine children. God gives sustenance to all of them; nurtures all of them; is compassionate to all of them; why should we be uncompassionate?” **`Abdu'l-Bahā**, *Khaṭībāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, pp. 145–146.

²⁴⁵ “When his holiness returned from Sulaymaniyah, he was strolling in the street one day with the late Āqā Mīrẓā Muḥammad Qulī. A Kabob seller quietly said, ‘These Bābīs have appeared again!’ The Blessed Beauty said to Mīrẓā Muḥammad Qulī, ‘Hit him in the mouth!’ Mīrẓā Muḥammad Qulī grabbed his beard and started hitting him in the head,” Ḥabīb Mu’ayyad, *Khāṭirātī Ḥabīb*, vol. 1, p. 266.

²⁴⁶ “Oh followers of Bahā! You were—and are—the starting point of affection and the beginning place of divine favors. Do not stain your tongue by swearing and cursing . . . do not be the cause of sadness,” **`Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī**, *Ganjīnī-y-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 47, p. 322.

²⁴⁷ “They are senile like arrogant fools and not seashells full of gems. They are ecstatic from the smell of garbage like dung beetles and not from the scent of a flower of gardens. They are lowly earthworms buried beneath the great earth not high flying birds. They are bats of darkness not the searchlights of clear horizons. They always make excuses and like ravens, have nested in the landfills of fall (Autumn) . . . so you Oh true friend and spiritual helper . . . attack these unjust foxes and like a high soaring eagle drive away these hateful ravens from this field,” **`Abdu'l-Bahā**, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 1, pp. 442–443.

17. Should Traitors Be given Refuge?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: “Give traitors shelter and refuge.”²⁴⁸

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Do not be kind to traitors, for kindness will cause them to revolt.²⁴⁹

18. Should We Be Polite or Rude?

Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā: Whoever is without manners, it is better that they be destroyed.²⁵⁰ We must not insult people.²⁵¹

Bahā'u'llāh referring to his brother: Oh donkey²⁵², oh cow, Oh polytheist, dung beetle, Satan, fly . . .²⁵³

²⁴⁸ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb*, vol. 3, p. 160.

²⁴⁹ “One cannot be kind to a tyrant, traitor, or thief, for kindness will make them revolt instead of awakening them. The more you show affection to a liar, the more lies he will tell,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 3, p. 211.

²⁵⁰ “Politeness is one of mankind’s traits that distinguishes him from other [creatures]. He who has no success in [being polite] then his demise certainly has—and will have—priority over his existence,” Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, pp. 203–204.

²⁵¹ “The divine principles in this luminous era are such that one must not insult anyone,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 1, p. 355.

²⁵² “Oh you donkeys! Whatever God says is the truth and will not become void by the words of the polytheists,” Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 174.

²⁵³ “When Mīrzā Yahyā Azal started opposing the works, deeds, and words of his esteemed brother (Bahā'u'llāh) in Edirne . . . he plunged from his [high] stature and the rank of union and agreement [that he had with Bahā'u'llāh] and was gradually—in the tablets, works, and revelations [from Bahā'u'llāh]—referred to with codes, references, and names such as the polytheist, the calf, the scarab (dung beetle), the tyrant, the Satan, the devil, the foul swamp, the buzzing of a fly, and similar names,” Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Asrār al-āthār khuṣṣī*, vol. 5, p. 345–346.

19. Should We Be Kind to Wolves?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Act with kindness towards bloodthirsty wolves.²⁵⁴

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Do not be kind with wolves, for it is betrayal of the sheep.²⁵⁵

20. Those Who Deny Bahā'u'llāh Are Bastards Who Will Go to Hell

`Abdu'l-Bahā: “As soon as we see ourselves superior to others, we will have gotten distant from the path of salvation and prosperity.”²⁵⁶

Bahā'u'llāh: Whoever denies Baha'ism or is Baha'u'llah's enemy, is a bastard who will go to hell.²⁵⁷

The result of these words: All Jews, Christians, Muslims, and all other people who do not accept Baha'ism are Bastards.

²⁵⁴ “Make bloodthirsty wolves smell the scent of musk like gazelles,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb*, vol. 3, p. 160.

²⁵⁵ “If you are kind to a wolf you are betraying the sheep because it will destroy a herd of sheep. If you give a dog that bites the opportunity, it will kill thousands of humans and animals. Thus showing affection to savage animals is equal to being unfair to oppressed animals,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 3, p. 212.

²⁵⁶ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Isḥrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 49, p. 326.

²⁵⁷ “Whoever denies this apparent exalted luminous grace (meaning Baha'ism), it is worthy that he asks his state from his mother and he will soon be returned to the bottom of hell,” `Abd al-Ḥamīd Isḥrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 4, pp. 355 and `Abd al-Ḥamīd Isḥrāq Khāwarī, *Ganj-i shāyḡān*, p. 78; “Whoever has the enmity of this servant (meaning Bahā'u'llāh) in his heart, certainly Satan has entered their mother's bed,” `Abd al-Ḥamīd Isḥrāq Khāwarī, *Ganj-i shāyḡān*, p. 79.

21. Must We Be Kind towards Tyrants or Should We Punish Them?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Be kind to tyrants and oppressors!²⁵⁸

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Punish tyrants so they do not revolt.²⁵⁹

22. Kindness towards the Opposition or Enmity?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: We must be kind to the enemies and love the deniers.²⁶⁰

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Meeting with the deniers of Baha'ism is forbidden.²⁶¹

23. How to Deal with the Unaware

`Abdu'l-Bahā: We must warn the unaware.²⁶²

Bah'ū'llāh: Protect yourself from the wicked poisonous breath of the unaware and do not socialize with them.²⁶³

²⁵⁸ "Apply ointment to the wounds of tyrants and heal the pain of oppressors," Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Amr wa khalq*, vol. 3, p. 228.

²⁵⁹ "One cannot be kind to a tyrant, traitor, or thief, for kindness will make them revolt instead of awakening them. The more you show affection to a liar, the more lies he will tell," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 3, p. 211.

²⁶⁰ "We must . . . warn the unaware, show compassion to the enemies, and love the foes," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 1, p. 288.

²⁶¹ "Know that God has forbidden his friends from meeting with the polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism) and hypocrites," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 4, pp. 280.

²⁶² "We must . . . warn the unaware, show compassion to the enemies, and love the foes," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 1, p. 288.

²⁶³ "Thus, O inhabitants of my orchard, protect yourselves from the wicked poisonous breath and void breeze which is socializing with the polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism) and the unaware (*ghāfil*)," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 8, p. 39.

24. Is Shunning Bad?

Bahā'u'llāh: We have nullified anything that as a cause for shunning.²⁶⁴

Bahā'u'llāh: Shun my enemies!²⁶⁵

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Why are the communities engaged in shunning people?! Shunning has a demoralizing effect.²⁶⁶

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Shun those who protest against the Guardian.²⁶⁷

²⁶⁴ "Whatsoever hath led the children of men to shun one another, and hath caused dissensions and divisions amongst them, hath, through the revelation of these words, been nullified and abolished," Bahā'u'llāh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 95.

²⁶⁵ "Shun any man in whom you perceive enmity for this Servant, though he may appear in the garb of piety of the former and later people, or may arise to the worship of the two worlds," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Bahā'ī World Faith—Selected Writings of Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā* (*`Abdu'l-Bahā's Section Only*), p. 431.

²⁶⁶ "One thing remains to be said: it is that the communities are day and night occupied in making penal laws, and in preparing and organizing instruments and means of punishment. They build prisons, make chains and fetters, arrange places of exile and banishment, and different kinds of hardships and tortures, and think by these means to discipline criminals, whereas, in reality, they are causing destruction of morals and perversion of characters," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 271; "The community, on the contrary, ought day and night to strive and endeavor with the utmost zeal and effort to accomplish the education of men, to cause them day by day to progress and to increase in science and knowledge, to acquire virtues, to gain good morals and to avoid vices, so that crimes may not occur. At the present time the contrary prevails; the community is always thinking of enforcing the penal laws, and of preparing means of punishment, instruments of death and chastisement, places for imprisonment and banishment; and they expect crimes to be committed. This has a demoralizing effect," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 272.

²⁶⁷ "The Hands of the Cause of God must be ever watchful and so soon as they find anyone beginning to oppose and protest against the Guardian of the Cause of God, cast him out from the congregation of the people of Bahā and in no wise accept any excuse from him. How often hath grievous error been disguised in the garb of truth, that it might sow the seeds of doubt in the hearts of men!" `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Will and Testament of `Abdu'l-Bahā*, p. 12.

25. To Wish Death or Not to Wish Death?

Bahā'u'llāh: Don't wish unto others what you do not wish for yourself.²⁶⁸

Bahā'u'llāh: "Die with anger, Oh he who denies this grace."²⁶⁹ "Die with anger O you denying polytheist."²⁷⁰

26. Why Have All of Bahā'u'llāh's Descendants Been Shunned and Excommunicated?

Bahā'u'llāh: If the root of a tree becomes corrupt so do all its branches (*aghsān*) and twigs and fruits and leaves.²⁷¹

By the time Shoghi died all of Bahā'u'llāh's blood descendants who are referred to as branches (*Aghsān*) had become corrupt and were shunned from the Baha'i community!

²⁶⁸ "He should not wish for others that which he doth not wish for himself, nor promise that which he doth not fulfil [*sic*]," Bahā'u'llāh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 266.

²⁶⁹ Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 213.

²⁷⁰ Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'lā*, vol. 1, no. 64, p. 276.

²⁷¹ "“You are like a spring of water. When its source becomes corrupt so do the streams that separate from it. Fear God and be pious. Likewise, look at man. When his heart becomes corrupt so do all his limbs and organs. Likewise, if the root of a tree becomes corrupt so do its branches and twigs (*aghsan* and *afnan*) and its leaves and its fruit.” Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'lā*, vol. 2, no. 90, p. 603.

27. Oneness of Humanity in the Baha'i Kingdom

The earth will be cleansed from the filth of the deniers of Baha'ism and Bahā'u'llāh's followers will be feared by the people.²⁷² Thieves will be kicked out of the cities and deprived of all rights.²⁷³ Arsonists will be burned alive, executed, or given life imprisonment.²⁷⁴

28. All the Titles given to Non-Baha'is by Baha'i Leaders

Haters of light, sufferers from spiritual leprosy,²⁷⁵ unreasonable, unknowledgeable, polytheists, dry wood worthy of fire, possessors of wicked poisonous breath, deniers of God and his signs, hypocrites, ungodly, evil, unhuman, animals, earthworms, livestock, lowly flies, donkeys, dogs, beasts, those who should die with anger, earthly pebbles, people that must be tormented, people who will be cleansed from earth, bastards, children of Satan, manifestations of hell, manifestations of Satan, rising place of Pharaohs, calves, dung beetles, tyrants, devil, foul swamp, senile, bats, ravens, foxes . . .²⁷⁶

²⁷² "God will soon take out from the sleeves of power the hands of strength and dominance and will make the Servant (Bahā'u'llāh) victorious and will cleanse the earth from the filth of every rejected polytheist (denier of Baha'ism). And they will stand by the cause and will conquer the lands using my mighty eternal name and will enter the lands and they will be feared by all the servants." Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'lā*, vol. 2, no. 90, p. 587.

²⁷³ "Exile and imprisonment are decreed for the thief, and, on the third offence, place ye a mark upon his brow so that, thus identified, he may not be accepted in the cities of God and His countries." Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, pp. 35–36.

²⁷⁴ "Should anyone intentionally destroy a house by fire, him also shall ye burn; should anyone deliberately take another's life, him also shall ye put to death. Take ye hold of the precepts of God with all your strength and power, and abandon the ways of the ignorant. Should ye condemn the arsonist and the murderer to life imprisonment, it would be permissible according to the provisions of the Book. He, verily, hath power to ordain whatsoever He pleaseth," Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 203.

²⁷⁵ "It is better not to read books by Covenant-breakers because they are haters of the Light, sufferers from a spiritual leprosy, so to speak. But books by well-meaning yet unenlightened enemies of the Cause can be read so as to refute their charges," Helen Bassett Hornby, *Lights of Guidance: A Bahā'ī Reference File*, chap. XII, no. 628.

²⁷⁶ The references of these titles can be found throughout this chapter.



A Summary and Conclusion of the Three Perspectives:

1) Is the Oneness of Humanity a new principle?

If the meaning of the Oneness of Humanity is that we are all creations of God and should not consider ourselves greater than others for racial or national reasons, then this Baha'i principle is definitely not novel for, over a than a thousand years ago, it was clearly stated in the Holy Book of the Muslims—the Quran—that we have all been created from one father and mother and the only criterion for superiority is being more God-fearing. Furthermore, `Abdu'l-Bahā had admitted himself that this principle is the basis of the teachings of all prophets.

If the purpose of this principle is the empathy and collaboration of humanity, once again people like the Persian poet Sa'dī stated hundreds of years ago that humanity are all part of one body. Thus the claim that this principle is novel is baseless.

2) Did the leaders of Baha'ism act upon this principle?

Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā's beliefs about Turks, black Africans, indigenous people, enemies of Bahā'u'llāh, deniers of Baha'ism, the unaware, non-Baha'is and etc. show that those who claimed to be the promoters of this principle were themselves utterly against it.

3) Is this principle rational and logical?

The extreme version of this principle that `Abdu'l-Bahā preached and included giving refuge and being kind to bloodthirsty wolves, traitors, and demons, is definitely irrational.

CHAPTER 3:

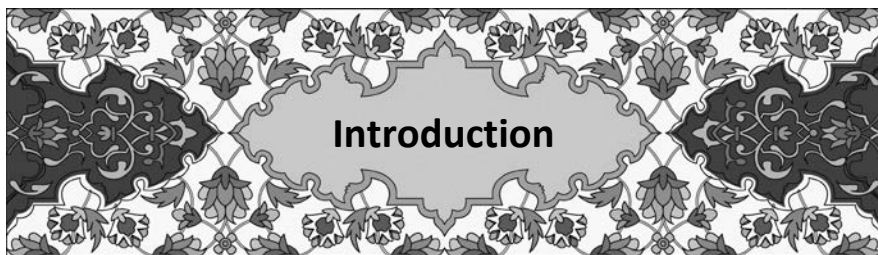
Religion Must be the Source of Unity and Fellowship in the World



“The third principle of his highness Bahā’u’llāh is that religion must be the source of fellowship. It must cause links among humanity. It must be a blessing of the Lord and if religion is a cause of enmity and a cause of war, its absence is better, and a lack of religion is better than religion. Rather, it must be the opposite. Religion must be a cause of fellowship and a cause of relations between the masses of humanity.”²⁷⁷



²⁷⁷ `Abdu’l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 146.



The meaning of “Religion Must Be the Source of Unity and Fellowship” is that religion must be the cause of kindness between people and if, as a result of religion, a group comes in conflict with another and enmity arises, that religion has no value.



‘Abdu’l-Bahā reiterates many times that if religion causes divisions instead of unity, its non-existence is better than its existence:

Religion must be the cause of unity and fellowship. If religion causes enmity it will have no result and having no religion is

better. For it becomes the cause of enmity and hatred between humanity and whatever causes enmity is hated by God and whatever causes unity and fellowship is accepted and praised. If religion causes killing and savagery it is not religion and having no religion is better than that. For religion is meant to be a cure. If a cure causes sickness then of course, no cure is better than it. Thus, if religion causes war and slaughter, then of course, it is better to have no religion.²⁷⁸

Religion should create unity and create links between the hearts. Jesus and the other divine prophets came to create unity and fellowship. If religion causes divisions, its non-existence is preferred.²⁷⁹

Baha'is claim that Bahā'u'llāh has brought a new religion whose main purpose is to bring about world peace and unity to the world of humanity; this peace and unity must occur under the shadow of kindness and fellowship. If a religion does not bring about kindness, peace, and unity, then it is not a religion.

²⁷⁸ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, pp. 44–45.

²⁷⁹ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 59.



Is the Principle “Religion Must be the Source of Unity and Fellowship in the World” New?

Did the previous Divine Prophets causes enmity and disunity? Did they urge people to be evil, oppress, use foul language, and to start wars? Is this principle as `Abdu'l-Bahā claims new:

He sets forth a new principle for this day in the announcement that religion must be the cause of unity, harmony and agreement among mankind. If it is the cause of discord and hostility, if it leads to separation and creates conflict, the absence of religion would be preferable in the world.²⁸⁰

All divine prophets had appeared to overcome the divisions among humanity and to bring about fellowship among the people. `Abdu'l-Bahā confesses to this reality and says:

All the Prophets came to nurture the people so that the immature individuals could reach maturity and to bring about kindness and love among the people, not hatred and enmity.²⁸¹

We read in the Bible:

²⁸⁰ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, pp. 454–455.

²⁸¹ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 65.

If you had known what these words mean, “I desire mercy, not sacrifice,” you would not have condemned the innocent.²⁸²

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?” Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.”²⁸³

In the Zoroastrian traditions it has come that:

I pledge myself to the Mazdayasnian religion, which causes the attack to be put off and weapons put down.²⁸⁴

Islam²⁸⁵ too has a special concern for unity, fellowship, and not hassling other humans. The Prophet of Islam has stated:

God will not have mercy on whoever does not have mercy on the people.²⁸⁶

It is obvious that in contrast to what Baha’is claim this principle is in no way novel and even amongst atheists and those that do not believe in any religion, there are countless individuals that have made kindness and servitude to others the goal of their lives. So, what is the innovation of Bahā’u’llāh and his religion?

²⁸² Book of Matthew, 12:7 (New International Version).

²⁸³ Book of Matthew, 18:21–22 (New International Version).

²⁸⁴ *Avesta*, Yasna 12, section 9, translated by L. H. Mills, *Sacred Books of the East* (American Edition, 1898).

²⁸⁵ The terrorists acts performed by those who claim to be Muslims must not be confused with the orders of true Islam.

²⁸⁶ *Al-Nūrī, Mustadrak al-wasā’il* (Qum: Mu’assissat Āl al-Bayt, 1408 AH), vol. 9, p. 55, no. 10183.



Did the Founders of Baha'ism Act Upon These Principles?

According to this principle and the aforementioned statements from 'Abdu'l-Bahā, if a religion causes enmity and hatred, its non-existence is better than its existence. Thus, it logically follows that if Bābism and Baha'ism caused enmity and hatred, they are subject to 'Abdu'l-Bahā's decree and their non-existence is preferred over their existence.

We will now proceed to show the many instances in which the Bābī and Baha'ī creeds became a cause of enmity, hatred, and divisions.

1- Internal Disputes in the Bābī and Baha'ī creeds

The history of Bābism and Baha'ism is filled with various enmities and conflicts between their leaders and followers. Much can be said about each conflict, but we will only refer to a small number of them below:

- The conflicts among the Bābīs over the title of *Him Whom God Shall Make Manifest*²⁸⁷.
- The conflicts, feuds, and bloodshed between Bahā'u'llāh and his brother Mīrzā Yahyā Ṣubḥ Azal and their followers that

²⁸⁷ Twenty seven people among the Bābīs brought themselves forth as the Promised One in the Book of Bayān, such as Mīrzā Yahyā Ṣubḥ Azal, Mīrzā Ḥusayn 'Alī Nūrī (Bahā'u'llāh), Mīrzā Asad-Allāh Dayyān, Mīrzā Muḥammad Nabīl Zarandī, Mīrzā Ghughā Darwīsh, and Sayyid Baṣīr Hindī. See Muḥammad 'Alī Fayḍī, *Ḥaḍrat Bahā'u'llāh*, pp. 103–104.

resulted in the exile of the Azalīs (the supporters of Mīrzā Yaḥyā Ṣubḥ Azal) to Cyprus and the Baha'is to Palestine.

- The conflicts and clashes between `Abdu'l-Bahā and his brother Muḥammad `Alī Effendi.²⁸⁸
- The disputes and arguments between Shoghi and those who opposed his successorship.²⁸⁹
- The dispute between Rūḥiyyih Maxwell (Shoghi's widow) and the Hands of the Cause with Mason Remey, the then president of the International Baha'i Council.²⁹⁰

2- Wars During the Bāb's Era

When the Bāb was imprisoned in Chihrīq,²⁹¹ Muḥammad Shah of Qājār passed away and the princes and nobles of the court became preoccupied with the issues of succession. This put the country in a state of chaos and turmoil. The Bābīs took advantage of this situation

²⁸⁸ Bahā'u'llāh had willed that his successor would be Ghuṣn A`zam (`Abdu'l-Bahā') and after him Ghuṣn Akbar (`Abdu'l-Bahā's brother Muḥammad `Alī): "God has destined the station [for] Ghuṣn Akbar after his position (meaning `Abdu'l-Bahā'), for He is the Commanding Wise. We chose the Akbar after the A`zam, an order from the All Knowing and Aware (God). All must show kindness towards the two Ghuṣns . . . All must respect and admire the two Ghuṣns," Bahā'u'llāh, *Majmū'iy-i alwāḥ-i mubārak-ih*, pp. 302–303. After Bahā'u'llāh's death the two brothers differed on the amount of authority they had and fights ensued between them and their followers.

²⁸⁹ According to Bahā'u'llāh's orders the successor after `Abdu'l-Bahā was supposed to be his brother Ghuṣn Akbar. `Abdu'l-Bahā disobeyed this decree and instead appointed his own grandson Shoghi Effendi as his successor. This resulted in many differences and conflicts between Shoghi and many Baha'is who didn't accept his authority.

²⁹⁰ In contrast to what `Abdu'l-Bahā had prophesized, Shoghi was sterile and had no children to succeed him. In a bid to become his successor, an internal conflict erupted between Bahā'u'llāh's followers. Amongst these conflicts, the most intense was the one between Shoghi's widow (Rūḥiyyih Maxwell) and Mason Remey (President of the International Baha'i Council). Mason Remey claimed that the UHJ established by Rūḥiyyih Maxwell was illegitimate and in a countermove the UHJ excommunicated Mason Remey from the Baha'i community.

²⁹¹ A village near the city of Salmās located in the Western Ādharbayjān province of Iran near the Turkish border.

and began to riot under the orders of the Bāb. These riots eventually lead to three bloody wars in three different regions of Persia.

The first war began in the first days of the reign of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh in the Fort of Sheikh Ṭabarsī in Māzandarān and was led by Mullā Ḥusayn-i-Bushrū'ī and after his death by Mīrzā `Alī Bārfurūshī. These clashes have been described in detail in *The Dawn Breakers*:

The day had not yet broken when at the signal, "Mount your steeds, O heroes²⁹² of God!" . . . Mullā Ḥusayn and two hundred and two of his companions ran to their horses and followed Quddūs . . . He forced his way through the gate and rushed into the private apartments of the prince.²⁹³

Mullā Ḥusayn . . . mounting his charger, gave the signal that the gate of the fort be opened. As he rode out at the head of three hundred and thirteen of his companions to meet the enemy, the cry of "Yā Sāhibu'z-Zamān!" again broke forth. Mullā Ḥusayn first charged the barricade which was defended by Zakariyyay-i-Qādī-Kalā'ī, one of the enemy's most valiant officers. Within a short space of time, he had broken through that barrier, disposed of its commander, and scattered his men. Dashing forward with the same swiftness and intrepidity, he overcame the resistance of both the second and third barricades, diffusing, as he advanced, despair and consternation among his foes. Undeterred by the bullets which rained continually upon him and his companions, they pressed forward until the remaining barricades had all been captured and overthrown.²⁹⁴

²⁹² The original Farsi word used is *jangjoo* which means 'combatant' not 'hero'.

²⁹³ Nabīl Zarandī, *The Dawn-Breakers: Nabīl's Narrative of the Early Days of the Bahā'ī Revelation* (US Bahā'ī Publishing Trust, 1932), p. 365.

²⁹⁴ Nabīl Zarandī, *The Dawn-Breakers: Nabīl's Narrative of the Early Days of the Bahā'ī Revelation*, p. 379–380.

The second clash occurred in the city of Nayrīz²⁹⁵ with the uprising of Sayyid Yaḥyā Dārābī and this clash also left behind a large number of casualties.²⁹⁶

The third clash occurred in Zanjān between the Bābīs and the government forces. The casualties in this conflict were at least 1800 from the Bābī side:

I have heard it stated that one of the companions of Hujjat who undertook to record the names of those who had suffered martyrdom, had left a written statement in which he had computed the number of those who had fallen prior to the death of Hujjat to be a thousand, five hundred and ninety-eight, whilst those who had suffered martyrdom afterwards were thought to have been in all two hundred and two persons.²⁹⁷

Was the cause of these wars and massacres, anything other than the religion of the Bāb and the beliefs of a group of Bābīs? Did these individuals not cause their own destruction, as well as that of many others, because they rioted and fought for their faith and the love they had for the Bāb?

Bābism, which is the root of Baha'ism, openly ordered its followers to start wars and cause bloodshed. In contrary to what Baha'is claim in their history books and want non-Baha'is to believe, the Bābīs were not a group of oppressed and peace-loving people who were merely protecting their women and children from the Persian government:

That humiliating episode was soon followed by a number of similar attempts on the part of the supporters of the

²⁹⁵ Nayrīz is located in the Fārs Province of Iran.

²⁹⁶ Nabīl Zarandī, *The Dawn-Breakers: Nabīl's Narrative of the Early Days of the Bahā'ī Revelation*, pp. 465–500.

²⁹⁷ Nabīl Zarandī, *The Dawn-Breakers: Nabīl's Narrative of the Early Days of the Bahā'ī Revelation*, p. 580.

governor, all of which utterly failed to achieve their purpose. Every time they rushed to attack the fort, Hujjat would order a few of his companions, who were three thousand in number, to emerge from their retreat and scatter their forces. He never failed, every time he gave them such orders, to caution his fellow-disciples against shedding unnecessarily the blood of their assailants. He constantly reminded them that their action was of a purely defensive character, and that their sole purpose was to preserve inviolate the security of their women and children. "We are commanded," he was frequently heard to observe, "not to wage holy war under any circumstances against the unbelievers, whatever be their attitude towards us."²⁹⁸

The peaceful and oppressed face of the Bābis and Baha'is, as well as the historical narratives presented in the books authored by Nabīl Zarandī (many of which were later used by Shoghi Effendi) should be taken with a grain of salt. Nabīl Zarandī was one of the many people who had falsely claimed to be "the One Whom God Shall Make Manifest."²⁹⁹ The words of someone who tries to falsely attribute such a supposedly high station to himself should be met with healthy skepticism.

Furthermore, contrary to Nabīl Zarandī's historical accounts, the orders of the Bāb clearly advocated all forms of violence and blood shedding. The wars that the Bābīs were fighting were the direct result of the Bāb's orders to burn non-Bābī books, behead and massacre those who did not believe in him, and to destroy all monuments. Most of these wars were not the result of government oppression against the Bābīs, and what has been narrated about them in Baha'i books carry with them a high amount of distortions and exaggerations.

²⁹⁸ Nabīl Zarandī, *The Dawn-Breakers: Nabīl's Narrative of the Early Days of the Bahā'ī Revelation*, p. 546.

²⁹⁹ See Muḥammad 'Alī Fayḍī, *Ḥaḍrat Bahā'u'llāh*, pp. 103–104.

‘Abdu’l-Bahā clearly announces:

The utterance of the [book or religion] of Bayān in the day of the appearance of his Highness A`lā (meaning the Bāb) was to behead, burn the books, destroy the monuments, and massacre [everyone] but those who believed [in the Bāb’s religion] and verified it.³⁰⁰

The savagery in the Bāb’s laws can clearly be seen in Bahā’u’llāh’s words too:

The unbelievers and the faithless have set their minds on four things: first, the shedding of blood [beheading]³⁰¹; second, the burning of books; third, the shunning of the followers of other religions; fourth, the extermination of other communities and groups. Now however, through the strengthening grace and potency of the Word of God these four barriers have been demolished, these clear injunctions have been obliterated from the Tablet and brutal dispositions have been transmuted into spiritual attributes.³⁰²

Since the Bābīs denied Bahā’u’llāh’s station, he refers to them as: “unbelievers and the faithless.” Regarding killing and savagery, ‘Abdu’l-Bahā says:

If religion causes killing and savagery it is not religion and having no religion is better than that. For religion is meant to be a cure. If a cure causes sickness then of course, no cure is

³⁰⁰ ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 2, p. 266.

³⁰¹ The Farsi word used in the original tablet translates to beheading not shedding blood.

³⁰² Bahā’u’llāh, *Tablets of Bahā’u’llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 91.

better than it. Thus, if religion causes war and slaughter, then of course, it is better to have no religion.³⁰³

According to these words, since the Bab gave orders for war, massacres, and plunder, then Bābism is not a religion. But then the question arises, if Bābism is not a religion, then what is Baha'ism? Did Baha'ism not arise as a continuation of Bābism and as a result of the tidings of the Bab to *Him Whom God Shall Make Manifest*? Does Baha'ism not proudly present itself as the spritiual successor to Babism? If Bābism is not a valid religion—which according to the current principle is not—then neither is Baha'ism.

3- Conflicts During Bahā'u'llāh's Era

After Bahā'u'llāh put forth his claim of being the Bab's successor, he claimed the title of *Him Whom God Shall Make Manifest* and attracted a number of followers, disagreements arose between him and his brother Ṣubḥ Azal, and their respective followers clashed and shed blood.

Bahā'u'llāh was forced to flee Baghdad and take refuge in the mountains of Sulaymaniyah near Mosul to escape his brother's followers. Under the alias Dervish Mohammad, he lived with the lifestyle of a dervish there for two years. Bahā'u'llāh uttered the following statements about this journey:

By the Righteousness of God! Our withdrawal contemplated no return, and Our separation hoped for no reunion. The one object of Our retirement was to avoid becoming a subject of discord among the faithful, a source of disturbance unto Our companions, the means of injury to any soul, or the cause of

³⁰³ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, pp. 44–45.

sorrow to any heart. Beyond these, We cherished no other intention, and apart from them, We had no end in view.³⁰⁴

Bahā'u'llāh confesses that the proclamation of his authority had caused conflict among his friends and followers of his creed. Thus, he had no choice but to go into hiding to prevent this and for two years there was no news of him or his claims. Some might claim that these actions were justified and in accordance with the principle that is under consideration, for Bahā'u'llāh, in order to prevent hatred and enmity, refrained from preaching his religion altogether.

This argument is unacceptable, for, even though Bahā'u'llāh himself knew that proclaiming his authority would cause conflicts among his followers, he still returned after two years, even though he had said "Our withdrawal contemplated no return, and Our separation hoped for no reunion." Why did he once again put forth his claims of being the successor to the Bab and claimant to the title of *Him Whom God Shall Make Manifest*? Why did he engage in conflicts and quarrels with his brother, until the situation reached the point that they exchanged all sorts of profanities? Didn't Bahā'u'llāh himself not admit that

In these days, however, such odours of jealousy are diffused, that—I swear by the Educator of all beings, visible and invisible—from the beginning of the foundation of the world—though it hath no beginning—until the present day, such malice, envy, and hate have in no wise appeared, nor will they ever be witnessed in the future. For a number of people who have never inhaled the fragrance of justice, have raised the standard of sedition, and have leagued themselves against Us. On every side We witness the menace of their

³⁰⁴ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitāb-i-Īqān* (US Bahā'ī Publishing Trust, 1989 [pocket-size edition]), p. 251.

spears, and in all directions We recognize the shafts of their arrows.³⁰⁵

According to Bahā'u'llāh's own statements, his claims—instead of bringing about unity and fellowship—brought about such a degree of hatred and jealousy that was unprecedented and will never occur again. Thus according to Bahā'u'llāh and Abdu'l-Bahā that, "if religion is a cause of enmity and a cause of war, its absence is better, and a lack of religion is better than religion,"³⁰⁶ it is obvious that having no religion is better than being a Baha'i.

4- Clashes After Bahā'u'llāh's Death

If we analyze the issues of fellowship and hatred among Baha'i's, we will see that even among the followers of Bahā'u'llāh there were many instances where there was no peace or love.

After Bahā'u'llāh's death, disputes arose among his children over the succession of their father. Even though he had ordered them to refrain from conflicts and disagreements, to respect each other and the other family members, and to refrain from saying obscenities to one another, his sons became engrossed in conflicts and accusations.

It is natural for normal people to have differences amongst each other after someone's death. What is difficult to understand is why should differences arise amongst individuals that preach the slogan of the Oneness of Humanity and those that claim they possess divine stations.

If religion must be a cause of fellowship and unity, then why did 'Abdu'l-Bahā refer to his brother with rude and impolite words like calf, dung beetle, the Devil, and Satan?³⁰⁷

³⁰⁵ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitāb-i-Īqān*, p. 249.

³⁰⁶ 'Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 146.

³⁰⁷ "When Mīrzā Yahyā Azal started opposing the works, deeds, and words of his esteemed brother (Bahā'u'llāh) in Edirne . . . he plunged from his [high] stature and the rank of union and agreement [that he had with Bahā'u'llāh] and was gradually— in the tablets, works, and revelations [from Bahā'u'llāh]— referred to with codes, references, and names such as the

5- Baha'i Attitude Toward Non-Baha'is

We showed Baha'i orders regarding non-Baha'is and covenant-breakers in the previous chapter. Was there even a speck of *unity and fellowship* in those words? Why is it that `Abdu'l-Bahā insists that his father caused unity and fellowship while all facts show the contrary:

We consider Bahā'u'llāh to be the highest mentor of the human world. At a time that the darkness of division had overwhelmed the East and the nations of the East were in utter enmity and hatred, the religions were in utter avoidance with each other and thought of each other as impure and were always busy with war and quarrels, it was as this time that Bahā'u'llāh rose like the sun from the Eastern horizon. He invited all to kindness and socialization and commenced on advising and nurturing them, and guided [people] from all nations and faiths. He healed the different nations and faiths and made them reach utter unity and harmony, such that when you enter their communities you wouldn't know which is an Israelite and which a Muslim.³⁰⁸

What do Baha'is really believe in: interacting with followers of other faiths with kindness and affection³⁰⁹ or refraining from having any relations with non-Baha'is?³¹⁰

polytheist, the calf, the scarab (dung beetle), the tyrant, the Satan, the devil, the foul swamp, the buzzing of a fly, and similar names," Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Asrār al-āthār khuṣūṣī*, vol. 5, p. 345–346.

³⁰⁸ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 54

³⁰⁹ "Consort with all religions with amity and concord," Bahā'u'llāh, *Aqdas* (n.p.: Baha'i World Centre, 1992), p. 72.

³¹⁰ "We must avoid deniers in all affairs and must not become fond of them or sit and converse with them even for a moment, for by God the [effect of] evil individuals on pure individuals is like fire on dry wood and heat on cold snow," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Isḥrāq Khāwārī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 8, pp. 39.

How is it that the same Baha'is that declare in their proselytization materials that the religion of every person is a personal matter, and our duty is to be kind to everyone, regardless of their religion or creed³¹¹ have their Prophet declare that:

Know that God has forbidden his friends from meeting with the polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism) and hypocrites.³¹²

How is it that Bahā'u'llāh orders his followers to be kind to all in one place, but in another orders them to seek distance from non-Baha'is and to be certain torment for them:

And you, oh friends of God, be clouds of grace for those who believe in God and his signs, and be *certain torment* for those who do not believe in God and are polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism).³¹³

Why does Bahā'u'llāh—who claims religion must be a source of unity and fellowship—openly incite hatred in non-Baha'is' hearts:

We did not want to meet you except to complete God's proof upon you and those who are around you so that the fire of hatred would dwell in your chest and the chest of those who do not believe in the Lord of the Lords.³¹⁴

And finally, why do Baha'is treat covenant breakers in such a harsh manner?

³¹¹ "Why should we say this [person] is a follower of Moses and that [person] a follower of Jesus, this [person] is a follower of Mohammad, and that [person] is a follower of Buddha? This is none of our business. God has created everyone and it is our duty to be kind to all. Belief related issues are God's business and he will give rewards and punishments on the Day of Judgment. God has not made us in charge of them," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, pp. 284–285.

³¹² `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 4, p. 280.

³¹³ Bahā'u'llāh, *Majmū'iy-i alwāḥ-i mubārak-ih*, p. 216.

³¹⁴ Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'lā*, vol. 1, no. 97, p. 339.

6- Bahā'u'llāh and Peace

In contrast to what Baha'is claim, Bahā'u'llāh had a violent history. Bahā'u'llāh had claimed to be a manifestation of Ḥusayn the grandson of the Prophet Muḥammad. Ḥusayn was ruthlessly murdered by Yazīd in cold blood. Bahā'u'llāh's actions were so violent while he was in Baghdad that according to his aunt, the people would recite the following verse of poetry when referring to him:

If Ḥusayn Ali (Bahā'u'llāh) is the manifestation of Ḥusayn the son of Ali (Prophet Muhammad's grandson), then a thousand blessings be upon the pure soul of Yazīd [for killing him].³¹⁵

This attitude can clearly be seen in a letter that `Abdu'l-Bahā wrote to his aunt. He unintentionally reveals his father's violent actions in the midst of praising him:

He threw an earthquake upon the pillars of Iraq and always left the people of discord (the Shia) in fear and apprehension. His grandeur had infiltrated the arteries and nerves to such an extent that not a single person dared to disapprove of him nor had the audacity to speak bad of him in the middle of the night in Karbala and Najaf (two cities in Iraq).³¹⁶

As his aunt explains, the reaction shown by the people was not due to Bahā'u'llāh's grandeur, but because of him and his followers' violent acts:

³¹⁵ `Izziye Khānum (Khānum Buzurg), *Tanbīh al-nā'imīn* (Tehran: n.p., n.d.), p. 12. This is the only non-Baha'i source that we have used in this book that contains quotes relevant to the Baha'i creed. What we have quoted from this book can be found with less detail in other quotes we have mentioned from Baha'i books.

³¹⁶ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 2, p. 177.

They gathered a group of hooligans from different provinces of Iran and from the same places fugitives who had never believed in any religion and had no faith in any prophet and had no work but manslaughter and had no occupation but stealing peoples' property. Even though they claimed they were following [the customs] of Ḥusayn (the grandson of the Prophet Muḥammad who was ruthlessly murdered by Shimr on the orders of Yazīd) they summoned a group of Shimr-like people around themselves. The breath of any soul who uttered anything but what they were satisfied with was suffocated. They beat any head which made the slightest sound other than accepting their guardianship. They cut every throat which showed other than humbleness towards them. They pierced every heart which had love toward other than them . . . ³¹⁷

³¹⁷ 'Izziye Khānum (Khānum Buzurg), *Tanbīh al-nā'imīn*, pp. 11–12.



Is This Principle Correct From a Rational and Logical Perspective?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā says:

If religion is a cause of enmity and a cause of war, its absence is better, and a lack of religion is better than religion. Rather, it must be the opposite. Religion must be a cause of fellowship and a cause of relations between the masses of humanity.³¹⁸

If religion causes divisions, its non-existence is preferred.³¹⁹

If God sends a prophet and group of people reject Him and resort to conflicts and enmity, can it be said that God has sent a religion in vain, and the non-existence of that religion is better than its existence? Or can the conflicts caused by the opponents be a cause to doubt the divinity of the message?

Were many Prophets not forced to resort to war in the process of bringing about divine goals? Were many not tortured or killed in the process of spreading their message? Should we doubt all these religions and question their validity because of these conflicts? Are the reactions of people toward a religion a criterion for determining its validity?

³¹⁸ ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 146.

³¹⁹ ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwārī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 59.

For all we know, every single religion that was announced by God, became a cause for war and conflict because people automatically took sides and opposed each other. Most religions even had laws and orders about the methods and means of going to war with their opponents. According to the current Baha'i teaching, all these religions are void and rejected. This is totally illogical, irrational, unjustified, and unacceptable.

It is up to you to draw your own conclusions!





**Bahā'u'llāh:
“Contradiction has and will not
ever have a way in the
sanctified realm of the Divine
Manifestations.”³²⁰**

³²⁰ Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 126.

1. Is the Principle "Religion Must Be the Source of Unity and Fellowship in the World" New?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: This is a new principle brought forth by my father.³²¹

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: All prophets came to create love and kindness among the people.³²²

2. Is Bābism a Religion?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: If religion causes enmity and war, it is not a religion.³²³

Ponder on: The conflicts among the Bābīs over the title of *Him Whom God Shall Make Manifest*.³²⁴ The massacres and bloody wars that were started on the Bab’s orders in three different parts of Iran.³²⁵ The Bab’s orders to behead and massacre those who did not believe in him.³²⁶

³²¹ “He sets forth a new principle for this day in the announcement that religion must be the cause of unity, harmony and agreement among mankind. If it is the cause of discord and hostility, if it leads to separation and creates conflict, the absence of religion would be preferable in the world,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 454–455.

³²² “All the Prophets came to nurture the people so that the immature individuals could reach maturity and to bring about kindness and love among the people, not hatred and enmity,” ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 65.

³²³ “Religion must be the cause of unity and fellowship. If religion causes enmity it will have no result and having no religion is better. For it becomes the cause of enmity and hatred between humanity and whatever causes enmity is hated by God and whatever causes unity and fellowship is accepted and praised. If religion causes killing and savagery it is not religion and having no religion is better than that. For religion is meant to be a cure. If a cure causes sickness then of course, no cure is better than it. Thus, if religion causes war and slaughter, then of course, it is better to have no religion,” ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, pp. 44–45.

³²⁴ Twenty seven people among the Bābīs brought themselves forth as the Promised One in the Book of Bayān, such as Mīrzā Yahyā Ṣubḥ Azal, Mīrzā Husayn ‘Alī Nūrī (Bahā’u’llāh), Mīrzā Asad-Allāh Dayyān, Mīrzā Muḥammad Nabīl Zarandī, Mīrzā Ghughā Darwīsh, and Sayyid Baṣīr Hindī. See Muḥammad ‘Alī Fayḍī, *Ḥadrat Bahā’u’llāh*, pp. 103–104.

³²⁵ See Nabīl Zarandī, *The Dawn-Breakers: Nabīl’s Narrative of the Early Days of the Bahā’ī Revelation*, chapters XIX, XXII, XIV.

³²⁶ “The utterance of the [book or religion] of Bayān in the day of the appearance of his Highness A’lā (meaning the Bāb) was to behead, burn the books, destroy the monuments, and massacre [everyone] but those who believed [in the Bāb’s religion] and verified it,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt: 1330 AH), vol. 2, p. 266; “The unbelievers and the faithless have set their minds on four things: first, the shedding of blood [beheading]; second, the burning of books; third, the shunning

3. Were the Bābī Wars Solely Defensive?

Bahā'i History books: The Bāb's followers were a peaceful oppressed people who only defended their women and children against the evil Persians.³²⁷

Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdul'-Bahā: The Bāb gave the order to massacre and behead all non-Bābīs.³²⁸

of the followers of other religions; fourth, the extermination of other communities and groups. Now however, through the strengthening grace and potency of the Word of God these four barriers have been demolished, these clear injunctions have been obliterated from the Tablet and brutal dispositions have been transmuted into spiritual attributes." Bahā'u'llāh, *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 91.

³²⁷ "That humiliating episode was soon followed by a number of similar attempts on the part of the supporters of the governor, all of which utterly failed to achieve their purpose. Every time they rushed to attack the fort, Hujjat would order a few of his companions, who were three thousand in number, to emerge from their retreat and scatter their forces. He never failed, every time he gave them such orders, to caution his fellow-disciples against shedding unnecessarily the blood of their assailants. He constantly reminded them that their action was of a purely defensive character, and that their sole purpose was to preserve inviolate the security of their women and children. "We are commanded," he was frequently heard to observe, "not to wage holy war under any circumstances against the unbelievers, whatever be their attitude towards us." Nabīl Zarandī, *The Dawn-Breakers: Nabīl's Narrative of the Early Days of the Bahā'ī Revelation*, p. 546.

³²⁸ "The utterance of the [book or religion] of Bayān in the day of the appearance of his Highness A'lā (meaning the Bāb) was to behead, burn the books, destroy the monuments, and massacre [everyone] but those who believed [in the Bāb's religion] and verified it," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt: 1330 AH), vol. 2, p. 266; "The unbelievers and the faithless have set their minds on four things: first, the shedding of blood [beheading]; second, the burning of books; third, the shunning of the followers of other religions; fourth, the extermination of other communities and groups. Now however, through the strengthening grace and potency of the Word of God these four barriers have been demolished, these clear injunctions have been obliterated from the Tablet and brutal dispositions have been transmuted into spiritual attributes." Bahā'u'llāh, *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 91.

4. Is Baha'ism a Religion?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: If a religion causes divisions it is not a religion.³²⁹

Ponder On: The conflicts between Bahā'u'llāh and his brother Mīrzā Yahyā.³³⁰ The conflicts between `Abdu'l-Bahā and his brother Muḥammad `Alī.³³¹ The disputes between Shoghi and those who opposed his successorship.³³² The dispute between Rūḥiyyih Maxwell and Mason Remey.³³³

³²⁹ "Religion should create unity and create links between the hearts. Jesus and the other divine prophets came to create unity and fellowship. If religion causes divisions, its non-existence is preferred," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 59.

³³⁰ The conflicts, feuds, and bloodshed between Bahā'u'llāh and his brother Mīrzā Yahyā Ṣubḥ Azal and their followers resulted in the exile of the Azalīs (the supporters of Mīrzā Yahyā Ṣubḥ Azal) to Cyprus and the Baha'is to Palestine.

³³¹ Bahā'u'llāh had willed that his successor would be Ghuṣn A`zam (`Abdu'l-Bahā') and after him Ghuṣn Akbar (`Abdu'l-Bahā's brother Muḥammad `Alī): "God has destined the station [for] Ghuṣn Akbar after his position (meaning `Abdu'l-Bahā'), for He is the Commanding Wise. We chose the Akbar after the A`zam, an order from the All Knowing and Aware (God). All must show kindness towards the two Ghuṣns . . . All must respect and admire the two Ghuṣns," Bahā'u'llāh, *Majmū'iy-i alwāḥ-i mubārak-ih*, pp. 302–303. After Bahā'u'llāh's death the two brothers differed on the amount of authority they had and fights ensued between them and their followers.

³³² According to Bahā'u'llāh's orders the successor after `Abdu'l-Bahā was supposed to be his brother Ghuṣn Akbar. `Abdu'l-Bahā disobeyed this decree and instead appointed his own grandson Shoghi Effendi as his successor. This resulted in many differences and conflicts between Shoghi and many Baha'is who didn't accept his authority.

³³³ In contrast to what `Abdu'l-Bahā had prophesized, Shoghi was sterile and had no children to succeed him. In a bid to become his successor, an internal conflict erupted between Bahā'u'llāh's followers. Amongst these conflicts, the most intense was the one between Shoghi's widow (Rūḥiyyih Maxwell) and Mason Remey (President of the International Baha'i Council). Mason Remey claimed that the UHJ established by Rūḥiyyih Maxwell was illegitimate and in a countermove the UHJ excommunicated Mason Remey from the Baha'i community.

5. Is Baha'ism the Cause of Hatred and Having No Religion Is Better than Being a Baha'i?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: If religion causes enmity and hatred it is not a religion.³³⁴

Bahā'u'llāh: When I claimed to be *He Whom God Shall make Manifest*, such hatred and envy occurred that had never existed to such a degree from the beginning of creation and never will occur again.³³⁵ I want to incite the fire of hatred in the chest of non-Baha'is.³³⁶

6. Are Other Peoples' Beliefs Any of Our Business?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Other people's beliefs are none of our business. Issues of faith are relevant to God and he will handle them on the Day of Judgment. God has not made us the police of the peoples' actions.³³⁷

Bahā'u'llāh: Torment the deniers of Baha'ism.³³⁸

³³⁴ "Religion must be the cause of unity and fellowship. If religion causes enmity it will have no result and having no religion is better. For it becomes the cause of enmity and hatred between humanity and whatever causes enmity is hated by God and whatever causes unity and fellowship is accepted and praised. If religion causes killing and savagery it is not religion and having no religion is better than that. For religion is meant to be a cure. If a cure causes sickness then of course, no cure is better than it. Thus, if religion causes war and slaughter, then of course, it is better to have no religion," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, pp. 44–45.

³³⁵ "In these days, however, such odours of jealousy are diffused, that—I swear by the Educator of all beings, visible and invisible—from the beginning of the foundation of the world—though it hath no beginning—until the present day, such malice, envy, and hate have in no wise appeared, nor will they ever be witnessed in the future," Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitāb-i-Īqān*, p. 249.

³³⁶ "We did not want to meet you except to complete God's proof upon you and those who are around you so that the fire of hatred would dwell in your chest and the chest of those who do not believe in the Lord of the Lords," Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'īlā*, vol. 1, no. 97, p. 339.

³³⁷ "Why should we say this [person] is a follower of Moses and that [person] a follower of Jesus, this [person] is a follower of Mohammad, and that [person] is a follower of Buddha? This is none of our business. God has created everyone and it is our duty to be kind to all. Belief related issues are God's business and he will give rewards and punishments on the Day of Judgment. God has not made us in charge of them," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, pp. 284–285.

³³⁸ "And you, oh friends of God, be clouds of grace for those who believe in God and his signs, and be *certain torment* for those who do not believe in God and are polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism)," Bahā'u'llāh, *Majmū'iy-i alwāḥ-i mubārak-ih*, p. 216.

7. Befriending the Enemies or Being like Flame of Fire to Them?

Bahā'u'llāh: "If, God forbid, you have an enemy, do not see him as an enemy but rather a friend. Deal with your friends in the same way you deal with your enemy."³³⁹

Bahā'u'llāh: "Be like a flame of fire to my enemies and a river of eternal life to my friends."³⁴⁰ "We did not want to meet you except to complete God's proof upon you and those who are around you so that the fire of hatred would dwell in your chest and the chest of those who do not believe in the Lord of the Lords."³⁴¹

8. Kindness or Violence?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: When everyone was in utmost hatred and spite, Bahā'u'llāh invited the word to kindness and fellowship and brought about unity and agreement.³⁴²

Bahā'u'llāh's Sister: Bahā'u'llāh and his followers murdered many people in Baghdad.³⁴³

³³⁹ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Egypt), vol. 1, p. 154.

³⁴⁰ Bahā'u'llāh, *Ad'iyyih-i ḥaḍrat-i maḥbūb* (Egypt: Published by Faraj-Allāh Dhakī al-Kurdī, 1339 AH), p. 184.

³⁴¹ Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'lā*, vol. 1, no. 97, p. 339.

³⁴² "We consider Bahā'u'llāh to be the highest mentor of the human world. At a time that the darkness of division had overwhelmed the East and the nations of the East were in utter enmity and hatred, the religions were in utter avoidance with each other and thought of each other as impure and were always busy with war and quarrels, it was as this time that Bahā'u'llāh rose like the sun from the Eastern horizon. He invited all to kindness and socialization and commenced on advising and nurturing them, and guided [people] from all nations and faiths. He healed the different nations and faiths and made them reach utter unity and harmony, such that when you enter their communities you wouldn't know which is an Israelite and which a Muslim," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 54.

³⁴³ "They gathered a group of hooligans from different provinces of Iran and from the same places fugitives who had never believed in any religion and had no faith in any prophet and had no work but manslaughter and had no occupation but stealing peoples' property. Even though they claimed they were following [the customs] of Ḥusayn (the grandson of the Prophet Muḥammad who was ruthlessly murdered by Shimr on the orders of Yazīd) they summoned a group of Shimr-like people around themselves. The breath of any soul who uttered anything but what they were satisfied with was suffocated. They beat any head which made the slightest sound

9. Is Religion a Cause of Fellowship or Fear?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Religion must be a cause of fellowship. It must cause kindness. It must cause links among humanity.³⁴⁴

`Abdu'l-Bahā: In Iraq, Bahā'u'llāh had caused such fear in the heart of the Muslims, that not a single person dared to protest against him.³⁴⁵

Bahā'u'llāh: Once my followers conquer the lands they will cleanse them from non-Baha'is and everyone will fear them!³⁴⁶

other than accepting their guardianship. They cut every throat which showed other than humbleness towards them. They pierced every heart which had love towards other than them," 'Izziye Khānum (Khānum Buzurg), *Tanbīh al-nā'imīn*, pp. 11–12.

³⁴⁴ "The third principle of his highness Bahā'u'llāh is that religion must be the source of fellowship. It must cause links among humanity," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 146.

³⁴⁵ "He threw an earthquake upon the pillars of Iraq and always left the people of discord (the Shia) in fear and apprehension. His grandeur had infiltrated the arteries and nerves to such an extent that not a single person dared to disapprove of him nor had the audacity to speak bad of him in the middle of the night in Karbala and Najaf," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātib* (Egypt), vol. 2, p. 177.

³⁴⁶ "God will soon take out from the sleeves of power the hands of strength and dominance and will make the Servant (Bahā'u'llāh) victorious and will cleanse the earth from the filth of every rejected polytheist (deniers of Baha'ism). And they will stand by the cause and will conquer the lands using my mighty eternal name and will enter the lands and they will be feared by all the servants," Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'lā*, vol. 2, no. 90, p. 587.



A Summary and Conclusion of the Three Perspectives:

1) Is “Religion Must be the Source of Unity and Fellowship” a new principle?

All of God’s Prophets made effort to mend conflicts among humanity and cause unity and fellowship among them. Examples from Zoroastrianism, Christianity, and Islam were brought forth. `Abdu’l-Bahā also confessed that this principle has existed in all religions. It is obvious that this principle is not a new discovery made by the Baha’is.

2) Did the leaders of Baha’ism act upon this principle?

According to the sayings of `Abdu’l-Bahā, if a religion causes war and enmity, its inexistence is better than its existence. The history of Bābism and Baha’ism displays a great deal of bloodshed and conflicts between the followers of these groups and those that opposed them. These conflicts even existed between Baha’i leaders in a bid to become successors to their predecessors.

3) Is this principle rational and logical?

Throughout history, many ignorant people have stood up against God’s prophets and have opposed them. These oppositions resulted in wars and conflicts. Can we say that because these religions brought about war, it would have been fundamentally better for these Prophets not to have come altogether?

CHAPTER 4:

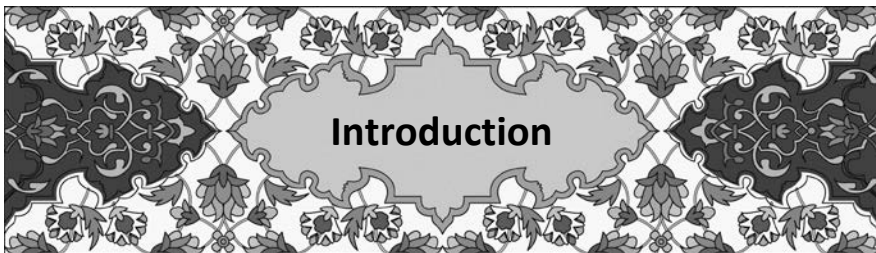
Religion Must Be in Conformity with Science and Reason



“The fourth principle of his highness Bahā’u’llāh is that religion must be in conformation to science. For God has given humans reason to investigate about the truth of things. If religious matters are against science and reason, they are illusions. For that which is against science is ignorance. And if we say religion is against reason, then the meaning is that religion is ignorance. Presumably religion must be in conformation to reason in order to bring assurance to a person. If something is against reason, it is not possible for it to bring about assurance in a person.”³⁴⁷



³⁴⁷ `Abdu’l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 147.



**‘Religion Must Be in
Conformity with Science and
Reason’ means a religion that
is not in harmony with reason
and science is an illusion, not a
religion.**



‘Abdu’l-Bahā says:

Put all your beliefs into harmony with science; there can be no opposition, for truth is one. When religion, shorn of its superstitions, traditions, and unintelligent dogmas, shows its conformity with science, then will there be a great unifying, cleansing force in the world which will sweep before it all

wars, disagreements, discords and struggles—and then will mankind be united in the power of the Love of God.³⁴⁸

One of the twelve principles that Baha’i’s put great effort in propagating and consider the intellectual masterpiece of their faith is the accordance of religion with science and reason.

Baha’i’s claim that their beliefs are firmly based on the foundation of science and reason and that there is no contradiction between Baha’ism and scientific knowledge.

This principle is one of the most attractive principles for Baha’i youth because they *claim* with utmost pride that they have chosen a religion that in contrast to other faiths, is both in harmony with science and human progress and with whatever reason and intellect arrive at.

If someone accepts this principle, then, they too must accept the following results:

1. Nothing that is against reason exists within the Baha’i scripture, particularly the works of the leaders of this faith.
2. Nothing that contradicts science can be found in Baha’ism.
3. If something is found in Baha’i works that is against science or reason, Baha’i’s should put aside their religion, for according to their own beliefs, their religion is no longer a valid religion.

When Baha’i’s use this principle to preach their faith, they start by criticizing other faiths for being incompatible with modern sciences³⁴⁹

³⁴⁸ ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Paris Talks*, p. 146.

³⁴⁹ For example: “Islam which has to date taken itself forward with power and pride, is now afflicted by the strike of new scientific knowledge. The same scientific knowledge that rang the death-bells of all the world’s great religions. Intellectual and educated Muslims are rapidly furthering themselves from their religion . . . Those that still abide by and believe in their religion are trying to change it to make it in conformity with modern sciences,” Stanwood Cobb, *Ārāmish barāy-i jahān-i pur āshūb*, 5th ed. trans. Jamshīd Fanāyīān (New Delhi: Mu’assisiyi Chāp Wa Intishārāt Mir’āt, 1994), pp. 76–77. The aforementioned book was originally written in English with the title *Security For a Failing World*. Unfortunately, we failed to obtain the original English manuscript and have retranslated the official Farsi translation back to English. The Farsi translation can be found at <http://reference.bahai.org/fa/t/o/AJPS/ajps-1.html> (retrieved 13/1/2014).

and claim that it is only Baha'ism that can answer the needs of the modern world.³⁵⁰ However whenever these same criticisms are made of Baha'ism, the answer given is that the problem is not our religion, but rather your understanding.³⁵¹

In essence, Baha'i's try to attract the attention of the youth to their faith with the slogan of the necessity of the conformity of science and reason with Baha'ism. They claim:

Since the Baha'i movement is in accordance to reason and defends science, and is completely free from the [superstitions] inherited from the past . . . the Baha'i movement has had an extraordinary influence on university students around the world.³⁵²

Strangely when it is asked from them that, given that mankind's knowledge is always changing and altering and that scientific theories are constantly being revised, which scientific theories is Baha'ism supposed to be in accordance with, they reply: What we mean by science is 'true science' not human knowledge. What we mean by

³⁵⁰ "All things are renewed thus the essence of divine religion must be renewed too. Imitations must be completely put aside and the light of reality must shine. Teachings that are the soul of this era must be propagated and those are the teachings of Bahā'u'llāh which are famous in the horizons and are the breath of the Holy Spirit," `Abd al-Bahā, *Makātīb*, vol. 3, p. 332.

³⁵¹ "Everything must be measured using the yardstick of knowledge and reason, for religion and reason are the same thing and will never be separated. Sometimes, a weak intellect cannot perceive [a concept]. In such a case, intellect has a shortcoming by being imperfect, not religion," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 93 (citing `Abd al-Bahā); "One of the fundamental teachings of Bahā'u'llāh is that true science and true religion must always be in harmony. Truth is one, and whenever conflict appears it is due, not to truth, but to error. Between so-called science and so-called religion there have been fierce conflicts all down the ages, but looking back on these conflicts in the light of the fuller truth we can trace them every time to ignorance, prejudice, vanity, greed, narrow-mindedness, intolerance, obstinacy or something of the kind," J. E. Esslemont, *Bahā'u'llāh and the New Era*, p. 197.

³⁵² Stanwood Cobb, *Ārāmish barāy-i jahān-i pur āshūb*, p. 160.

reason is the perfect Divine Reason, not human reason.³⁵³ They claim that if a principle or wisdom in Baha'ism is not in accordance to today's science and reason, the shortcoming is from man's errors and reasoning.³⁵⁴ This is how `Abdu'l-Bahā explains it:

Everything must be measured using the yardstick of knowledge and reason, for religion and reason are the same thing and will never be separated. Sometimes, a weak intellect cannot perceive [a concept]. In such a case, intellect has a shortcoming by being imperfect, not religion.³⁵⁵

Apparently, `Abdu'l-Bahā had completely forgotten that in their proselytization efforts, Baha'is had defined science as modern science and technology³⁵⁶ and that they had considered other religions old and outdated because, they were not in harmony with modern science and knowledge.³⁵⁷ One wonders, given the above mentioned explanation regarding weak intellects, what is the Baha'i creed's superiority over other religions? What religion would openly claim that its commands and contents are against reason and unscientific?

In Third Perspective we will cover this issue with more detail. But for now, based on the normal procedure, we will start off by analyzing whether this principle is new or not.

³⁵³ "What is meant by knowledge, is Divine Knowledge, and what is meant by reason is the perfect Divine Reason that religion must be in accord to," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwārī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 91 (citing `Abd al-Bahā).

³⁵⁴ "Truth is one, and whenever conflict appears it is due, not to truth, but to error," J. E. Esslemont, *Bahā'u'llāh and the New Era*, p.197.

³⁵⁵ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwārī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p.93.

³⁵⁶ Some instances have been mentioned in Third Perspective.

³⁵⁷ "Islam which has to date taken itself forward with power and pride, is now afflicted by the strike of new scientific knowledge. The same scientific knowledge that rang the death-bells of all the world's great religions. Intellectual and educated Muslims are rapidly furthering themselves from their religion . . . Those that still abide by and believe in their religion are trying to change it to make it in conformity with modern sciences," Stanwood Cobb, *Ārāmish barāy-i jahān-i pur āshūb*, pp. 76–77.



Is the principle “Religion Must Be in Conformity with Science and Reason” New?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā claims that this principle is new:

Furthermore, He proclaims that religion must be in harmony with science and reason. If it does not conform to science and reconcile with reason, it is superstition. Down to the present day it has been customary for man to accept a religious teaching, even though it was not in accord with human reason and judgment. The harmony of religious belief with reason is a new vista which Bahā’u’llāh has opened for the soul of man.³⁵⁸

As usual he contradicts himself elsewhere:

‘Alī, the son-in-law of Muḥammad, said: “That which is in conformity with science is also in conformity with religion.” Whatever the intelligence of man cannot understand, religion ought not to accept. Religion and science walk hand in hand, and any religion contrary to science is not the truth.³⁵⁹

‘Abdu’l-Bahā confesses that this principle had previously come in Islam—nearly 1400 years ago—in the words of the first Shia Imam, Ali

³⁵⁸ ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 455.

³⁵⁹ ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Paris Talks*, p. 131.

the son-in-law of Muḥammad. Thus, the claim that this principle is new and novel is unwarranted and baseless.

Regardless of `Abdu'l-Bahā's confession about this principle not being new, we will refer to a few Shia narrations about the relation between religion, science, and reason. Imam Ali states:

The Prophets have come to reveal what has been concealed [by God] in the intellects/reasons of the people.³⁶⁰

There are three things that if present in a person, will make their faith complete: reason, patience, and knowledge.³⁶¹

According to Imam `Alī, the prophets were given the duty to plow the people's reasons and awaken their intellects. Is the meaning of these narrations, anything other than the close relationship between religion, science, and reason? The seventh Shia Imam, Mūsā ibn Ja'far, states:

God has two proofs upon the people: the outer proof and the inner proof. The outer and apparent are his Messengers, Prophets, and the Imams, and the inner (intrinsic) proof is reason.³⁶²

This narration also refers to the relationship between religion and reason. Additionally, the accordance of religion and reason was so important in Shia Islam that from the early years of Islam until now, this famous phrase has—and is still—preached by Shia Muslim scholars:

Whatever reason decrees, is also decreed by religion, and whatever religion decrees, is also decreed by reason.

³⁶⁰ Sayyid Raḍī, *Nahj al-balāgha*, sermon 1.

³⁶¹ `Abd al-Wāḥid `Āmidī, *Ghurur al-ḥikam wa durar al-kalim* (Qum: Intishārāt Daftar Tablīghāt, 1366 AH [solar]), p. 88, no. 1470.

³⁶² Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī* (Tehran: Dār al-Kutub al-Islāmiyya, 1365 AH [solar]), vol. 1, p. 16.



Did Baha'is and Their Leaders Act Upon This Principle?

The Bab, Bahā'u'llāh, and `Abdu'l-Bahā have given orders and have uttered words, that are unacceptable to any sound mind. Some of these words clearly contradict proven scientific facts and established laws of nature. Since these words contradict both science and reason, then, according to `Abdu'l-Bahā, both the Bab and Bahā'u'llāh's creeds are illusions and void. We will gradually show these examples in the next sections.

1- Baha'ism is the Criterion for the Validity of Reason and Science

The first and utmost problem is that Bahā'u'llāh, neither regards reason nor science, as a usable tool for recognizing the truth about a religion. Rather, he believes that Baha'ism is the yardstick of truth and anything uttered in it however unscientific and unreasonable that it may be is the absolute truth. He believes that the correctness of peoples' knowledge and reason must be measured using the words of Bahā'u'llāh, not the other way around:

Say: O leaders of religion!³⁶³ Weigh not the Book of God with such standards and sciences as are current amongst you, for the Book itself is the unerring Balance established amongst men. In this most perfect Balance whatsoever the peoples and kindreds of the earth possess must be weighed, while the measure of its weight should be tested according to its own standard, did ye but know it.³⁶⁴

According to Bahā'u'llāh, science is not a means of weighing the book of Aqdas, rather science and everything the people possess must be weighed and compared with the book of Aqdas!

The following quotes—that we already mentioned in chapter one—clearly show that Baha'ism is a yardstick for measuring ones reason and science:

The general criterion is what we mentioned and any soul who has success in it, meaning recognizes and realizes the Sunrise of Manifestation (meaning himself), will be mentioned in the Divine Book as someone who possesses reason or else he will be (mentioned as) ignorant even if he himself thinks that his reason equals that of the whole world.³⁶⁵

No one has denied or will deny what has been revealed by the Ancient Pen (meaning himself) in this Most Great Manifestation regarding society, unity, manners, rites, and being occupied with what has benefits for the people, except that he completely lacks reason.³⁶⁶

³⁶³ In the Arabic version of the Aqdas, the words used are *yā ma`shar al-`ulamā* which translates to “O group of scholars.” This has been translated to “O leaders of religion,” in the official Baha’i version.

³⁶⁴ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 56.

³⁶⁵ `Abd al-Hamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā`idiy-i āsimānī*, vol. 7, p. 160.

³⁶⁶ Bahā'u'llāh, *Iqtidārāt wa chand lauḥ dīgar*, p. 168.

If today, someone grasps all of the knowledge on earth but stops at the word ‘yes’ (meaning does not become a Baha’i), the Lord will not pay attention to him (*ladī l-Ḥaqq madhkūr na*) and he will be considered as the most ignorant amongst the people.³⁶⁷

From now on nobody is to be called knowledgeable, except those who have decorated themselves with the garment of this New Affair (meaning those who have become Baha’is).³⁶⁸

If reason and science are not a criterion for recognizing the truth about a religion, then what is?

It would have been better if this principle was called “Science and Reason Must be in Conformity With Baha’ism” instead of “Religion Must be in Conformity With Science and Reason.”

2-Bāb’s Religious Orders That Contradict Reason and Common-Sense

As was also mentioned in the first principle, the Bāb and his book, *Bayān* hold a special importance for Baha’i’s. This is what Bahā’u’llāh says, about the book of Bayan:

Refer to it, for a letter from it will suffice the entirety of the people of the earth. And surely God has stated all things in the evident book.³⁶⁹

He also says:

³⁶⁷ Bahā’u’llāh, *Iqtidārāt wa chand lauḥ dīgar*, p. 111.

³⁶⁸ Bahā’u’llāh, *Badī’*, pp. 138–139.

³⁶⁹ Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Asrār al-āthār khuṣūṣī*, vol. 2, p. 102.

I [swear by] He who in His hand is my soul and my essence, a single letter from the *Bayān* is dearer to me than everything that is in the heavens and the earth.³⁷⁰

Even though Bahā'u'llāh abrogated the book of the Bayān, he had stresses many times that he had no intention to do so. Rather, he had stated that he intended to reinforce its decrees:

Say: The polytheists thought that we might want to abrogate what was revealed unto the Point of Bayan (*Nuqṭat al-Bayān* which means the Bab). Say: By my Merciful Lord, even if we had intended [to do] what they had thought, no one was allowed to object to God who has created everything . . . but God has desired by this manifestation [meaning Bahā'u'llāh himself] to reinforce what has been revealed by the Point of Bayan . . . thus we will reinforce his decrees and will prove his writings [or signs] on earth with power and authority.³⁷¹

This is while many of the laws that have been put forth by the Bab in the book of Bayan are unacceptable to any sound mind. We have already mentioned a few of these in the previous chapters. We will repeat them here accompanied by a few more samples:

a- Destroy Anything and Anyone non-Bābī

You must destroy everything [non-Bābī?] that you have written and you must argue using the *Bayān*.³⁷²

³⁷⁰ Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Asrār al-āthār khuṣūṣī*, vol. 5, p. 333.

³⁷¹ Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 390.

³⁷² The Bāb, *Arabic Bayān*, unit 6, chap. 6.

Chapter six of the sixth unit which is about destroying all books but those that have been written or will be written about this Order (meaning the Bab's creed).³⁷³

The fifth chapter of the fifth unit which is about the decree of taking the property of those who do not believe in [the religion] of Bayan and giving it back if they become believers in this religion, except in the lands where taking [property] is not possible.³⁷⁴

The sixteenth chapter of the seventh unit which is about [the decree] that all rulers who rise who are [followers] of the religion of the *Bayan*, leave no-one in their land who is not a follower of this religion. This is compulsory upon all the people too.³⁷⁵

He who acquires a position of ruling is a manifestation of God's wrath and if possible for him, must not leave [alive] on earth anyone but the Bābīs!³⁷⁶

Make everyone accept the [religion of] Bayān and do not accept from them jewels that would amount to the whole earth as payment so that they are excused from becoming Bābīs.³⁷⁷

As we previously noted both Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā had announced what the essence of the Bab's religion was:

³⁷³ The Bāb, *Farsi bayān*, unit 6, chap. 6.

³⁷⁴ The Bāb, *Farsi Bayan*, unit 5, chap. 5.

³⁷⁵ The Bāb, *Farsi Bayān*, unit 16, chap. 7.

³⁷⁶ The Bāb, *Lauḥ haykal al-dīn*, unit 4, chap. al-Bahā.

³⁷⁷ The Bāb, *Lauḥ haykal al-dīn*, unit 5, chap. al-Lād.

The unbelievers and the faithless have set their minds on four things: first, the shedding of blood [beheading]³⁷⁸; second, the burning of books; third, the shunning of the followers of other religions; fourth, the extermination of other communities and groups. Now however, through the strengthening grace and potency of the Word of God these four barriers have been demolished, these clear injunctions have been obliterated from the Tablet and brutal dispositions have been transmuted into spiritual attributes.³⁷⁹

The utterance of the [book or religion] of Bayān in the day of the appearance of his Highness A`lā (meaning the Bāb) was to behead, burn the books, destroy the monuments, and massacre [everyone] but those who believed [in the Bāb's religion] and verified it.³⁸⁰

These are the orders of the herald to Bahā'u'llāh: behead, burn, destroy, massacre, and exterminate!

b- Books, Writings, and Teaching

Teaching a book other than the book of *Bayān* is not allowed unless it has in it what is related to speculative theology (*kalām*). [Teaching] those [sciences] which have been invented such as logic (*manṭiq*), principles of jurisprudence (*uṣūl*), and other [sciences], are not permitted for those who have faith.³⁸¹

³⁷⁸ The Farsi word used in the original tablet translates to beheading not shedding blood.

³⁷⁹ Bahā'u'llāh, *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 91.

³⁸⁰ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb*, vol. 2, p. 266.

³⁸¹ The Bāb, *Farsi Bayān*, unit 4, chap. 10.

You have been prohibited in the *Bayān* from having more than nineteen books. If you do so, you will be fined 19 mithqāls³⁸² of gold.³⁸³

Do not argue but by the verses [of the *Bayān*] for whoever does not argue using them has no knowledge, and do not mention any miracle [but this book]!³⁸⁴

The best trade is to acquire all of the Bāb's books. Once this is fulfilled sustenance will flow down like rain:

If possible acquire all the writings of the Point (meaning the Bāb) even if they are in printed form (not hand-written) for sustenance will descend upon those who possess these like rain. Say O my servants, this is the best trade!³⁸⁵

And finally some very disturbing words:

Say O Muḥammad, my teacher. Do not hit me before my age finishes five even for a moment for my heart is very very soft. After that discipline me but not more than I can bear. If you want to hit me do not [hit me] more than five times. And do not hit me on my flesh (*lahm*) unless there is a covering over it. If you exceed [these guidelines] your wife will be illegal for you for nineteen days. If you forget and if you don't have a companion, then you must give in charity for every beating nineteen mithqāls³⁸⁶ of gold if you want to be faithful.³⁸⁷

³⁸² Every mithqāl is equal to about 3.6 grams.

³⁸³ The Bāb, *Arabic Bayān*, unit 11, chap. 7.

³⁸⁴ The Bāb, *Arabic Bayān*, unit 6, chapter 8.

³⁸⁵ The Bāb, *Arabic Bayān*, unit 9, chap. 10.

³⁸⁶ 3.6 grams.

³⁸⁷ Bāb, *Arabic Bayān*, unit 6, chapter 11.

These words are very disturbing because he is giving orders to his teacher to do something not in the future, but in the past! He is telling his teacher to not hit him until his age passes five. These words were uttered when the Bāb was about 29 years old! He then threatens the teacher that if he surpasses these orders he will make his wife illegal for him for nineteen days (!) or if he doesn't have a companion (wife) he would have to pay nineteen mithqāls of Gold. Are these words in conformity with reason and science?

c- Food and Medicine

Using medicine is forbidden:

You must not possess, buy, sell, or use medicine, intoxicants, and higher than those!³⁸⁸

Drinking donkey milk is also forbidden and by not drinking it people will become pious:

Do not drink donkey milk! And do not load it and other animals with what they cannot bear. This is what God has made incumbent upon you so that you may become pious!³⁸⁹

Do not spoil eggs for they are the Bāb's food on the Day of Resurrection:

Do not hit eggs on something that will spoil their insides before they are cooked, for this is the food of the Primal Point (the Bāb) and his followers in the Day of Resurrection (*Qiyāma*) so that you may be grateful.³⁹⁰

³⁸⁸ The Bāb, *Arabic Bayān*, unit 9, chap. 8.

³⁸⁹ The Bāb, *Arabic Bayān*, unit 10, chap. 15.

³⁹⁰ The Bāb, *Arabic Bayān*, unit 10, chap. 15.

This order is itself very unique for according to the Baha'is, the Day of Resurrection, is the proclamation of Bahā'u'llāh. The Bāb had been dead for many years when this occurred so how could his food be eggs on that day?

d- Going on Journeys

Unreasonable punishments:

Whoever forces anyone in a journey—even one step—or enters someone's house before permission is given, or forces him out of his house without his permission, or unlawfully summons him from his home, then his wife will be illegal for him for 19 months!³⁹¹

Permission is given for going on journeys for one of three reasons:

Do not go on journeys but [1] for the sake of God and [2] if you are going to (visit) He Whom God Shall Make Manifest or [3] (visiting) those who have faith in him. And He orders you to take the leaves of trees and eat them [!] and walk above [!] the earth with your legs!³⁹²

The order has been given to eat the leaves of trees and to walk above the ground with the legs! Pay attention, he says *above (fauq)* the ground not *on* the ground!

e- Some Miscellaneous Laws

³⁹¹ The Bāb, *Arabic Bayān*, unit 6, chap. 16.

³⁹² The Bāb, *Lauḥ haykal al-dīn*, unit 6, chap. al-Badī.

I have given permission to every soul to carry one thousand lines [from my books] with them so that they may have great pleasure!³⁹³

Do not make more than 95 doors for the Point's (the Bāb's) house!³⁹⁴

Do not wear clothes that will frighten children!³⁹⁵

At the age of eleven all children must marry. The consequence for ignoring this order is the annihilation of their good deeds:

It is incumbent upon all souls to leave from himself a soul (meaning to have children) and you must bring them close to each other (i.e. make them marry) after they have turned eleven and whoever can marry but doesn't, then his [good] deeds will be annihilated!³⁹⁶

Buying and selling air, fire, water, and earth is prohibited:

Do not buy or sell the four elements (earth, air, fire, and water)!³⁹⁷

Do not ride cows and do not put loads on them if you (truly) believe in God and His signs!³⁹⁸

In every dispensation, God loves that everything becomes renewed. It is because of this that he has ordered that once in every 202 years every person renew what books he possesses

³⁹³ The Bāb, *Arabic Bayān*, unit 6, chap. 1.

³⁹⁴ The Bāb, *Arabic Bayān*, unit 6, chap. 13.

³⁹⁵ The Bāb, *Arabic Bayān*, unit 7, chap. 6.

³⁹⁶ The Bāb, *Arabic Bayān*, unit 8, chap. 15.

³⁹⁷ The Bāb, *Arabic Bayān*, unit 9, chap. 11.

³⁹⁸ The Bāb, *Arabic Bayān*, unit 10, chap. 15.

by either putting them in fresh water or bestowing them to someone else!³⁹⁹

It is incumbent for every person to leave for his inheritors 19 pieces of soft paper and 19 rings inscribed on them a Name from the Names of God!⁴⁰⁰

If anyone can, they must recite 700 verses from the *Bayān* every day and night and if they can't they must repeat 'Allahu Aẓhar' 700 times!⁴⁰¹

You must accept as guests 19 people in 19 days!⁴⁰²

These are only a handful of the Bāb's orders. We have sufficed with these as to not elongate this section. This is how the Bāb praises these laws:

What has been descended (i.e. revealed) in the *Bayān* from the verses, a single one of them is a proof over everyone that is in the skies and the earth and what is in between them. And if all those who are in the skies and the earth and what is in between them come together so as to put forth anything like it, they will be incapable.⁴⁰³

Bahā'u'llāh had also praised these laws by these words:

³⁹⁹ The Bāb, *Farsi Bayān*, unit 7, chap. 1.

⁴⁰⁰ The Bāb, *Farsi Bayān*, unit 8, chap. 2.

⁴⁰¹ The Bāb, *Farsi Bayān*, unit 8, chap. 14.

⁴⁰² The Bāb, *Arabic Bayān*, unit 9, chap. 17.

⁴⁰³ The Bāb, *Lauḥ haykal al-dīn*, unit 1, chap. 3.

I [swear by] He who in His hand is my soul and my essence, a single letter from the *Bayān* is dearer to me than everything that is in the heavens and the earth.⁴⁰⁴

When Bahā'u'llāh was praising these irrational statements, had he forgotten what he had uttered about religion being in conformance with science:

[That which causes] distinction between humans and animals is reason and science. If religious beliefs contradict reason and science, then of course [they are] ignorance.⁴⁰⁵

Irrespective of the Bayan being abrogated or not, most if not all of the aforementioned decrees clearly contradict reason. Thus, according to Baha'i principles, Bābism is not a religion and consequently Baha'ism too is not a religion.

3-Bahā'u'llāh's Statements That Are Against Science and Reason

a- The punishment for Arson

Is this law about arson logical?

Should anyone intentionally destroy a house by fire, him also shall ye burn; should anyone deliberately take another's life, him also shall ye put to death. Take ye hold of the precepts of God with all your strength and power, and abandon the ways of the ignorant. Should ye condemn the arsonist and the murderer to life imprisonment, it would be permissible according to the provisions of the Book. He, verily, hath power to ordain whatsoever He pleaseth.⁴⁰⁶

⁴⁰⁴ Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Asrār al-āthār khuṣūṣī*, vol. 5, p. 333.

⁴⁰⁵ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 92.

⁴⁰⁶ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 203.

Bahā'u'llāh announces that arsons who destroy a house are to be burned alive or alternatively they can be imprisoned for life. No conditions have been specified whatsoever about the severity and extremity of the offence that will lead to this punishment. This law must be implemented irrespective of anyone dying as a result of this fire. This law is so harsh and illogical that in the complementary notes of the Book of *Aqdas*, the following explanation has been added:

The details of the Baha'i law of punishment for murder and arson, a law designed for a future state of society, were not specified by Bahā'u'llāh. The various details of the law, such as degrees of offence, whether extenuating circumstances are to be taken into account, and which of the two prescribed punishments is to be the norm are left to the Universal House of Justice to decide in light of prevailing conditions when the law is to be in operation. The manner in which the punishment is to be carried out is also left to the Universal House of Justice to decide. In relation to arson, this depends on what "house" is burned. There is obviously a tremendous difference in the degree of offence between the person who burns down an empty warehouse and one who sets fire to a school full of children.

The interesting point is the fact that the above statement was neither uttered by Bahā'u'llāh, nor `Abdu'l-Bahā, nor Shoghi, and none of these characters had stated anything about these conditions and matters whatsoever. They had all accepted the law as it had been announced without the need for further interpretation. As can be seen elsewhere, the Universal House of Justice has put forward an interpretation for one of Bahā'u'llāh's laws that none of the authorized interpreters of Bahā'u'llāh's teachings—meaning `Abdu'l-Bahā and Shoghi⁴⁰⁷—had

⁴⁰⁷ "Bahā'u'llāh designated 'Abdu'l-Bahā, His eldest Son, as His Successor and the Interpreter of His Teachings. 'Abdu'l-Bahā in His turn appointed His eldest grandson, Shoghi Effendi, to

mentioned. The unauthorized interpreter of this law (the UHJ) has designated it as one being “designed for a future state of society,” to prevent it from being implemented and to silence any criticism that might occur. This attitude can be seen in many problematic Baha’i laws in which they are simply ignored and disregarded, by claiming this law is for the future.

b- Nuclear Physics or Alchemy?!

The following quote is propagated by Baha’is in a bid to prove Bahā’u’llāh had spoken about nuclear physics:

Consider the doubts which they who have joined partners with God have instilled into the hearts of the people of this land. “Is it ever possible,” they ask, “for copper to be transmuted into gold?” Say, Yes, by my Lord, it is possible. Its secret, however, lieth hidden in Our Knowledge. We will reveal it unto whom We will. Whoso doubteth Our power, let him ask the Lord his God, that He may disclose unto him the secret, and assure him of its truth. That copper can be turned into gold is in itself sufficient proof that gold can, in like manner, be transmuted into copper, if they be of them that can apprehend this truth. Every mineral can be made to acquire the density, form, and substance of each and every other mineral. The knowledge thereof is with Us in the Hidden Book.⁴⁰⁸

This text is completely misleading for it has a number of errors in the translation and has been taken out of context. We have translated the complete text from the original Farsi words below:

succeed Him as interpreter of the holy Writ and Guardian of the Cause. The interpretations of ‘Abdu’l-Bahā and Shoghi Effendi are considered divinely guided and are binding on the Baha’is,” Bahā’u’llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 221.

⁴⁰⁸ Bahā’u’llāh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahā’u’llāh*, pp. 197–198.

From amongst the doubts that the polytheists have induced in this land is [the question] that how is it possible for gold to transmute into copper? Say, “Yes [it is possible], by my Lord, but we have the knowledge and teach it to whoever we want through a knowledge from our side. Whoever has doubts should ask his Lord to show him so that he becomes one of those who has certitude.” The [fact] that copper can attain the state of gold is a clear reason that gold can retain its original state (meaning copper), [they would understand] this if they had any sense. All metals can attain the weight (*wazn*), face (*ṣūrat*), and substance (*māddih*) of each other, but we have this knowledge in a hidden book. We say that the knowledge of the deniers has not reached a state for them to understand that gold transmutes into gold and they have not understood yet that it can turn into earth. This state is visible for all those who have any sense, that they all originated from earth and to earth they will return. Earths importance and price is cheaper than copper for [earth] is from the masses (*ajṣām*) and copper is from the bodies (*ajṣād*). This is very obvious and evident and if the people had been mature and worthy we would have definitely uttered some of the secret Divine Sciences.⁴⁰⁹

In this quote Bahā’u’llāh has used a number of terms that are peculiar to alchemy. Such as weight, face (*ṣūrat*), masses (*ajṣad*), bodies (*ajṣam*), copper and gold transmuting to each other, earth being less important and cheaper than copper, etc. The esoteric language that he has used, which is customary of alchemists is further proof that he is explaining his own alchemical beliefs in a strictly alchemical language.

He claims that all metals can transmute into each other but mechanisms involved are Divine secrets that he will not speak about

⁴⁰⁹ ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā’idiy-i āsimānī*, vol. 7, pp. 18-19.

because people are not worthy and mature enough to know these sciences. The first thing that would come to the mind is that he was probably speaking about nuclear physics and the mechanisms that can be performed in *particle accelerators*—by consuming large amounts of energy—to transmute very minute amounts of elements to others. Baha’is would want you to think that since the laws governing nuclear physics were not known in those times, the phrase that *the people are not mature* means they currently lack the means to understand these sciences. Fortunately, Bahā’u’llāh has revealed elsewhere the exact mechanism by which he believes copper transmutes into gold.

When Bahā’u’llāh wants to speak about the “Divine Elixir” that can transform people⁴¹⁰ in an instant, he gives the example of the transformation of copper to gold. He explains that just as copper transforms into gold, the Divine Elixir can transform the people. Then he explains how this transformation happens in detail:

For instance, consider the substance of copper. Were it to be protected in its own mine from becoming solidified, it would, within the space of seventy years, attain to the state of gold. There are some, however, who maintain that copper itself is gold, which by becoming solidified is in a diseased condition, and hath not therefore reached its own state. Be that as it may, the real elixir will, in one instant, cause the substance of copper to attain the state of gold, and will traverse the seventy-year stages in a single moment.⁴¹¹

Bahā’u’llāh states that if copper is prevented from becoming dry in a mine, it will turn to gold after 70 years! The fallacies in this statement are unjustifiable. Shoghi has used the word “solidified” to translate

⁴¹⁰ These metaphors are in exact accordance with alchemist beliefs, for in the spiritual aspect of alchemy, it was believed that the philosophers stone (elixir) would transmute the bad souls into pure souls.

⁴¹¹ Bahā’u’llāh, *The Kitāb-i-Īqān*, p. 157.

“*yubūsat*.” This must not be confused with solid as opposed to liquid or gas, for “*yubūsat*” was used by alchemists to refer to *dryness* as opposed to *wetness*. Either way, the statement is completely wrong and contradicts established physical laws about the conversion of elements, for copper does not turn into gold if left in a wet (or liquified) state for 70 years.

Some Baha’is try to justify these words by claiming that Bahā’u’llāh was merely narrating the beliefs of others. The context of the words prove otherwise and the only sentence that might be the belief of others is the one that comes after his statement: “There are some, however, who maintain that copper itself is gold . . .” This shows that the first statement was his own and the second the belief of others. Furthermore, there are other alchemical statements in Baha’i scripture that clearly show he was uttering his own beliefs:

The King of the Names (God) has made the possibility in some things to change and in others He hasn’t. For instance, copper can transmute into Gold but earth/soil (*turab*) does not have this possibility in actualness (*bil-fi’l*). Since the scientists [meaning alchemists] have already mentioned these subjects this servant did not like to mention it comprehensively.⁴¹²

The last sentence clearly shows that his beliefs about alchemy were based on the science of those days and he had nothing new to utter. Most—if not all—of those beliefs about alchemy have been proven wrong today. If, *Religion Must Be in Conformity with Science and Reason*, Bahā’u’llāh’s words in no means fulfill this criterion.

⁴¹² `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā’idiy-i āsimānī*, vol. 7, p. 44.

c- Earth's Age

Bahā'u'llāh claims:

The learned men, that have fixed at several thousand years the life of this earth [the age of this world], have failed, throughout the long period of their observation, to consider either the number or the age of the other planets. Consider, moreover, the manifold divergencies that have resulted from the theories propounded by these men.⁴¹³

What we have placed in square-brackets is the correct translation of the original Farsi text that has been distorted by the Baha'i translation committee. There are more errors in the translation of this quote that we will ignore for now.

The fallacy in these words is that the learned men had not fixed the age of the earth at several thousand years during Bahā'u'llāh's life. The estimates ranged from tens of thousands to the millions. In the mid-eighteenth century, Russian scientist Mikhail Lomonosov—widely viewed as the founder of modern Russian science—concluded that earth had been created several hundred thousand years ago. The French naturalist, Comte du Buffon, gave an estimate of 75000 years in 1779. The physicist, William Thomson of Glasgow, gave the estimate of between 20–400 million years in 1862.

These are estimates about the “age of the earth.” The original Farsi words used by Baha'u'llah translate to “the age of this world.” Many scientists contemporary to Baha'u'llah believed that this world is eternal (not a few thousand years claimed by Baha'u'llah).

⁴¹³ Bahā'u'llāh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 163. The original Fārsī quote can be found in Bahā'u'llāh, *Muntakhabāt az āthār Ḥaḍrat Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 109.

d- Aliens

Bahā'u'llāh says:

Know thou that every fixed star hath its own planets, and every planet its own creatures, whose number no man can compute.⁴¹⁴

Science has already proven the falsity of this claim. We will leave it to the readers to judge for themselves how the founder of a religion that claims divine knowledge can come up with such words.

To justify this fallacy Baha'is have uttered a few arguments that are all invalid. In the first argument they claim he is referring to "fixed stars" and most stars are not fixed but are in motion thus, these words are referring to specific fixed stars which do indeed have life on their planets but we do not have the means to view these life forms from deep within space. This argument is wrong because the Farsi word used is *thawābit* which is used to refer to celestial bodies that appear to have fixed positions with respect to each other from the viewpoint of an observer on earth. Planets do not fit this criterion but all stars do.⁴¹⁵ The correct translation thus would be *all stars* not *fixed stars*.

The second justification is that 'creatures' refers to minerals and non-living matter! Should we thank Bahā'u'llāh for telling us that there are innumerable numbers of minerals and dead matter on other planets? Gary L. Mathews, a prominent Baha'i author explains this in depth:

Furthermore, Bahā'u'llāh's teachings explicitly state that even "minerals are endowed with a spirit and life according to the requirements of that stage . . . [sic] even as He saith in the Qur'ān, 'All things are living.'" Thus rocks, ponds, clouds, and

⁴¹⁴ Bahā'u'llāh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 163. The original Fārsī quote can be found in Bahā'u'llāh, *Muntakhabāt az āthār Ḥaḍrat Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 109.

⁴¹⁵ See Dihkhudā and Mu'īn dictionaries under the word *thawābit*.

other inanimate objects may, in some rudimentary sense, fall within Bahā'u'llāh's definition of "creatures."⁴¹⁶

Mathews believes that rocks, ponds, and clouds are creatures endowed with a *spirit and life*! He has reached this conclusion through a verse of the Quran that `Abdu'l-Bahā has quoted: 'All things are living.' This verse does not exist in the Quran and has been forged by `Abdu'l-Bahā to back-up his false claims about everything possessing spirit and life. Here is the real verse:

We made from water everything living.⁴¹⁷

Compare again with the distorted version put forward by Bahā'u'llāh: 'All things are living.' These two sentences have two completely different meanings.

Pay attention to the quote we mentioned from G. Mathews: "minerals are endowed with a spirit and life according to the requirements of that stage . . . [*sic*] even as He saith in the Qur'ān." Why has he removed a section of the quote by using three periods? To hide a bitter truth; here is the quote as it had been uttered by `Abdu'l-Bahā:

As to the existence of spirit in the mineral: it is indubitable that minerals are endowed with a spirit and life according to the requirements of that stage. This unknown secret, too, hath become known unto the materialists⁴¹⁸ who now

⁴¹⁶ Gary L. Mathews, *The Challenge of Bahā'u'llāh: Does God Still Speak to Humanity Today* (George Ronald Pub Ltd, 2001), p. 86.

⁴¹⁷ Quran, 21:30

⁴¹⁸ This is how `Abdu'l-Bahā defines materialists: "By materialists, whose belief with regard to Divinity hath been explained, is not meant philosophers in general, but rather that group of materialists of narrow vision who worship that which is sensed, who depend upon the five senses only, and whose criterion of knowledge is limited to that which can be perceived by the senses. All that can be sensed is to them real, whilst whatever falleth not under the power of the senses is either unreal or doubtful. The existence of the Deity they regard as wholly doubtful," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Tablet to August Forel* (George Ronald Publishers, 1978), p. 7.

maintain that all beings are endowed with life, even as He saith in the Qur'ān, 'All things are living.'⁴¹⁹

As if distorting the Quran wasn't enough `Abdu'l-Bahā puts the burden of his lies upon the materialists: "materialists who now maintain that all beings are endowed with life." The Farsi words translated to 'beings' are *jamī` kā'ināt* which means *all things existing*. `Abdu'l-Bahā is basically telling us that materialistics believe all things in existence are endowed with life. Materialists have never maintained such a belief!

Whatever the justification, Shoghi too has made it clear that he believes there are creatures on all other planets and science must find them some day:

Regarding the passage on p. 163 of the 'Gleanings': The creatures which Bahā'u'llāh states to be found on every planet cannot be considered to be necessarily similar or different from human beings on this earth. Bahā'u'llāh does not specifically state whether such creatures are like or unlike us. He simply refers to the fact that there are creatures on every planet. It remains for science to discover one day the exact nature of these creatures. (From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, February 9, 1937)⁴²⁰

These words from Shoghi are further proof that in the Baha'i creed it is not religion that must be in conformity with science, rather it is science that must try to prove the unscientific words uttered by the leaders of Baha'ism.

`Abdu'l-Bahā too has extensively spoken about Aliens. His words are even more unscientific and unreasonable than his father's. We will analyze them in the next sections.

⁴¹⁹ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Tablet to August Forel*, p. 9.

⁴²⁰ Helen Bassett Hornby, *Lights of Guidance: A Bahā'ī Reference File*, chap. XLI, no. 1581.

e- Pythagoras Lived in the days of Solomon!

In the *Tablet of Wisdom* Bahā'u'llāh claims that all philosophers have acquired their knowledge from Divine Prophets and then he brings forward two examples:

Empedocles, who distinguished himself in philosophy, was a contemporary of David, while Pythagoras lived in the days of Solomon, son of David, and acquired Wisdom from the treasury of prophethood. It is he who claimed to have heard the whispering sound of the heavens and to have attained the station of the angels. In truth thy Lord will clearly set forth all things, if He pleaseth. Verily, He is the Wise, the All-Pervading.⁴²¹

He claims that Empedocles was a contemporary of David and Pythagoras lived in the days of Solomon. These two examples are both wrong, very wrong. Empedocles lived between 490–440 BC, while David is believed to have lived sometime around 1040–970 BC. Pythagoras lived between 570–495 BC, while Solomon is believed to have lived sometime around 970–931 BC.

Seeing this great fallacy, the Baha'i administration has tried to justify these words by inserting the following footnote in the published version of this tablet:

In many of the passages that follow concerning the Greek philosophers, Bahā'u'llāh quotes verbatim from the works of such Muslim historians as Abu'l-Fath-i-Shāhristānā (1076–1153 A.D.) and Imādu'd-Dān Abu'l-Fidā (1273–1331 A.D.).⁴²²

⁴²¹ Bahā'u'llāh, *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas* (US Bahā'ī Publishing Trust, 1988 [pocket-size edition]), p. 145.

⁴²² Bahā'u'llāh, *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 144 (footnote).

So the infallible Bahā'u'llāh with all his divine knowledge quotes wrong historical facts from two Muslim historians, and verbatim?! What happened to all his divine knowledge and infallibility?!

The absurdity of this justification can be seen more clearly by referring to the First words of this tablet:

This is an Epistle which the All-Merciful hath sent down from the Kingdom of Utterance.⁴²³

Bahā'u'llāh is clearly stating that this tablet is the word of God, the All-Merciful. The justification put forward by the Baha'i administration basically boils down to this: God revealed a tablet in which He quoted verbatim two wrong historical facts from the history books of two of his erring servants!

The fallacies don't end here. In an article titled *Socrates*⁴²⁴, compiled by the Research Department of the Universal House of Justice, Shoghi has been quoted as saying regarding the previous quote:

We must not take this statement too literally; "contemporary" may have been meant in Persian as something far more elastic than the English word. Likewise, the whole translation probably needs revising (15 February 1947).

This is a clear admittance by Shoghi—the authorized interpreter and translator of Baha'i scripture—that he does not have enough knowledge about the Persian language to produce an appropriate translation. This is not the disturbing point in this quote. What is disturbing, is the fact that the original tablet was revealed by Bahā'u'llāh in Arabic, NOT Persian as Shoghi claims! Shoghi's words clearly contradict the claim

⁴²³ Bahā'u'llāh, *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 137.

⁴²⁴ Available online: http://bahai-library.com/compilation_socrates_bwc (retrieved 17/2/2014). This article points out to a few more historical errors in `Abdu'l-Bahā's words regarding the prophets and philosophers.

(written on his behalf) that he was infallible regarding matters related to the cause:

The infallibility of the Guardian is confined to matters which are related strictly to the Cause and interpretations of the Teachings; he is not an infallible authority on other subjects, such as economics, science, etc.⁴²⁵

f- Bahā'u'llāh's Opinion About the Book of *Bayān*

We showed in the previous sections the illogical and unreasonable orders uttered by the Bāb in the book of *Bayān*. Orders like beheading non-Babis, burning their books, destroying their monuments, massacring them, eating the leaves of trees, walking above the earth with legs, not consuming medicine, etc.

These instructions and orders are so inhumane, illogical, and unreasonable that they are never mentioned by Baha'is. When approached by questions regarding these matters, they respond by saying Bābism has been abrogated and what orders the Bāb gave, have nothing to do with Baha'ism. Bahā'u'llāh considers his own book the *Aqdas* as the abrogator of the *Bayān*:

The book of *Aqdas* abrogates all the decrees of the book of *Bayān* . . . everyone's [religious] source is [now] the book of *Aqdas* not the book of *Bayān*. The decrees of the *Bayān* are [now] abrogated.⁴²⁶

Nevertheless, the author of this violent, irrational, and unreasonable book is considered as the Starting Point (*nuqṭiyi aulā*) and herald to Bahā'u'llāh. Baha'is celebrate his birth, rush to visit his shrine, and consider visiting his home (in Shiraz, Iran) to be like performing the

⁴²⁵ Shoghi Effendi, *Directives from the Guardian*, pp. 33–34.

⁴²⁶ Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Asrār al-āthār khuṣṣī*, vol. 2, p. 106.

Islamic Hajj.⁴²⁷ So how is it that they deny having any relation to the Bāb, and declare Bābism to be abrogated? Furthermore, Bahā'u'llāh had affirmed the status and position of the book of *Bayān* by telling his followers to refer to this book:

Refer to it, for a letter from it will suffice the entirety of the people of the earth. And surely God has stated all things in the evident book.⁴²⁸

Claiming that the book of *Bayān* has been abrogated does not resolve the problem, for Bahā'u'llāh had stated multiple times that he did not intend to abrogate this book:

Say, the polytheists thought that we might want to abrogate what was revealed unto the Point of Bayan (*Nuqṭat al-Bayān* which means the Bab) . . . but God has desired by this manifestation [meaning Bahā'u'llāh himself] to reinforce what has been revealed by the Point of Bayan . . . thus we will reinforce his decrees and will prove his writings [or signs] on earth with an evident power and authority.⁴²⁹

Although everyone knows that by this great manifestation what has been revealed in the *Bayān* has been proved/made firm, made obvious, and has been fulfilled; the name of God has been elevated; the remnants of God have been distributed to the West and East; and the *Farsi Bayān* has been endorsed particularly for this manifestation, but they have been constantly writing “that they (meaning the Baha’is)

⁴²⁷ *Hajj* is a special Islamic pilgrimage that every Muslims is required to perform in the city of Mecca at least once in their lifetime if the conditions are met.

⁴²⁸ Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Asrār al-āthār khuṣūṣī*, vol. 2, p. 102.

⁴²⁹ Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 390.

have abrogated the *Bayān*” so that they may induce doubts in the hearts and the calf⁴³⁰ may be worshipped.⁴³¹

They have attributed to this Station (meaning Bahā’u’llāh)—by whose authority all [divine] Books speak— that he has abrogated the decrees of the *Bayān*. May the curse of God fall upon the unjust.⁴³²

I swear to God that if an individual from the followers of the *Bayān* mentions the abrogation of that book, God will break the mouth of the speaker and defamer.⁴³³

Bahā’u’llāh had even stated that

I [swear by] He who in His hand is my soul and my essence, a single letter from the *Bayān* is dearer to me than everything that is in the heavens and the earth.⁴³⁴

According to what Bahā’u’llāh states—irrespective of the *Bayān* being abrogated or not—the savage acts of murder⁴³⁵, looting⁴³⁶, and the

⁴³⁰ Calf or *ʿIjl*, was used by Bahā’u’llāh to refer to his brother Mīrzā Yahyā who opposed him and was widely believed by the Bābīs to be the successor of the Bāb.

⁴³¹ Bahā’u’llāh, *Iqtidārāt wa chand lauḥ dīgar*, pp. 45-46.

⁴³² Bahā’u’llāh, *Iqtidārāt wa chand lauḥ dīgar*, p. 103.

⁴³³ Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Asrār al-āthār khuṣūṣī*, vol. 5, p. 333.

⁴³⁴ Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Asrār al-āthār khuṣūṣī*, vol. 5, p. 333.

⁴³⁵ Chapter 7 of the 16th unit of the *Farsi Bayan*: “The sixteenth chapter of the seventh unit which is about [the decree] that all rulers who rise who are [followers] of the religion of the *Bayan*, leave no-one in their land who is not a follower of this religion. This is compulsory upon all the people too”; “The utterance of the [book or religion] of Bayān in the day of the appearance of his Highness A’lā (meaning the Bāb) was to behead, burn the books, destroy the monuments, and massacre [everyone] but those who believed [in the Bāb’s religion] and verified it,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt: 1330 AH), vol. 2, p. 266.

⁴³⁶ Chapter 5 of the 5th unit of the *Farsi Bayan*: “The fifth chapter of the fifth unit which is about the decree of taking the property of those who do not believe in [the religion] of Bayan and giving it back if they become believers in this religion, except in the lands where taking [property] is not possible.”

crimes against humanity⁴³⁷ that Ali Muḥammad Bāb ordered his followers to commit in the *Bayān*, were more dear to Bahā'u'llāh than everything that is in the heavens and earth. This is the true face of Bahā'u'llāh that Baha'is are trying to hide today. One is truly lost in amazement at how Bahā'u'llāh glorifies the acts of savagery ordered by the Bāb while at the same time whines about other people taking glory in savage acts:

Gracious God! The great and the noble in Persia glory in acts of such savagery that one is lost in amazement at the tales thereof.⁴³⁸

g- Baha'u'llah is the Creator of Multiple Gods

Baha'u'llah claims:

All Gods became Gods from the flow of my affairs and all Lords became Lords by the overflowing of my decree.⁴³⁹

These words make no sense and are against reason and the teachings of all monotheistic religions.

4-`Abdu'l-Bahā's Statements That Are Against Science and Reason

Before we start this section we must point out that when `Abdu'l-Bahā was asked if he knew everything, he had answered:

⁴³⁷ "The utterance of the [book or religion] of Bayān in the day of the appearance of his Highness A'lā (meaning the Bāb) was to behead, burn the books, destroy the monuments, and massacre [everyone] but those who believed [in the Bāb's religion] and verified it," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt: 1330 AH), vol. 2, p. 266; *Farsi Bayān*: "Chapter six of the sixth unit which is about destroying all books but those that have been written or will be written about this order (meaning the Bab's creed)."

⁴³⁸ Bahā'u'llāh, *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 90.

⁴³⁹ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb*, vol. 2, p. 255.

No, I do not know everything. But when I need to know something, it is pictured before me.⁴⁴⁰

These words are sometimes labeled by Baha'is as being *pilgrims notes* that cannot be verified. Shoghi has done us a favor and has verified these words at least in the sense that `Abdu'l-Bahā is unerring, has superhuman knowledge, and his words are valid like his father:

Little wonder that from the same unerring pen there should have flowed, after 'Abdu'l-Bahā's memorable visit to the West . . .⁴⁴¹

He is, and should for all time be regarded, first and foremost, as the Center and Pivot of Bahā'u'llāh's peerless and all-enfolding Covenant, His most exalted handiwork, the stainless Mirror of His light, the perfect Exemplar of His teachings, the unerring Interpreter of His Word . . . He is, above and beyond these appellations, the "Mystery of God"—an expression by which Bahā'u'llāh Himself has chosen to designate Him, and which, while it does not by any means justify us to assign to Him the station of Prophethood, indicates how in the person of 'Abdu'l-Bahā the incompatible characteristics of a human nature and superhuman knowledge and perfection have been blended and are completely harmonized.⁴⁴²

Magnified be He, therefore, for this sublime, this blessed, this mighty, this exalted Handiwork . . . A Word hath, as a token of Our grace, gone forth from the Most Great Tablet—a Word which God hath adorned with the ornament of His own Self,

⁴⁴⁰ Stanwood Cobb, *Memories of 'Abdu'l-Bahā in In his Presence: Visits to 'Abdu'l-Bahā* (Kalimāt Press, 1989), p. 60.

⁴⁴¹ Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 75.

⁴⁴² Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 134.

and made it sovereign over the earth and all that is therein, and a sign of His greatness and power among its people . . . Render thanks unto God, O people, for His appearance; for verily He is the most great Favor unto you, the most perfect bounty upon you . . . We have sent Him down in the form of a human temple . . . He is the Trust of God amongst you, His charge within you, They who deprive themselves of the shadow of the Branch, are lost in the wilderness of error, are consumed by the heat of worldly desires, and are of those who will assuredly perish.⁴⁴³

That ‘Abdu’l-Bahā is not a Manifestation of God, that He gets His light, His inspiration and sustenance direct from the Fountain-head of the Bahā’ī Revelation; that He reflects even as a clear and perfect Mirror the rays of Bahā’u’llāh’s glory, and does not inherently possess that indefinable yet all-pervading reality the exclusive possession of which is the hallmark of Prophethood; that His words are not equal in rank, though they possess an equal validity with the utterances of Bahā’u’llāh . . .⁴⁴⁴

Shoghi clearly states that ‘Abdu’l-Bahā is unerring, has Superhuman Knowledge, and his words are equal in validity with those of Bahā’u’llāh. Now let us test this unerring, super human, and valid knowledge:

a- Spontaneous Generation

Spontaneous generation is the incorrect belief that non-living things can give rise to living organisms. For instance, the belief had been held for years that maggots (fly larvae) were created due to the decay of meat. These beliefs were effectively disproved by Louis Pasteur’s experiments

⁴⁴³ Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā’u’llāh*, p. 136.

⁴⁴⁴ Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā’u’llāh*, p. 139.

in the nineteenth century. Apparently, the same `Abdu'l-Bahā that preached about the accordance of religion with science and reason at every opportunity, had not heard about these scientific discoveries:

Know that the creatures are of many kinds . . . some are created in wombs others [are created] by spontaneous regeneration (*khalq al-sā`a*) and come into existence by themselves, such as the animals that are created in fruits, and a group are created in eggs. These are the types of creation of [living] things.⁴⁴⁵

b- Convex and Concave Mirrors

`Abdu'l-Bahā believes that a convex mirror, like a concave mirror, focuses light rays in a single real point. When explaining the necessity of focusing thought in one point he uses the following parable:

Like sunlight that does not have a complete effect on a flat mirror, but when it shines on a concave or convex mirror, all its heat is focused in a single point and the heat of that point will become stronger than fire.⁴⁴⁶

This is while it has been proven centuries ago that a convex mirror, as opposed to a concave mirror, spreads light rays apart and does not create heat by focusing them. Some have defended Abdu'l-Bahā's words by claiming that he meant a virtual focus; this is unacceptable because he clearly states that the heat in the focus point will be hotter than fire and this phenomena only occurs in a real focus point.

c- Animal Breath

⁴⁴⁵ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 2, p. 24.

⁴⁴⁶ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ayyām tis`a*, p. 324.

From the breath of animals a watery element (*`unṣur*) spreads that is nowadays called hydrogen and carbon and this gives life to plants and from plants and trees a fiery element spreads that is nowadays phrased as oxygen and is the cause of animal survival.⁴⁴⁷

What `Abdu'l-Bahā apparently means by the element that “gives life to plants” is carbon dioxide. Carbon dioxide is not an element, is not called “hydrogen and carbon,” does not have hydrogen in it, and is not watery. It is a gaseous compound.

d- Male and Female

`Abdu'l-Bahā says:

The tenth principle of his Highness Bahā'u'llāh is the unity of men and women; for in the view of God men and women are equal. They are all from the human race and the descendants of Adam. Because being male or female is not specific to the human race. Plants have male and female and animals too have male and female and there is no distinction. Look at the plant kingdom. Is there any distinction between male plants and female plants? Rather there is complete equality; and in the Animal kingdom too, there is no distinction at all. They are all under the shadow of God's mercy.⁴⁴⁸

Are we supposed to believe male and female plants and animals are completely equal and have no distinction at all because `Abdu'l-Bahā says so? Are males and females completely equal from the perspectives of genetics, anatomy, physiology, body size and form, power, ability, ranking, and sexual domination? Had Abdu'l-Bahā not seen the male date-palm trees in Palestine that do not give any fruit whilst the female

⁴⁴⁷ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 1, p. 459.

⁴⁴⁸ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, pp. 149–150.

produce ripe dates? Had he not seen bulls, rams, and roosters dominating a group of females? Were these male animals completely equal in behavior, shape, and domination with cows, ewes, and hens?! Do male animals have the ability to bear offspring and to lay eggs? And why does he contradict his own words elsewhere and clearly states there are distinctions and differences between male and female:

Although women and men share the same capacities and abilities, there is definitely no doubt that men are superior and stronger. Even in animals like pigeons, sparrows, peacocks, and other [birds] this advantage is visible.⁴⁴⁹

e- The Reason Humans Have Canine Teeth

‘Abdu’l-Bahā says:

Thou hast written regarding the four canine teeth in man, saying that these teeth, two in the upper jaw and two in the lower, are for the purpose of eating meat. Know thou that these four teeth are not created for meat-eating, although one can eat meat with them. All the teeth of man are made for eating fruit, cereals and vegetables. These four teeth, however, are designed for breaking hard shells, such as those of almonds.⁴⁵⁰

‘Abdu’l-Bahā claims that the four human canine teeth have been created for breaking nuts like almonds! Firstly, breaking nuts using teeth are dentists’ (and parents’) worst nightmares! The easiest way to chip one’s canines is to try to break open a nut with them.

Secondly, even if one does want to make the unwise choice of breaking nuts with their teeth, they will go about doing so using their molars, not canines, for the canines are in no way suited for this task.

⁴⁴⁹ Maḥmūd Zaraqānī, *Badā’i’ al-āthār* (Bombay: Karīmī Press, 1921), vol. 1, p. 153.

⁴⁵⁰ Helen Bassett Hornby, *Lights of Guidance: A Bahā’ī Reference File*, chap. XXIV, no. 1007.

f- Christopher Columbus Discovered America Using His Reason

This spirit has the power of discovery; it encompasses all things. All these wonderful signs, these scientific discoveries, great enterprises and important historical events which you know are due to it. From the realm of the invisible and hidden, through spiritual power, it brought them to the plane of the visible. So man is upon the earth, yet he makes discoveries in the heavens. From known realities—that is to say, from the things which are known and visible—he discovers unknown things. For example, man is in this hemisphere; but, like Columbus, through the power of his reason he discovers another hemisphere—that is, America—which was until then unknown.⁴⁵¹

ʿAbdu’l-Bahā claims that Christopher Columbus discovered America by spiritual power and reason while he was in his place in one hemisphere and America was in another hemisphere. All kinds of thorny problems arise from this statement. Firstly, Columbus did not discover America, as there were humans living there for thousands of years before he was born. Abdu’l-Bahā clearly must have known this, which raises the question of whether he, like so many of his contemporaries, considers only the Europeans to be human, and other, ‘backward’ people to be subhuman.

Secondly, even if one adopts the racist Eurocentric mindset of ignoring the Native Americans and only considering the Western Hemisphere as ‘discovered’ when Europeans land there, Abdu’l-Bahā’s statement is still incorrect. Historians today undisputedly accept that the Norse explorer Leif Erikson was the first European to land in North America, nearly 500

⁴⁵¹ ʿAbdu’l-Bahā, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 144.

years before Columbus. This fact was not known during `Abdu'l-Bahā's lifetime, but is clear to us today.

Finally, even if one accepts the erroneous idea that Christopher Columbus did indeed 'discover' America, it is well known that this was by chance—not reason or spirituality—when he was looking for an alternate route from Europe to India. When he reached America he had thought he had reached India and incorrectly called the natives Indians. `Abdu'l-Bahā has repeated the aforementioned claim elsewhere:

Thus it is in Europe and discovers America; it is on the earth, and it makes discoveries in the heavens.⁴⁵²

An animal in Europe could not foresee and plan the discovery of America as Columbus did. It could not take the globe map of the earth and scan the various continents, saying, “This is the eastern hemisphere; there must be another, the western hemisphere.”⁴⁵³

The last sentence is very problematic. The eastern and western hemispheres are the hemispheres that lie on the west and east of an imaginary line called the Prime Meridian. `Abdu'l-Bahā's belief that at a time people believed there was only an eastern hemisphere and then Columbus came about and thought to himself that there must be a western one too is totally baseless.

g- The Pupil of the Eye is Black to Attract the Rays of the Sun

`Abdu'l-Bahā claims:

How many things exist of which we do not yet know the reason! So the science of physiology—that is to say, the knowledge of the composition of the members—records that

⁴⁵² `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 252.

⁴⁵³ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 417.

the reason and cause of the difference in the colors of animals, and of the hair of men, of the redness of the lips, and of the variety of the colors of birds, is still unknown; it is secret and hidden. But it is known that the pupil of the eye is black so as to attract the rays of the sun, for if it were another color—that is, uniformly white—it would not attract the rays of the sun. Therefore, as the reason of the things we have mentioned is unknown, it is possible that the reason and the wisdom of these traces of members, whether they be in the animal or man, are equally unknown. Certainly there is a reason, even though it is not known.⁴⁵⁴

The first sentence is in itself interesting. `Abdu'l-Bahā claims many things exist that we do not know the reason about, yet Baha'is insist he has superhuman knowledge.⁴⁵⁵ Some might argue that he wasn't referring to himself but to other people. The context and examples he puts forward show the contrary.

A great fallacy that he utters is where he says the pupil of the eye is black to attract the rays of the sun. The fact is, the pupil is merely a transparent hole in the center of the eye which light passes through to reach the retina. The only reason it *appears* black is that most of the light that passes through it either gets absorbed inside the eye or is diffused therein. This fact had been known for decades and optometrists had been using ophthalmoscopes to see inside the eye through this hole ever since the mid nineteenth century!

Another error is the fact that black colored things do not *attract* the rays of the sun. They absorb them. Whether absorption or attraction was intended, they are both wrong because the reason for the blackness of the pupil has nothing to do with it absorbing or attracting light, for the pupil is transparent and colorless.

⁴⁵⁴ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Some Answered Questions*, pp. 192–193.

⁴⁵⁵ Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 134.

Baha'is try to justify these words by claiming that the phrase has been incorrectly translated and `Abdu'l-Bahā was not referring to the pupil but was referring to another part of the eye. Firstly, the pupil is the only black part of the eye that fits `Abdu'l-Bahā's words. Secondly, The Farsi word used is *tukhm chishm* which is used to refer to the pupil.

Sometimes Baha'is go as far as claiming the space within the eye that is filled with a special gel was intended. This too is wrong because this space is transparent and has no color neither black nor white. Whatever part of the eye is intended, none have been created black for the purpose of attracting or absorbing sunlight and the aforementioned statements are grievous mistakes committed by the *Unerring Pen*.

h- Death Occurs After Decomposition

When `Abdu'l-Bahā wants to explain that the soul is immortal, he utters these words:

The whole physical creation is perishable. These material bodies are composed of atoms; when these atoms begin to separate decomposition sets in, then comes what we call death. This composition of atoms, which constitutes the body or mortal element of any created being, is temporary.⁴⁵⁶

In most if not all cases, death occurs before decomposition. `Abdu'l-Bahā claims the opposite, and says first material bodies start decomposing then death occurs!

i- Atoms are Indestructable

Scientific philosophy has demonstrated that a simple element ('simple' meaning 'not composed') [*sic*] is indestructible, eternal. The soul, not being a composition of elements, is, in

⁴⁵⁶ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Paris Talks*, pp. 90–91.

character, as a simple element, and therefore cannot cease to exist.⁴⁵⁷

By *simple element*, he is clearly referring to atoms. He claims atoms are indestructible. This had already been proved wrong in theory by Einstein in 1905 (seven years before `Abdu'l-Bahā uttered these words). And if he had any superhuman knowledge⁴⁵⁸ he would have known how wrong his words—that were based on wrong scientific facts of those times—were.

What is strange is the fact that based on a few very vague quotes, Baha'is claim that Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā have spoken about and prophesized nuclear power. This is totally unreasonable, because nuclear power is based on the destruction of atoms whilst `Abdu'l-Bahā is uttering in a very clear manner that he believes atoms are indestructible. The first quote is from `Abdu'l-Bahā:

Scientific discoveries have greatly increased material civilization. There is in existence a stupendous force, as yet, happily, undiscovered by man. Let us supplicate God, the Beloved, that this force be not discovered by science until Spiritual Civilization, i.e. the Kingdom, shall dominate the human mind. In the hands of men of lower material nature, this power would be able to destroy the whole earth.⁴⁵⁹

Nuclear energy is based on the destruction of atoms. How can one accept that this vague statement is referring to nuclear energy whilst the same person who uttered it had stated that atoms are indestructible?

⁴⁵⁷ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Paris Talks*, pp. 90–91.

⁴⁵⁸ Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 134.

⁴⁵⁹ Adib Taherzadeh, *The Revelation of Bahā'u'llāh*, vol. 4, p. 225.

j- All Stars Are Inhabited by Animals That Have Souls and Move

As we previously showed Bahā'u'llāh believes that all planets are inhabited by Aliens. `Abdu'l-Bahā has similar beliefs that are even more radical. He claims all stars are inhabited by aliens:

All celestial stars have special creatures. When this planet earth that is comparably infinitely small is not empty and in vain, then these great bright shining [heavenly] bodies are a different matter altogether (meaning they definitely possess life). It has been explicitly [mentioned] in the Quran, “And from His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the animals/beasts (*dābbah*) He scattered in both of them.” He says *in both of them* not *in it* (meaning only earth). It is very clear that in both of them there are creatures that have souls. For *dābbah* (animal/beast) is used [to refer to] a creature that has a soul and moves.⁴⁶⁰

`Abdu'l-Bahā explicitly states these creatures have souls and move. It is also evident from the context that he believes these creatures live on the stars! He iterates elsewhere to make this point perfectly clear:

He explicitly says in the Quran, “And from His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the animals/beasts (*dābbah*) He scattered in both of them.” This means that there are [creatures] that have souls in both the sky and Earth. Thus it is clear that all these bright [heavenly] bodies are inhabited and the light of truth shines and beams in all of them. God has not created these infinite bright [heavenly] bodies in vain.⁴⁶¹

⁴⁶⁰ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Muntakhabātī az makātib Ḥaḍrat `Abdu'l-Bahā* (Germany: Mu'assisiyi Maṭbū'āt Amrī Ālmān), vol. 6, no. 480.

⁴⁶¹ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Muntakhabātī az makātib Ḥaḍrat `Abdu'l-Bahā*, vol. 6, no. 481.

This belief has also been echoed in an Arabic tablet where he even goes as far as giving a rough description of these creatures:

Regarding (the question about) the species of these creatures and if they are like the creatures on earth, (the answer is) yes. But their difference is like the difference between sea dwelling, land dwelling, air dwelling, and fire dwelling animals and the difference in their nature and the variance in the balance of elements (that create them). These creatures differ in the composite parts that they are created from.⁴⁶²

We already showed that these claims are baseless and scientifically wrong. One wonders what `Abdu'l-Bahā means by *fire dwelling (al-maujūdāt al-nāriyya) creatures*?!

k- Blessed Animals Don't Have Patriotic Quarrels

`Abdu'l-Bahā says:

The blessed animals engage in no patriotic quarrels. They are in the utmost fellowship with one another and live together in harmony. For example, if a dove from the east and a dove from the west, a dove from the north and a dove from the south chance to arrive, at the same time, in one spot, they immediately associate in harmony. So is it with all the blessed animals and birds. But the ferocious animals, as soon as they meet, attack and fight with each other, tear each other to pieces and it is impossible for them to live peaceably together in one spot. They are all unsociable and fierce, savage and combative fighters.⁴⁶³

⁴⁶² `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb*, vol. 1, p. 120.

⁴⁶³ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Bahā'ī World Faith—Selected Writings of Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā (Abdu'l-Bahā's Section Only)*, pp. 287–288.

We don't know what a *blessed animal* is, but if `Abdu'l-Bahā had paid close attention to pigeons and doves he would have seen that they too engage in quarrels and feather-plucking for a variety of reasons. Furthermore there are many ferocious animals that live peacefully with each other in large groups and packs. Lions, wolves, and dogs are obvious examples. `Abdu'l-Bahā believes that even wolves and dogs hunt alone and cannot live in groups:

Among the beasts of prey each kind liveth apart from other species of its genus, observing complete antagonism and hostility; and whenever they meet they immediately fight and draw blood, gnashing their teeth and baring their claws. This is the way in which ferocious beasts and bloodthirsty wolves behave, carnivorous animals that live by themselves and fight for their lives . . . dogs, wolves, tigers, hyenas and those other beasts of prey, are alienated from each other as they hunt and roam about alone.⁴⁶⁴

I- The Sun is Stationary, Fixed, and Ever Occupies the Same Space

The animal cannot become aware of the fact that the earth is revolving and the sun stationary. Only processes of reasoning can come to this conclusion. The outward eye sees the sun as revolving. It mistakes the stars and the planets as moving about the earth. But reason decides their orbit, knows that the earth is moving and the other worlds fixed, knows that the sun is the solar center and ever occupies the same place, proves that it is the earth which revolves around it.⁴⁶⁵

⁴⁶⁴ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Selections From the Writings of `Abdu'l-Bahā*, p. 287.

⁴⁶⁵ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 417.

It is a known fact that the sun—like other stars in the Milky Way galaxy—is in constant motion and it does not occupy the same place.

m- The Pupil of the Eye is the Source of Light

`Abdu'l-Bahā says:

Although the pupil of the eye is black in color, but it is the mine of light. You must become like this. The essence must be luminous not the face. Thus say with utmost certitude and sureness, “O Lord, make a dazzling light, a glowing lamp, and a rising star, so that I may illuminate the hearts by the shining beam of the Abhā kingdom.”⁴⁶⁶

These words are a clear reference to the *emission theory* that is the incorrect belief that a beam of light is generated in the eye which bounces off objects and returns to the eye and creates vision.

Some might claim that what he meant by *mine* is the place where light is entrapped in the eye. This is incorrect because firstly, a mine is a source for something, and secondly, words like *essence must be luminous*, *dazzling light*, and *glowing lamp* that come after this sentence, clearly show that he meant the pupil is the source of light.

n- Deductive Reasoning

Usually, when `Abdu'l-Bahā wants to prove a concept, he puts forward an example then based on that example tries to prove a concept. This method, if used correctly, can be of some use. Unfortunately, `Abdu'l-Bahā's examples are usually logically flawed. For instance he uses three creatures to prove males are superior to females in one instance, then uses three other creatures to prove that females are superior to males in another:

⁴⁶⁶ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Tehran: Mu'assisiyi Millī Maṭbū'āt Amrī, 134 B.), vol. 7, pp. 60–61.

‘Abdu’l-Bahā smiled and asked: “What will you say if I prove to you that the woman is the stronger wing?” The answer came in the same bright vein: “You will earn my eternal gratitude!” at which all the company made merry. ‘Abdu’l-Bahā then continued more seriously: “The woman is indeed of the greater importance to the race. She has the greater burden and the greater work. Look at the vegetable and the animal worlds. The palm which carries the fruit is the tree most prized by the date grower. The Arab knows that for a long journey the mare has the longest wind. For her greater strength and fierceness, the lioness is more feared by the hunter than the lion.”⁴⁶⁷

A woman’s question was referred to him who had asked why hasn’t God made any woman Prophets and why have all Divine Manifestations been men. He answered: “Although women and men share the same capacities and abilities, there is definitely no doubt that men are superior and stronger. Even in animals like pigeons, sparrows, peacocks, and other [birds] this advantage is visible.”⁴⁶⁸

5-Shoghi’s Sayings That Contradict Science or Reason

Although Baha’is sometimes try to portray Shoghi as being infallible, he himself begs to differ. Here is a letter written on his behalf by his secretary in 1944:

The infallibility of the Guardian is confined to matters which are related strictly to the Cause and interpretations of the

⁴⁶⁷ ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *‘Abdu’l-Bahā in London*, pp. 102–103.

⁴⁶⁸ Maḥmūd Zaraqānī, *Badā’i’ al-āthār*, vol. 1, p. 153.

Teachings; he is not an infallible authority on other subjects, such as economics, science, etc.⁴⁶⁹

He clearly says that he is not infallible in science. With this quote at hand there is no need to put forward any of his errors and unscientific words that exist in his translations, history books, letters, and elsewhere.

Furthermore, if one errs in one subject there is no guarantee that he won't err in another, and thus there is no guarantee that Shoghi won't err in matters related to the Baha'i cause and its interpretations. We previously showed how helpless he was in interpreting Bahá'u'lláh's words in the following quote from the article called *Socrates*⁴⁷⁰ compiled by the Research Department of the UHJ:

We must not take this statement too literally; "contemporary" may have been meant in Persian as something far more elastic than the English word. Likewise, the whole translation probably needs revising (15 February 1947).⁴⁷¹

Pay attention to the words *probably* and *may*. Would one expect these words from someone assigned by a divine figure to be the sole interpreter of Baha'i works? Is this how he interprets Baha'i works: by saying *maybe* and *probably*?! He also makes a mistake regarding the work he is referring to and believes the original words were uttered in Persian whilst they were uttered in Arabic.

There are other instances:

⁴⁶⁹ Shoghi Effendi, *Directives from the Guardian*, p. 33–34.

⁴⁷⁰ Available online: http://bahai-library.com/compilation_socrates_bwc (retrieved 17/2/2014). This article points out to a few more historical errors in 'Abdu'l-Bahá's words regarding the prophets and philosophers.

⁴⁷¹ http://bahai-library.com/compilation_socrates_bwc (retrieved 18/2/2014)

Concerning the different translations of the Words. It is surely the original text that should never be changed. The translations will continue to vary as more and better translations are made. Shoghi Effendi does not consider even his own translations as final, how much more translations made in the early days of the Cause in the West when no competent translators existed (From a letter on behalf of the Guardian to John Hyde Dunn, 14 August 1930)⁴⁷²

Shoghi Effendi does not consider his own translations as final. Apparently, in this creed, everything is subject to change and error prone. We ask again, how can someone fulfill the station of being the authoritative interpreter of Baha'i works when he constantly expresses doubts and is unsure of his own translations and interpretations?

6- The Bāb, Bahā'u'llāh, and `Abdu'l-Bahā's Religious Knowledge

a- The Bab's Religious Knowledge

The Bāb copied verses of the Quran, changed a few words then presented them as his own divine revelations. To show this obvious act of prophetic and religious plagiarism we will analyze the first and last page of his book *Qayyūm al-asmā'* (commentary on the Sura of Joseph) to provide evidence.⁴⁷³

Unfortunately, the manner by which he has joined these verses together has made many of his sentences meaningless or vague and translating some of these words into something that makes any sense at all, is very difficult. Those who have tried to translate these verses have

⁴⁷² http://bahai-library.com/compilation_provisional_translations (retrieved 18/2/2014).

⁴⁷³ The Bāb. *Qayyūm al-Asmā'* (commentary on the Surah of Joseph). n.p.: n.p., n.d. <http://www.bayanic.com/showPict.php?id=ahsan&ref=0&err=0&curr=0>

usually altered some parts to make something meaningful out of them.⁴⁷⁴

In the following table, we have shown which parts of the Quran he has used to create the first statements of the first page of the *Qayyūm al-Asmā'*. The copied sections have been underlined.

Table 2: Quranic source of the Bāb's words in the first page of the *Qayyūm al-Asmā'*

The Bab's Words	The Origins in the Quran
<u>الحمد لله الذى نزل الكتاب على عبده بالحق ليكون</u> <u>للعالمين سراجا وهاجا.</u> "All praise is to God who descended the Book unto His servant with truth so that he may be for the worlds a blazing lamp."	Sections from 3 different verses have been joined together: "الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَى عَبْدِهِ الْكِتَابَ" "All praise is to God who descended the Book unto His servant (Quran 18:1)" "لِيَكُونَ لِلْعَالَمِينَ" "so that he may be for the worlds (25:1)" "سِرَاجاً وَهَّاجاً" "a blazing lamp (78:13)"
ان هذا صراط على عند ربك <u>بالحق</u> قد كان فى ام <u>الكتاب على الحق القيم مستقيما</u> "This is truly an exalted path with your Lord that has been straight above the Upright Truth in the Mother Book."	The main verse copied is: "و هَذَا صِرَاطٌ رَبِّكَ مُسْتَقِيمًا" "And this is your Lord's straight path (6:126)" After copying the verse, he has thrown in a scramble of different quranic words in between the main words that we have underlined. The final result is a vague and to some extent meaningless phrase.
وانه فى ام الكتاب لدينا <u>لعلى</u> و على الحق الاكبر قد <u>كان عند الرحمان حكيمًا.</u>	An exact replica of the following verse in which he has placed some fairly meaningless words before the end.

⁴⁷⁴ For instance see *Selections from the writings of the Bab*, pp. 38–41 and Stephen Lambden's translation at <http://www.hurqalya.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/03-THE%20BAB/QAYYUM%20AL-ASMA%27/Q-ASMA.001.htm>

"He is exalted in the Mother Book that is with us and He is above the most great truth and he possessed wisdom in the presence of the Merciful."	"وَإِنَّهُ فِي أُمِّ الْكِتَابِ لَدَيْنَا لَعَلِيَّ حَكِيمٌ" "He is exalted and wise in the Mother Book that is with Us (43:4)"
و انه الحق من عند الله و على الدين الخالص قد كان في ام الكتاب حول الطور مسطورا. "And it is a truth from God and in accordance with the pure religion. It was in the Mother Book inscribed near mount Sinai."	The first section is made up of these two verses: "إِنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ" "It is a truth from your Lord (11:17)" "الدينُ الخالصُ" "the pure religion (39:3)" The last section is based on the following verse and as usual he has thrown in some extra words and has created another vague meaningless sentenc: "فِي الْكِتَابِ مَسْطُورًا" "inscribed in the book (33:6)"
ان هذا هو الحق صراط الله في السموات و الارض. "This is verily the truth, the path of God in the skies and earth."	Sections from two verses have been joined together. This time he has deleted a few words instead of adding some: "إِنَّ هَذَا هُوَ حَقُّ الْيَقِينِ" "This is verily the certain truth (56:95)" "صِرَاطَ اللَّهِ الَّذِي لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ" "The path of God who possess what is in the skies and what is in the earth (42:53)"
فمن شاء اتخذ الى الله بالحق سبيلا "Whoso wishes may take a path to God by the truth."	Replica of the following verse with a slight distortion: "فَمَنْ شَاءَ اتَّخَذْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ سَبِيلًا" "Whoso wishes may take a path to God (76:29)"
ان هذا هو الدين القيم و كفى بالله و من عنده علم الكتاب شهيدا "This is verily the upright religion and	The following three verses have been used: "إِنَّ هَذَا هُوَ"

God and he who possesses the knowledge of the Book suffice as witnesses."

"This is verily (56:95)"

"ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ"

"that is the upright religion (30:30)"

"كَفَى بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ وَ مَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ"

"God suffices as a witness between me and you and he who possesses the knowledge of the Book (13:43)"

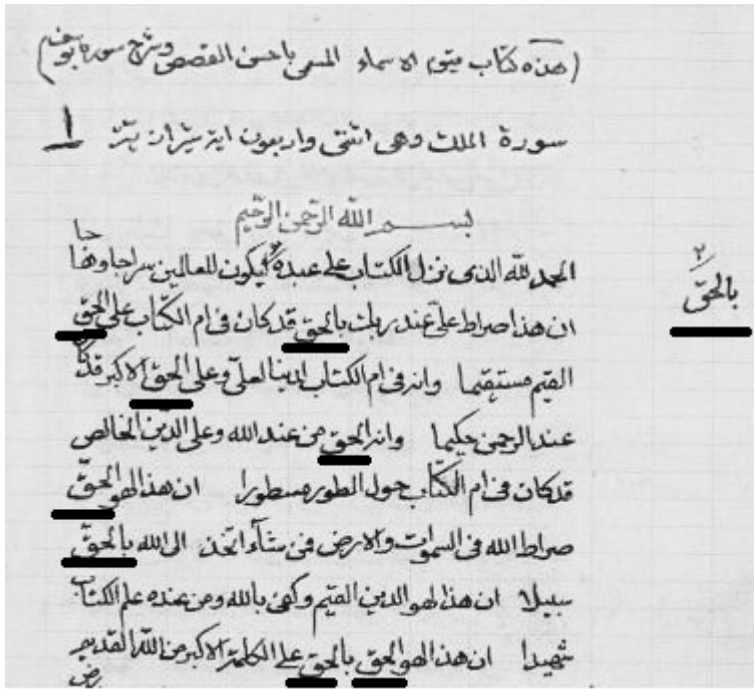


Figure 4: Facsimile of the beginning sentences of the first page of the book *Qayyūm al-asmā'*

We have underlined the word *haqq* (meaning truth) in the facsimile. This word has been added to the verses of the Quran nine times in eight lines. As if adding the word *truth* between his distortions will make

them any more *true*! The same trend is used in all the book. The word truth has also been added five times between the distorted Quranic verses in the six ending lines of the book. We have shown these in bold-face. In the next table the ending sentences of the book have been examined:

The Bab's Words	The Origins in the Quran
قل ما اسئلكم من اجر فهو عند الله ربي في ام الكتاب هذا قد كان بالحق على الحق موجودا. "Say I do not ask you for a reward, for it is present with my Lord in the Mother Book. This is truly and above truth existant."	The first section is copied from these two verses: "قُلْ مَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ" "Say I do not ask you for a reward for this (25:57)" "إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ" "My reward (will be given) by the Lord of the worlds (26:109)"
و ان اجرى على الله بالحق على الحق قد كان في يوم البدء مقضيا "My reward (will be given to me) by God, with the truth and above the truth. This has been ordained in the Day of Beginning."	The two verses copied are: "إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ" "My reward (will only be given to me) by God (34:47)" "كَانَ أَمْرًا مَقْضِيًّا" "This matter has been ordained (19:21)"
و ان الله و ملائكته يصلون على النبي و اله يا ايها الذين امنوا صلوا عليهم كما صلى الله عليهم و على شيعتهم "God and His angels send blessings on the Prophet and his family. Oh you who believe, send blessings on them like how God sent blessings on them and their followers."	A copy of this verse with a few distortions added: "إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَ مَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا" "God and His angels send blessings on the Prophet. Oh you who believe, send blessings on him and be very submissive (33:56)"
و هو الله كان بالحق على كل شيء شهيدا و هو الله كان بكل شيء محيطا	Copy of these two verses: "إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدًا"

"He is God who is truly witness to all things and He is God who encompasses all things."	"verily God is witness to all things (4:33)" "وَ كَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّحِيطًا" "and God encompasses all things (4:126)"
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The same trend is followed more or less through the book with exact or very similar replicas of whole verses being used in every page. There are multiple ways to convey a message using many different words and their combinations. Why insist on using exact replicas of the Quran and insist they are new revelations?

Now let us read all these phrases side-by-side to see if they make any sense:

All praise is to God who descended the Book unto His servant with truth so that he may be for the worlds a blazing lamp. This is truly an exalted path with your Lord that has been straight above the Upright Truth in the Mother Book. He is exalted in the Mother Book that is with us and He is above the most great truth and he possessed wisdom in the presence of the Merciful. And it is a truth from God and in accordance with the pure religion. It was in the Mother Book inscribed near mount Sinai. This is verily the truth, the path of God in the skies and earth. Whoso wishes may take a path to God by the truth. This is verily the upright religion and God and he who possesses the knowledge of the Book suffice as witnesses.

Say I do not ask you for a reward, for it is present with my Lord in the Mother Book. This is truly and above truth existant. My reward (will be given to me) by God, with the truth and above the truth. This has been ordained in the Day of Beginning. God and His angels send blessings on the Prophet and his family. Oh you who believe, send blessings on

them like how God sent blessings on them and their followers. He is God who is truly witness to all things and He is God who encompasses all things.

These words don't make much sense and are very similar to Sufi and mystic cult language designed to baffle the reader and create artificial esoteric sensations in them. The sentences usually do not convey a clear message and when they do, they are out of context and mostly unrelated to each other. The remaining sections of this book are also of this form and contain many grammatical errors that we will not point out to for they are inappropriate for a non-Arabic audience.

Another point that must be mentioned here is the fact that this book (*commenatry* on the Sura of Joseph) was meant to be a *commentary*. A commentary is a series of explanatory notes which make clear the meanings of a sentence and remove any ambiguity therein. What the Bab has done is the exact opposite, not only has he not made the verses of the Sura of Joseph clear, for every verse he has written 2–3 pages of very conflicting and ambiguous words that are more baffling than any ambiguous verse that one might encounter in the Quran.

Furthermore, anyone who reads this book will frequently encounter the catchphrase “*bi l-haqq `ala l-haqq* (with the truth above the truth)” which is meaningless even in its original Arabic form.

This is how Baha'is describe the revealing of the aforementioned verses by the Bāb:

He [meaning the Bāb] then proceeded to say: “Now is the time to reveal the commentary on the Sūrih of Joseph.” He took up His pen and with incredible rapidity revealed the entire Sūrih of Mulk, the first chapter of His commentary on the Sūrih of Joseph. The overpowering effect of the manner in which He wrote was heightened by the gentle intonation of His voice which accompanied His writing. Not for one moment did He interrupt the flow of the verses which

streamed from His pen. Not once did He pause till the Sūrih of Mulk was finished. I sat enraptured by the magic of His voice and the sweeping force of His revelation.⁴⁷⁵

Pay attention to the description: incredible rapidity, overpowering effect, gentle intonation, not once did he pause, magic, and force of revelation. This is how Baha'is portray the revelation of these ambiguous words to make their audience believe they are divine inspirations and guidance brought from God. Not once do they tell their followers that most of these words are sections copied from the Quran, are a clear act of plagiarism, and most other sentences in this book are meaningless. Here is another sample:

within the space of forty-eight hours, verses had streamed that equalled in number those of the Qur'ān, which it took its Author twenty-three years to reveal⁴⁷⁶

Since when did the sheer amount of sentences written down in a short time become a criterion for the truth? And when did Muḥammad become the author of the Quran? It is only in the Bābī and Baha'ī creeds that a prophet writes down his own revelations and is the author of the Book of God.

Furthermore, according to Shia Islamic beliefs that Baha'u'llah believed in, the Quran was revealed upon the Prophet of Islam's heart all at once at the beginning of his proclamation but it was announced to the people in a form known as *progressive revelation* so that they would gradually become acquainted with its laws. Claiming that it took twenty years to reveal the Quran whilst the same was revealed by the Bab in 48 hours is a baseless claim made by Shoghi which shows the amount of

⁴⁷⁵ Nabīl Zarandī, *The Dawn-Breakers: Nabīl's Narrative of the Early Days of the Bahā'ī Revelation*, p. 61.

⁴⁷⁶ Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 10.

knowledge he possessed. This statement serves no purpose but to degrade Islam and try to show a superior Bāb.

b- Bahā'u'llāh's Religious Knowledge

To show how much religious knowledge Bahā'u'llāh had, we will use the first book he authored, the book of *Īqān* (Certitude). This book has been designated by Bahā'u'llāh as "the Lord of all Books." Contrary to what Baha'is claim, the book of *Īqān* was widely dismissed by Persian Scholars and researchers as a book full of fallacies and errors and a number of works were authored in Farsi that clearly showed these errors.

Currently, the original manuscript of the book of *Īqān* is stored at the International Baha'i Archives in Israel.⁴⁷⁷ This manuscript which is in 'Abdu'l-Bahā's handwriting, retains the many errors that have now been fixed in versions of the *Īqān* being distributed by the Baha'i administration. For reasons that are fairly obvious, copies of this manuscript have not been made available to the public.

The errors in the *Īqān* fall under four categories:

1. Interpretations of Islamic narrations and verses of the Quran that do not conform to established Shia/Islamic teachings.
2. Obvious linguistic and grammatical errors.
3. Errors in citing the Quran.
4. Distorting and forging Shia narrations.

We will not speak about the first category here because it requires a fair amount of knowledge about the Shia belief that most readers might find confusing. We will now proceed to analyze the other three categories.

⁴⁷⁷ Some researchers believe that this manuscript is not the original *Īqān* and is a second generation. They claim the audience of the original *Īqān* were the followers of Bayān (i.e. the Bābīs) but references to these people have been removed in the second generation versions. This theory is plausible because Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī mentions in *Asrār al-āthār khuṣūṣī* (Mu'assisiyi Millī Maṭbū'āt Amrī, 124 Badī'), vol. 1, pp. 279–280, that in some manuscripts the following sentence on the first page "Sanctify your souls, O ye peoples of the world," has been written as "Sanctify your souls, O ye peoples of the Bayān."

1- Obvious Linguistic and Grammatical Errors

The only publicly available section of the original Īqān that we were able to find, is a facsimile of the first and last page that Buck has reproduced at the beginning of his book *Symbol and Secret: Qur'an Commentary in Bahā'u'llāh's Kitāb-i-Iqān*⁴⁷⁸. To show the extent of grammatical errors in the original Īqān, we will compare this facsimile with first page of the book of Īqān that is being propagated by the Baha'i administration today.

In the image that follows, we have underlined ten words that have been changed or deleted in only the first page of this book.

⁴⁷⁸ The electronic version of his book holds another image, whilst the printed edition has the original image.

باسم ربنا العلي
 الباب المذكور في بيان ان العباد ان يصلحوا الى شاطئ بحر عرفان
 الا بالانقطاع الصروف عن كل من في السموات والارض فالتقدم
 انفسكم يا اهل الارض لعل تصلحوا الى مقام الذي قد ردد الله لكم
 وقد خلق في سرادق الذي جعله الله في سما الديان مرفوعا
 جوهرا في سلكين سبل بيان وفي اربع كايوس يقان يا من كنو شجند
 از بهر شجند شجند عرصه پاك بهر شجند شجند شجند شجند شجند
 وندش از رقصه شجند شجند شجند شجند شجند شجند شجند
 وندش از رقصه شجند شجند شجند شجند شجند شجند شجند
 تا كنون فاشليت شجند شجند شجند شجند شجند شجند شجند
 فيوض شجند شجند شجند شجند شجند شجند شجند شجند
 رقصه و رقصه شجند شجند شجند شجند شجند شجند شجند
 العزبه و العزبه شجند شجند شجند شجند شجند شجند شجند
 بهر شجند شجند شجند شجند شجند شجند شجند شجند
 كه بهر شجند شجند شجند شجند شجند شجند شجند شجند

Figure 5: Facsimile of the first page of the original *Iqān* being held at the UHJ archives.
 We have underlined ten grammatical errors uttered by Bahā'u'llāh that have been
 fixed in the current versions.

These errors were penned down by 'Abdu'l-Bahā who Shoghi
 describes as the *Unerring Pen*.⁴⁷⁹ Both the Farsi and Arabic sections of
 this work contain these mistakes. Apparently, Bahā'u'llāh had linguistic
 problems not only in Arabic, but in his mother tongue too.

If today, a book is published with so many obvious stylistic,
 grammatical, and editing errors, the author, editor, and publisher (who
 are all prone to error) would be criticized in the harshest manner

⁴⁷⁹ Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 75.

possible. But if a claimant to prophethood commits these mistakes, his followers act like it is no big deal.

In the following table we have put side by side the text of the current and original *Īqān* to show the errors that have been fixed.

Table 3: Comparison between original *Īqān* and current *Īqān* in which errors uttered by Bahā'u'llāh have been corrected

Original <i>Īqān</i> Manuscript	Current official <i>Īqān</i>
بِسْمِ رَبِّنا الْعَلِيِّ الْأَعْلَى الباب المذكورُ في بيان أنَّ العبادَ لَنْ <u>يَصِلُوا</u> إلى شاطئِ بحرِ العرفانِ إِلَّا بِالانْقِطاعِ الصَّرْفِ عَنْ كُلِّ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ. <u>فَلتَقْدَسَنَّ</u> أَنْفُسُكُمْ يا أَهْلَ الْأَرْضِ لَعَلَّ تَصِلُنَّ إلى <u>المقامِ</u> الَّذِي قَدَّرَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَ تَدْخُلُنَّ فِي سُرادِقِ <u>الَّذِي</u> جَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ فِي سَمااءِ الْبَيانِ مَرْفُوعاً. جوهر این باب آنکه سالکین سبیل ایمان و طالبین کُؤوس ایقان باید نفوس خود را از جمیع شئونات عرضیه پاک و مقدّس نمایند، یعنی گوش را از استماع اقوال و قلب را از ظنونات متعلّقه به سُبُحات جلال و روح را از تعلّق به اسباب ظاهره و چشم را از ملاحظه کلمات فانیه و <u>متوکّلان</u> علی الله و <u>متوسّلان</u> الیه سالک شوند تا آنکه قابل تجلّیات اشراقات شمس علم و عرفان الهی <u>شوند</u> و محلّ ظهورات فیوضات غیب نامتناهی گردند . زیرا <u>که</u> اگر عبد بخواهد <u>که</u> اقوال و اعمال و افعال عباد را از عالم و جاهل میزان معرفت حقّ و اولیای او قرار دهد هرگز به رضوان معرفت ربّ العزّه داخل نشود و بعیون علم و حکمت سلطان احدیت فائز نگردد و هرگز و به سر منزل بقا نرسد و از جام قُرب و رضا مرزوق نگردد. ناظر به ایّام قبل شوید که چقدر مردم از اعالی	بِسْمِ رَبِّنا الْعَلِيِّ الْأَعْلَى الباب المذكورُ في بيان أنَّ العبادَ لَنْ <u>يَصِلُوا</u> إلى شاطئِ بحرِ العرفانِ إِلَّا بِالانْقِطاعِ الصَّرْفِ عَنْ كُلِّ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ. <u>قَدَسُوا</u> أَنْفُسُكُمْ يا أَهْلَ الْأَرْضِ لَعَلَّ تَصِلُنَّ إلى <u>المقامِ</u> الَّذِي قَدَّرَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَ تَدْخُلُنَّ فِي سُرادِقِ <u>(؟)</u> جَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ فِي سَمااءِ الْبَيانِ مَرْفُوعاً. جوهر این باب آنکه سالکین سبیل ایمان و طالبین کُؤوس ایقان باید نفوس خود را از جمیع شئونات عرضیه پاک و مقدّس نمایند، یعنی گوش را از استماع اقوال و قلب را از ظنونات متعلّقه به سُبُحات جلال و روح را از تعلّق به اسباب ظاهره و چشم را از ملاحظه کلمات فانیه و <u>متوکّلین</u> علی الله و <u>متوسّلین</u> الیه سالک شوند تا آنکه قابل تجلّیات اشراقات شمس علم و عرفان الهی <u>(؟)</u> و محلّ ظهورات فیوضات غیب نامتناهی گردند . زیرا <u>(؟)</u> اگر عبد بخواهد <u>(؟)</u> اقوال و اعمال و افعال عباد را از عالم و جاهل میزان معرفت حقّ و اولیای او قرار دهد هرگز به رضوان معرفت ربّ العزّه داخل نشود و بعیون علم و حکمت سلطان احدیت فائز نگردد و هرگز و به سر منزل بقا نرسد و از جام قُرب و رضا مرزوق نگردد. ناظر به ایّام قبل شوید که چقدر مردم از اعالی

و ادانی <u>که</u> همیشه منتظر ظهورات احدیه در هیاکل قدسیه بوده‌اند	و ادانی (?) همیشه منتظر ظهورات احدیه در هیاکل قدسیه بوده‌اند
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This is how the UHJ justifies Bahā'u'llāh's act of correcting these errors:

In his Questions and Answers, supplemental to the Kitāb-i Aqdas, Bahā'u'llāh himself discloses the editing process and reasons for it: "Many Tablets were revealed and dispatched in their original form without being checked and reviewed. Consequently, as bidden, they were again read out in the Holy Presence, and brought into conformity with the grammatical conventions of the people in order to forestall the cavils of the opponents of the Cause."⁴⁸⁰

What a careless Prophet! Utter words using inappropriate grammar and style, let them be inscribed under your nose, allow them to be distributed far and wide, and once the errors have been exposed bring them in conformity with the grammatical conventions of the people and use the excuse of forestalling the cavils of the opponents!

What the UHJ doesn't tell us is that this reasoning fundamentally contradicts what Bahā'u'llāh had uttered when he was confronted with the grammatical errors in his writings and the writings of the Bāb:

Say, oh you ignorant man; look at the words of God using His Eyes so that you may realize they are free of the allusions and the grammatical conventions of the people for He possesses the knowledge of the worlds. Say, if the words of God were revealed based on your grammatical conventions and (the

⁴⁸⁰ Christopher buck, edited by Juan R. Cole and Moojan Momen, *Symbol and Secret: Qur'an Commentary in Bahā'u'llāh's Kitāb-i-Iqān*, p. 27.

laws) that are with you, then they would be like your words, oh group of people who are veiled (from the truth).⁴⁸¹

You and your kind have said that the words of the Great Bāb and the Most Complete Remembrance are wrong and not in conformance with the grammatical conventions of the people. You still haven't understood that the divine revealed words are the yardstick for all and what is lower than them cannot be a yardstick. Every grammatical convention that is not in accordance with the divine verses has no credibility.⁴⁸²

Bahā'u'llāh had stated in the clearest words that his writings are not and must not be⁴⁸³ in accordance with the grammatical conventions of the people. He had stated that all grammatical conventions that are not in conformance with his writings are wrong and have no credibility. Suddenly he changes his mind and distorts all his writings and brings them in conformity with the grammatical conventions of the people, the same conventions that he had openly stated had no credibility and the words of God must not follow!

Bahā'u'llāh is probably the only Prophet ever who has revised and changed the *errors* in his own writings, and the only erring infallible. Unfortunately, some people fail to see why these errors must not be committed by a divine figure who carries God's messages. Some people fail to realize that God's words don't need to be edited, proofread, and changed, especially if they have been penned by the "Unerring Pen."

To make matters worse, the UHJ explicitly mentions that many of the changes were suggested to Bahā'u'llāh by an ordinary person:

⁴⁸¹ Bahā'u'llāh, *Majmū'iy-i alwāḥ-i mubārak-ih*, p. 71.

⁴⁸² Bahā'u'llāh, *Majmū'iy-i alwāḥ-i mubārak-ih*, p. 78.

⁴⁸³ This can be deduced from his statement "then they would be like your words," which was uttered by Bahā'u'llāh to state that there must be a difference between the words of God and the words of the people and this difference exists in the grammatical conventions.

It is important to note that the stylistic and grammatical changes mentioned above took place over time—often it was Zayn himself that suggested them—and therefore the various manuscripts differ somewhat, one from the other.⁴⁸⁴

These words show how helpless Bahā'u'llāh was in correcting his errors. Every time he fixed the errors some more were found and he was again forced to make changes in the book and give out a new revised version. He even needed a fallible person to point out these errors and give him *suggestions*. Thus, the book was not revised once but numerous times. If these changes were made to “to forestall the cavils of the opponents of the Cause” then why not change it accordingly once and shut the mouth of the opponents once and for all. Are the words of God some sort of joke that must be changed every time someone objects to them? The words of God are perfect they need not be changed for style and grammar.

These acts by Bahā'u'llāh are in direct contradiction with the claimed infallibility and divine knowledge attributed to him. What is the difference between this Baha'i prophet and all other ordinary men who make mistakes and correct them later on? What kind of an Omniscient God do Baha'is believe in that cannot foresee the troubling consequences of his revelations and changes them multiple times and gives out newer versions and editions?!

2- Errors in Citing the Quran

Bahā'u'llāh had made many errors in citing the verses of the Quran and was forced to correct these too in revisions of the *Īqān*. The closest version to the original undistorted book of *lqān* that we found is a

⁴⁸⁴ Christopher buck, edited by Juan R. Cole and Moojan Momen, *Symbol and Secret: Qur'an Commentary in Bahā'u'llāh's Kitab-i-Iqan*, p. 27.

manuscript held at the National Library of Iran (Kitābkhaniyi Millī) with the book code 1613405.

Although missing some pages, this book retains the distorted verses of the Quran that were uttered by Bahā'u'llāh and the grammatical errors; including the ones we pointed to from the first page held at the Baha'i Archives. The manuscript can be accessed online from the digital section of the library.⁴⁸⁵ For convenience, we have downloaded the images and uploaded them as a pdf file to archive.org.⁴⁸⁶

Refuting this manuscript is not an option for the Universal House of Justice. Any objections they make can only be validated if they show us the original Īqān which they claim they possess. It isn't that hard to make available the original manuscript and relieve all researchers once and for all. If Bahā'u'llāh was justified in correcting that manuscript, then what harm will it do if it is shown to the world? What are the Baha'is afraid of? What are they trying to hide?

When a request was made for a copy of this Īqān the UHJ had answered:

It is not possible to provide photocopies of the entire volume of the lithographed editions for the purpose of research at this time.⁴⁸⁷

As usual, problematic matters have been postponed to a future time. We believe it is completely possible to provide copies but the UHJ simply does not want to make this manuscript available for research, for as we mentioned in chapter 1, all manuscripts at the Baha'i Archives

⁴⁸⁵ <http://dl.nlai.ir/UI/0703ce2c-183d-4267-bb7a-35498b51ecc6/LRRView.aspx?tocterm=&History=True&First=true>

⁴⁸⁶ https://archive.org/details/original_Iqan

⁴⁸⁷ Christopher buck, edited by Juan R. Cole and Moojan Momen, *Symbol and Secret: Qur'an Commentary in Bahā'u'llāh's Kitāb-i-Iqān*, p. 27.

have been digitized at least since 1993,⁴⁸⁸ and all the effort needed to make them available to the public is simply a “copy and paste”.

Anyway, we have compared the verses of the Quran from the original and corrected versions and have created a table below which shows the distortions. The page numbers are in accordance with the pdf document at archive.org. The underlined words mark the distortions.

p.	Original version	distorted	Corrected Version	Notes
5	و لقد همت كل امة برسولهم لياخذوه و يجادلوا به بالباطل ليدحضوا به الحق		وَ هَمَّتْ كُلُّ أُمَّةٍ بِرَسُولِهِمْ لِيَأْخُذُوهُ وَ جَادَلُوا بِالْبَاطِلِ لِيُدْحِضُوا بِهِ الْحَقَّ (40:5)	Three distortions
8	و ما يزيد الكافرين الا خسارا		وَ لَا يَزِيدُ الْكَافِرِينَ كُفْرُهُمْ إِلَّا خَسَارًا (35:39)	Two distortions
17	انما نطعمكم لوجه الله و ما نريد منكم جزاء و لا شكورا		إِنَّمَا نُطْعِمُكُمْ لِوَجْهِ اللَّهِ لَا نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً وَ لَا شُكْرًا (76:9)	One distortion
17	مثل كلمة طيبة كشجرة طيبة اصلها ثابت في الارض و فرعها في السماء و يوتى اكلها في كل حين		مَثَلًا كَلِمَةً طَيِّبَةً كَشَجَرَةٍ طَيِّبَةٍ أَصْلُهَا ثَابِتٌ وَ فَرْعُهَا فِي السَّمَاءِ، تُؤْتِي أُكْلَهَا كُلَّ حِينٍ (14:24-25)	Four distortions. The distorted verse has grammatical errors too.
38	كحمر مستنفره فرت من القسورة		كَأَنَّهُمْ حُمُرٌ مُسْتَنْفِرَةٌ، فَرَّتْ مِنْ قَسْوَرَةٍ (51-74:50)	Two distortions. This verse has also been distorted in Bahā'u'llāh's <i>Ishrāqāt wa chand lauḥ dīgar</i> , p.

⁴⁸⁸ “To assist the House of Justice in referring to the wealth of guidance and teachings contained in the Bahā'ī Writings, a computer database is used which contains descriptions of every Tablet and every letter of Shoghi Effendi, together with a typed copy of the text of each document. In the near future images of the original documents will also be stored in the computer, making it unnecessary to refer to the original items.” This is a section of a pamphlet inserted in *ʿAndalīb magazine*, 12:48 (Fall 1993).

			16.
41	یا لیتنی مت قبل هذا ام كنت نسیا منسیا	یا لیتنی مت قبل هذا و كنت نسیا منسیا (19:23)	One distortion
57	"یوم یاتی الله فی ظلل من الغمام" و علمای ظاهر این آیه را بعضی از علائم قیامت موهوم که خود تعقل نموده اند گرفته اند که مضمون آن اینست: که روزی که میاید خدا در سایه از ابر و حال اینکه این مضمون در اکثر کتب سماوی مذکور است و در همه اماکن در ذکر علامات ظهور فرموده اند.	"هل یَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي ظُلُلٍ مِنَ الْعَمَامِ." و علمای ظاهر بعضی این آیه را از علائم قیامت موهوم که خود تعقل نموده اند گرفته اند و مضمون آن این است: آیا انتظار می کشند مگر اینکه بیاید آنها را خدا در سایه ای از ابر؟ و حال آنکه این مضمون در اکثر کتب سماوی مذکور است و در همه اماکن در ذکر علامات ظهور بعد ذکر فرموده اند.	Numerous distortions in both the verse and the explanations after it. The distortions in the explanations have been made to make it in conformance with the corrected verse.
57	يَوْمَ يَأْتِي السَّمَاءُ بِدُخَانٍ مُبِينٍ يَغْشَى النَّاسَ هَذَا عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ	يَوْمَ تَأْتِي السَّمَاءُ بِدُخَانٍ مُبِينٍ يَغْشَى النَّاسَ هَذَا عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ (44:10-11)	One distortion.
58	وَ إِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَ إِذَا خَلَوْا عَضُّوا عَلَيْكُمُ الْأَنَامِلَ مِنَ الْعِظِ قُلْ مُؤْتُوا بِعِظِكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِمَا فِي الصُّدُورِ	وَ إِذَا لَقَوْكُمْ قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَ إِذَا خَلَوْا عَضُّوا عَلَيْكُمُ الْأَنَامِلَ مِنَ الْعِظِ قُلْ مُؤْتُوا بِعِظِكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ	Two distortions
66	وَ قَدْ كَانَ فَرِيقٌ مِنْكُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ كَلَامَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُحَرِّفُونَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا عَقَلُوا وَ هُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ	وَ قَدْ كَانَ فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ كَلَامَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُحَرِّفُونَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا عَقَلُوا وَ هُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ	One distortion. Ironically this verse says: "A group of them would hear the words of God and would distort them after they had understood them." The distortion here is grammatically wrong

			too.
71	لَيْسَ الْبِرُّ أَنْ تُولُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قَبْلَ المَشْرِقِ وَ الْمَغْرِبِ وَ لَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ أَنْ تُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَ الْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ	لَيْسَ الْبِرُّ أَنْ تُولُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قَبْلَ المَشْرِقِ وَ الْمَغْرِبِ وَ لَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَ الْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ	One distortion.
74	و فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ أَفَلَا تَبْصِرُونَ	و فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَفَلَا تَبْصِرُونَ	One distortion.
81	وَ إِنْ كَبُرَ عَلَيْكَ إِعْرَاضُهُمْ فَإِنْ اسْتَطَعْتَ أَنْ تَبْتَغِيَ نَفَقًا فِي الْأَرْضِ أَوْ سُلَّمًا فِي السَّمَاءِ	وَ إِنْ كَانَ كَبُرَ عَلَيْكَ إِعْرَاضُهُمْ فَإِنْ اسْتَطَعْتَ أَنْ تَبْتَغِيَ نَفَقًا فِي الْأَرْضِ أَوْ سُلَّمًا فِي السَّمَاءِ	One distortion.
84	وَ لَا قُلُوبٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا وَ هُمْ أَعْيُنٌ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا	هُمْ قُلُوبٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا وَ هُمْ أَعْيُنٌ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا	One distortion.
85	"إِنْ نَعَجِبَ فَعَجِبْتَ قَوْلُهُمْ أَ إِذَا كُنَّا تُرَابًا أَئِنَّا لَمَبْعُوثُونَ" که ترجمه آن این است که می فرماید اگر عجب می داری پس عجب است قول کافران و معرضان که می گویند آیا ما تراب و استخوان بودیم و از روی استهزاء می گفتند که آیا مائیم مبعوث شده گان.	"وَ إِنْ نَعَجِبَ فَعَجِبْتَ قَوْلُهُمْ أَ إِذَا كُنَّا تُرَابًا أَئِنَّا لَفِي خَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ" که ترجمه آن این است که می فرماید اگر عجب می داری پس عجب است قول کافران و معرضان که می گویند آیا ما تراب بودیم و از روی استهزاء می گفتند که آیا مائیم مبعوث شدگان	Multiple distortions. What is strange is that Bahā'u'llāh has written the Farsi translation of this verse after it and one part of the translation has been corrected in the distorted version while the end part has not.
86	"فَنُفِّخَ فِي الصُّورِ ذَلِكِ يَوْمُ الْوَعْدِ وَ جَاءَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَعَهَا سَائِقٌ وَ شَهِيدٌ" که معنی ظاهر این است که دمیده شد در صور و آن است یوم وعید که به نظرها بسیار بعید بود و آمد هر نفسی برای حساب و با اوست راننده و	"و نُفِّخَ فِي الصُّورِ ذَلِكِ يَوْمُ الْوَعْدِ وَ جَاءَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَعَهَا سَائِقٌ وَ شَهِيدٌ" که معنی ظاهر آن این است دمیده شد در صور و آن است یوم وعید که به نظرها بسیار بعید بود و آمد هر نفسی برای حساب و با اوست راننده و	Multiple distortions in the verse and explanations provided.

	اوست كشنده و گواهان.	گواه.	
94	جند الله هم الغالبون	و ان جندنا لهم الغالبون	Multiple distortions.
105	وَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَ لِقَائِهِ أُولَئِكَ يُسْأَلُونَ مِنْ رَحْمَتِي وَ أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ اللَّهُ وَ أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ	وَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَ لِقَائِهِ أُولَئِكَ يُسْأَلُونَ مِنْ رَحْمَتِي وَ أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ	Two distortions.
105	الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ رَحْمَتِي وَ أَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ	الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُلَاقُوا رَبِّهِمْ وَ أَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ	Two words deleted.
109	يوم ياتي الله فى ظلل من الغمام	هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي ظُلُلٍ مِنَ الْغَمَامِ	The same distortion has been made in p. 57.
156	وَ إِذَا تُتْلَى عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ قَالُوا مَا هَذَا إِلَّا رَجُلٌ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَصُدَّكُمْ عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْبُدُونَ أَبَاؤُكُمْ وَ قَالُوا مَا هَذَا إِلَّا إِفْكٌ مُفْتَرًى	وَ إِذَا تُتْلَى عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ قَالُوا مَا هَذَا إِلَّا رَجُلٌ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَصُدَّكُمْ عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْبُدُونَ أَبَاؤُكُمْ وَ قَالُوا مَا هَذَا إِلَّا إِفْكٌ مُفْتَرًى	Single word deleted.
160	وَ لَوْ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ كِتَابًا فِى قِرْطَاسٍ فَلَمَسُوهُ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ لَقَالُوا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُبِينٌ	وَ لَوْ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ كِتَابًا فِى قِرْطَاسٍ فَلَمَسُوهُ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ لَقَالُوا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُبِينٌ	Two words distorted.

The fact that Bahā'u'llāh has distorted some of the verses in the exact same manner in multiple places (for instance on p. 109 and 57 or on p. 16) shows that these verses were memorized by him incorrectly and his claimed Tablet of Wisdom⁴⁸⁹ was malfunctioning. His malfunctioning Tablet of wisdom had also made grammatical mistakes in citing some of the verses.

⁴⁸⁹ “Whenever We desire to quote the sayings of the learned and of the wise, presently there will appear before the face of thy Lord in the form of a tablet all that which hath appeared in the world and is revealed in the Holy Books and Scriptures,” Bahā'u'llāh, *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 149.

Let us see what the Research Department of the Universal House of Justice say about these verses:

During His lifetime, Bahā'u'llāh Himself reviewed the book and indicated necessary changes so that, subsequently, a new, revised version of the book became available. In several Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh, indications are found that during 1305-1306 A.H. (1887-1889 A.D.), Bahā'u'llāh undertook the task of revising the book particularly in order to bring the Qur'anic quotations in line with the common standard.⁴⁹⁰

Since the invalid excuse of bringing the verses “into conformity with the grammatical conventions of the people” cannot be used here, a new excuse is put forward and it is claimed that Bahā'u'llāh revised the book and reached the conclusion that it was necessary to “to bring the Qur'anic quotations in line with the common standard.” Is the research department serious? Is this the attitude of an infallible Prophet from God? Just Imagine Moses and Jesus telling their followers that the Torah and Bible they had revealed had problems and need to be changed. The Research Department continues by Quoting Bahā'u'llāh saying:

A copy of a correct Īqān was given to Jināb-i-'Alī Akbar, My Glory be upon him. Existing copies should be brought into conformity with this copy, or new transcriptions made from it. The latter is better and more appropriate.⁴⁹¹

So the original Īqān was not correct and a *correct* copy was reproduced by Bahā'u'llāh that was better and more appropriate?! The Research Department then claims:

⁴⁹⁰ Christopher buck, edited by Juan R. Cole and Moojan Momen, *Symbol and Secret: Qur'an Commentary in Bahā'u'llāh's Kitāb-i-Iqān* (United States of America: Kalimat Press, 1995), p.26.

⁴⁹¹ *Symbol and Secret: Qur'an Commentary in Bahā'u'llāh's Kitāb-i-Iqān*, p. 26.

A careful study of the changes that were made clearly shows that the verses of the Qur'an that were not quoted exactly in the first edition of the Īqān were brought into exact conformity in the new edition. As Mr. Buck is undoubtedly aware, when Bahā'u'llāh quotes His own Writings in a Tablet, He not infrequently quotes them in a form that, while conveying the essential meaning of the original, is not in exactly the same words. It would seem that in revealing the Kitāb-i Īqān, He followed the same practice in relation to passages He quoted from the Qur'an. The fact that He Himself had them later changed to be in accordance with the accepted text of the Qur'an makes it clear that He was fully aware of the matter and, moreover, that the change in wording had no effect on the purport of His argument.

What the Baha'i Research Department apparently fails to recognize is that they are speaking about a Prophet of God, not some ordinary fallible erring person. The words of the Books of God are perfect and need not be changed. These changes have been made by the same Bahā'u'llāh that had constantly claimed the words of God are different from the words and conventions of the people. Someone who utters such words cannot change them later on to "bring them in accordance with the accepted text".

Furthermore, the justification that Bahā'u'llāh had a habit of quoting verses of the Quran in their unoriginal forms is totally unacceptable because whenever Bahā'u'llāh wants to quote a verse or narration he stops writing in *Farsi* and clearly quotes the verse or hadith in *Arabic* to show that he is quoting an exact text. This attitude was—and still—is customary in Persian religious Islamic writings and when a verse of the Quran or an Arabic narration is quoted in the midst of a Farsi text it is written in its exact Arabic form without any changes. The same manner is followed in Arabic works and verses of the Quran are cited in the exact form because they are held with utmost respect.

Regarding this matter, the UHJ is portraying a very annoying act of double-standards. When the UHJ is asked as to why Bahā'u'llāh had three wives when he himself forbade it, it is claimed:

He was following the Laws of the previous Dispensation and the customs of the people of His own land⁴⁹²

Why is it that Bahā'u'llāh adheres to the customs of the previous dispensations and people of his own land when it is related to worldly controversial matters like polygamy, but in spiritual matters like citing sacred texts he fails to recognize these customs? Apparently, the only place that the conformity with the beliefs must be disregarded is in an *unimportant* subject like citing the Quran, but in *very important* matters like sex, Bahā'u'llāh must strictly follow the customs of a fairly small group⁴⁹³ of people who engaged in polygamy.

Before making unreasonable justifications and to realize how important it is to clearly and correctly cite verses of the Quran, the UHJ should take a look at `Abdu'l-Bahā's attitude when he received a text from Mīrzā Yaḥyā Ṣubḥ Azal in which he had—probably unintentionally—misplaced two adjacent letters in a word when citing a verse of the Quran. `Abdu'l-Bahā says:

He had written the blessed verse of the Quran “what are these statues/images that you are worshipping” (*mā hādhihī l-tamāthīl al-latī antum `alayhā `āḳifūn*) [and had written the last word] as *`āḳifūn* and the [text] is in the possession of Mīrzā Yaḥyā Qazwīnī. Pay attention that the leader of this

⁴⁹² Letter from Universal House of Justice to an individual believer dated 23/10/1995: http://bahai-library.com/uwj_wives_bahauallah (retrieved 1/6/2104)

⁴⁹³ Even in a community where polygamy is accepted as a standard norm, only a percentage of the people can engage in polygamy before the community runs out of women; because the number of men and women are nearly equal. Furthermore, in Iran, polygamy was mostly practiced by the elite who had the financial or other means needed to support a polygamous lifestyle and it was not something compulsory or customary.

group cannot make a distinction between *`āḳif* and *`āfik* and he distorts the evident verse of the Book of God in his own handwriting!⁴⁹⁴

When only two adjacent letters are misplaced by Mīrzā Yaḥyā, he is labeled by `Abdu'l-Bahā as a distorter of the Book of God, but when Bahā'u'llāh completely distorts multiple verses from of the Quran, we are supposed to believe some unreasonable justification put forward by the UHJ. `Abdu'l-Bahā's words show without doubt that his father was a distorter of the Book of God.

3-Distorting and Forging Shia narrations

Unlike the grammatical and Quranic errors that were revised and corrected in later versions, Bahā'u'llāh failed to fix the Shia narrations that he had mentioned in the *Īqān*. Some of these narrations have been made up and do not exist in the Shia corpus. Why didn't Bahā'u'llāh fix these distortions and forgeries in the second version of the *Īqān*? Because the Quran was so widespread and known to the people and the linguistic errors so obvious that even the average Joe could point out the errors committed by Bahā'u'llāh. Thus, finding the specific verses and fixing the erroneous versions that Bahā'u'llāh had mentioned was fairly easy, just as it was fairly easy for non-Bahā'is to point out these mistakes.

The same cannot be said about the narrations that he has mentioned in this book because of two reasons:

The first, is that he claims that some of the narrations he is citing are from the book *Biḥār (al-anwār)* without mentioning the volume or chapter he is referring to. The current printed version of this book consists of about 107 volumes and about 35000 pages. Since this book was not widely available, most of Bahā'u'llāh's distortions from this

⁴⁹⁴ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Muntakhabāt az makātib Ḥaḍrat `Abdu'l-Bahā* (Germany: Mu'assisiyi Maṭbū'āt Amrī Almān), vol. 6, no. 430.

book had remained unnoticed. With recent advances in digitizing these works, all this book and many other Shia sources have been typed and placed in searchable databases. Using these databases we have found and pinpointed the exact narrations that Bahā'u'llāh had distorted and had used in the *Īqān*.

Second, he had forged a number of concepts in these narrations to prove the Bāb's creed. Correcting these forged concepts would have invalidated his arguments.

Just like the verses of the Quran, Bahā'u'llāh mentions these narrations in Arabic in the midst of writing in Farsi to show that he is making exact quotations. We will only refer to the narrations that have been mentioned in the last three pages of the *Īqān* for they are enough to show the purpose. We will go along with Shoghi's translation although he has made some mistakes in translating them. The first narration:

Consider, that even the year in which that Quintessence of Light is to be made manifest hath been specifically recorded in the traditions, yet they still remain unmindful, nor do they for one moment cease to pursue their selfish desires. According to the tradition, Mufaddal asked Sādiq saying: "What of the sign of His manifestation, O my master?" He made reply: "In the year sixty, His Cause shall be made manifest, and His Name shall be proclaimed." How strange! Notwithstanding these explicit and manifest references these people have shunned the Truth.⁴⁹⁵

Pay attention to how Bahā'u'llāh labels the Shias as unmindful selfish shunners of truth because they do not believe in his forged and distorted narrations. He claims that in Shia narrations, even the year of the Bāb's appearance has been mentioned and he quotes the year 60

⁴⁹⁵ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitāb-i-Īqān*, pp. 253–254.

referring to the year 1260 AH. The only hadith that is similar to this in the Shia scripture is the hadith in volume 53 of *Biḥār al-anwār* under the chapter titled: “What Occurs When he Appears According to What Mufaḍḍal ibn Umar Has Narrated.” The hadith starts by Mufaḍḍal asking Imam al-Ṣādiq that “Is there an apparent time (for the appearance) of the assigned awaiting Mahdi?” The Imam then gives a negative answer and in contrary to what Bahā’u’llāh claims, does not mention any date.

In the following table we have compared the original and forged narration with each other. Since the original narration is fairly long, only the relevant section has been mentioned. We have underlined the two sections that are very similar to the original narration.

Īqān version	Shoghi’s Translation	Original narration	Translation of original narration
حديث في المفضل "سئل عن الصادق فكيف يا مولاي في ظهوره؟ فقال عليه السلام: في سنة الستين يظهر أمره و يعلمو ذكره".	According to the tradition, Mufaḍḍal asked Ṣādiq saying: “What of the sign of His manifestation, O my master?” He made reply: “In the year sixty, His Cause shall be made manifest, and His Name shall be proclaimed”.	عَنِ الْمُفَضَّلِ بْنِ عُمَرَ قَالَ سَأَلْتُ سَيِّدِي الصَّادِقَ ع هَلْ لِلْمَأْمُورِ الْمُتَنَظَّرِ الْمَهْدِيِّ ع مِنْ وَقْتٍ مُوقَّتٍ يَعْلَمُهُ النَّاسُ فَقَالَ حَاشَ لِلَّهِ أَنْ يُوقَّتَ ظُهُورُهُ يَوْقَتَ . . . قَالَ الْمُفَضَّلُ: "يَا مُوَلَايَ فَكَيْفَ بَدْءَ ظُهُورِ الْمَهْدِيِّ ع وَ إِلَيْهِ التَّسْلِيمُ" قَالَ ع "يَا مُفَضَّلُ يَظْهَرُ فِي شُبْهَةِ لَيْسَتَيْنِ فَيَعْلَمُو ذِكْرَهُ وَ يَظْهَرُ أَمْرُهُ"	From Mufaḍḍal ibn Umar who said, “I asked my Master (Imam) Ṣādiq is there an appointed time (for the appearance) of the assigned waiting Mahdi that the people know about?” He replied, “God forbid, that He appoint a time for his appearance . . .” Mufaḍḍal said, “How will the beginning of his appearance be and how will (they) submit to him?” He replied, “O Mufaḍḍal, he will appear during (a great) doubt to dispel it. Then his name will be proclaimed and his cause shall be made manifest.”⁴⁹⁶

⁴⁹⁶ Al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār* (Beirut: Mu’assissat al-Wafā, 1404 AH), vol. 53, p.1–3.

Do Baha'is expect non-Baha'is to have faith in someone who forges scripture? The next narration:

For instance, mention of the sorrows, the imprisonment and afflictions inflicted upon that Essence of divine virtue hath been made in the former traditions. In the “Bihār” it is recorded: “In our Qā’im there shall be four signs from four Prophets, Moses, Jesus, Joseph, and Muḥammad. The sign from Moses, is fear and expectation; from Jesus, that which was spoken of Him; from Joseph, imprisonment and dissimulation; from Muḥammad, the revelation of a Book similar to the Qur’ān.” Notwithstanding such a conclusive tradition, which in such unmistakable language hath foreshadowed the happenings of the present day, none hath been found to heed its prophecy, and methinks none will do so in the future.⁴⁹⁷

In this section Bahā’u’llāh explicitly mentions that he is narrating from the book *Biḥār (al-anwār)*. In the book of *Biḥār*, there are a number of narrations that show a meaning similar to the above tradition. We have mentioned and compared them all in the table below:

	Arabic text	Translation
<i>Īqān</i>	إِنَّ فِي قَائِمِنَا أَرْبَعَ عِلَامَاتٍ مِنْ أَرْبَعَةِ نَبِيِّ مُوسَى وَ عِيسَى وَ يُوسُفَ وَ مُحَمَّدٍ. أَمَّا الْعِلَامَةُ مِنْ مُوسَى الْخَوْفُ وَ الْإِنْتِظَارُ. وَ أَمَّا الْعِلَامَةُ مِنْ عِيسَى مَا قَالُوا فِي حَقِّهِ. وَ الْعِلَامَةُ مِنْ يُوسُفَ السَّجْنُ وَ التَّقِيَّةُ. وَ الْعِلَامَةُ مِنْ مُحَمَّدٍ يَظْهَرُ بِأَثَارٍ مِثْلِ الْقُرْآنِ.	In our Qā’im there shall be four signs from four Prophets, Moses, Jesus, Joseph, and Muḥammad. The sign from Moses, is fear and expectation; from Jesus, that which was spoken of Him; from Joseph, imprisonment and dissimulation; from Muḥammad, the revelation of a Book similar to the Qur’ān.

⁴⁹⁷ Bahā’u’llāh, *The Kitāb-i-Īqān*, p. 254.

Bihār al- anwār (51:216)	فِي صَاحِبِ هَذَا الْأَمْرِ أَرْبَعُ سُنَنٍ مِنْ أَرْبَعَةِ أَنْبِيَاءَ سُنَّةٌ مِنْ مُوسَى وَ سُنَّةٌ مِنْ عِيسَى وَ سُنَّةٌ مِنْ يُوسُفَ وَ سُنَّةٌ مِنْ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَوَاتُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِمْ فَأَمَّا مِنْ مُوسَى فَخَائِفٌ يَتَرَقَّبُ وَ أَمَّا مِنْ يُوسُفَ فَالسَّجْنُ وَ أَمَّا مِنْ عِيسَى فَيُقَالُ إِنَّهُ مَاتَ وَ لَمْ يَمُتْ وَ أَمَّا مِنْ مُحَمَّدٍ ص فَالسَّيْفُ	The owner of this affair (meaning the Mahdi) will have four customs from four Prophets: a custom from Moses, a custom from Jesus, a custom from Joseph, and a custom from Muḥammad, Allah's Blessings be upon them. The custom (from Moses) is that he will be in a state of insecurity/fright and he will be awaiting, the custom from Joseph is prison, the custom from Jesus is that it will be said he has died but he hasn't, and the custom from Muḥammad is the sword.
Bihār al- anwār (51:218)	فِي صَاحِبِ الْأَمْرِ سُنَّةٌ مِنْ مُوسَى وَ سُنَّةٌ مِنْ عِيسَى وَ سُنَّةٌ مِنْ يُوسُفَ وَ سُنَّةٌ مِنْ مُحَمَّدٍ ص فَأَمَّا مِنْ مُوسَى فَخَائِفٌ يَتَرَقَّبُ وَ أَمَّا مِنْ عِيسَى فَيُقَالُ فِيهِ مَا قِيلَ فِي عِيسَى وَ أَمَّا مِنْ يُوسُفَ فَالسَّجْنُ وَ التَّقْيُّهُ وَ أَمَّا مِنْ مُحَمَّدٍ ص فَالْقِيَامُ بِسِرِّهِ وَ تَبْيِينُ أَنْارِهِ ثُمَّ يَضَعُ سَيْفَهُ عَلَى عَاتِقِهِ ثَمَانِيَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَ لَا يَزَالُ يَقْتُلُ أَعْدَاءَ اللَّهِ حَتَّى يَرْضَى اللَّهُ	In the Owner of the Affair (meaning the Mahdi) there will be a custom from Moses, a custom from Jesus, a custom from Joseph, and a custom from Muḥammad. (The custom) from Moses is that he will be in a state of insecurity/fright and he will be awaiting, from Jesus is that it will be said about him what was said about Jesus, from Joseph is prison and dissimulation, and from Muḥammad is that he will rise with his manners and will demonstrate his works (teachings) and he will carry his sword (meaning Muḥammad's sword) on his shoulder and will kill the enemies of God for eight months until God becomes satisfied.
Bihār al- anwār (51:224)	إِنَّ فِي صَاحِبِ هَذَا الْأَمْرِ سُنَنًا مِنْ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ سُنَّةٌ مِنْ مُوسَى بْنِ عِمْرَانَ وَ سُنَّةٌ مِنْ عِيسَى وَ سُنَّةٌ مِنْ يُوسُفَ وَ سُنَّةٌ مِنْ مُحَمَّدٍ ص فَأَمَّا سُنَّتُهُ مِنْ مُوسَى فَخَائِفٌ يَتَرَقَّبُ وَ أَمَّا سُنَّتُهُ مِنْ عِيسَى فَيُقَالُ فِيهِ مَا قِيلَ فِي عِيسَى وَ أَمَّا سُنَّتُهُ مِنْ يُوسُفَ فَالسَّجْنُ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ بَيْنَهُ وَ بَيْنَ الْخَلْقِ حِجَابًا يَرُونَهُ وَ لَا يَعْرِفُونَهُ وَ أَمَّا	In the owner of this Affair are customs from the Prophets. A custom from Moses son of `Imrān, a custom from Jesus, a custom from Joseph, and a custom from Muḥammad. The custom from Moses is that he will be in a state of insecurity/fright, the custom from Jesus is that it will be said about him what was said about Jesus, from Joseph is a veil that

	سُنَّتُهُ مِنْ مُحَمَّدٍ ص فَيَهْتَدِي بِهُدَاؤِهِ وَ يَسِيرُ بِسِيرَتِهِ	God will put between him and the people so that they will see him but they will not recognize him, and the custom from Muḥammad is that he will guide using his guidance and will act by his manners.
Bihār al-anwār (52:347)	فِي صَاحِبِ هَذَا الْأَمْرِ شَبَهُ مِنْ أَرْبَعَةِ أَنْبِيَاءَ شَبَهُ مِنْ مُوسَى وَ شَبَهُ مِنْ عِيسَى وَ شَبَهُ مِنْ يُوسُفَ وَ شَبَهُ مِنْ مُحَمَّدٍ ص فَقُلْتُ وَ مَا شَبَهُ مُوسَى قَالَ خَائِفٌ يَتَرَقَّبُ قُلْتُ وَ مَا شَبَهُ عِيسَى فَقَالَ قِيلَ فِيهِ مَا قِيلَ فِي عِيسَى قُلْتُ فَمَا شَبَهُ يُوسُفَ قَالَ السَّجْنُ وَ الْعَيْبَةُ قُلْتُ وَ مَا شَبَهُ مُحَمَّدٍ ص قَالَ إِذَا قَامَ سَارَ بِسِيرَةِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ص إِلَّا أَنَّهُ يُبَيِّنُ آثَارَ مُحَمَّدٍ وَ يَضَعُ السَّيْفَ ثَمَانِيَةَ أَشْهُرٍ هَرْجًا هَرْجًا حَتَّى يَرْضَى اللَّهُ	“In the owner of this Affair will be similarities from four Prophets. A similarity with Moses, a similarity with Jesus, a similarity with Joseph, and a similarity with Muḥammad.” (The narrator says) I asked, “What is the similarity with Moses?” He replied, “He will be in a state of insecurity/fright.” I asked, “What is the similarity with Jesus?” He replied, “It will be said about him what was said about Jesus.” I asked, “What is the similarity with Joseph?” He replied, “Prison and occultation.” I asked, “What is the similarity with Muḥammad?” He replied, “When he rises he will act by the manners of the Messenger of God except that he will demonstrate Muḥammad’s teachings and he will slaughter with the sword for eight months until God becomes satisfied.

What Bahā’u’llāh claims is a mixture of the aforementioned hadiths with many distortions. The most important false statement that Bahā’u’llāh puts forward is this: “from Muḥammad, the revelation of a Book similar to the Qur’ān.” In none of the aforementioned hadiths was there anything slightly similar to this claim and what the hadiths had mentioned was that he would demonstrate Muhammad’s teachings and would guide using his guidance. Why would Bahā’u’llāh make up such words and claim the Mahdi would reveal a book similar to the Quran? Because as we previously showed, the Bāb had used verses of the Quran

to make up the *Qayyūm al-Asmā'* and it would have been a very positive point if a narration existed that had said the Mahdī would reveal “a Book similar to the Qur’ān”! The next narration:

Thus hath Ṣādiq, son of Muḥammad, spoken: “God verily will test them and sift them.”⁴⁹⁸

Īqān version	Original narration
این است که صادق بن محمد می فرماید: و الله لیمحصن و الله لیغربلن	عَنْ أَبِي بَصِيرٍ قَالَ سَمِعْتُ أَبَا جَعْفَرٍ مُحَمَّدَ بْنَ عَلِيٍّ ع يَقُولُ وَاللَّهِ لَتُمَيِّزَنَّ وَاللَّهِ لَتُمَحِّصَنَّ وَاللَّهِ لَتُغَرِّبَنَّ
Thus hath Ṣādiq, <u>son of Muḥammad</u> , spoken: “God verily will test <u>them</u> and sift them.”	From Abū Baṣīr who said I heard Abū Jafar <u>Muḥammad the son of `Alī</u> say, “By God <u>you</u> will be separated, by God <u>you</u> will be screened out, by God <u>you</u> will be sifted.” ⁴⁹⁹

The next narration:

Īqān version	Original narration
لِكُلِّ عِلْمٍ سَبْعُونَ وَجْهًا وَ لَيْسَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ إِلَّا وَاحِدٌ وَ إِذَا قَامَ الْقَائِمُ يَبَيِّتُ بَاقِيَ الْوُجُوهِ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ	الْعِلْمُ سَبْعَةٌ وَ عِشْرُونَ حَرْفًا فَجَمِيعُ مَا جَاءَتْ بِهِ الرُّسُلُ حَرْفَانِ فَلَمْ يَعْرِفِ النَّاسُ حَتَّى الْيَوْمِ غَيْرَ الْحَرْفَيْنِ فَإِذَا قَامَ قَائِمُنَا أَخْرَجَ الْخَمْسَةَ وَ الْعِشْرِينَ حَرْفًا فَبَيَّنَّهَا فِي النَّاسِ وَ صَمَّ إِلَيْهَا الْحَرْفَيْنِ حَتَّى يَبَيَّنَّهَا سَبْعَةٌ وَ عِشْرِينَ حَرْفًا
Every knowledge hath seventy meanings, of which one only is known amongst the people. And when the Qā'im shall arise, He shall reveal unto men all that which remaineth.	Knowledge is twenty-seven words and all that the Prophets have brought are two (of these words) and until now, the people know not but two of these words. When our Qa'im (the Mahdi) rises he will reveal (the remaining) twenty five words and he will distribute them amongst the people and will supplement to them the two other words, until he distributes the twenty seven words. ⁵⁰⁰

⁴⁹⁸ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitāb-i-Īqān*, p. 255.

⁴⁹⁹ Al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, vol. 52, p. 114.

⁵⁰⁰ Al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, vol. 52, p. 336.

What is amazing is that even though it is explicitly mentioned in this narration that when the Qa'im rises he will reveal all the remaining meanings, the Bāb died without this prophecy being fulfilled. What was Bahā'u'llāh thinking when he was citing this narration to prove the Bāb's claims? In no way does he fit the criterion presented in this narration, even the distorted version. Next narration:

Īqān version	Original narration
نَحْنُ نَتَكَلَّمُ بِكَلِمَةٍ وَ نُرِيدُ مِنْهَا إِحْدَى وَسَبْعِينَ وَجْهًا وَلَنَا لِكُلِّ مِنْهَا الْمَخْرُجُ.	إِنَّا لَنَتَكَلَّمُ بِالْكَلِمَةِ لَهَا سَبْعُونَ وَجْهًا لَنَا مِنْ كُلِّهَا الْمَخْرُجُ
We speak one word, and by it we intend <u>one and seventy meanings</u> ; each one of these meanings <u>we can explain</u> .	We speak one word that has <u>seventy meanings</u> and we <u>intend all those</u> (meanings). ⁵⁰¹

The distortions and Bahā'u'llāh's forgeries are evident in these narrations. These were only narrations from the last three pages of the book.

Another important hadith that Bahā'u'llāh has distorted and deserves special attention is:

Have they not heard the well-known tradition: “When the Qa'im riseth, that day is the Day of Resurrection?”⁵⁰²

This narration has been forged to justify the claims made by the Bāb about the day of resurrection being the day of the appearance of the Bāb. Bahā'u'llāh claims this is a “well-known tradition” but it is completely made up and does not exist in the Shia hadith corpus.

These hadiths show that the UHJ's justifications about why the numerous errors of the *Īqān* were corrected by Bahā'u'llāh are baseless

⁵⁰¹ Al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, vol. 2, p. 198.

⁵⁰² Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitāb-i-Īqān*, p. 144.

and the only purpose they have is to hide the truth. Why did he correct verses of the Quran and the grammatical errors but left intact the forged narrations that no one knew exactly where he had cited from? Why did he only correct the obvious errors that anyone could point out? And we ask again, why did this supposedly infalible manifestation make these mistakes, errors, and deliberate forgeries in the first place? The answers are obvious.

As a side-note, this is what Shoghi says about the book of *Īqān*:

Foremost among the priceless treasures cast forth from the billowing ocean of Bahā'u'llāh's Revelation ranks the Kitāb-i-Īqān (Book of Certitude), revealed within the space of two days and two nights, in the closing years of that period (1278 A.H.—1862 A.D.)⁵⁰³

Shoghi fixes the date the *Īqān* was written to the year 1278 AH. Here is the interesting part, Bahā'u'llāh refers to the year 1280 AH in the book of *Īqān*, p. 172:

Twelve hundred and eighty years have passed since the dawn of the Muḥammadan Dispensation.

How can Shoghi claim that the book of *Īqān* was written in 1278 whilst Bahā'u'llāh refers to 1280 in the book. Maybe—in contrary to what Baha'is preach—the book wasn't finished in two days and two nights, and it was finished in two years (1278–1280)?

The answer to this question is not important because there is a greater fallacy on behalf of Bahā'u'llāh within these words. The Islamic calendar started 13 years⁵⁰⁴ after the “the dawn of the Muḥammadan Dispensation” when Prophet Muḥammad migrated from the city of

⁵⁰³ Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes by*, p. 138.

⁵⁰⁴ This number is some time erroneously said to be 10 instead of 13.

Mecca to Medina. Thus, when Bahā'u'llāh says 1280 years have passed since the dawn of the “Muḥammadan Dispensation” he is saying: the year I am writing these words in is: 1280 - 13 = 1267.

Shoghi says the book was written in 1278 AH, whilst Bahā'u'llāh mentions the year 1267. So, either Shoghi made a mistake in dating the *Īqān*, or Bahā'u'llāh didn't know that the Islamic calendar didn't start from the *dawn of the Muḥammadan Dispensation*. We'll leave it up to the readers to figure out whose infallibility and knowledge we must question: Shoghi, Bahā'u'llāh, or both?

c- `Abdu'l-Bahā's Religious Knowledge

To show how much religious knowledge `Abdu'l-Bahā had, we will analyze a single book from his writings: *Muntakhabātī az makātīb ḥaḍrat `Abdu'l-Bahā*, volume 6.⁵⁰⁵ From this book we will cite the verses of the Quran that he has quoted to evaluate his knowledge on this matter. The following table shows the errors that he has made in this respect. The left column refers to the tablet number.

no.	`Abdu'l-Bahā version	Correct Version	Notes
5	و من الناس من يقول آمنا بالله و باليوم الآخر و ما هم بمؤمنين يخادعون الله و <u>رسوله</u> و ما يخدعون إلا انفسهم	و من الناس من يقول آمنا بالله و باليوم الآخر و ما هم بمؤمنين يخادعون الله و الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا و ما يخدعون إلا أنفُسَهُمْ و ما يَشْعُرُونَ (2:8–9)	'Those who believe' has been replaced with “the messenger.” `Abdu'l-Bahā then proceeds to speak about the “messengers” based on this distortion!

⁵⁰⁵ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Muntakhabātī az makātīb Ḥaḍrat `Abdu'l-Bahā* (Germany: Mu'assisiyi Maṭbū'āt Amrī Almān), vol. 6: <http://reference.bahai.org/download/swa6-fa-doc.zip> (retrieved 16/2/2014).

25	در قرآن می فرماید و لنبلونکم <u>بشيء من الخوف و الجوع و</u> <u>نقص من الأموال و الأنفس و</u> <u>الثمار فيبشّر الصّابرين(2:155)</u> . . . چنانکه می فرماید <u>اذا</u> <u>وجدوا آثروا على انفسهم و اذا</u> <u>فقدوا اشكروا الله شكراً جزياً</u> <u>هذه صفة الأبرار و سمة</u> <u>الأخيار.</u> با وجود این <u>انّ مع</u> <u>العسر يسرا (94:6)</u> یا <u>اِنَّهَا الَّذِيْنَ</u> <u>آمَنُوا لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِنْ رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ</u> <u>(39:53)</u> یا <u>بَنِي لَا تَيْأَسُوا مِنْ</u> <u>رُوحِ اللَّهِ (12:87).</u> پس باید توکل نمود و به تقوای الهی تمسک جست و <u>من يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ</u> <u>مَخْرَجاً و يَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا</u> <u>يَحْتَسِبُ (2-3:65).</u> نهایت تضرّع به ربّ جلیل می نلزم تا گشایشی حاصل گردد.	قُلْ يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِنْ رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ (39:53) يَا بَنِي أَذْهَبُوا فَتَحَسَّسُوا مِنْ يُوسُفَ وَ أَخِيهِ وَ لَا تَيْأَسُوا مِنْ رُوحِ اللَّهِ (12:87)	He starts listing verses of the Quran. I have underlined these verses and placed their address in parentheses. One of the verses he cites is virtually non-existent (shown in boldface). The first section of verse 53:39 is wrong. Sections of 12:87 have been left out.
37	احسبتم ان تدخلوا الجنة و لما يأتكم مثل الذين <u>كانوا</u> من قبلکم اصابتهم البأساء و الضرّاء	أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَأْتِكُمْ مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ مَسْتَهْزِئِينَ الْبِأْسَاءُ وَ الضَّرَّاءُ (2:214)	Three words have been distorted.
47	آية ملكه ان <u>تأتیکم</u> التّابوت فيه سکینه	آيَةُ مُلْكِهِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَكُمُ التَّابُوتُ فِيهِ سَكِينَةٌ (2:248)	The first letter of the underlined word has been distorted. This letter changes the meaning from “he” to “you”

59	كَحَبَّةٍ انْبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلٍ فِي كُلِّ سُنْبُلَةٍ مِائَةُ حَبَّةٍ وَاللَّهُ يُضَاعِفُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ	كَمَلَّ حَبَّةٌ أَنْبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلٍ فِي كُلِّ سُنْبُلَةٍ مِائَةُ حَبَّةٍ وَاللَّهُ يُضَاعِفُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ (2:261)	The first word has been dropped and the second has been distorted. This verse has also been mentioned in tablets 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, and 545 and the same mistake has been repeated in all these verses, except that in 61, 62, and 64 only the first mistake has been repeated.
119	لَا تَأْخُذْهُمْ فِي اللَّهِ لُومَةٌ لَائِمٌ	لَا يَخَافُونَ لُومَةً لَائِمٌ (5:54)	`Abdu'l-Bahā explicitly states this is from the Quran: “ <i>dar Qurān mīfarmāyad.</i> ” He has repeated this mistake in tablets 40, 120, 122,123,124, 125, 126, 127, and 128.
166	وَأَتَمَّنَاهُ بِعَشْرٍ	وَأَتَمَّنَاهَا بِعَشْرٍ (7:142)	This change is deliberate because `Abdu'l-Bahā speaks about the second word and its non-existent ‘و’ that he has added to the end and its meaning in Abjad code.
172	لَوْ كُنْتُ أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبِ لَاسْتَكْثَرْتُ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ وَمَا أَدْرِي مَاذَا يَفْعَلُ بِي وَبِكُمْ غَدًا	لَوْ كُنْتُ أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبِ لَاسْتَكْثَرْتُ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ (7:188) وَمَا أَدْرِي مَا يُفْعَلُ بِي وَبِكُمْ (46:9)	This time `Abdu'l-Bahā has attributed a verse to the Quran using the Bab's method. He has cut two sections of two different verses and has joined them together to form a

			new verse. The second verse has been quoted incorrectly and a word has also been added at the end of the newly created verse! Same non-existent verse repeated in tablets 173 and 271.
191	رضوان الله أكبر	وَ رِضْوَانٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ (9:72)	He has dropped out two words.
193	ا لم يروا يفتنون في كل عام مرة او مرتين	أَوْ لَا يَرَوْنَ أَنَّهُمْ يُفْتَنُونَ فِي كُلِّ عَامٍ مَرَّةً أَوْ مَرَّتَيْنِ (9:126)	Total distortion at beginning of verse. The distorted verse is grammatically wrong. A similarly distorted version can also be found in tablet 380.
194	و جعلنا الشمس ضياءً و جعلنا القمر نوراً	هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ الشَّمْسُ ضِيَاءً وَ الْقَمَرَ نُورًا (10:5)	Distortions and additions.
371	و انزلنا من السماء ماءً فسالنا اودية بقدرها فاحتمل السيل زبداً رابياً و مما يوقدون عليه في النار زياد مثله فاما الزبد فيذهب جفاءً و اما ما ينفع الناس فيمكث في الارض	أَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَسَالَتْ أَوْدِيَةٌ بِقَدَرِهَا فَاحْتَمَلَ السَّيْلُ زَبَدًا رَابِيًا وَ مِمَّا يُوقَدُونَ عَلَيْهِ فِي النَّارِ ابْتِغَاءَ حُلْيَةٍ أَوْ مَتَاعٍ زَبَدٌ مِثْلُهُ كَذَلِكَ يَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْحَقَّ وَ الْبَاطِلَ فَأَمَّا الزَّبَدُ فَيَذْهَبُ جُفَاءً وَ أَمَّا مَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ فَيَمْكُثُ فِي الْأَرْضِ (13:17)	First part of verse distorted and two sections completely removed.
229	مثل كلمة طيبة كشجرة طيبة اصلها ثابت و فرعها في السماء و تؤتي اكلها في كل حين	مِثْلًا كَلِمَةً طَيِّبَةً كَشَجَرَةٍ طَيِّبَةٍ أَصْلُهَا ثَابِتٌ وَ فَرْعُهَا فِي السَّمَاءِ تُؤْتِي أَكْلَهَا كُلَّ حِينٍ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهَا (14:24-25)	Three distortions. The same distortions have been repeated in tablets 227, 228, and 230. In the two latter tablets a fourth distortion exists.

249	و اخفض لهما جناح الذل و قل رب ارحمهما كما ربياني صغيراً	وَ اخْفِضْ لهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرُّحْمَةِ وَ قُلْ رَبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَانِي صَغِيرًا (17:24)	Two words have been deleted.
260	و نبعتك مقاماً محموداً	عَسَى أَنْ يَبْعَثَكَ رَبُّكَ مَقَاماً مُحْمُوداً (17:79)	Distortion of first section.
348	1-ان هذا الّا بشر مثلكم 2-افترى على الله أم به جنه 3-اذا راوك ان يتخذوك الّا هزوا ا هذا الذي بعنه الله رسولا	إِنْ نَحْنُ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِثْلُكُمْ (14:11) أَفْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَمْ بِهِ جِنَّةٌ (34:8) إِذَا رَأَوْكَ إِِنْ يَتَّخِذُونَكَ إِلَّا هُزُوًا أ هَذَا الَّذِي بَعَثَ اللَّهُ رَسُولًا (25:41)	Three distorted verses in a single tablet. The third verse has also been repeated in 309 and 347.
354	و اجعل لي لسان صدق عليا	وَ اجْعَلْ لِي لِسَانَ صِدْقٍ فِي الْآخِرِينَ (26:84) وَ جَعَلْنَا لَهُمْ لِسَانَ صِدْقٍ عَلِيًّا (19:50)	Sections of two verses joined and presented as a new verse.
390	و لقد اخذناهم بالعذاب الأدنى دون العذاب الأكبر لعلهم يرجعون	وَ لَقَدْ أَخَذْنَاهُمْ بِالْعَذَابِ فَمَا اسْتَكَانُوا لِرَجْمٍ وَ مَا يَنْصَرِعُونَ (23:76) وَ لَنَذِيقَنَّهُمْ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ الْأَدْنَى دُونَ الْعَذَابِ الْأَكْبَرِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ (32:21)	Again sections of two verses have been cut and joined as presented as another verse. This distortion has also been repeated in tablets 391, 392, 393, and 394.
410	ثم اورثنا الكتاب الذين اصطفينا منهم ظالم لنفسه و منهم مقتصد و منهم سارع الى الخيرات	ثُمَّ أَوْثَرْنَا الْكِتَابَ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَيْنَا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا فَمِنْهُمْ ظَالِمٌ لِنَفْسِهِ وَ مِنْهُمْ مُّقْتَصِدٌ وَ مِنْهُمْ سَابِقٌ بِالْخَيْرَاتِ يُأَذِّنُ اللَّهُ ذَلِكَ هُوَ	A deletion and two distortions.

		الْفَضْلُ الْكَبِيرُ (35:32)	
414	اَنَا تَطَيَّرْنَا بِكُمْ لَئِنْ لَمْ تَنْتَهُوا لَنَرْجُمَنَّكُمْ وَ لَنَمَسَّنَّكُمْ مِنَّا عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ (36:18)	اَنَا تَطَيَّرْنَا بِكُمْ لَئِنْ لَمْ تَنْتَهُوا لَنَرْجُمَنَّكُمْ وَ لَنَمَسَّنَّكُمْ مِنَّا عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ	Repeated twice in 414 and once in 415.
134	جند هنالك مهزوم من الأحزاب	جُنُودٌ مِمَّا هُنَالِكَ مَهْزُومٌ مِنَ الْأَحْزَابِ (38:11)	Word deleted. This has been repeated in 434, 435, and 437.
434	هذا هو الحق و ما بعد الحق الا الضلال	فَذَلِكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمُ الْحَقُّ فَمَاذَا بَعَدَ الْحَقِّ إِلَّا الضَّلَالُ (10:32)	Multiple distortions.
452	لا يستوى الذين يعلمون و الذين لا يعلمون	هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ (39:9)	One distortion.
455	انك ميت و هم ميئون	إِنَّكَ مَيِّتٌ وَ إِنَّهُمْ مَيِّتُونَ (39:30)	One distortion.
467	قابل التوب غافر الذنب و ان الله يغفر الذنوب جميعاً	غَافِرِ الذَّنْبِ وَ قَابِلِ التَّوْبِ (40:3) إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعاً (39:53)	Sections from two verses have been joined then presented as a new verse. Parts from the first verse have also been misplaced.
485	ما كان محمد ابا احد من رجالكم و لكنه رسول الله و خاتم النبيين	مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِنْ رِجَالِكُمْ وَ لَكِنْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَ خَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ (33:40)	One distortion.
524	كل شيء خلقناه زوجين اثنين	كُلِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَاهُ زَوْجَيْنِ (51:49) أَحْمَلٌ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ زَوْجَيْنِ اُنْتُنِ (11:40)	Mixture of two different verses presented as a new verse.
545	و يؤثرون على انفسهم ولو كانت بهم خصاصة	وَ يُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَ لَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ (59:9)	This error has also been repeated in tablet 45.

548	يا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نُودِيَ لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ فَاسْعَوْا إِلَى ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَذَرُوا الْبَيْعَ (62:9)	One word changed.
551	يَوْمَ يَغْنَى اللَّهُ كَلًّا مِنْ سَعَتِهِ وَ إِنْ يَتَفَرَّقَا يُغْنِ اللَّهُ كُلًّا مِنْ سَعَتِهِ (4:130)	The exact same distortion has been repeated in tablets 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, and 110.
203	قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِنْ أَجَرْتُمْ إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ (26:109)	Multiple distortions. This has been repeated in 355 and 356.
363	تِلْكَ بَيُوتُهُمْ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَى عُرُوشِهَا بِمَا ظَلَمُوا وَ مَا ظَلَمْنَاهُمْ وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ.	This one is a masterpiece. He has created a new verse using the beginning, middle, and ending of three different verses. This is what he says before this verse: "He has become an example of the blessed verse . . ."
394	إِنْ تُصِيبُهُمْ حَسَنَةٌ يَقُولُوا هَذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَ إِنْ تُصِيبُهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ سَقِيتُمْ هَذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِكُمْ قُلْ كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ فَمَا لَهُؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ لَا يَكَادُونَ يَفْقَهُونَ حَدِيثًا (4:78)	Two words added.

557	لن ترى في خلق الرحمن من فتور و لن ترى في خلق الرحمن من تفاوت	ما ترى في خلق الرحمن من تفاوتٍ فارجع البصر هل ترى من فُطور (67:3)	A complete shuffling of the words in the verse. Also, the word underlined has been written with the wrong spelling.
557	كَلَّا مَدَّ هَوْلًا و هَوْلًا و ما كان عطاء ربك محظورا	كَلَّا تُمَدُّ هَوْلًا و هَوْلًا مِنْ عَطَاءِ رَبِّكَ و ما كان عطاء ربك مُحْظُورًا (17:20)	Three words deleted from middle of verse.

We have not mentioned many of the distorted verses because the distortions were minor. The same distortions can be found in the many other writings of `Abdu'l-Bahā. The fact that he has repeated the exact distortions multiple times clearly shows that he had memorized the verses incorrectly. This can be further verified by the verses that he has forged by mixing up multiple verses and presenting them as new verses.

It is appropriate here to remind the UHJ what `Abdu'l-Bahā had said about Mīrzā Yaḥyā Ṣubḥi Azal:

He had written the blessed verse of the Quran “what are these statues/images that you are worshipping” (*mā hādhihī al-tamāthīl al-latī antum `alayhā* *`āḳifūn*) [and had written the last word] as *`āḳifūn* and the [text] is in the possession of Mīrzā Yaḥyā Qazwīnī. Pay attention that the leader of this group cannot make a distinction between *`āḳif* and *`āḳik* and he distorts the evident verse of the Book of God in his own handwriting!⁵⁰⁶

If a single change in a word warrants such a harsh response, then what should ones response be to the many verses we cited, which were only a handful of `Abdu'l-Bahā's distortion of the verses of the Quran.

⁵⁰⁶ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Muntakhabāt az makātib Ḥaḍrat `Abdu'l-Bahā*, vol. 6, no. 430.

The story gets even more interesting. No one probably noticed but `Abdu'l-Bahā has even distorted the current verse and has written it incorrectly: *mā hādhihī al-tamāthīl al-latī antum `alayhā `ākifūn*. The underlined word should be lahā! The Mystery of God bashes a person for misplacing two adjacent letters whilst he distorts the same verse when trying to criticizing him. The story doesn't end here. We have only mentioned the first part of the quote. `Abdu'l-Bahā continues:

This writing has been unwillingly inscribed by his pen so that it becomes evident that he is the chief of the distorters and the leader of those who are in Hell. Some of the followers of that unknown person⁵⁰⁷—even though they saw this [distortion] with their own eyes—didn't wake up and proved that they were lowly flies that followed any caller and bended with any breeze.⁵⁰⁸

How would Baha'is react if we used the exact same reasoning and words to refer to Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā the distorters, and the Baha'is who don't wake up and blindly follow them?

7- The source of the Bāb, Bahā'u'llāh, and `Abdu'l-Bahā's Knowledge

Baha'is believe that the Bab, Bahā'u'llāh, and `Abdu'l-Bahā were divinely inspired and received knowledge directly from God. For instance this is how Bahā'u'llāh claims he received divine knowledge:

Whenever We desire to quote the sayings of the learned and of the wise, presently there will appear before the face of thy

⁵⁰⁷ This is again a reference to Mīrzā Yahyā. The Arabic word used is *majhūl* which literally means *unknown* and was probably used by `Abdu'l-Bahā to degrade him, or it could be that `Abdu'l-Bahā had intended to say *jāhil* which means *ignorant*.

⁵⁰⁸ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Muntakhabāt az makātīb Ḥaḍrat `Abdu'l-Bahā*, vol. 6, no. 430.

Lord in the form of a tablet all that which hath appeared in the world and is revealed in the Holy Books and Scriptures.⁵⁰⁹

Likewise, as we already mentioned, `Abdu'l-Bahā claims:

I do not know everything. But when I need to know something, it is pictured before me.⁵¹⁰

Bahā'is claim that these figures never attended school and didn't receive education like other people. As we will show these claims are baseless.

a- The Bāb's Education

`Abdu'l-Bahā says:

It was universally admitted by the Shi'is that He had never studied in any school and had not acquired knowledge from any teacher; all the people of Shīrāz bear witness to this.⁵¹¹

`Abdu'l-Bahā's claims that "it was universally admitted by the Shi'is that He had never studied in any school," this *universal admittance* has not been verified to date and there exists no document that we know of that can even partially show this admission. On the contrary, it is nearly universally admitted by Bahā'is and non-Bahā'is alike that the Bāb had studied in school. We will present here only a few samples from the many recorded documents on this matter.

Fāḍil Māzandarānī mentions that he was taught both reading and writing at the school of Shaykh Abid.⁵¹² He also mentions that he had attended Sayyid Kāẓim Rashtī's classes in Karbalā and had taught from

⁵⁰⁹ Bahā'u'llāh, *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 149.

⁵¹⁰ Stanwood Cobb, *Memories of `Abdu'l-Bahā in In his Presence: Visits to `Abdu'l-Bahā*, p. 60.

⁵¹¹ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 25.

⁵¹² Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Tārīkh zuhūr al-Ḥaqq*, vol. 3, p. 263.

him the works of Suyūṭī and Ḥāshiyyi Mullā `Abdullāh.⁵¹³ This is further verified by two documents in which the Bāb refers to Sayyid Kāẓim as his teacher.⁵¹⁴

In another document it is narrated from Ḥājī Sayyid Jawād that:

One day I was in the Khāl's (the Bāb's uncle) house when I saw that his highness (the Bāb) returned from school while he was holding some papers. I asked him, "What are these?" He replied with a weak whisper, "These are my homework (or calligraphy practices)."⁵¹⁵

Esslemont too admits that the Bāb had received education at school:

In childhood He learned to read, and received the elementary education customary for children.⁵¹⁶

He then continues in the footnote:

On this point a historian remarks: "The belief of many people in the East, especially the believers in the Bāb (now Baha'is) was this: that the Bāb received no education, but that the Mullās, in order to lower him in the eyes of the people, declared that such knowledge and wisdom as he possessed were accounted for by the education he had received. After deep search into the truth of this matter we have found evidence to show that in childhood for a short time he used to go to the house of Shaykh Muḥammad (also known as Abid) where he was taught to read and write in Persian. It was this

⁵¹³ Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Tārīkh ṣuhūr al-Haqq*, vol. 3, pp. 200 & 437.

⁵¹⁴ See Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Asrār al-āthār khuṣūṣī*, vol. 1, p. 35 & vol. 2, pp. 61–62.

⁵¹⁵ Mīrzā Abu l-Faḍl Gulpāyḡānī and Mīrza Mīhdī Gulpāyḡānī, *Kashf al-ghitā'* (Tashkent, 1919), pp. 56–57.

⁵¹⁶ J. E. Esslemont, *Bahā'u'llāh and the New Era*, p. 13.

to which the Bāb referred when he wrote in the book of Bayān: ‘O Muḥammad, O my teacher! . . .’”

The last sentence which Esslemont has replaced with three periods refers to what the Bāb had written in the *Arabic Bayān*. We have previously cited a section of this quote:

Say O Muḥammad, my teacher. Do not hit me before my age finishes five even for a moment for my heart is very very soft. After that discipline me but not more than I can bear. If you want to hit me do not [hit me] more than five times. And do not hit me on my flesh (*lahm*) unless there is a covering over it. If you exceed [these guidelines] your wife will be illegal for you for nineteen days. If you forget and if you don’t have a companion, then you must give in charity for every beating nineteen mithqāls⁵¹⁷ of gold if you want to be faithful. And do not hit but very very softly. And you must place the children on a throne, seat, or stool because [the time they are sitting there] will not be calculated as their age and you must allow them to do what makes them happy. And you must teach me the *Shikastih*⁵¹⁸ handwriting for that is what God loves and has made the gateway to His soul . . .⁵¹⁹

Pay attention to the first sentence in which the Bāb refers to that person as his teacher, and to the sentence in which the Bāb is clearly asking the teacher to teach him: “And you must teach me the *Shikastih* handwriting.” Do these words show anything but the fact that the Bāb was schooled?

Nabīl Zarandī claims that the Bāb studied at school for five years:

⁵¹⁷ 3.6 grams.

⁵¹⁸ A form of calligraphy.

⁵¹⁹ Bāb, *Arabic Bayān*, unit 6, chapter 11.

The Bāb was six or seven years of age when He entered the school of Shaykh Abid. The school was known by the name of “Qahviyah-Awliya.” The Bāb remained five years at that school where He was taught the rudiments of Persian.⁵²⁰

To cover-up this fact, it is claimed in this book that the Bab was forced to go to school and didn’t need to be educated, although the previous examples we mentioned clearly show the contrary. It is even claimed that he had shown super-human wisdom at the school:

“ . . . Day after day He continued to manifest such remarkable evidences of superhuman wisdom as I am powerless to recount.” At last His uncle was induced to take Him away from the school of Shaykh Abid, and to associate Him with himself in his own profession. There, too, He revealed signs of a power and greatness that few could approach and none could rival.⁵²¹

The validity of the claims about the Bāb’s super human knowledge and inspirations can be verified by studying his beliefs and writings mentioned earlier in this book. As usual, Nabil Zarandī’s historical accounts go against established facts. As we previously mentioned, Nabil himself should be looked at with skepticism, because he had falsely claimed that he was the One Who God Would Make Manifest.

Anyway, what is important here is that in contrast to what `Abdu’l-Bahā claimed, the Bab had attended school.

`Abdu’l-Bahā’s challenge is even more interesting: “all the people of Shīrāz bear witness to this.” These words were uttered by `Abdu’l-Bahā between the years 1904–1906 (let us use the average 1905). The Bab

⁵²⁰ Nabīl Zarandī, *The Dawn-Breakers: Nabīl’s Narrative of the Early Days of the Bahā’ī Revelation*, p. 75 (footnote).

⁵²¹ Nabīl Zarandī, *The Dawn-Breakers: Nabīl’s Narrative of the Early Days of the Bahā’ī Revelation*, p. 76.

was born in the year 1819 and had reached the age of schooling by 1825. What `Abdu'l-Bahā is saying is this: all the people in Shiraz bear witness to what happened 80 (1905-1825 = 80) years ago! Most—if not all—the people who might have witnessed the Bab's schooling were definitely dead when `Abdu'l-Bahā had put forward this challenge. Now let us read `Abdu'l-Bahā's sentence again:

(1) It was universally admitted by the Shī'is that (2) He had never studied in any school and (3) had not acquired knowledge from any teacher; (4) all the people of Shīrāz bear witness to this.⁵²²

Is it an exaggeration to say that `Abdu'l-Bahā has uttered four lies in a single sentence?

b- Bahā'u'llāh's Education

`Abdu'l-Bahā says about his father:

As all the people of Persia know, He had never studied in any school, nor had He associated with the `ulamā or the men of learning. The early part of His life was passed in the greatest happiness. His companions and associates were Persians of the highest rank, but not learned men.⁵²³

In the Bāb's case, the witness to `Abdu'l-Bahā's claims were all the people of Shiraz, in Bahā'u'llāh's case the matter is taken to a whole new level: all the people of Iran! The falsity of this claim is obvious.

`Abdu'l-Bahā claims his father had not associated with the `Ulamā. Apparently he has forgotten that when he was exaggerating his father's knowledge elsewhere, he had mentioned that his father had in fact associated with the `Ulamā:

⁵²² `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 25.

⁵²³ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 27.

When He was only thirteen or fourteen years old He became renowned for His learning. He would converse on any subject and solve any problem presented to Him. In large gatherings He would discuss matters with the `Ulamā (leading mullās) and would explain intricate religious questions. All of them used to listen to Him with the greatest interest.⁵²⁴

In whatever meeting, scientific assembly or theological discussion He was found, He became the authority of explanation upon intricate and abstruse questions presented.⁵²⁵

The claims about Bahā'u'llāh's superior knowledge in these gatherings, are merely `Abdu'l-Bahā's claims and have not been verified to date by any external source. In these talks, the `Ulamā are basically displayed as a group of unlearned foolish men who were begging Bahā'u'llāh to answer their questions. Once again, what is important here is that in contrary to what `Abdu'l-Bahā had claimed, these quotes clearly show that Bahā'u'llāh would socialize and associate with the `Ulamā and scholars.

Yet `Abdu'l-Bahā repeatedly insists that his father had not attended school. Here is another instance:

During the period of youth the Blessed Perfection did not enter school. He was not willing to be taught. This fact is well established among the Persians of Ṭihrān.⁵²⁶

⁵²⁴ J. E. Esslemont, *Bahā'u'llāh and the New Era*, p. 48. The author claims on page 23 that he directly heard these words from `Abdu'l-Bahā: "On one occasion `Abdu'l-Bahā, the eldest son of Bahā'u'llāh, related to the writer the following particulars about His Father's early day."

⁵²⁵ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Bahā'ī World Faith—Selected Writings of Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā (Abdu'l-Bahā's Section Only)*, (US Bahā'ī Publishing Trust, 1976), p. 220.

⁵²⁶ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Bahā'ī World Faith—Selected Writings of Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā (Abdu'l-Bahā's Section Only)*, p. 220.

This time the people of Tehran are used as witnesses. These hundreds and thousands of witnesses (!) too like the people of Shiraz were all probably dead when `Abdu'l-Bahā made this claim.

In a similar quote `Abdu'l-Bahā says:

**He never attended school or college, and what little teaching
He received was given at home.⁵²⁷**

In this quote, `Abdu'l-Bahā admits that his father received education at home. We will allow Adib Taherzadeh, a member of the Universal House of Justice from 1988–2000, to tell us how Bahā'u'llāh was educated:

In Persia in the nineteenth century . . . There were two educated classes, divines and government officials, plus a small number of others . . . The second class included government officials, clerks and some merchants, who received a certain elementary education in their childhood. This consisted of reading, writing, calligraphy, the study of the Qur'ān and the works of some famous Persian poets. All this was usually accomplished within the span of a few years, after which many of them would marry, as was customary, in their late teens.

It was to this class that Bahā'u'llāh belonged. His father was a senior dignitary at the court of the Shāh and famous as a calligrapher—an art which carried with it great prestige in royal circles. Bahā'u'llāh as a child received a simple education for a brief period of time. Like His father, He excelled in calligraphy. Some specimens of His exquisite handwriting are kept in the International Bahā'ī Archives on Mount Carmel.⁵²⁸

⁵²⁷ J. E. Esslemont, *Bahā'u'llāh and the New Era*, p. 23.

⁵²⁸ Adib Taherzadeh, *The Revelation of Bahā'u'llāh*, vol. 1, pp. 18–19.

Adib Taherzadeh gives us further information elsewhere:

Bahā'u'llāh received an elementary education during His childhood in Tihran [sic]. The nobility of those days usually employed the services of a teacher at home to tutor their children. The main subjects were calligraphy, the study of the Qur'an and the works of the Persian poets. This type of schooling ended after only a few years when the child was in his early teens. Bahā'u'llāh's education did not go further than this.⁵²⁹

According to these words, the reason Bahā'u'llāh didn't go to school was because he was born in a noble family and it was customary in these families to not send their children to school. Rather they would employ a private teacher to teach their children. It is well known that the quality of teaching received from a private tutor usually far exceeds the education that one might attain in a public school.

The final witness to how Bahā'u'llāh was educated is someone who knew him from childhood and as `Abdu'l-Bahā claims, apparently reared him. This person is no one but his sister, Khānum Buzurg (also known as Shāh Sultan Khānum and `Izziye Khānum). Although she became a follower of Mīrzā Yahyā, nonetheless, she was held with high esteem and was greatly respected by `Abdu'l-Bahā. The bond between `Abdu'l-Bahā and his aunt was so strong that `Abdu'l-Bahā used these words to address her:

Do you not remember that during my childhood and infancy what devotion I had to you, and now, for the sake of the Blessed Dust (*Turbat Mubārakī*) and the Encircling Place of

⁵²⁹ Adib Taherzadeh, *The child of the covenant: A Study Guide to the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha* (Oxford: George Ronald, 2000), p. 19.

the Most High Ones (*Maṭāf Mala' A`lā*), I still have the utmost love (for you).⁵³⁰

O intelligent aunt! I swear by the Encircling Place of the Most High Ones (*Maṭāf Mala' A`lā*) that in intelligence, cognition, reason, and understanding you have distinction and superiority over those who claim they are the pole/axis of the Merciful (Lord's) world. The child that you had nurtured in your lap of love and affection had no similarity with his other brothers in any aspect and he wouldn't accept any position.⁵³¹

These words show that Khānum Buzurg had very close ties to Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā until they split up over the Bab's successorship. The words also clearly show that Khānum Buzurg possessed a very high degree of intelligence. Furthermore, the child that `Abdu'l-Bahā is referring to who she had nurtured, is most probably Bahā'u'llāh himself because he is the one that “wouldn't accept any positions.”⁵³² These statement show that the Aunt knew a fair amount about the internal affairs of Bahā'u'llāh and how he had been schooled.

There are at least five tablets from `Abdu'l-Bahā that have been addressed to her in a bid to persuade her to become a follower of

⁵³⁰ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 2, p. 180.

⁵³¹ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 2, p. 183.

⁵³² “This occasioned surprise and comment. It was frequently said: ‘How is it that a young man of such keen intelligence and subtle perception does not seek lucrative appointments? As a matter of fact every position is open to him.’ This is a historical statement fully attested by the people of Īrān. He was most generous, giving abundantly to the poor. None who came to Him were turned away. The doors of His house were open to all. He always had many guests. This unbounded generosity was conducive to greater astonishment from the fact that He sought neither position nor prominence.” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Bahā'ī World Faith—Selected Writings of Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā ('Abdu'l-Bahā's Section Only)*, pp. 220–221; “When Bahā'u'llāh was twenty-two years old, His father died, and the Government wished Him to succeed to His father's position in the Ministry, as was customary in Persia, but Bahā'u'llāh did not accept the offer.” J. E. Esslemont, *Bahā'u'llāh and the New Era*, p. 24.

Bahā'u'llāh.⁵³³ In the longest tablet,⁵³⁴ `Abdu'l-Bahā refers to her as kind (*mihrabān*), pure (*ṭayyiba*), honored (*mukrama*). It is in this tablet that he asks her to “awaken those who are asleep.”⁵³⁵ In a response to this request, she sends him a letter with the title *Ṭanbīh al-na'imīn*⁵³⁶ (Awakening the asleep) to refute his claims. It is in this letter that she explains how Bahā'u'llāh—her brother—was tutored:

The Mirzā (meaning Bahā'u'llāh), who was your father, from the beginning of his life to when he came of age—because the means were at hand and because of the gathering of the companions—was engrossed in studying and endeavored in homework⁵³⁷. He wouldn't disengage from learning the rudiments for a moment. After studying the rudiments of Arabic and literature he inclined towards the science of philosophy (*ḥikmat*) and mysticism (*'irfān*) so that he might benefit from these. It was such that he would spend most of the day and night socializing with high statured philosophers and the gatherings of mystics and Sufis. When it was blown in Seraph's Trumpet of Appearance (meaning when the Bāb made his claims), he (meaning Bahā'u'llāh) was a man who had seen most of the words and phrases of the mystics and philosophers and had heard and understood most of the signs of the appearance (of the Mahdi) . . . after returning from Badasht and after the Shaykh Ṭabarsī Fort war was over, he was engaged day and night in socializing with great Islamic scholars and followers of mysticism . . .⁵³⁸

⁵³³ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 2, pp. 162–186.

⁵³⁴ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 2, pp. 170–186.

⁵³⁵ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 2, p. 172.

⁵³⁶ This document is the only non-Baha'i source used in this book. The sections that we are citing from this document bear very close resemblance to what we mentioned from Baha'i sources.

⁵³⁷ The Farsi word used is *mashgh* which can also mean practicing calligraphy.

⁵³⁸ `Izziye Khānum (Khānum Buzurg), *Tanbīh al-nā'imīn*, pp. 4–5.

Both friend and foe, admit that Bahā'u'llāh received education and was engaged in studying and socializing with the scholars in his youth. The story doesn't end here, even Bahā'u'llāh himself admits that he used to read Islamic books when he was a child:

This oppressed one in his childhood (ṭufūliyyat) saw the war of the tribe of Qurayza in a book that belonged to (was authored by) Mullā Bāqir Majlisī, and has been sad and sorrowful ever-since.⁵³⁹

Bahā'u'llāh also says that he “has been sad and sorrowful ever-since” whilst `Abdul'-Bahā had claimed the exact opposite:

As all the people of Persia know, He had never studied in any school, nor had He associated with the `ulamā or the men of learning. The early part of His life was passed in the greatest happiness. His companions and associates were Persians of the highest rank, but not learned men.⁵⁴⁰

Bahā'u'llāh also unwittingly admits in the Ṭiqān that he would read the books of other people:

For instance, a certain man,⁵⁴¹ reputed for his learning and attainments, and accounting himself as one of the pre-eminent leaders of his people, hath in his book denounced and vilified all the exponents of true learning. This is made abundantly clear by his explicit statements as well as by his allusions throughout his book. As We had frequently heard about him, We purposed to read some of his works. Although We never felt disposed to peruse other peoples' writings, yet as some had questioned Us concerning him, We felt it

⁵³⁹ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idiy-i āsimānī*, vol. 7, p. 136.

⁵⁴⁰ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 27.

⁵⁴¹ Hājī Mīrzā Karīm Khān.

necessary to refer to his books, in order that We might answer Our questioners with knowledge and understanding. His works, in the Arabic tongue, were, however, not available, . . . We sent for the book, and kept it with Us a few days. It was probably referred to twice. The second time, We accidentally came upon the story of the “Mi’rāj”⁵⁴² . . . We noticed that he had enumerated some twenty or more sciences, the knowledge of which he considered to be essential for the comprehension of the mystery of the “Mi’rāj”.

These words clearly show that Bahā’u’llāh would read books to attain knowledge and would even refer to them to answer questions. This is while ‘Abdu’l-Bahā says the knowledge of divine figures is divine not acquired:

Since the Sanctified Realities, the supreme Manifestations of God, surround the essence and qualities of the creatures, transcend and contain existing realities and understand all things, therefore, Their knowledge is divine knowledge, and not acquired—that is to say, it is a holy bounty; it is a divine revelation.⁵⁴³

Furthermore, why would Bahā’u’llāh lie elsewhere and claim he had not read any books:

You know that we did not read the books of the people and were unaware of the sciences that they possessed.⁵⁴⁴

⁵⁴² Ascent.

⁵⁴³ ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Some Answered Questions*, pp. 157–158.

⁵⁴⁴ Bahā’u’llāh, *Majmū’ihī az alwāḥ jamāl aqdas abhā ki ba’d az kitāb Aqdas nāzil shude*. (Langenhain [Germany]: Lajniyi Nashr Āthār Amrī Bi Lisān Fārsī wa ‘Arabī), p. 89.

And why would the Baha'i administration distort these words when translating them to English:

Thou knowest full well that We perused not the books which men possess and We acquired not the learning current amongst them.⁵⁴⁵

Why would the word *qara'a* which simply means *read* be translated to *peruse* which means *read or examine thoroughly or carefully*?⁵⁴⁶ Why would we "were unaware of the sciences that they possessed" be translated to "We acquired not the learning current amongst them"? Why does the Baha'i administration insist on presenting to the World a Bahā'u'llāh that isn't the real Bahā'u'llāh?

When friend and foe and even Bahā'u'llāh himself admit that he had received education, had read the books, and had socialized with learned people, then why is there insistence by Baha'is that he was not schooled and his knowledge was Divine? The answer can be found in the Quran:

And before this you had not read any book and you do not write it by your right hand, for if it was so, the slanderers would have defamed you.⁵⁴⁷

Prophet Muḥammad, prior to becoming a Prophet, had received no schooling or education. It was for this fact that when he became Divinely Inspired by knowledge and wisdom he was not refuted as a liar who had learned the knowledge that he was uttering in school or had read it in books. It is because of this verse, that Baha'is try to display an illiterate Bāb and Bahā'u'llāh who had only attained knowledge through divine inspirations, whilst all evidence shows the contrary.

⁵⁴⁵ Bahā'u'llāh, *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 149.

⁵⁴⁶ Concise Oxford English Dictionary

⁵⁴⁷ Quran 29:48.

c- `Abdu'l-Bahā's Education

`Abdu'l-Bahā himself had received schooling in Tehran and had then been educated at home by his father and family members. We will not delve into this matter. We will only present two sources that clearly show an alternative source for many of his political views and superhuman knowledge:

Today I was reading the events in Italy and Turkey. Another war has started and the blood of wretched people is spilled for the lowliest causes.⁵⁴⁸

I read in the newspaper that even in Italy people are protesting and shouting.⁵⁴⁹

As it has been made obvious, the source of the knowledge of these figures is rooted in many places:

- 1- Education they received from school and their teachers (publicly and privately).
- 2- What they were taught by family members.
- 3- Socializing with scholars, philosophers, and mystics and Sufis⁵⁵⁰.
- 4- Reading the Quran, Islamic books, philosophical works, history⁵⁵¹ books, newspapers etc.
- 5- Reading books of literature and poetry.

Out of these five sources, we have already provided documents for four of them. The Baha'is have kindly provided us with enough

⁵⁴⁸ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Egypt), vol. 1, p. 87.

⁵⁴⁹ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Egypt), vol. 1, p. 205.

⁵⁵⁰ This can also be seen in what is narrated from his days in Kurdistan.

⁵⁵¹ The latter can be found from incorrect verbatim quotes which we previously showed that he had claimed were divine revelations. See Bahā'u'llāh, *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 144 (footnote).

documents regarding the fifth source. In a Farsi book titled *Source of Poems in Baha'i Works*⁵⁵² Dr Vahid Rafati—former director of the Research Department of the Baha'i World Center—has provided many documents in three volumes and about a thousand pages on this topic. This is what he says in the introduction of the third volume:

In the holy Baha'i works there are numerous quotes from the verses of the previous Holy Books, hadiths, sayings of the Prophets and Imams, poems from Turk, Arab, and Persian poets, and Persian and Arabic proverbs. The reality is that for the first time in the history of Divine Religions, not only the sayings of the Prophets, but the desirable thoughts and exalted emotions and expressive opinions and beliefs of prominent Arab and Persian litterateurs and mystics and even slangy mottos peculiar to the common folk have been given the honor of becoming a part of the Words of God in this Godly cycle and become widely manifest in the works of the Interpreter ('Abdu'l-Bahā) of this great manifestation.⁵⁵³

With all the errors and contradictions that we mentioned, which conclusion must we reach: that the poems and sayings of all the different groups of people that exist in the Baha'i corpus have been given the *honor* of becoming *a part of the words of God*; or the founders of this religion copied these words and presented them as words from God? Should we believe that this act is something performed *for the first time in the history of Divine Religions* or maybe divine religions are mostly devoid of quotations of this form? Dr. Rafati continues:

Whatever has been narrated from the works of the former people—whether concepts or exact quotes—in the Baha'i

⁵⁵² Vahid Rafati, *Ma'ākhiz ash'ār dar āthār Bahā'ī* (Canada: Persian Institute for Baha'i Studies, 1990, 1995, and 2000).

⁵⁵³ Vahid Rafati, *Ma'ākhiz ash'ār dar āthār Bahā'ī*, p. 3.

scripture, has made the [scripture] impressive and elegant and has phenomenally extended the meanings and concepts inscribed in the Baha'i scripture.⁵⁵⁴

If this is not a confession to the fact that the *claimed* elegance and the concepts found in Baha'i works have virtually been taken from other non-divine and divine sources, then what is it?

Dr Rafati continues:

Poetry can literarily decorate the words, make them more attractive and cause rapture, make the tone more appealing, creates a charming rhythm, and creates a sweeter echo in the perception of the soul.⁵⁵⁵

This is another confession that the *claimed* elegance and rhythm in Baha'i scripture is due to the borrowed poetry and literature therein. Rafati further admits that the poetry quoted in Baha'i literature—just like the verses of the Quran and hadith that we showed—have in many instances been quoted incorrectly. In some instances, the quoted verses have been reported in not one, but multiple incorrect forms!⁵⁵⁶

Not only these, but apparently these figures were engrossed in obtaining knowledge from all worldly means possible. This is how one Baha'i author puts it:

There are many stories in the Bahá'í community about the supernatural access to information that Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and Shoghi Effendi had. My point here is not to dispute these stories; merely to say these superhuman mechanisms do not seem to have been working at every instant. If they

⁵⁵⁴ Vahid Rafati, *Ma 'ākhiz ash`ār dar āthār Bahā'ī*, p. 3.

⁵⁵⁵ Vahid Rafati, *Ma 'ākhiz ash`ār dar āthār Bahā'ī*, p. 4.

⁵⁵⁶ Vahid Rafati, *Ma 'ākhiz ash`ār dar āthār Bahā'ī*, pp. 5–6.

had, Bahā'u'llāh would not have read newspapers, as He suggests He may have done; 'Abdu'l-Bahā and Shoghi Effendi would not have constantly written the friends asking for news; they would not have pumped visiting pilgrims for their knowledge and evaluation of places, peoples, cultures, and individuals; and Shoghi Effendi would not have had to do massive, monumental research in order to edit The Dawn-breakers or write God Passes By.⁵⁵⁷

He makes another point which further confirms that the knowledge possessed by these figures was not divine:

Further, when one examines the historical and cultural information contained in Bahā'u'llāh's writings one notes that the knowledge to which He customarily refers is information that would have been available to Him via ordinary nineteenth-century means. Bahā'u'llāh never reveals a commentary on Confucian ethics or Buddhist cosmology, neither of which would have been readily available in nineteenth-century Persian or Arabic. He does not discuss Olmec hymns or Indo-European myths, none of which are available to even twentieth-century scholars, but which must have existed and which must have contained profound statements worthy of discussion, commentary, and praise by a Manifestation of God. Bahā'u'llāh revealed in pure Persian — much to the astonishment of the Zoroastrians — but never revealed in ancient Avestan, Iran's ancestral tongue.⁵⁵⁸

⁵⁵⁷ Robert Stockman, *Revelation, Interpretation, and Elucidation in the Baha'i Writings in Scripture and Revelation*, ed. Moojan Momen (Oxford: George Ronald, 1997): http://bahai-library.com/stockman_revelation_interpretation_elucidation (retrieved 2/12/2014).

⁵⁵⁸ Robert Stockman, *Revelation, Interpretation, and Elucidation in the Baha'i Writings in Scripture and Revelation*, ed. Moojan Momen (Oxford: George Ronald, 1997): http://bahai-library.com/stockman_revelation_interpretation_elucidation (retrieved 2/12/2014).

If these figures had divine knowledge then why were all their talks and speeches based on sciences known in those days and information available to them? Amazingly, they didn't even bother to double check these sciences with the divine tablets that they claimed they had and as we showed, they committed multiple mistakes in their scientific claims and citations of Holy scripture.

Pay attention to another quote from Adib Taherzadeh:

In Persia in the nineteenth century most people were illiterate, under the domination of the clergy whom they blindly obeyed. There were two educated classes, divines and government officials, plus a small number of others. Only the religious leaders and divines, however, could be called learned. They used to spend decades of their lives applying themselves to theology, Islamic law, jurisprudence, philosophy, medicine, astronomy and, above all, the Arabic language and its literature.⁵⁵⁹

Do these sciences ring a bell: theology, Islamic law, jurisprudence, philosophy, medicine, astronomy, and Arabic literature? These are mostly the same sciences that we showed Bahā'u'llāh and 'Abdu'l-Bahā had made errors in. Why did they only speak about these sciences? Was it because the Holy Spirit had taught them these sciences and these sciences were revealed to them; or in contrary to their claim of not being schooled and not learning the sciences of those times, they had been schooled and tutored on the exact same customary sciences of Iran in the nineteenth century?

It will not be far-fetched if we claim that Bahā'u'llāh was referring to his own self and his own methods when he uttered these words:

⁵⁵⁹ Adib Taherzadeh, *The Revelation of Bahā'u'llāh*, vol. 1, pp. 18–19.

Never trust narrations and news from anybody for it has been observed that a soul⁵⁶⁰ that associated others with God and drank the blood of His loved ones—in the few years that we saw him—listened to all sciences and methods and then wrote all those down and presented them to the people and claimed to have virtues.⁵⁶¹

And a final confession from Bahā'u'llāh as to where he obtained his divine knowledge from:

There is many an utterance of the mystic seers and doctors of former times which I have not mentioned here, since I dislike the copious citation from sayings of the past; for quotation from the words of others proveth acquired learning, not the divine bestowal. Even so much as We have quoted here is out of deference to the wont of men and after the manner of the friends. Further, such matters are beyond the scope of this epistle. Our unwillingness to recount their sayings is not from pride, rather is it a manifestation of wisdom and a demonstration of grace.⁵⁶²

Bahā'u'llāh confesses that quotation from the words of others proves acquired learning not divine bestowal. Ponder on the following:

- Why would Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā cite hundreds of lines of poetry in their writings without acknowledging the original composers?⁵⁶³
- Why would Bahā'u'llāh quote verbatim⁵⁶⁴ many passages about philosophers from Muslim historians in the Tablet of

⁵⁶⁰ He is probably referring to Mīrzā Yaḥyā.

⁵⁶¹ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī* (Tehran: Mu'assisiyi Millī Maṭbū'āt Amrī, 128 B.), vol. 1, p. 42.

⁵⁶² Bahā'u'llāh, *The Seven Valleys And the Four Valleys*, p. 26.

⁵⁶³ See Vahid Rafati's *Ma'ākhiz ash'ār dar āthār Bahā'ī*.

Wisdom whilst claiming the tablet is a divine revelation from God?⁵⁶⁵

- Why would Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā refer countless times to the sayings of the learned men,⁵⁶⁶ scientists,⁵⁶⁷ and what has been written in the books?⁵⁶⁸
- Why would Bahā'u'llāh refer to books to gain knowledge.⁵⁶⁹

8- Reason Judges That One Must Practice What He Preaches

If religion must be in conformance with reason, then one would expect that the leaders of a religion too act in accordance to reason and its judgements. One of the most obvious judgments of reason is that one must practice what he preaches. This act has also been emphasized on in the Holy Books sent by God. For instance:

⁵⁶⁴ “In many of the passages that follow concerning the Greek philosophers, Bahā'u'llāh quotes verbatim from the works of such Muslim historians as Abu'l-Faḥ-i-Shāhristānā (1076–1153 A.D.) and Imādu'd-Dān Abu'l-Fidā (1273–1331 A.D.),” Bahā'u'llāh, *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 144 (footnote).

⁵⁶⁵ Bahā'u'llāh, *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 137.

⁵⁶⁶ For instance, “The learned men, that have fixed at several thousand years the life of this earth . . .” Bahā'u'llāh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 163.

⁵⁶⁷ For instance, “For instance copper can transmute into Gold but earth/soil (*turab*) does not have this possibility in actualness (*bil-fi'l*). Since the scientists have already mentioned these subjects this servant did not like to mention it comprehensively,” `Abd al-Ḥamīd Isḥrāq Khāwārī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 7, p. 44.

⁵⁶⁸ For instance, “Mention hath been made in certain books of a deluge which caused all that existed on earth,” Bahā'u'llāh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 174.

⁵⁶⁹ For instance, “This oppressed one in his childhood (*tufūliyyat*) saw the war of the tribe of Qurayza in a book that belonged to (was authored by) Mullā Bāqir Majlisī, and has been sad and sorrowful ever-since,” `Abd al-Ḥamīd Isḥrāq Khāwārī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 7, p. 136; “We purposed to read some of his works. Although We never felt disposed to peruse other peoples' writings, yet as some had questioned Us concerning him, We felt it necessary to refer to his books, in order that We might answer Our questioners with knowledge and understanding. His works, in the Arabic tongue, were, however, not available . . . We sent for the book, and kept it with Us a few days. It was probably referred to twice,” Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitāb-i-Īqān*, pp. 184–186.

O You who believe! Why do you utter what you do not do? It is greatly detested by God to utter what you do not do.⁵⁷⁰

Do you order the people to do good but forget about yourselves whilst you read the Book! Do you not use your reason!⁵⁷¹

You, then, who teach others, do you not teach yourself? You who preach against stealing, do you steal? You who say that people should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery?⁵⁷²

There are many instances in the Baha'i scripture that show that Baha'i leaders have preached what they have not practiced. Apart from the instances that we have mentioned throughout the book and are related to the twelve principles, we will mention a few other samples here:

a- Prohibition of Kissing Hands

Bahā'u'llāh writes in the Aqdas:

The kissing of hands hath been forbidden in the Book. This practice is prohibited by God, the Lord of glory and command.

This law has been completely ignored by Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā and they freely allowed anyone who wanted to kiss their hands. Here are a few examples:

"The inhabitants of the quarter in which Bahā'u'llāh had been living, and the neighbors who had gathered to bid Him farewell, came one after the other," writes an eye-witness,

⁵⁷⁰ Quran 61:2-3

⁵⁷¹ Quran 2:44.

⁵⁷² Romans 2:21-22 (New International Version).

“with the utmost sadness and regret to kiss His hands and the hem of His robe, expressing meanwhile their sorrow at His departure . . .”⁵⁷³

Until it was time to leave and he kissed (‘Abdu’l-Bahā’s) blessed hand.⁵⁷⁴

With great sincerity one would kiss (‘Abdu’l-Bahā’s) blessed hand and another would hold his skirt.⁵⁷⁵

There is a video from ‘Abdu’l-Bahā’s journey in America that clearly shows women kissing his hand:



Figure 6: Portions of a movie in which women kiss ‘Abdu’l-Bahā’s hands in America.

⁵⁷³ Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 181.

⁵⁷⁴ *Maḥmūd Zaraqānī, Badā’i’ al-āthār*, vol. 2, p. 31.

⁵⁷⁵ *Maḥmūd Zaraqānī, Badā’i’ al-āthār*, vol. 2, p. 340.

The hand kissing in America attracted so much attention that the title of an article in the newspaper, The Baltimore Sun, November 12 1912 was "Women kiss his hand". This is how it was described:

With condescension, he greeted his followers as they were presented by the interpreter, Dr. Ameer U. Farewed, a Persian and a graduate in medicine of Johns Hopkins University. "Oh, I am so glad to see you," was uttered in tones of reverence by the women as they bowed before him and kissed his wrinkled hand.⁵⁷⁶



Figure 7: Portion of a newspaper that shows women used to kiss 'Abdu'l-Bahā's hands in America.

Bahā'is try to justify these acts by claiming a specific kind of kissing was meant, or the kissing that is equal to submission has been prohibited. This whilst Bahā'u'llāh's words elsewhere show that any kind of kissing the hand is prohibited. For instance he says:

God is my witness! Had it not been in conflict with that which the Tablets of God have decreed, I would have gladly kissed

⁵⁷⁶ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/women-kiss-his-hand> (retrieved 20/1/2014)

the hands of whosoever attempted to shed my blood in the path of the Well-Beloved.⁵⁷⁷

b- Where to Bury the Dead

The Baha'i law for Burial states:

It is forbidden you to transport the body of the deceased a greater distance than one hour's journey from the city . . . The spirit of Bahā'u'llāh's law is for the deceased to be buried near where he or she dies.⁵⁷⁸

This is how the Burial was performed for the Bāb on the orders of Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā:

As observed in a previous chapter the mangled bodies of the Bāb and His fellow-martyr, Mīrzā Muḥammad-`Alī, were removed, in the middle of the second night following their execution, through the pious intervention of Ḥājī Sulaymān Khān, from the edge of the moat where they had been cast to a silk factory owned by one of the believers of Milān, and were laid the next day in a wooden casket, and thence carried to a place of safety. Subsequently, according to Bahā'u'llāh's instructions, they were transported to Ṭīhrān and placed in the shrine of Imām-Zādiḥ Ḥasan. They were later removed to the residence of Ḥājī Sulaymān Khān himself in the Sar-Chashmih quarter of the city, and from his house were taken to the shrine of Imām-Zādiḥ Ma`ṣūm, where they remained concealed until the year 274 1284 A.H. (1867–1868), when a Tablet, revealed by Bahā'u'llāh in Adrianople, directed Mullā `Alī-Akbar-i-Shāhmīrzādī and Jamāl-i-Burūjirdī to transfer

⁵⁷⁷ Bahā'u'llāh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 102.

⁵⁷⁸ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 230.

them without delay to some other spot . . . Ḥājī Shāh Muḥammad buried the casket beneath the floor of the inner sanctuary of the shrine of Imām-Zādiḥ Zayd, where it lay undetected until Mīrzā Asadu'llāh-i-Iṣfahānī was informed of its exact location through a chart forwarded to him by Bahā'u'llāh. Instructed by Bahā'u'llāh to conceal it elsewhere, he first removed the remains to his own house in Ṭihrān, after which they were deposited in several other localities such as the house of Ḥusayn-'Alīy-i-Iṣfahānī and that of Muḥammad-Karīm-i-'Aṭṭār, where they remained hidden until the year 1316 (1899) A.H., when, in pursuance of directions issued by 'Abdu'l-Bahā, this same Mīrzā Asadu'llāh, together with a number of other believers, transported them by way of Iṣfahān, Kirmanshāh, Baghdād and Damascus, to Beirut and thence by sea to 'Akkā, arriving at their destination on the 19th of the month of Ramadān 1316 A.H. (January 31, 1899), fifty lunar years after the Bāb's execution in Tabriz.⁵⁷⁹

This one hour limit, changes to about 50 years and thousands of kilometers when applied to the Bāb.

c- Noah and the Flood: Symbolical or Reality

Shoghi tells his followers to believe in a symbolical flood and Ark in the time of Noah:

The statement in 'Seven Days of Creation' certainly cannot be considered authoritative or correct. The Ark and the Flood we believe are symbolical.⁵⁸⁰

This is while Bahā'u'llāh clearly refers to the flood as a cause for the destruction of many historical records:

⁵⁷⁹ Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 273–274

⁵⁸⁰ Helen Bassett Hornby, *Lights of Guidance: A Bahā'ī Reference File*, chap. XLI, no. 1716.

Manifestations . . . were dispatched in the first centuries and invited the people to the truth. But because of the disturbances and changes in the world some of their names and sayings have been lost. In the books, the flood has been mentioned and in that event everything that was on earth was drowned including history records and other things. Furthermore, there have been many revolutions which have annihilated (the records) of some events . . . ⁵⁸¹

Here is the official distorted Baha'i translation that when one reads does not think he is referring to the flood:

Manifestations . . . have been sent down from time immemorial, and been commissioned to summon mankind to the one true God. That the names of some of them are forgotten and the records of their lives lost is to be attributed to the disturbances and changes that have overtaken the world. Mention hath been made in certain books of a deluge which caused all that existed on earth, historical records as well as other things, to be destroyed. Moreover, many cataclysms have occurred which have effaced the traces of many events. ⁵⁸²

⁵⁸¹ Bahā'u'llāh, *Muntakhabātī az āthār Ḥaḍrat Bahā'u'llāh*, pp. 115–116.

⁵⁸² Bahā'u'llāh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 174.



Is This Principle Correct From a Rational and Logical Perspective?

In order to analyze this principle logically and rationally, we first must determine what Baha'is mean by *reason*, and *science*?

The Meaning of Science

Abdu'l-Bahā says:

If religious beliefs contradict reason and science, then of course [they are] ignorance.⁵⁸³

Depending on the situation, Baha'i's change the meaning of science. In some places it means modern empirical science, while in others, it is used to refer to the true, divine sciences. If the Baha'i creed is being preached in a university environment, science is presented as that which has been empirically determined by modern research, observations, and experiments and it is claimed that the Baha'i creed holds a special value and importance for the sciences that universities are acquiring, and if a religion is at odds with these sciences, it is not a valid religion. Let us take a look at two examples:

Science, is the greatest virtue of the human world. Science, is eternal dignity. Science, is everlasting life . . . all of the people

⁵⁸³ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 92.

are dead and scholars are alive . . . thus I have utmost delight that I am present in this university . . . for science is light and ignorance is darkness.⁵⁸⁴

The highest virtue of the human world is science for it is the discovery of the truth of things. I have utmost delight today that we see ourselves in this center of knowledge, in this college whose fame has reached the horizons. For the best of the groups that gather in the world are the group of the scholars and the best of the centers in the human world are the centers of science and technology.⁵⁸⁵

When critics criticize the *necessity of the conformity of religion with human science* by pointing out the fact that science is always in a state of change, it is claimed that what is meant by science is the true, divine science.⁵⁸⁶

This problem is much bigger in the sphere of the social sciences and humanities. The scientists of these sciences have rarely reached a consensus on any matter. In this domain, different movements and schools exists that are completely opposed to one another. Now the question is which one of these movements is the Baha'i faith in accordance with?

Is the Baha'i creed in accordance with whatever mankind contemplates in this era? Is whatever that occurs to the mind of 21st century man in accordance to the Baha'i creed?

When these criticisms are made, Baha'i's turn back from their claims that their religion is up to date. They say that if at a time there is

⁵⁸⁴ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, pp. 83–84.

⁵⁸⁵ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 81.

⁵⁸⁶ “What is meant by knowledge, is Divine Knowledge, and what is meant by reason is the perfect Divine Reason that religion must be in accord to,” `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 91 (citing `Abdu'l-Bahā).

disagreement between science and religion, in that matter religion is definitely correct and the inconsistency is due to our error.⁵⁸⁷

Furthermore, in universities and colleges, Baha'is never refer to the fact that they believe all people are ignorant but Baha'is and no non-Baha'i is to be regarded as knowledgeable.⁵⁸⁸

The Meaning of Reason

`Abdu'l-Bahā says:

Unquestionably there must be agreement between true religion and science. If a question be found contrary to reason faith and belief in it are impossible, and there is no outcome but wavering and vacillation.⁵⁸⁹

He also iterates that what is meant by reason is the complete Divine Reason:

What is meant by knowledge, is Divine Knowledge, and what is meant by reason is the perfect Divine Reason that religion must be in accord to.⁵⁹⁰

One would wonder, what is the use of the perfect Divine Reason when humankind does not possess it and what humans possess—according to `Abdu'l-Bahā—are apparently some kind of inferior reasons that are susceptible to error? `Abdu'l-Bahā too asks this question:

⁵⁸⁷ “One of the fundamental teachings of Bahā'u'llāh is that true science and true religion must always be in harmony. Truth is one, and whenever conflict appears it is due, not to truth, but to error,” J. E. Esslemont, *Bahā'u'llāh and the New Era*, p. 197.

⁵⁸⁸ We mentioned some relevant quotes at the beginning of the Second Perspective in chapters 1 and 4.

⁵⁸⁹ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 181.

⁵⁹⁰ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 91(citing `Abdu'l-Bahā).

Every religion which is not in accordance with established science is superstition. Religion must be reasonable. If it does not square with reason, it is superstition and without foundation. It is like a mirage, which deceives man by leading him to think it is a body of water. God has endowed man with reason that he may perceive what is true. If we insist that such and such a subject is not to be reasoned out and tested according to the established logical modes of the intellect, what is the use of the reason which God has given man?⁵⁹¹

The contradiction in these sentences is clear: In one place it is claimed God has endowed man with reason so he may perceive what is true, but when that same reason that is the tool for perceiving the truth, finds a contradiction in Baha'i beliefs, then reason is no longer a tool in the hands of men but a Divine apparatus that men lack:

If religious belief and doctrine is at variance with reason, it proceeds from the limited mind of man and not from God.⁵⁹²

It can be summarized that:

Baha'is claim that Baha'ism is a unique faith and is consistent with the modern age, and in accordance with science and reason. When it is asked how the Baha'i creed can be in conformity to human sciences while these sciences are constantly changing and different scientific theories invalidate each other as time passes by, they respond that what they mean by this principle is the conformity of religion with Divine Sciences. When scientific contradictions in their religion are pointed to, the same answer is given and it is claimed that science will soon catch up with our teachings. When unreasonable texts and orders are pointed to in the Baha'i scripture, the response given is that these orders are in conformity with Divine Reason not the limited human

⁵⁹¹ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 65.

⁵⁹² `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 231.

reason. So then what is all this proselytizing and evangelization for? What religion is there that does not claim to be in accordance to Divine Science and Reason? If science and reason are the criterion for finding the truth, then what use is this criterion when man lacks it and its true form is only in the hands of God?

It is up to you to draw your own conclusions!





**Bahā'u'llāh:
“Contradiction has and will not
ever have a way in the
sanctified realm of the Divine
Manifestations.”⁵⁹³**

⁵⁹³Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 126.

1. Is the Principle "Religion Must Be in Conformity with Science and Reason" New?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: This principle is a new vista proclaimed by Bahā'u'llāh.⁵⁹⁴

**`Abdu'l-Bahā:** The first Shia Muslim Imam, Imam `Alī, has said that religion must be in accord with science.⁵⁹⁵

2. If Religion Contradicts Reason Which One Is Incorrect?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: If religion contradicts science and reason, that religion is an illusion.⁵⁹⁶

Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā: If religion contradicts science and reason, the human mind is to be blamed.⁵⁹⁷

⁵⁹⁴ "Furthermore, He proclaims that religion must be in harmony with science and reason. If it does not conform to science and reconcile with reason, it is superstition. Down to the present day it has been customary for man to accept a religious teaching, even though it was not in accord with human reason and judgment. The harmony of religious belief with reason is a new vista which Bahā'u'llāh has opened for the soul of man," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 455.

⁵⁹⁵ "`Alī, the son-in-law of Muḥammad, said: 'That which is in conformity with science is also in conformity with religion.' Whatever the intelligence of man cannot understand, religion ought not to accept. Religion and science walk hand in hand, and any religion contrary to science is not the truth," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Paris Talks*, p. 131.

⁵⁹⁶ "If religious matters are against science and reason, they are illusions," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 147.

⁵⁹⁷ "Sometimes, a weak intellect cannot perceive [a concept]. In such a case, intellect has a shortcoming by being imperfect, not religion," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p.93 (citing `Abd al-Bahā); "One of the fundamental teachings of Bahā'u'llāh is that true science and true religion must always be in harmony. Truth is one, and whenever conflict appears it is due, not to truth, but to error," J. E. Esslemont, *Bahā'u'llāh and the New Era*, p.197.

3. Is Science Good or Bad?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: The difference between man and animal is science and reason.⁵⁹⁸ “The highest virtue of the human world is science for it is the discovery of the truth of things.”⁵⁹⁹

The Bāb: Teaching anything but my books is forbidden.⁶⁰⁰ All non-Bābī books must be burned.⁶⁰¹

4. Is Bābism a True Religion: Books and Teaching

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: “If religious matters are against science and reason, they are illusions.”⁶⁰²

The Bāb: Do not teach but my books,⁶⁰³ do not argue but by my words,⁶⁰⁴ do not own but my writings.⁶⁰⁵

⁵⁹⁸ “[That which causes] distinction between humans and animals is reason and science. If religious beliefs contradict reason and science, then of course [they are] ignorance,” ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 92.

⁵⁹⁹ ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 81.

⁶⁰⁰ ‘Alī Muḥammad Bāb, *Farsi Bayān*, unit 4, chap. 10.

⁶⁰¹ “The utterance of the [book or religion] of Bayān in the day of the appearance of his Highness A’lā (meaning the Bāb) was to behead, burn the books, destroy the monuments, and massacre [everyone] but those who believed [in the Bāb’s religion] and verified it,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt: 1330 AH), vol. 2, p. 266; “The unbelievers and the faithless have set their minds on four things: first, the shedding of blood [beheading]; second, the burning of books; third, the shunning of the followers of other religions; fourth, the extermination of other communities and groups. Now however, through the strengthening grace and potency of the Word of God these four barriers have been demolished, these clear injunctions have been obliterated from the Tablet and brutal dispositions have been transmuted into spiritual attributes.” Bahā’u’llāh, *Tablets of Bahā’u’llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 91.

⁶⁰² ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 147.

⁶⁰³ “Teaching a book other than the book of *Bayān* is not allowed unless it has in it what is related to speculative theology (*kalām*). [Teaching] those [sciences] which have been invented such as logic (*manṭiq*), principles of jurisprudence (*uṣūl*), and other [sciences], are not permitted for those who have faith,” The Bāb, *Farsi Bayān*, unit 4, chap. 10.

⁶⁰⁴ “Do not argue but by the verses [*of the Bayān*] for whoever does not argue using them has no knowledge, and do not mention any miracle [but this book]!” The Bāb, *Arabic Bayān*, unit 6, chapter 8.

5. Is Bābism a True Religion: Destroy Anyone and Everything Non-Bābī

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: “If religious matters are against science and reason, they are illusions.”⁶⁰⁶

The Bāb: Destroy anyone and anything non-Bābī.⁶⁰⁷

⁶⁰⁵ “Chapter six of the sixth unit which is about destroying all books but those that have been written or will be written about this Order (meaning the Bab’s creed),” The Bāb, *Farsi bayān*, unit 6, chap. 6.

⁶⁰⁶ ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 147.

⁶⁰⁷ “The utterance of the [book or religion] of Bayān in the day of the appearance of his Highness A’lā (meaning the Bāb) was to behead, burn the books, destroy the monuments, and massacre [everyone] but those who believed [in the Bāb’s religion] and verified it,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt: 1330 AH), vol. 2, p. 266; “The unbelievers and the faithless have set their minds on four things: first, the shedding of blood [beheading]; second, the burning of books; third, the shunning of the followers of other religions; fourth, the extermination of other communities and groups. Now however, through the strengthening grace and potency of the Word of God these four barriers have been demolished, these clear injunctions have been obliterated from the Tablet and brutal dispositions have been transmuted into spiritual attributes.” Bahā’u’llāh, *Tablets of Bahā’u’llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 91; “You must destroy everything [non-Bābī?] that you have written and you must argue using the *Bayān*,” The Bāb, *Arabic Bayān*, unit 6, chap. 6. “Chapter six of the sixth unit which is about destroying all books but those that have been written or will be written about this Order (meaning the Bab’s creed),” The Bāb, *Farsi bayān*, unit 6, chap. 6; “The fifth chapter of the fifth unit which is about the decree of taking the property of those who do not believe in [the religion] of Bayan and giving it back if they become believers in this religion, except in the lands where taking [property] is not possible,” The Bāb, *Farsi Bayan*, unit 5, chap. 5; “Chapter six of the sixth unit which is about destroying all books but those that have been written or will be written about this Order (meaning the Bab’s creed),” The Bāb, *Farsi bayān*, unit 6, chap. 6; “The sixteenth chapter of the seventh unit which is about [the decree] that all rulers who rise who are [followers] of the religion of the *Bayan*, leave no-one in their land who is not a follower of this religion. This is compulsory upon all the people too,” The Bāb, *Farsi Bayān*, unit 7, chap. 16; “He who acquires a position of ruling is a manifestation of God’s wrath and if possible for him, must not leave [alive] on earth anyone but the Bābīs!” The Bāb, *Lauḥ haykal al-dīn*, unit 4, chap. al-Bahā; “Make everyone accept the [religion of] Bayān and do not accept from them jewels that would amount to the whole earth as payment so that they are excused from becoming Bābīs,” The Bāb, *Lauḥ haykal al-dīn*, unit 5, chap. al-Lād.

6. Is Bābism a True Religion: Food and Medicine

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: “If religious matters are against science and reason, they are illusions.”⁶⁰⁸

The Bāb: Do not buy, sell, or use medicine. Not drinking donkey milk will make you pious.⁶⁰⁹

7. Is Bābism a True Religion: Guidelines for Going on Journeys

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: “If religious matters are against science and reason, they are illusions.”⁶¹⁰

The Bāb: “Do not go on journeys but [1] for the sake of God and [2] if you are going to (visit) He Whom God Shall Make manifest or [3] (visiting) those who have faith in him. And He orders you to take the leaves of trees and eat them [!] and walk above [!] the earth with your legs!”⁶¹¹

⁶⁰⁸ ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 147.

⁶⁰⁹ “You must not possess, buy, sell, or use medicine, intoxicants, and higher than those!” The Bāb, *Arabic Bayān*, unit 9, chap. 8; “Do not drink donkey milk! And do not load it and other animals with what they cannot bear. This is what God has made incumbent upon you so that you may become pious!” The Bāb, *Arabic Bayān*, unit 10, chap. 15.

⁶¹⁰ ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 147.

⁶¹¹ The Bāb, *Lauḥ haykal al-dīn*, unit 6, chap. al-Badī.

8. Is Bābism a True Religion: Some Miscellaneous Laws

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: “If religious matters are against science and reason, they are illusions.”⁶¹²

The Bāb: Renew your books every 202 years by throwing them in water or giving them to someone else.⁶¹³ If you truly believe in God you must not ride cows or make them carry loads.⁶¹⁴ “Do not wear clothes that will frighten children!”⁶¹⁵ “Do not buy or sell the four elements (earth, air, fire, and water)!”⁶¹⁶

9. Does the Quran Say Everything Is Living?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: It says in the Qur’an that all things are living.⁶¹⁷

Qur’an: “We made from water everything living.”⁶¹⁸

⁶¹² ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 147.

⁶¹³ “In every dispensation, God loves that everything becomes renewed. It is because of this that he has ordered that once in every 202 years every person renew what books he possesses by either putting them in fresh water or bestowing them to someone else!” The Bāb, *Farsi Bayān*, unit 7, chap. 1;

⁶¹⁴ “Do not ride cows and do not put loads on them if you (truly) believe in God and His signs,” The Bāb, *Arabic Bayān*, unit 10, chap. 15.

⁶¹⁵ The Bāb, *Arabic Bayān*, unit 7, chap. 6.

⁶¹⁶ The Bāb, *Arabic Bayān*, unit 9, chap. 11.

⁶¹⁷ “As to the existence of spirit in the mineral: it is indubitable that minerals are endowed with a spirit and life according to the requirements of that stage. This unknown secret, too, hath become known unto the materialists⁶¹⁷ who now maintain that all beings are endowed with life, even as He saith in the Qur’ān, ‘All things are living,’” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Tablet to August Forel*, p. 9.

⁶¹⁸ Quran, 21:30

10. The Criterion for Being Knowledgeable and Reasonable in the Baha'i Creed?

Esslemont (Baha'i author): "The religious world owes a debt of gratitude to the men of science who helped to tear such worn-out creeds and dogmas to tatters and allowed the truth to step forth free."⁶¹⁹

Bahā'u'llāh: If you don't become a Baha'i you are ignorant even if you possess all the science in the world.⁶²⁰ If you do not become a Baha'i you have no reason.⁶²¹

11. Was the Tablet of Wisdom Revealed in Persian?

Shoghi: The tablet of wisdom was revealed in Persian.⁶²²

The tablet was revealed by Bahā'u'llāh in Arabic!

⁶¹⁹ J. E. Esslemont, *Bahā'u'llāh and the New Era*, p. 200.

⁶²⁰ "If today, someone grasps all of the knowledge on earth but stops at the word 'yes' (meaning does not become a Baha'i), the Lord will not pay attention to him and he will be considered as the most ignorant amongst the people," Bahā'u'llāh, *Iqtidārāt wa chand lauḥ dīgar*, p. 111; "From now on nobody is to be called knowledgeable, except those who have decorated themselves with the garment of this New Affair (meaning those who have become Baha'is)," Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, pp. 138–139.

⁶²¹ "The general criterion is what we mentioned and any soul who has success in it, meaning recognizes and realizes the Sunrise of Manifestation (meaning himself), will be mentioned in the Divine Book as someone who possesses reason or else he will be (mentioned as) ignorant even if he himself thinks that his reason equals that of the whole world," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 7, p. 160; "No one has denied or will deny what has been revealed by the Ancient Pen (meaning himself) in this Most Great Manifestation regarding society, unity, manners, rites, and being occupied with what has benefits for the people, except that he completely lacks reason," Bahā'u'llāh, *Iqtidārāt wa chand lauḥ dīgar*, p. 168.

⁶²² When referring to a problematic matter in the English translation of this tablet he says: "We must not take this statement too literally; "contemporary" may have been meant in Persian as something far more elastic than the English word. Likewise, the whole translation probably needs revising (15 February 1947)." Article titled *Socrates* compiled by the Research Department of the Universal House of Justice: http://bahai-library.com/compilation_socrates_bwc (retrieved 17/2/2014).

12. Is Shoghi Infallible?

Shoghi: I am only infallible in matters regarding the faith and interpreting it.⁶²³

Shoghi makes errors when speaking about Bahā'u'llāh's Tablet of Wisdom and claims it was revealed in Persian while it was revealed in Arabic.⁶²⁴

13. Can Shoghi Fit the Role of Being the Authorized Interpreter of Baha'i Texts?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Shoghi is the authoritative interpreter of the words of God.⁶²⁵

Shoghi is unsure in interpreting the words of Bahā'u'llāh and uses the words *may* and *probably*.⁶²⁶ He doesn't even consider his own translations as final.⁶²⁷

⁶²³ "The infallibility of the Guardian is confined to matters which are related strictly to the Cause and interpretations of the Teachings; he is not an infallible authority on other subjects, such as economics, science, etc," Shoghi Effendi, *Directives from the Guardian*, p. 33–34.

⁶²⁴ See previous footnotes.

⁶²⁵ "O my loving friends! After the passing away of this wronged one, it is incumbent upon the Aghsān (Branches), the Afnān (Twigs) of the Sacred Lote-Tree, the Hands (pillars) of the Cause of God and the loved ones of the Abhā Beauty to turn unto Shoghi Effendi—the youthful branch branched from the two hallowed and sacred Lote-Trees and the fruit grown from the union of the two offshoots of the Tree of Holiness,—as he is the sign of God, the chosen branch, the Guardian of the Cause of God, he unto whom all the Aghsān, the Afnān, the Hands of the Cause of God and His loved ones must turn. He is the Interpreter of the Word of God and after him will succeed the first-born of his lineal descendents," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Will and Testament of `Abdu'l-Bahā*, p. 11.

⁶²⁶ "We must not take this statement too literally; "contemporary" may have been meant in Persian as something far more elastic than the English word. Likewise, the whole translation probably needs revising (15 February 1947)," Article titled *Socrates* compiled by the Research Department of the Universal House of Justice: http://bahai-library.com/compilation_socrates_bwc (retrieved 17/2/2014).

⁶²⁷ "Concerning the different translations of the Words. It is surely the original text that should never be changed. The translations will continue to vary as more and better translations are made. Shoghi Effendi does not consider even his own translations as final, how much more translations made in the early days of the Cause in the West when no competent translators existed (From a

14. Are the Bāb's Words Divine Inspirations?

Writes the *Qayyūm al-Asmā'* by copying verses of the Quran, the end result being mostly vague incomprehensible sentences, then claims they are divine revelations.⁶²⁸

15. Bahā'u'llāh and Divine Knowledge: Referring to Books

Bahā'u'llāh: Whenever I want to quote a book it is revealed in a tablet before my face.⁶²⁹ "You know that we did not read the books of the people and were unaware of the sciences that they possessed."⁶³⁰

Bahā'u'llāh: I searched in vain for a book to see what the author had written in it until I finally found it!⁶³¹ I used to read books when I was a child.⁶³²

letter on behalf of the Guardian to John Hyde Dunn, 14 August 1930)," http://bahai-library.com/compilation_provisional_translations (retrieved 18/2/2014).

⁶²⁸ See the section on *The Bab's Religious Knowledge* in this chapter.

⁶²⁹ "Whenever We desire to quote the sayings of the learned and of the wise, presently there will appear before the face of thy Lord in the form of a tablet all that which hath appeared in the world and is revealed in the Holy Books and Scriptures," Bahā'u'llāh, *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 149.

⁶³⁰ Bahā'u'llāh, *Majmū'ihī az alwāḥ jamāl aqdas abhā ki ba'd az kitāb Aqdas nāzil shude*. (Langenhain [Germany]: Lajniyi Nashr Āthār Amrī Bi Lisān Fārsī wa `Arabī), p. 89.

⁶³¹ "As We had frequently heard about him, We purposed to read some of his works. Although We never felt disposed to peruse other peoples' writings, yet as some had questioned Us concerning him, We felt it necessary to refer to his books, in order that We might answer Our questioners with knowledge and understanding. His works, in the Arabic tongue, were, however, not available, . . . We sent for the book, and kept it with Us a few days. It was probably referred to twice," Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitāb-i-Īqān*, pp. 184–186.

⁶³² "This oppressed one in his childhood (tufūliyyat) saw the war of the tribe of Qurayza in a book that belonged to (was authored by) Mullā Bāqir Majlisī, and has been sad and sorrowful ever-since," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwārī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 7, p. 136

16. Bahā'u'llāh and Divine Knowledge: Historical Facts

Claims the words in the Tablet of Wisdom are divine revelations from God⁶³³ and quotes verbatim⁶³⁴ therein, wrong historical facts from other history books.⁶³⁵

17. Bahā'u'llāh and Divine Knowledge: Citing Verses of the Quran

Bahā'u'llāh: Whenever I want to quote Holy Books and scriptures they are revealed in a tablet before my face.⁶³⁶

Bahā'u'llāh multiple distortions while citing verses of the Quran in the Īqān.⁶³⁷ The Universal House of Justice Says it is no big deal!

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Those who distort two letters from the verses of the Quran are leaders of those who are in hell and their followers are lowly flies.⁶³⁸

⁶³³ "This is an Epistle which the All-Merciful hath sent down from the Kingdom of Utterance," Bahā'u'llāh, *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 137.

⁶³⁴ "In many of the passages that follow concerning the Greek philosophers, Bahā'u'llāh quotes verbatim from the works of such Muslim historians as Abu'l-Fath-i-Shāhristānī (1076–1153 A.D.) and Imādu'd-Dān Abu'l-Fidā (1273–1331 A.D.)," Bahā'u'llāh, *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 144 (footnote).

⁶³⁵ "Empedocles, who distinguished himself in philosophy, was a contemporary of David, while Pythagoras lived in the days of Solomon, son of David, and acquired Wisdom from the treasury of prophethood. It is he who claimed to have heard the whispering sound of the heavens and to have attained the station of the angels. In truth thy Lord will clearly set forth all things, if He pleaseth. Verily, He is the Wise, the All-Pervading," Bahā'u'llāh, *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 145. Empedocles lived between 490–440 BC whilst David lived between 1040–970 BC. There are about 500 years of difference between these dates. Pythagoras lived between 570–495 BC whilst Solomon lived between 970–931 BC. The difference between these two is also about 500 years.

⁶³⁶ "Whenever We desire to quote the sayings of the learned and of the wise, presently there will appear before the face of thy Lord in the form of a tablet all that which hath appeared in the world and is revealed in the Holy Books and Scriptures," Bahā'u'llāh, *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 149.

⁶³⁷ See section titled *Bahā'u'llāh's Religious Knowledge*

⁶³⁸ "He had written the blessed verse of the Quran "what are these statues/images that you are worshipping" (*mā hādhihī l-tamāthīl al-latī antum `alayhā `ākīfūn*) [and had written the last word] as *`āfīkūn* and the [text] is in the possession of Mīrzā Yaḥyā Qazwīnī. Pay attention that the leader of this group cannot make a distinction between *`ākīf* and *`āfīk* and he distorts the evident

18. Bahā'u'llāh and Divine Knowledge: Revisions in the Divine Texts

Bahā'u'llāh revealed a Holy book, found out that it had multiple grammatical mistakes and discovered many errors in citing the verses of the Quran. He then proceeded to revise it, and gave out a second version, and then claimed “the latter is better and more appropriate”!⁶³⁹

19. Bahā'u'llāh and Adhering to the Customs of the Previous People

In matters of sex, Bahā'u'llāh adhered to the customs of Muslims and took three wives. However he forbids this for everyone else.⁶⁴⁰ When citing the Quran, he put aside the custom of the Muslims in carefully citing the exact verses of the Quran and erroneously cites many verses in the book of *Īqān*.

verse of the Book of God in his own handwriting! This writing has been unwillingly inscribed by his pen so that it becomes evident that he is the chief of the distorters and the leader of those who are in Hell. Some of the followers of that *unknown person* (meaning Mīrzā Yahyā) —even though they saw this [distortion] with their own eyes—didn't wake up and proved that they were lowly flies that followed any caller and bended with any breeze,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Muntakhabātī az makātīb Ḥadrat ‘Abdu’l-Bahā*, vol. 6, no. 430.

⁶³⁹ “A copy of a correct *Īqān* was given to Jināb-i-‘Alī Akbar, My Glory be upon him. Existing copies should be brought into conformity with this copy, or new transcriptions made from it. The latter is better and more appropriate.” *Symbol and Secret: Qur'an Commentary in Bahā'u'llāh's Kitab-i-Iqān*, p. 26.

⁶⁴⁰ When the UHJ is asked as to why Bahā'u'llāh had three wives when he himself forbade it, it is claimed: “He was following the Laws of the previous Dispensation and the customs of the people of His own land,” Letter from Universal House of Justice to an individual believer dated 23/10/1995: http://bahai-library.com/uhj_wives_bahauallah (retrieved 1/6/2104).

20. Bahā'u'llāh and Citing Shia Narrations

Bahā'u'llāh forged many narrations and distorted many others to prove that the Bāb was divine.⁶⁴¹ He then labeled the Shia as being unmindful selfish shunners of truth because they did not believe in his forged and distorted narrations.⁶⁴²

21. `Abdu'l-Bahā and Citing Verses of the Quran

`Abdul-Bahā distorted dozens of verses from the Quran.⁶⁴³ He announced those who distort two letters from the verses of the Quran are leaders of those who are in hell and their followers are lowly flies.⁶⁴⁴ Yet he distorted the same verse of the Quran that he is using to bash Mīrzā Yaḥyā because Mīrzā Yaḥyā had misplaced two letters in it!⁶⁴⁵

⁶⁴¹ See section titled *Bahā'u'llāh's Religious Knowledge*

⁶⁴² “Consider, that even the year in which that Quintessence of Light is to be made manifest hath been specifically recorded in the traditions, yet they still remain unmindful, nor do they for one moment cease to pursue their selfish desires. According to the tradition, Mufaḍḍal asked Ṣādiq saying: “What of the sign of His manifestation, O my master?” He made reply: “In the year sixty, His Cause shall be made manifest, and His Name shall be proclaimed.” How strange! Notwithstanding these explicit and manifest references these people have shunned the Truth,” Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitāb-i-Īqān*, pp. 253–254.

⁶⁴³ See section titled *`Abdu'l-Bahā's Religious Knowledge*

⁶⁴⁴ “He had written the blessed verse of the Quran “what are these statues/images that you are worshipping” (*mā hādhihī l-tamāthīl al-latī antum `alayhā `ākifūn*) [and had written the last word] as *`āfikūn* and the [text] is in the possession of Mīrzā Yaḥyā Qazwīnī. Pay attention that the leader of this group cannot make a distinction between *`ākif* and *`āfik* and he distorts the evident verse of the Book of God in his own handwriting! This writing has been unwillingly inscribed by his pen so that it becomes evident that he is the chief of the distorters and the leader of those who are in Hell. Some of the followers of that *unknown person* (meaning Mīrzā Yaḥyā) —even though they saw this [distortion] with their own eyes—didn't wake up and proved that they were lowly flies that followed any caller and bended with any breeze,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Muntakhabāt az makātīb Ḥaḍrat `Abdu'l-Bahā*, vol. 6, no. 430.

⁶⁴⁵ `Abdu'l-Bahā mentions the verse as *mā hādhihī l-tamāthīl al-latī antum `alayhā `ākifūn*. The underlined word should be *lahā!* (see previous footnote).

22. The Bāb's Education

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: “(1) It was universally admitted by the Shī’is that (2) He had never studied in any school and (3) had not acquired knowledge from any teacher (4) all the people of Shīrāz bear witness to this.”⁶⁴⁶

Four false statements in a single sentence.⁶⁴⁷

23. Is It in Accordance with Reason to Prohibit Someone from Doing Something in the Past?

The Bāb, while about 29 years old, gave orders to his childhood teacher to not hit him until he is five years old!⁶⁴⁸

24. Had Bahā’u’llāh Associated with the Learned and the ‘Ulamā?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: “As all the people of Persia know, He had never studied in any school, nor had He associated with the ‘ulamā or the men of learning.”⁶⁴⁹

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: My father used to associate with the learned and the ‘Ulamā!⁶⁵⁰

⁶⁴⁶ ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 25.

⁶⁴⁷ See the section titled *The Bāb's education*.

⁶⁴⁸ “Say O Muḥammad, my teacher. Do not hit me before my age finishes five even for a moment for my heart is very very soft. After that discipline me but not more than I can bear. If you want to hit me do not [hit me] more than five times. And do not hit me on my flesh (*lahm*) unless there is a covering over it. If you exceed [these guidelines] your wife will be illegal for you for nineteen days. If you forget and if you don’t have a companion, then you must give in charity for every beating nineteen mithqāls of gold if you want to be faithful. And do not hit but very very softly,” Bāb, *Arabic Bayān*, unit 6, chapter 11.

⁶⁴⁹ ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 27.

⁶⁵⁰ “When He was only thirteen or fourteen years old He became renowned for His learning. He would converse on any subject and solve any problem presented to Him. In large gatherings He would discuss matters with the ‘Ulamā (leading mullās) and would explain intricate religious questions. All of them used to listen to Him with the greatest interest,” J. E. Esslemont, *Bahā’u’llāh and the New Era*, p. 48; “In whatever meeting, scientific assembly or theological

25. Is Quoting the Words of Others a Sign of Not Having Divine Knowledge?

Bahā'u'llāh: “I mislike the copious citation from sayings of the past; for quotation from the words of others proveth acquired learning, not the divine bestowal.”⁶⁵¹

Ponder on these questions:

- Why would Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā cite hundreds of lines of poetry in their writings without acknowledging the original composers?⁶⁵²
- Why would Bahā'u'llāh quote verbatim⁶⁵³ many wrong passages about philosophers from Muslim historians in the Tablet of Wisdom whilst claiming the tablet is a divine revelation from God?⁶⁵⁴
- Why would Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā refer countless times to the sayings of the learned men,⁶⁵⁵ scientists,⁶⁵⁶ and what has been written in the books?⁶⁵⁷
- Why would Bahā'u'llāh refer to books to gain knowledge.⁶⁵⁸

discussion He was found, He became the authority of explanation upon intricate and abstruse questions presented,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Bahā'ī World Faith—Selected Writings of Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā* (*`Abdu'l-Bahā's Section Only*), p. 220.

⁶⁵¹ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Seven Valleys And the Four Valleys*, p. 26.

⁶⁵² See Vahid Rafati's *Ma'ākhiz ash'ār dar āthār Bahā'ī*.

⁶⁵³ “In many of the passages that follow concerning the Greek philosophers, Bahā'u'llāh quotes verbatim from the works of such Muslim historians as Abu'l-Fath-i-Shāhristānā (1076–1153 A.D.) and Imādu'd-Dān Abu'l-Fidā (1273–1331 A.D.),” Bahā'u'llāh, *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 144 (footnote).

⁶⁵⁴ Bahā'u'llāh, *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 137.

⁶⁵⁵ For instance, “The learned men, that have fixed at several thousand years the life of this earth . . .” Bahā'u'llāh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 163.

⁶⁵⁶ For instance, “For instance copper can transmute into Gold but earth/soil (*turab*) does not have this possibility in actualness (*bil-fi'l*). Since the scientists have already mentioned these subjects this servant did not like to mention it comprehensively,” `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwārī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 7, p. 44.

⁶⁵⁷ For instance, “Mention hath been made in certain books of a deluge which caused all that existed on earth,” Bahā'u'llāh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 174.

26. Bahā'u'llāh's Childhood: Happiness or Sorrow?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: “The early part of His life was passed in the greatest happiness.”⁶⁵⁹

Bahā'u'llāh: “This oppressed one in his childhood (*ṭufūliyyat*) saw the war of the tribe of Qurayza in a book that belonged to (was authored by) Mullā Bāqir Majlisī, and has been sad and sorrowful ever-since.”⁶⁶⁰

27. Kissing the Hand of Ones Murderer

Bahā'u'llāh: Had it not been against God’s law I would have kissed the hand of the one who intends to kill me.⁶⁶¹

Bahā'u'llāh: My followers kiss the hands of those who intend to kill them.⁶⁶²

⁶⁵⁸ For instance, “This oppressed one in his childhood (*ṭufūliyyat*) saw the war of the tribe of Qurayza in a book that belonged to (was authored by) Mullā Bāqir Majlisī, and has been sad and sorrowful ever-since,” ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā’idiy-i āsimānī*, vol. 7, p. 136; “We purposed to read some of his works. Although We never felt disposed to peruse other peoples’ writings, yet as some had questioned Us concerning him, We felt it necessary to refer to his books, in order that We might answer Our questioners with knowledge and understanding. His works, in the Arabic tongue, were, however, not available . . . We sent for the book, and kept it with Us a few days. It was probably referred to twice,” Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitāb-i-Īqān*, pp. 184–186.

⁶⁵⁹ ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 27.

⁶⁶⁰ ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā’idiy-i āsimānī*, vol. 7, p. 136.

⁶⁶¹ “God is my witness! Had it not been in conflict with that which the Tablets of God have decreed, I would have gladly kissed the hands of whosoever attempted to shed my blood in the path of the Well-Beloved,” Bahā'u'llāh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 102.

⁶⁶² “He bareth his breast to meet the darts of the enemy and raiseth his head to greet the sword of destiny; nay rather, he kisseth the hand of his would-be murderer and surrendereth his all,” Bahā'u'llāh, *Gems of Divine Mysteries*, p. 29.

28. When and Where to Bury the Dead

Bahā'u'llāh: "It is forbidden you to transport the body of the deceased a greater distance than one hour's journey from the city."⁶⁶³

Under Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā's orders, this one hour limit changes to fifty years and thousands of kilometers for the Bāb!⁶⁶⁴

29. Does Bahā'u'llāh Intend to Abrogate the Book of Bayān?

⁶⁶³ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 230.

⁶⁶⁴ "As observed in a previous chapter the mangled bodies of the Bāb and His fellow-martyr, Mīrzā Muḥammad-`Alī, were removed, in the middle of the second night following their execution, through the pious intervention of Hājī Sulaymān Khān, from the edge of the moat where they had been cast to a silk factory owned by one of the believers of Milān, and were laid the next day in a wooden casket, and thence carried to a place of safety. Subsequently, according to Bahā'u'llāh's instructions, they were transported to Tīhrān and placed in the shrine of Imām-Zādiḥ Ḥasan. They were later removed to the residence of Hājī Sulaymān Khān himself in the Sar-Chashmih quarter of the city, and from his house were taken to the shrine of Imām-Zādiḥ Ma`šūm, where they remained concealed until the year 274 1284 A.H. (1867–1868), when a Tablet, revealed by Bahā'u'llāh in Adrianople, directed Mullā `Alī-Akbar-i-Shāhmīrzādī and Jamāl-i-Burūjirdī to transfer them without delay to some other spot . . . Hājī Shāh Muḥammad buried the casket beneath the floor of the inner sanctuary of the shrine of Imām-Zādiḥ Zayd, where it lay undetected until Mīrzā Asadu'llāh-i-Iṣfahānī was informed of its exact location through a chart forwarded to him by Bahā'u'llāh. Instructed by Bahā'u'llāh to conceal it elsewhere, he first removed the remains to his own house in Tīhrān, after which they were deposited in several other localities such as the house of Ḥusayn-`Alī-i-Iṣfahānī and that of Muḥammad-Karīm-i-`Aṭṭār, where they remained hidden until the year 1316 (1899) A.H., when, in pursuance of directions issued by `Abdu'l-Bahā, this same Mīrzā Asadu'llāh, together with a number of other believers, transported them by way of Iṣfahān, Kirmanshāh, Baghdād and Damascus, to Beirut and thence by sea to `Akkā, arriving at their destination on the 19th of the month of Ramadān 1316 A.H. (January 31, 1899), fifty lunar years after the Bāb's execution in Tabriz," Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 273–274.

Bahā'u'llāh: We will re-enforce the Bayān's decrees and prove them. God curse those who say we abrogated it and break their mouths.⁶⁶⁵

Bahā'u'llāh: The book of *Bayān* has been abrogated.⁶⁶⁶

30. Noah's Flood: Symbolic or Reality?

Shoghi: The flood is symbolic.⁶⁶⁷

Bahā'u'llāh: The flood is a reality and destroyed everything on earth.⁶⁶⁸

⁶⁶⁵ "Say: The polytheists thought that we might want to abrogate what was revealed unto the Point of Bayan (*Nuqṭat al-Bayān* which means the Bab). Say: By my Merciful Lord, even if we had intended [to do] what they had thought, no one was allowed to object to God who has created everything . . . but God has desired by this manifestation [meaning Bahā'u'llāh himself] to reinforce what has been revealed by the Point of Bayan . . . thus we will reinforce his decrees and will prove his writings [or signs] on earth with power and authority," Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 390; "Although everyone knows that by this great manifestation what has been revealed in the *Bayān* has been proved/made firm, made obvious, and has been fulfilled; the name of God has been elevated; the remnants of God have been distributed to the West and East; and the *Farsi Bayān* has been endorsed particularly for this manifestation, but they have been constantly writing 'that they (meaning the Baha'is) have abrogated the *Bayān*' so that they may induce doubts in the hearts and the calf may be worshipped," Bahā'u'llāh, *Iqtidārāt wa chand lauḥ dīgar*, pp. 45-46; "They have attributed to this Station (meaning Bahā'u'llāh)—by whose authority all [divine] Books speak—that he has abrogated the decrees of the *Bayān*. May the curse of God fall upon the unjust," Bahā'u'llāh, *Iqtidārāt wa chand lauḥ dīgar*, p. 103; "I swear to God that if an individual from the followers of the *Bayān* mentions the abrogation of that book, God will break the mouth of the speaker and defamer. I [swear by] He who in His hand is my soul and my essence, a single letter from the *Bayān* is dearer to me than everything that is in the heavens and the earth," Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Asrār al-āthār khuṣūṣī*, vol. 5, p. 333;

⁶⁶⁶ "The book of Aqdas abrogates all the decrees of the book of *Bayān* . . . everyone's [religious] source is [now] the book of Aqdas not the book of *Bayān*. The decrees of the *Bayān* are [now] abrogated," Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Asrār al-āthār khuṣūṣī*, vol. 2, p. 106.

⁶⁶⁷ "The statement in 'Seven Days of Creation' certainly cannot be considered authoritative or correct. The Ark and the Flood we believe are symbolical," Helen Bassett Hornby, *Lights of Guidance: A Bahā'ī Reference File* (New Delhi: Bahā'ī Publishing Trust, 1983), chap. XLI, no. 1716.

⁶⁶⁸ "Manifestations . . . were dispatched in the first centuries and invited the people to the truth. But because of the disturbances and changes in the world some of their names and sayings have been lost. In the books the flood has been mentioned and in that event everything that was on earth was drowned including history records and other things. Furthermore, there have been many revolutions which have annihilated (the records) of some events . . ." Bahā'u'llāh, *Muntakhabātī az āthār Ḥaḍrat Bahā'u'llāh*, pp. 115–116.

31. Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā as Scientists

- **Nuclear Physics:**
 - Coppers transmutes into Gold after 70 years!⁶⁶⁹
 - Atoms are indestructible!⁶⁷⁰
- **Physics:** Both convex and concave mirrors focus light in a real point that creates great heat!⁶⁷¹
- **Geology:**
 - The Earth's age (world's age) is several thousand years!⁶⁷²
 - All minerals possess a spirit and life.⁶⁷³
- **Biology:**
 - Some creatures are created by spontaneous generation!⁶⁷⁴

⁶⁶⁹ "For instance, consider the substance of copper. Were it to be protected in its own mine from becoming solidified, it would, within the space of seventy years, attain to the state of gold," Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitāb-i-Īqān*, p. 157.

⁶⁷⁰ "Scientific philosophy has demonstrated that a simple element ('simple' meaning 'not composed') is indestructible, eternal. The soul, not being a composition of elements, is, in character, as a simple element, and therefore cannot cease to exist," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Paris Talks*, pp. 90–91.

⁶⁷¹ "Like sunlight that does not have a complete effect on a flat mirror, but when it shines on a concave or convex mirror, all its heat is focused in a single point and the heat of that point will become stronger than fire," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ayyām tis`a*, p. 324.

⁶⁷² Bahā'u'llāh claims that this date has been given by the learned men. Since the learned men have not given this date, then these words are his own beliefs: "The learned men, that have fixed at several thousand years the life of this earth [the age of this world], have failed, throughout the long period of their observation, to consider either the number or the age of the other planets," Bahā'u'llāh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 163. The correct translation is the *world's age*.

⁶⁷³ "As to the existence of spirit in the mineral: it is indubitable that minerals are endowed with a spirit and life according to the requirements of that stage. This unknown secret, too, hath become known unto the materialists who now maintain that all beings are endowed with life," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Tablet to August Forel*, p. 9.

⁶⁷⁴ "Know that the creatures are of many kinds . . . some are created in wombs others [are created] by spontaneous regeneration (*khalq al-sā`a*) and come into existence by themselves, such as the animals that are created in fruits, and a group are created in eggs. These are the types of creation of [living] things," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātib* (Egypt), vol. 2, p. 24.

- o There is absolutely no difference and distinction between male and female plants and animals!⁶⁷⁵
- **Chemistry:** Plants survive on a watery element called carbon and hydrogen that comes from the mouth of animals!⁶⁷⁶
- **Astronomy:**
 - o The Sun is Stationary, Fixed, and Ever Occupies the Same Space!⁶⁷⁷
 - o All stars have planets and all these planets have countless aliens on them!⁶⁷⁸
 - o All stars have aliens living on them!⁶⁷⁹

⁶⁷⁵ “Plants have male and female and animals too have male and female and there is no distinction. Look at the plant kingdom. Is there any distinction between male plants and female plants? Rather there is complete equality; and in the Animal kingdom too, there is no distinction at all,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, pp. 149–150.

⁶⁷⁶ “From the breath of animals a watery element (*ʿunsur*) spreads that is nowadays called hydrogen and carbon and this gives life to plants,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātib* (Egypt), vol. 1, p. 459.

⁶⁷⁷ “The animal cannot become aware of the fact that the earth is revolving and the sun stationary. Only processes of reasoning can come to this conclusion. The outward eye sees the sun as revolving. It mistakes the stars and the planets as moving about the earth. But reason decides their orbit, knows that the earth is moving and the other worlds fixed, knows that the sun is the solar center and ever occupies the same place, proves that it is the earth which revolves around it,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 417.

⁶⁷⁸ “Consider, moreover, the manifold divergencies that have resulted from the theories propounded by these men. Know thou that every fixed star hath its own planets, and every planet its own creatures, whose number no man can compute,” Bahā'u'llāh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 163; “Regarding the passage on p. 163 of the ‘Gleanings’: The creatures which Bahā'u'llāh states to be found on every planet cannot be considered to be necessarily similar or different from human beings on this earth. Bahā'u'llāh does not specifically state whether such creatures are like or unlike us. He simply refers to the fact that there are creatures on every planet. It remains for science to discover one day the exact nature of these creatures. (From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, February 9, 1937),” Helen Bassett Hornby, *Lights of Guidance: A Bahā'ī Reference File*, chap. XLI, no. 1581.

⁶⁷⁹ “All celestial stars have special creatures. When this planet earth that is comparably infinitely small is not empty and in vain, then these great bright shining [heavenly] bodies are a different matter altogether (meaning they definitely possess life). It has been explicitly [mentioned] in the Quran, “And from His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the animals/beasts (*dābbah*) He scattered in both of them.” He says *in both of them* not *in it* (meaning only earth). It is very clear that in both of them there are creatures that have souls. For *dābbah* (animal/beast) is used [to refer to] a creature that has a soul and moves,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Muntakhabāt az makātib Ḥaḍrat `Abdu'l-Bahā*, vol. 6, no. 480; “He explicitly says in the Quran, “And from His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the animals/beasts (*dābbah*) He scattered in both of

- **Humanitarianism:** The more oppressed that you are the better.⁶⁸⁰ Do not protest to oppressors.⁶⁸¹ Self-victimize yourself by not defending yourself!⁶⁸² Baha'is kiss the hand of those who want to kill them!⁶⁸³
- **Human rights:** Confiscating peoples' property and banishing them based on religious matters are more dear than everything that is in the Skies and earth!⁶⁸⁴

them.” This means that there are [creatures] that have souls in both the sky and Earth. Thus it is clear that all these bright [heavenly] bodies are inhabited and the light of truth shines and beams in all of them. God has not created these infinite bright [heavenly] bodies in vain,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Muntakhabātī az makātīb Haḍrat `Abdu'l-Bahā*, vol. 6, no. 481; “Regarding (the question about) the species of these creatures and if they are like the creatures on earth, (the answer is) yes. But their difference is like the difference between sea dwelling, land dwelling, air dwelling, and fire dwelling animals and the difference in their nature and the variance in the balance of elements (that create them), those creatures differ in the composite parts that they are created from,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb*, vol. 1, p. 120.

⁶⁸⁰ “The more you are oppressed the more favored it has and it will be,” Bahā'u'llāh, *Iqtidārāt wa chand lauḥ dīgar*, p. 127; “Know, by the Age of God, that being oppressed is loved [by God] . . . God, the Almighty, has loved being oppressed and will continue to do so,” `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idī-i āsimānī*, vol. 4, pp. 349–350;

⁶⁸¹ “[Our] friends must leave the actions and deeds of the oppressors to God and must not protest in any way,” `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idī-i āsimānī*, vol. 8, p. 44.

⁶⁸² “As a religious body, Baha'is have, at the express command of Bahā'u'llāh, entirely abandoned the use of armed force in their own interests, even for strictly defensive purposes. In Persia many, many thousands of the Bābīs and Baha'is have suffered cruel deaths because of their faith. In the early days of the Cause the Bābīs on various occasions defended themselves and their families by the sword, with great courage and bravery. Bahā'u'llāh, however, forbade this,” J. E. Esslemont, *Bahā'u'llāh and the New Era*, pp. 169–170.

⁶⁸³ “He bareth his breast to meet the darts of the enemy and raiseth his head to greet the sword of destiny; nay rather, he kisseth the hand of his would-be murderer and surrendereth his all,” Bahā'u'llāh, *Gems of Divine Mysteries*, p. 29.

⁶⁸⁴ Compare what Bahā'u'llāh says about the book of Bayān: “I [swear by] He who in His hand is my soul and my essence, a single letter from the Bayān is dearer to me than everything that is in the heavens and the earth,” and the orders given therein: “The fifth chapter of the fifth unit which is about the decree of taking the property of those who do not believe in [the religion] of Bayan and giving it back if they become believers in this religion, except in the lands where taking [property] is not possible,” The Bāb, *Farsi Bayan*, unit 5, chap. 5; “The sixteenth chapter of the seventh unit which is about [the decree] that all rulers who rise who are [followers] of the religion of the *Bayan*, leave no-one in their land who is not a follower of this religion. This is compulsory upon all the people too,” The Bāb, *Farsi Bayan*, unit 7, chap. 16;

- **Psychology:** The communities must not shun the citizens for it has a demoralizing effect and will cause perversion of character;⁶⁸⁵ but we will shun people!⁶⁸⁶
- **History:** Empedocles was a contemporary of David and Pythagoras lived in the days of Solomon!⁶⁸⁷
- **Linguistics:**
 - o Bahā'u'llāh commits many grammatical and linguistic mistakes when writing the *Ṭiqān*!⁶⁸⁸

⁶⁸⁵ “One thing remains to be said: it is that the communities are day and night occupied in making penal laws, and in preparing and organizing instruments and means of punishment. They build prisons, make chains and fetters, arrange places of exile and banishment, and different kinds of hardships and tortures, and think by these means to discipline criminals, whereas, in reality, they are causing destruction of morals and perversion of characters,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 271; “The community, on the contrary, ought day and night to strive and endeavor with the utmost zeal and effort to accomplish the education of men, to cause them day by day to progress and to increase in science and knowledge, to acquire virtues, to gain good morals and to avoid vices, so that crimes may not occur. At the present time the contrary prevails; the community is always thinking of enforcing the penal laws, and of preparing means of punishment, instruments of death and chastisement, places for imprisonment and banishment; and they expect crimes to be committed. This has a demoralizing effect,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 272.

⁶⁸⁶ “The Hands of the Cause of God must be ever watchful and so soon as they find anyone beginning to oppose and protest against the Guardian of the Cause of God, cast him out from the congregation of the people of Bahā and in no wise accept any excuse from him. How often hath grievous error been disguised in the garb of truth, that it might sow the seeds of doubt in the hearts of men!” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Will and Testament of `Abdu'l-Bahā*, p. 12; “Shun any man in whom you perceive enmity for this Servant, though he may appear in the garb of piety of the former and later people, or may arise to the worship of the two worlds,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Bahā'ī World Faith—Selected Writings of Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā* (*`Abdu'l-Bahā's Section Only*), p. 431.

⁶⁸⁷ “Empedocles, who distinguished himself in philosophy, was a contemporary of David, while Pythagoras lived in the days of Solomon, son of David, and acquired Wisdom from the treasury of prophethood. It is he who claimed to have heard the whispering sound of the heavens and to have attained the station of the angels. In truth thy Lord will clearly set forth all things, if He pleaseth. Verily, He is the Wise, the All-Pervading,” Bahā'u'llāh, *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 145. Empedocles lived between 490–440 BC whilst David lived between 1040–970 BC. There are about 500 years of difference between these dates. Pythagoras lived between 570–495 BC whilst Solomon lived between 970–931 BC. The difference between these two is also about 500 years.

⁶⁸⁸ “Regarding stylistic and grammatical changes: numerous changes are recorded, all of which are reflected in the texts transcribed during the time of Bahā'u'llāh, i.e., assumed to have been

- **Dentistry:** Humans have canine teeth to break nuts with!⁶⁸⁹
- **Geography:** Christopher Columbus discovered America using his reason!⁶⁹⁰
- **Ophthalmology:**
 - The Pupil of the Eye is Black to Attract the Rays of the Sun!⁶⁹¹
 - The Pupil of the Eye is the Source of Light!⁶⁹²
- **Theology:**
 - `Abdu'l-Bahā claims God says in the Qur'an that everything is living!⁶⁹³ God says "We made from water everything living."⁶⁹⁴

seen and approved by Him," *Symbol and Secret: Qur'an Commentary in Bahā'u'llāh's Kitab-i-Iqan*, p.27.

⁶⁸⁹ "Thou hast written regarding the four canine teeth in man, saying that these teeth, two in the upper jaw and two in the lower, are for the purpose of eating meat. Know thou that these four teeth are not created for meat-eating, although one can eat meat with them. All the teeth of man are made for eating fruit, cereals and vegetables. These four teeth, however, are designed for breaking hard shells, such as those of almonds." Helen Bassett Hornby, *Lights of Guidance: A Bahā'ī Reference File*, chap. XXIV, no. 1007.

⁶⁹⁰ Although Christopher Columbus discovered America by sheer chance when trying to find an alternative way to India, `Abdu'l-Bahā claims: "For example, man is in this hemisphere; but, like Columbus, through the power of his reason he discovers another hemisphere—that is, America—which was until then unknown," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 144; "An animal in Europe could not foresee and plan the discovery of America as Columbus did. It could not take the globe map of the earth and scan the various continents, saying, "This is the eastern hemisphere; there must be another, the western hemisphere." `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 417.

⁶⁹¹ "So the science of physiology—that is to say, the knowledge of the composition of the members—records that the reason and cause of the difference in the colors of animals, and of the hair of men, of the redness of the lips, and of the variety of the colors of birds, is still unknown; it is secret and hidden. But it is known that the pupil of the eye is black so as to attract the rays of the sun, for if it were another color—that is, uniformly white—it would not attract the rays of the sun." `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Some Answered Questions*, pp. 192–193.

⁶⁹² "Although the pupil of the eye is black in color, but it is the mine of light. You must become like this. The essence must be luminous not the face. Thus say with utmost certitude and sureness, 'O Lord, make a dazzling light, a glowing lamp, and a rising star, so that I may illuminate the hearts by the shining beam of the Abhā kingdom,'" `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb*, vol. 7, pp. 60–61.

⁶⁹³ "He saith in the Qur'ān, 'All things are living.'" `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Tablet to August Forel*, p. 9.

⁶⁹⁴ Quran, 21:30

- Father and son distort multiple verses from the Quran when citing them.⁶⁹⁵
 - Bahā'u'llāh claims he is the creator of multiple Gods.⁶⁹⁶
- **Science:** Materialists believe that all things have a spirit and life!⁶⁹⁷
- **Deductive reasoning:** Since roosters are superior to hens then there is no doubt that males are superior to females and stronger. Since lioness' are fiercer thus females are stronger and more important than males!⁶⁹⁸

⁶⁹⁵ Refer to the tables we provided in the current chapter.

⁶⁹⁶ "All Gods became Gods from the flow of my affairs and all Lords became Lords by the overflowing of my decree," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb*, vol. 2, p. 255.

⁶⁹⁷ "As to the existence of spirit in the mineral: it is indubitable that minerals are endowed with a spirit and life according to the requirements of that stage. This unknown secret, too, hath become known unto the materialists who now maintain that all beings are endowed with life." `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Tablet to August Forel*, p. 9.

⁶⁹⁸ "Although women and men share the same capacities and abilities, there is definitely no doubt that men are superior and stronger. Even in animals like pigeons, sparrows, peacocks, and other [birds] this advantage is visible." Maḥmūd Zaraqānī, *Badā'i' al-āthār*, vol. 1, p. 153; "'Abdu'l-Bahā smiled and asked: 'What will you say if I prove to you that the woman is the stronger wing?' The answer came in the same bright vein: 'You will earn my eternal gratitude!' at which all the company made merry. 'Abdu'l-Bahā then continued more seriously: 'The woman is indeed of the greater importance to the race. She has the greater burden and the greater work. Look at the vegetable and the animal worlds. The palm which carries the fruit is the tree most prized by the date grower. The Arab knows that for a long journey the mare has the longest wind. For her greater strength and fierceness, the lioness is more feared by the hunter than the lion.'" `Abdu'l-Bahā, *`Abdu'l-Bahā in London*, pp. 102–103.



A Summary and Conclusion of the Three Perspectives:

1) Is the principle “Religion Must be in Conformity With Science and Reason” a new principle?

Hundreds of years before Bahā’u’llāh, Shia Islam clearly referred to the relationship between reason, science, and belief, and described the Prophets as the awakeners of people’s reasons. This issue was so important that the sentence “Whatever reason decrees, is also decreed by religion, and whatever religion decrees, is also decreed by reason,” was widespread among the scholars.

2) Did Baha’i leaders follow this principle?

Bahā’u’llāh neither considers reason nor science to be a criterion for recognizing the truth. Rather, he believes the yardstick for someone having any reason or science is their acceptance of Baha’ism. Aside from this, the works of the Bab, Bahā’u’llāh, and `Abdu’l-Bahā are filled with sayings and orders that are both against science reason. This shows that they either didn’t believe in this principle, or based on this principle, the Bābī and Baha’i faiths are invalid.

3) Is this principle rational and logical?

If the meaning of science, is that which is empirically determined with modern technology, there is no doubt that this principle is not reasonable, for these sciences are subject to change. If the meaning of reason is “Complete Divine Reason” that men lack, then this is also incorrect because reason has been mentioned as a tool and criterion for

finding the truth about a religion. If this only resides with God then what use is it to us?

CHAPTER 5:

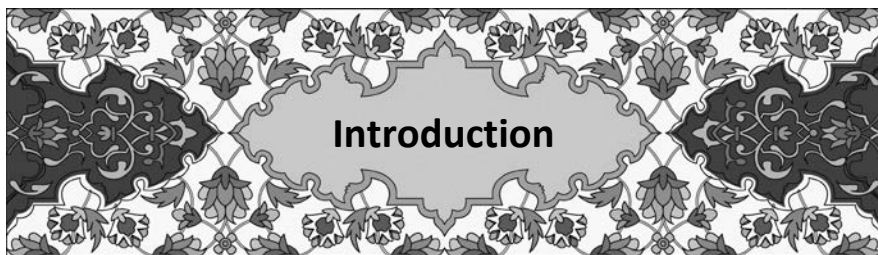
The Removal of All Prejudice



"The fifth Baha'i principle is that sexual prejudice, religious prejudice, spiritual prejudice, national prejudice, and political prejudice are the destroyers of human foundations and any form of prejudice ruins the basis of humankind. Not until these prejudices are removed, will the human world attain tranquility. The proof for [this claim] is that all wars and battles and all enmities and hatreds which have occurred amongst humans were either the result of national prejudice or the result of political prejudice. The human world has not seen peace for 6000 years and the reason for this lack of peace is these prejudices. Until there is prejudice, there will be war, there will be hatred, there will be enmity, and there will be inconvenience. If the human world is to attain comfort, we must dump all these prejudices or else tranquility will be impossible."⁶⁹⁹



⁶⁹⁹ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, pp. 147–148.



**The definition of the Removal
of Prejudice is that all forms of
prejudice, whatsoever, must
be put aside.**



`Abdu'l-Bahā says:

National prejudice is also [rooted in] pure ignorance. For the surface of Earth is a single nation and all of planet earth is man's home. Man has created these limits and borders and these limits and borders did not exist in nature . . . as for economical prejudice, it is obvious that the increase in international relations and exchanging goods and every economical center which is created in any land, will inevitably expand to other lands and general welfare will show itself. So, why have prejudice? But regarding political prejudice, God's policies must be followed and it is very clear that divine

policies are grander than human policies. We must follow divine policies for He is the same to all people and has no difference. He is the base of all divine religions.⁷⁰⁰

⁷⁰⁰ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 3, pp. 105–106.



Is This Principle New?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā claims this principle is new:

A new religious principle is that prejudice and fanaticism—whether sectarian, denominational, patriotic or political—are destructive to the foundation of human solidarity; therefore, man should release himself from such bonds in order that the oneness of the world of humanity may become manifest.⁷⁰¹

As we already mentioned, Bahā’u’llāh had grown up in a Shia community and for years, was under the influence of those beliefs. The Shia belief about prejudice and zeal states that not all kinds of zeal are undesirable. Showing zeal towards what is right and is logically and rationally correct is by no means bad. On the other hand, having indiscriminate prejudice on race, incorrect beliefs, and even one’s family must be put aside. The third Shia Imam explains it like this

Prejudice [is bad] when it results in a sin. For instance, [regarding tribal prejudice], if a man regards the worst person in his tribe better than the best person from another tribe, this is prejudice, but if a person loves his tribe this is not

⁷⁰¹ ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 455.

prejudice. Another form of prejudice is when a man assists his tribe in oppressing [another group].⁷⁰²

This is how the Prophet of Islam describes the outcome of having prejudice:

He who has prejudice or others show prejudice because of him, then he has removed the necklace of faith from his neck (meaning he no longer has any faith).⁷⁰³

The Baha'i view about prejudice has elements borrowed from Shia Islam combined with a fair amount of illogical extremism. This extremism, which regards all prejudice and zeal void irrespective of their outcome, is to an extent novel, but nevertheless unjustifiable.

⁷⁰² Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 308

⁷⁰³ Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 308



Did the Founders of Baha'ism Refrain From Prejudice?

A quick review of Baha'i scripture and history shows that Baha'i leaders have shown great a great amount of prejudice regarding different matters. We will now enumerate some of these instances:

1- The Bāb

Some of the most extreme and most violent prejudice and zeal in Baha'i history can be found in the laws and actions of the Bāb:

- The order to destroy all non-Bābī books.⁷⁰⁴
- The order to destroy all monuments.⁷⁰⁵
- The order to exile or massacre all non-Bābī people.⁷⁰⁶

⁷⁰⁴ The Bāb, *Farsi Bayān*: "Chapter six of the sixth unit which is about destroying all books but those that have been written or will be written about this order (meaning the Bab's creed)."

⁷⁰⁵ "The utterance of the [book or religion] of Bayān in the day of the appearance of his Highness A'lā (meaning the Bāb) was to behead, burn the books, destroy the monuments, and massacre [everyone] but those who believed [in the Bāb's religion] and verified it," 'Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt: 1330 AH), vol. 2, p. 266

⁷⁰⁶ The Bāb, *Farsi Bayān*: "The sixteenth chapter of the seventh unit which is about [the decree] that all rulers who rise who are [followers] of the religion of the *Bayan*, leave no-one in their land who is not a follower of this religion. This is compulsory upon all the people too"; "The utterance of the [book or religion] of Bayān in the day of the appearance of his Highness A'lā (meaning the Bāb) was to behead, burn the books, destroy the monuments, and massacre [everyone] but those

- Prohibition of teaching any book but those that the Bāb had revealed.⁷⁰⁷
- The order to confiscate the wealth of non-Bābīs.⁷⁰⁸

Even with all these savage and irrational laws, Baha’i prejudice and zeal towards the Bāb is so great that he is regarded by them as one of the greatest prophets of God. Bahā’u’llāh had so much zeal with respect to the Bāb that he had uttered that a single word from his book was more dear to him than anything in the skies and on the earth.⁷⁰⁹

2- Removal of Prejudice: Only for Non-Baha’is

If all prejudice and zeal must be put aside, even religious zeal, then Baha’is too, must put aside their religious beliefs and stop preaching their religion to others. As we previously showed, when ‘Abdu’l-Bahā speaks about setting aside religious prejudice, he only addresses non-Baha’is:

Zoroastrians say we are right, Jews say we are right, Christians say we are right, and Buddhists say we are right. How can the [one who is really] right be shown? The follower of Moses must put aside prejudice, the Christian must put aside prejudice, and the Buddhist must put aside prejudice.

who believed [in the Bāb’s religion] and verified it,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt: 1330 AH), vol. 2, p. 266.

⁷⁰⁷ The Bāb, *Farsi Bayān*: “The tenth chapter of the fourth unit which is about [the decree] that it is prohibited to teach any book but the book of *Bayān*.”

⁷⁰⁸ The Bāb, *Farsi Bayan*: “The fifth chapter of the fifth unit which is about the decree of taking the property of those who do not believe in [the religion] of Bayan and giving it back if they become believers in this religion, except in the lands where taking [property] is not possible.”

⁷⁰⁹ “I [swear by] He who in His hand is my soul and my essence, a single letter from the *Bayān* is dearer to me than everything that is in the heavens and the earth,” Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Asrār al-āthār khuṣūṣī*, vol. 5, p. 333.

Not until this is performed will it be possible to expose the truth . . . [no one] should have prejudice.⁷¹⁰

Why have Baha'is been excluded from this order? Why shouldn't they too put aside prejudice? Why don't Baha'is practice what they preach? Why does `Abdu'l-Bahā state that words needs actions but his own words remain only as words:

Words need actions. Words without actions are like a bee without honey or a tree without fruits.⁷¹¹

3- Baha'i Attitude Toward Deniers

The Baha'i corpus is filled with sentences about the need to put aside all prejudice. For example:

Keep aloof from the scent of ignorant prejudice, enmity, vulgar hatred, and sexual, national and religious delusions, for they are all against God's religion and His satisfaction and will deprive mankind of God's graces . . . do not have the slightest hatred towards anyone from any nation, religion, tribe, sex, or land, rather show utmost compassion and friendship.⁷¹²

But when it concerns Baha'ism directly, this is no longer the case and a very disturbing prejudice can be seen in Bahā'u'llāh's orders:

We must avoid deniers in all affairs and must not become fond of them or sit and converse with them even for a

⁷¹⁰ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p.18.

⁷¹¹ Riyāḍ Qadīmī, *Gulzār-i ta`ālim Bahā'ī*, p. 1.

⁷¹² Riyāḍ Qadīmī, *Gulzār-i ta`ālim Bahā'ī*, pp. 366–367.

moment, for by God the [effect of] evil individuals on pure individuals is like fire on dry wood and heat on cold snow.⁷¹³

We showed many other similar quotes in the second chapter.

4- Baha'is Have No Prejudice but Non-Baha'is Are Bastards

`Abdu'l-Bahā says:

Praise God that you have accepted this great affair that is the light of the horizons and the promoter of the oneness of humanity. You detest all prejudice and show utmost compassion and kindness to all religions. You love all humanity.⁷¹⁴

We must not desire ourselves and must regard others as better than ourselves, even those who are not believers . . . we must see all people superior to ourselves . . . we must see other peoples shortcomings as our own shortcomings for if we didn't have shortcomings ourselves we couldn't have seen the shortcomings of others. Man must always see himself as imperfect and others perfect.⁷¹⁵

The falsity of the claims of having no prejudice and loving all humanity can be seen when we compare `Abdu'l-Bahā's words with those of his father. As we showed in chapter two, Bahā'u'llāh regards all those who deny him as being bastards.

5- Baha'is Have No Prejudice but Non-Baha'is Are Animals

According to Bahā'u'llāh non-Baha'is are animals:

⁷¹³ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 8, pp. 39.

⁷¹⁴ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 3, pp. 81–82.

⁷¹⁵ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīnīy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 49, p. 326–327.

Today, according to the decree of the Point of Bayān (meaning the Bāb), those individuals who turn away from this Novel Affair (meaning Baha'ism) are deprived of the garb of being called and described [as humans?] and are assembled and mentioned as animals in the presence of God.⁷¹⁶

Non-Baha'is must be viewed as earthworms and their sound is the buzz of flies⁷¹⁷. They are mentioned among the livestock⁷¹⁸.

Instead of preaching to non-Baha'is, `Abdu'l-Bahā should have reminded his father that:

This century, is the century of progress. These prejudices are unjustified. These are rooted in ignorance.⁷¹⁹

Is considering non-Baha'is to be non-humans not a clear sign of prejudice? Whose words should Baha'is adhere to? `Abdu'l-Bahā who claims prejudice is rooted in ignorance? Or Bahā'u'llāh who insists on having prejudice?

6- Baha'is Are Jewels and Other People Worthless Rocks

If any creed or group had claimed that they themselves were jewels and all other people were worthless pieces of rock, would Baha'is not have expressed their dissatisfaction because of such blatant prejudice? Why is it acceptable for Bahā'u'llāh to utter such words:

⁷¹⁶ Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 213.

⁷¹⁷ "Do not see the polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism) but as earthworms and their sounds but the buzzing of flies," Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'lā*, vol. 1, no. 20, p. 183.

⁷¹⁸ "O group of polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism), if you take pride in your name remaining amongst the animals or being mentioned amongst the livestock, then take pride in that for you are worthy of it," Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'lā*, vol. 2, no. 81, p. 452.

⁷¹⁹ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwārī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 25.

My friends are the pearls of [this] order and all others are earthly pebbles . . . a single one of these (Baha'is) is more precious than a million others (non-Baha'is).⁷²⁰

Why must one show such ignorance, as `Abdu'l-Bahā puts it, by having all this prejudice:

We must neither say bad things nor quarrel. We must know that all are the servants of one God and are encompassed with his sea of mercy . . . see how ignorant people can be by being prisoners of such prejudice.⁷²¹

Even though the words of the leaders of this creed have a high degree of prejudice in them, `Abdu'l-Bahā announces with great pride that:

We must thank God a hundred thousand times every moment, that thank-god, we have been freed from ignorant prejudice and are kind to all of God's sheep.⁷²²

7- Non-Baha'is Inherit Nothing from Baha'i Parents

If in the Baha'i creed, religious prejudice has really been abolished, and all people, regardless of their religion have equal rights, then why are non-Baha'is deprived of their share of inheritance from their deceased parents?⁷²³ And why does `Abdu'l-Bahā insist that there are equality of rights:

⁷²⁰ `Abd al-Hamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idiy-i āsimānī*, vol. 4, p. 353.

⁷²¹ `Abd al-Hamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 25.

⁷²² `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 3, p. 43.

⁷²³ "Bahā'u'llāh states that non-Baha'is have no right to inherit from their Bahā'ī parents or relatives," Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 184.

There is equality between people and complete brotherhood. Justice implies that the rights of humankind be protected and preserved and all have equal rights.⁷²⁴

How can such discriminatory laws be considered just and manifestations of complete brotherhood? How are they not examples of clear religious prejudice? Perhaps Baha'u'llah has a totally new definition for prejudice.

8- Baha'is Have No Prejudice but All Non-Baha'is Are Ignorant and Unreasonable

We have quoted Baha'u'llah multiple times saying only Baha'is can be referred to as knowledgeable and reasonable. If this is not prejudice, then what is it? Is this the meaning of not seeing ourselves superior to others, as described below:

One of Bahā'u'llāh's teachings is mutual aid between humans. This aid is much greater than equality. It means that not only one must not see himself superior to others; rather, he must sacrifice his life and belongings for other people.⁷²⁵

9- Racial prejudice in Baha'i teachings

As we already pointed out in the second chapter, there exists a certain degree of racial prejudice in the Baha'i scripture. For instance `Abdu'l-Bahā believes that Turks deserve ridiculous answers⁷²⁶ and all Africans

⁷²⁴ `Abd al-Hamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 30.

⁷²⁵ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 3, p. 107.

⁷²⁶ "When Djemal Pasha . . . reached Acre and asked to see me, I mounted a donkey and headed for his home. As soon as he saw me, he greeted me and sat me next to him and without hesitation said: "You are a corrupter of religion and that is why the government of Iran exiled you here . . ." I thought to myself that he is a Turk and I must give him a ridiculous and silencing answer," Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Asrār al-āthār khuṣūṣī*, vol. 3, p. 42–43.

are like savage wild animals⁷²⁷ that are cows with human faces until they are nurtured.⁷²⁸

10- Sexual Prejudice

Although Baha'is preach for equality between men and women, their laws show a great degree of prejudice and discrimination towards women and women are regarded inferior to men.⁷²⁹ For example, they take a smaller share of inheritance⁷³⁰ and cannot be a member of the Universal House of Justice.⁷³¹ We will present many other examples in the tenth chapter.

With all these forms of prejudice, 'Abdu'l-Bahā still insists that:

To reach the goal of (removing prejudice) we strive . . . but others just talk.⁷³²

Yes they strive. They strive by saying non-Baha'is are like dry wood that are only worthy of fire,⁷³³ no socializing is allowed with them,⁷³⁴

⁷²⁷ "The inhabitants of a land like Africa are all like wild savages and land-dwelling animals that lack common-sense and knowledge and are all wild. There is not a single wise and civilized person among them," 'Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 1, pp. 331

⁷²⁸ "The wild tribes have no superiority over animals. For example, what is the difference between African blacks and American blacks? The [black Africans] are cows that God has created with human faces. The [black Americans] are civilized, intelligent, and have culture," 'Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 3, p. 48.

⁷²⁹ "A woman's question was referred to him who had asked why hasn't God made any woman Prophets and why have all Divine Manifestations been men. He answered, 'Although women and men share the same capacities and abilities, there is definitely no doubt that men are superior and stronger. Even in animals like pigeons, sparrows, peacocks, and other [birds] this advantage is visible,'" Maḥmūd Zaraqānī, *Badā'i' al-āthār*, vol. 1, p. 153.

⁷³⁰ The deceased's property are split into 2520 portions. Out of these, 1080 are for the children, 390 for the wives, fathers 330, mothers 270, brothers 210, sisters 150, teachers 90 ('Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 10, p. 117–119).

⁷³¹ 'Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 27, p. 219.

⁷³² 'Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 99.

and the earth will be cleansed from their filth when the Baha'i kingdom materializes.⁷³⁵

⁷³³ "Anyone who has a garden will not allow the dry trees to remain in the garden and will definitely cut them and throw them in fire, for dry wood is only worthy of fire. Thus, O inhabitants of my orchard, protect yourselves from the wicked poisonous breath and void breeze which is socializing with the polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism) and the unaware (*ghāfil*)," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 8, p. 39.

⁷³⁴ "Do not socialize with those who deny God (meaning non-Baha'is) and his signs and keep away from their kind," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 8, p. 39; "In it incumbent on ever soul to keep away from the wicked breath of the polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism)," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 8, p. 39; "Know that God has forbidden his friends from meeting with the polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism) and hypocrites," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 4, p. 280. for more quotes refer to chapter 2.

⁷³⁵ "God will soon take out from the sleeves of power the hands of strength and dominance and will make the Servant (Bahā'u'llāh) victorious and will cleanse the earth from the filth of every rejected polytheist (deniers of Baha'ism). And they will stand by the cause and will conquer the lands using my mighty eternal name and will enter the lands and they will be feared by all the servants," Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'lā*, vol. 2, no. 90, p. 587.



Is This Principle Correct From a Rational and Logical Perspective?

Not all forms of prejudice and zeal can be considered bad. For instance, national prejudice and zeal, in times of foreign intervention, is by no means detestable, rather it is necessary. Bahā'u'llāh even detests national prejudice and pride:

There is no pride in loving ones country, rather [there is only pride] in loving the whole world.⁷³⁶

‘Abdu’l-Bahā further advocates this belief:

We title every fenced patch [of land] homeland and fancifully call it mother[land], whilst planet Earth is everybody’s mother[land], not this fenced patch. We live a few days on this earth and will finally be buried in it. It is our eternal grave. Is it reasonable to shed blood over this eternal grave and rip each-other apart? Of course not! Neither God is satisfied with nor does any rational person admit [such a thing]. Pay attention to the blessed animals which have no territorial disputes and have complete friendship with one-another and live in groups. For instance, if an eastern pigeon, a western pigeon, a northern pigeon, and a southern pigeon,

⁷³⁶ Bahā'u'llāh, *Ishrāqāt wa chand lauḥ dīgar*, pp. 20–21.

come together at a single location, they immediately show affection to each other. All blessed animals and birds are like this too. As for predatory animals, as soon as they see each other, they attack and tear one another apart. It is impossible for them to live in a unit land.⁷³⁷

Are our mother lands just a patch of fenced off earth that we shouldn't care about? Should we only care about the earth as a whole? If a foreign force invades us what do we do? Lay down our arms, and allow them to invade, just like what `Abdu'l-Bahā did when the British invaded Palestine?

History shows that this attitude is not limited to laying down arms and in extreme cases results in serving the enemy. It was because of this attitude that `Abdu'l-Bahā was awarded the title of Knighthood for his service to the invading forces.⁷³⁸ The same invading forces who in a few years, would lay the foundations for a nation whose very foundations were based on national and tribal prejudice: A Jewish country for a Jewish people. Is this how prejudice is removed?

This attitude was not only limited to `Abdu'l-Bahā'. During the Russian wars with Persia, Bahā'u'llāh was imprisoned for his alleged role in plotting to kill Nāṣir al-Dīn Shah. In a series of events, whose reason was never revealed, the Russian government exerted pressure on the Iranian government to free Bahā'u'llāh from prison. These efforts bore fruit and Bahā'u'llāh was released after four months. A tablet was revealed by Bahā'u'llāh to thank the Russian government:

In the days when this Wronged One was sore-afflicted in prison, the minister of the highly esteemed government (of Russia)—may God, glorified and exalted be He, assist him!—

⁷³⁷ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 3, pp. 105–106.

⁷³⁸ Baha'is relate `Abdu'l-Bahā's Knighthood to humanitarian services. This title is given to a person who serves the British Empire, not to someone who provides humanitarian services to people being oppressed under an invading army. What is more ironic, is the fact that the title of knighthood is provided by the invading forces, not the defenders.

exerted his utmost endeavor to compass My deliverance. Several times permission for My release was granted. Some of the `ulamās of the city, however, would prevent it. Finally, My freedom was gained through the solicitude and the endeavor of His Excellency the Minister . . . His Imperial Majesty, the Most Great Emperor—may God, exalted and glorified be He, assist him!—extended to Me for the sake of God his protection—a protection which has excited the envy and enmity of the foolish ones of the earth.⁷³⁹

Pay attention to Bahā'u'llāh's prayers for the Russian government. He asks God, twice, to "assist" the government whose country is invading his homeland! Why? Only because they secured his release from prison. Bahā'u'llāh doesn't even care that this government is the same government who is responsible for the deaths of thousands of people in his homeland in their bid to conquer it and take over its natural resources. It seems that the only thing he cares about is his own freedom.

Bahā'u'llāh claims that the Russians extended their protection for him "for the sake of God." One wonders if the Russians truly offered protection for the followers of a group who were inciting civil war in a country that they were at war with, merely "for the sake of God".

This does not mean that prejudice and zeal are justified in every case. Extreme neutrality is just as problematic as extreme prejudice. Defending one's country, family, or tribe during certain times of danger does not mean that one should defend every unjust action that happens in it. Clearly this is not a case of black and white.

Would it not have been better if Bahā'u'llāh had stuck with the Shia model of prejudice instead of presenting a radical extreme version? The first Shia Imam (who is often cited by Baha'i leaders) determines when it is justified by saying:

⁷³⁹ Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 106

**If one must have prejudice, then they should have prejudice
on virtuous morals, praiseworthy actions, and admirable
matters . . .**⁷⁴⁰

Should we not have prejudice towards the truth? Are truth and falsehood the same? Are the oppressed and the oppressor the same? When the Nazi's invaded France in World War II, should the French have laid down their arms and ignored the situation, because the entire earth is their homeland, not just France? This is a clear example of the classic situation in which, in an attempt to remedy one extreme, someone has fallen into the opposite extreme.

It is up to you to draw your own conclusions!



⁷⁴⁰ Sayyid Raḍī, *Nahj al-balāgha*, sermon 192.



**Bahā'u'llāh:
“Contradiction has and will not
ever have a way in the
sanctified realm of the Divine
Manifestations.”⁷⁴¹**

⁷⁴¹ Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 126.

1. Removing All Prejudice or Prohibition of Meeting with Non-Baha'is

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Have no prejudice and show no hatred towards any religion.⁷⁴²

Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā: Keep away from non-Baha'is and do not socialize with them.⁷⁴³

2. Having No Prejudice or Considering All Non-Baha'is Ignorant and Unreasonable?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Religious prejudice destroys the foundations of humanity.⁷⁴⁴

Bahā'u'llāh: Only Baha'is are knowledgeable and reasonable and non-Baha'is are ignorant and lack reason.⁷⁴⁵

⁷⁴² "Keep aloof from the scent of ignorant prejudice, enmity, vulgar hatred, and sexual, national and religious delusions, for they are all against God's religion and His satisfaction and will deprive mankind of God's graces . . . do not have the slightest hatred towards anyone from any nation, religion, tribe, sex, or land, rather show utmost compassion and friendship," Riyāḍ Qadīmī, *Gulzār-i ta'ālīm Bahā'ī*, pp. 366–367.

⁷⁴³ "Do not socialize with those who deny God (meaning non-Baha'is) and his signs and keep away from their kind," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 8, p. 39; "In it incumbent on ever soul to keep away from the wicked breath of the polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism)," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 8, p. 39; "Know that God has forbidden his friends from meeting with the polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism) and hypocrites," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 4, p. 280. for more quotes refer to chapter 2.

⁷⁴⁴ "The fifth Baha'i principle is that sexual prejudice, religious prejudice, spiritual prejudice, national prejudice, and political prejudice are the destroyers of human foundations," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 147.

⁷⁴⁵ "From now on nobody is to be called knowledgeable, except those who have decorated themselves with the garment of this New Affair (meaning those who have become Baha'is)," Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 138–139; "If today, someone grasps all of the knowledge on earth but stops at the word 'yes' (meaning does not become a Baha'i), the Lord will not pay attention to him (*ladī l-Ḥaqq madhkūr na*) and he will be considered as the most ignorant amongst the people," Bahā'u'llāh, *Iqtidārāt wa chand lauḥ dīgar*, p. 111; "The general criterion is what we mentioned and any soul who has success in it, meaning recognizes and realizes the Sunrise of Manifestation (meaning himself), will be mentioned in the Divine Book as someone who possesses reason or else he will be (mentioned as) ignorant even if he himself thinks that his reason equals that of the

3. Removing Prejudice or Claiming Each Baha'i worth More than a Million Non-Baha'is?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: People must not regard themselves superior to others.⁷⁴⁶

Bahā'u'llāh: "My friends are the pearls of [this] order and all others are earthly pebbles . . . a single one of these (Baha'is) is more precious than a million others (non-Baha'is),"⁷⁴⁷

4. Removing Prejudice or Depriving Non-Baha'is from Their Share of Inheritance?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: All people have equal rights.⁷⁴⁸

Bahā'u'llāh: Non-Baha'is do not inherit from their Baha'i parents.⁷⁴⁹

whole world," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Isḥrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 7, p. 160; "No one has denied or will deny what has been revealed by the Ancient Pen (meaning himself) in this Most Great Manifestation regarding society, unity, manners, rites, and being occupied with what has benefits for the people, except that he completely lacks reason," Bahā'u'llāh, *Iqtidārāt wa chand lauḥ dīgar*, p. 168.

⁷⁴⁶ "One of Bahā'u'llāh's teachings is mutual aid between humans. This aid is much greater than equality. It means that not only one must not see himself superior to others; rather, he must sacrifice his life and belongings for other people," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 3, p. 107.

⁷⁴⁷ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Isḥrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 4, p. 353.

⁷⁴⁸ "There is equality between people and complete brotherhood. Justice implies that the rights of humankind be protected and preserved and all have equal rights," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Isḥrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 30.

⁷⁴⁹ "Bahā'u'llāh states that non-Baha'is have no right to inherit from their Bahā'ī parents or relatives," Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 184.

5. Removing All Prejudice or Calling Non-Baha'is Animals

`Abdu'l-Bahā: The truth can only be exposed when all religions remove prejudice.⁷⁵⁰

Bahā'u'llāh: Non-Baha'is are animals.⁷⁵¹

6. Removing All Prejudice or Calling Non-Baha'is Bastards

`Abdu'l-Bahā: "This century, is the century of progress. These prejudices are unjustified. These are rooted in ignorance."⁷⁵²

Bahā'u'llāh: Non-Baha'is are Bastards⁷⁵³.

⁷⁵⁰ "The follower of Moses must put aside prejudice, the Christian must put aside prejudice, and the Buddhist must put aside prejudice. Not until this is performed will it be possible to expose the truth . . . [no one] should have prejudice," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Isḥrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p.18.

⁷⁵¹ "Today, according to the decree of the Point of Bayān (meaning the Bāb), those individuals who turn away from this Novel Affair (meaning Baha'ism) are deprived of the garb of being called and described [as humans?] and are assembled and mentioned as animals in the presence of God," Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 213; "Do not see the polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism) but as earthworms and their sounds but the buzzing of flies," Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'lā*, vol. 1, no. 20, p. 183; "O group of polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism), if you take pride in your name remaining amongst the animals or being mentioned amongst the livestock, then take pride in that for you are worthy of it," Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'lā*, vol. 2, no. 81, p. 452; "Oh you donkeys! Whatever God says is the truth and will not become void by the words of the polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism)," Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 174; "When the one who turned away from God halted (in accepting me) and fell off the path, in that moment his body left the garb of humanness and appeared and became visible in the skin of animals. Sanctified is He who changes the beings how he likes," Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 110.

⁷⁵² `Abd al-Ḥamīd Isḥrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 25.

⁷⁵³ "Whoever denies this apparent exalted luminous grace (meaning Baha'ism), it is worthy that he asks his state from his mother and he will soon be returned to the bottom of hell," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Isḥrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 4, pp. 355 and `Abd al-Ḥamīd Isḥrāq Khāwarī, *Ganj-i shāyghān*, p. 78; "Whoever has the enmity of this servant (meaning Bahā'u'llāh) in his heart, certainly Satan has entered their mother's bed," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Isḥrāq Khāwarī, *Ganj-i shāyghān*, p. 79.

7. Removing All Prejudice or Saying Non-Baha'is Are like Dry Wood That Are Only Worthy of Fire?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: We act to remove prejudice but others just talk.⁷⁵⁴

Bahā'u'llāh: Non-Baha'is are like dry wood that are only worthy of fire.⁷⁵⁵

8. Removing Prejudice or Depriving of All Graces, Those Who View Non-Baha'is as Humans?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: People must not regard themselves superior to others.⁷⁵⁶

Bahā'u'llāh: Whoever call my deniers humans, will be deprived of all of God's graces.⁷⁵⁷

⁷⁵⁴ "To reach the goal of (removing prejudice) we strive . . . but others just talk," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 99.

⁷⁵⁵ "Anyone who has a garden will not allow the dry trees to remain in the garden and will definitely cut them and throw them in fire, for dry wood is only worthy of fire. Thus, O inhabitants of my orchard, protect yourselves from the wicked poisonous breath and void breeze which is socializing with the polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism) and the unaware (*ghāfil*)," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idī-i āsimānī*, vol. 8, p. 39.

⁷⁵⁶ "One of Bahā'u'llāh's teachings is mutual aid between humans. This aid is much greater than equality. It means that not only one must not see himself superior to others; rather, he must sacrifice his life and belongings for other people," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 3, p. 107.

⁷⁵⁷ "From this day, any individual that mentions as human a single person from those who deny me—whether that [denier] has a high or low stature—they will be excluded from all of (God's) Merciful Graces, let alone trying to prove [those deniers] have dignity or stature," Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī*, p. 140.

9. Removing Racial Prejudice or Calling All Black Africans Irrational Savages?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Prejudice destroys the foundations of humanity.⁷⁵⁸

`Abdu'l-Bahā: The inhabitants of a land like Africa are *all* like wild savages and land-dwelling animals that lack common-sense and knowledge.⁷⁵⁹

10. Having No Prejudice or Saying Turks Deserve Ridiculous Answers?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: “In the presence of God there is no [such thing] as English, French, Turk, or Persian. To God they are all the same.”⁷⁶⁰

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Turks deserve ridiculous answers.⁷⁶¹

⁷⁵⁸ “The fifth Baha’i principle is that sexual prejudice, religious prejudice, spiritual prejudice, national prejudice, and political prejudice are the destroyers of human foundations,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 147.

⁷⁵⁹ “The inhabitants of a land like Africa are all like wild savages and land-dwelling animals that lack common-sense and knowledge and are all wild. There is not a single wise and civilized person among them,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 1, pp. 331; “The wild tribes have no superiority over animals. For example what is the difference between African blacks and American blacks? The [black Africans] are cows that God has created with human faces. The [black Americans] are civilized, intelligent, and have culture . . .” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 3, p. 48.

⁷⁶⁰ `Abd al-Hamīd Ishraq Khāwārī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 45-46.

⁷⁶¹ “When Djemal Pasha⁷⁶¹ . . . reached Acre⁷⁶¹ and asked to see me, I mounted a donkey and headed for his home. As soon as he saw me, he greeted me and sat me next to him and without hesitation said: “You are a corrupter of religion and that is why the government of Iran exiled you here . . .” I thought to myself that he is a Turk and I must give him a ridiculous and silencing answer,” Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Asrār al-āthār khuṣūṣī*, vol. 3, p. 42–43.

11. Having No Prejudice or Praising the Most Prejudice Based Religion to Ever Exist?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Religious prejudice destroys the foundations of humanity.⁷⁶²

The Bāb: Destroy all non-Bābī books.⁷⁶³ Massacre all non-Bābis and destroy their monuments.⁷⁶⁴ Teaching non-Bābī books is prohibited.⁷⁶⁵

Bahā'u'llāh: "I [swear by] He who in His hand is my soul and my essence, a single letter from the *Bayān* is dearer to me than everything that is in the heavens and the earth."⁷⁶⁶

12. Removing All Prejudice or Discrimination between Men and Women?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: All people have equal rights.⁷⁶⁷

Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā: Women are inferior to men,⁷⁶⁸ they take a smaller share of inheritance,⁷⁶⁹ and cannot be a member of the UHJ.⁷⁷⁰

⁷⁶² "The fifth Baha'i principle is that sexual prejudice, religious prejudice, spiritual prejudice, national prejudice, and political prejudice are the destroyers of human foundations," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 147.

⁷⁶³ The Bāb, *Farsi Bayān*: "Chapter six of the sixth unit which is about destroying all books but those that have been written or will be written about this order (meaning the Bab's creed)"; "The utterance of the [book or religion] of Bayān in the day of the appearance of his Highness A'lā (meaning the Bāb) was to behead, burn the books, destroy the monuments, and massacre [everyone] but those who believed [in the Bāb's religion] and verified it," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt: 1330 AH), vol. 2, p. 266.

⁷⁶⁴ "The utterance of the [book or religion] of Bayān in the day of the appearance of his Highness A'lā (meaning the Bāb) was to behead, burn the books, destroy the monuments, and massacre [everyone] but those who believed [in the Bāb's religion] and verified it," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt: 1330 AH), vol. 2, p. 266.

⁷⁶⁵ The Bāb, *Farsi Bayān*: "The tenth chapter of the fourth unit which is about [the decree] that it is prohibited to teach any book but the book of *Bayān*."

⁷⁶⁶ Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Asrār al-āthār khuṣūṣī*, vol. 5, p. 333.

⁷⁶⁷ "There is equality between people and complete brotherhood. Justice implies that the rights of humankind be protected and preserved and all have equal rights," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 30.



A Summary and Conclusion of the Three Perspectives:

1) Is Removing All Prejudice a new principle?

The extreme form of removing all kinds of prejudice brought forward by Bahā'u'llāh is novel to an extent but nevertheless incorrect and unacceptable.

2) Did the leaders of Baha'ism act upon this principle?

There are numerous documented instances where Baha'i leaders have expressed, religious, racial, and sexual prejudice. This shows that those who created this principle didn't adhere to it themselves.

3) Is this principle rational and logical?

No rational person will accept that all kinds of prejudice and zeal must be removed. In other religions such as Islam, this fact has been explained by pointing out that having prejudice on what is right and favorable is not only good but also defensible.

⁷⁶⁸ "A woman's question was referred to him who had asked why hasn't God made any woman Prophets and why have all Divine Manifestations been men. He answered: 'Although women and men share the same capacities and abilities, there is definitely no doubt that men are superior and stronger. Even in animals like pigeons, sparrows, peacocks, and other [birds] this advantage is visible,'" Maḥmūd Zaraqānī, *Badā'i` al-āthār*, vol. 1, p. 153.

⁷⁶⁹ The deceased's property are split into 2520 portions. Out of these, 1080 are for the children, 390 for the wives, fathers 330, mothers 270, brothers 210, sisters 150, teachers 90 (ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 10, p. 117–119).

⁷⁷⁰ ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 27, p. 219.

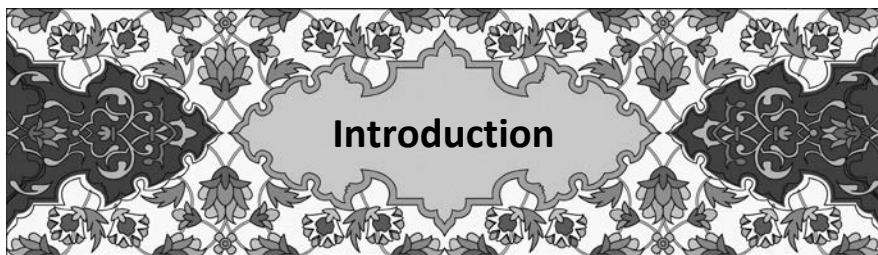
CHAPTER 6:

The Equalization of the Means of Livelihood for All Humanity



“Every human being has the right to live; they have a right to rest, and to a certain amount of well-being. As a rich man is able to live in his palace surrounded by luxury and the greatest comfort, so should a poor man be able to have the necessities of life. Nobody should die of hunger; everybody should have sufficient clothing; one man should not live in excess while another has no possible means of existence.”⁷⁷¹

⁷⁷¹ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Paris Talks*, pp. 131–132.



**The Equalization of the Means
of Livelihood for All Humanity
means that universal wealth
must be distributed in such a
way that all people—rich or
poor—live in peace and
tranquility.**



‘Abdu’l-Bahā says:

People are of different [social] classes. Some are extremely wealthy others extremely poor. One lives in a splendid palace whilst another doesn’t even have a hole [to live in]. One has all kinds of food on his table another doesn’t even have a

single loaf of bread . . . thus the means of livelihood for people must be remedied.⁷⁷²

He stresses that the Equalization of the Means of Livelihood, does not mean that everyone should have equal wealth, rather, it means that the wealthy should help the needy:

Remedying the means of livelihood for humans is necessary. [This does not] mean equality . . . Humans cannot be all the same because they are different in creation. Some have first-degree intelligence, others have medium intelligence, and others are completely deprived of it. Is it possible for someone who has very high intelligence to be equal to someone who has no intelligence at all?⁷⁷³

He believes that people of all social classes must live a tranquil life irrespective of their class and position:

All must become needless and everyone must have tranquility proportional to their position and status. Just as a ruler has honor and is immersed in blessings, the poor must too have daily sustenance and must not be left in great abjection and be deprived of this living world by starvation.⁷⁷⁴

`Abdu'l-Bahā states that there must exist different social ranks and classes:

We must strive for the eternal salvation of humankind. In this respect, laws are needed so [social] classes [and differences] remain and [at the same time] the members of the community be in complete peace. Because a community is

⁷⁷² `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 134.

⁷⁷³ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 134.

⁷⁷⁴ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Egypt), vol. 1, pp. 32–33.

like a [military] camp that needs generals, majors, lieutenants, and privates. All members cannot be generals or privates. There must be [different] classes and different ranks are needed.⁷⁷⁵

`Abdu'l-Bahā clearly expresses that social ranks and classes will not be abolished. The Baha'i vision is to create a community with moderate social classes:

It is better that moderation be introduced. Moderation means a series of laws and systems must be put in place which prevent some people from unnecessary accumulation of wealth and [at the same time] provide the necessary needs of the public.⁷⁷⁶

`Abdu'l-Bahā further iterates that this principle cannot be implemented unless laws are passed and legislation is introduced which oblige the wealthy to give some of their wealth to the needy:

It is not acceptable that some are extremely wealthy whilst others are extremely poor. Reforms must be introduced and laws must be implemented so that all enjoy welfare and well-being. It shouldn't be such that one is poverty-stricken and another enjoys utmost opulence. For instance, a wealthy person who has great wealth must not allow another person to remain in a state of poverty and must consider his needs so that he reaches peace. This must be enforced by law and the wealthy must give the surplus of their wealth to the needy themselves. The laws of a country should be such that according to God's tradition everyone has tranquility.⁷⁷⁷

⁷⁷⁵ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 138.

⁷⁷⁶ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 142.

⁷⁷⁷ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 135.

`Abdu'l-Bahā repeats a few times that there must be a law or legislation that prevents the accumulation of wealth by the wealthy and causes them to give the surplus of their revenue to the needy. This clearly shows that this principle must be enforced through the use of legal means and possibly by using excessive force. In an unusual change of mind, he immediately claims that distribution of wealth by the wealthy must be performed out of free will not force:

The wealthy must have mercy on the poor, but out of free will not by force. It is useless if force is used. There must not be force but a general law by which everyone will know their duty.⁷⁷⁸

He then continues by presenting an example on how this should be implemented. Amazingly, the example he presents still relies on legal obligation like all the previous quotes. Whatever `Abdu'l-Bahā is saying, contradicts itself and does not make any sense, whether in theory or in action.

⁷⁷⁸ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 148.



Is the Equalization of the Means of Livelihood for All Humanity a New Principle?

Modern economic movements date back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. All these movements have the common belief that society is economically flawed and not in favor of the general population. The doctrines proposed by these movements were all brought forward with the promise of reform and better means of livelihood for the people. Many of these doctrines, when implemented, failed to perform as promised and were put aside.

The current principle that the Baha'i leadership has proposed, is a solution to the economic problems of the modern world. How this model will perform when implemented has yet to be seen.

Religious teachings about social justice have existed ever since antiquity. This is a goal most, if not all, religions have been striving to achieve. The system proposed by Shia Islam, is based on two different actions: The first is a legal obligation which is enforced by the government and the second is a religious obligation, which is unto the adherents to apply to and is not enforced by the government.

In the first form, a certain percentage of certain kinds of wealth, when exceeding a fixed amount, are paid to the government to be used for the welfare of the general population and also the needy. In the second form, the wealthy are recommended to pay charity to the needy. It is up to them to decide to pay these alms and they are in no way obliged to do so although God will judge them in the hereafter for these actions:

God has placed the sustenance of the needy amongst the wealth of the wealthy. No poor person starves but because of the benefiting of a wealthy person. God will question [the wealthy] because of [these actions].⁷⁷⁹

Some of the elements of the model proposed by `Abdu'l-Bahā are strikingly similar to the Islamic model. Borrowing elements from Islam is so common, that when `Abdu'l-Bahā is asked about the tax called *zakāt*, he replies:

We ordered that the *zakāt* be paid as has been revealed in the Quran.⁷⁸⁰

Even though both religious and social movements before Bahā'u'llāh had all strived to reach this goal, `Abdu'l-Bahā claims this principle is new and no religion has spoken about it:

He has set forth the solution and provided the remedy for the economic question. No religious Books of the past Prophets speak of this important human problem.⁷⁸¹

⁷⁷⁹ Sayyid Raḍī, *Nahj al-balāgha*, saying no. 328.

⁷⁸⁰ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīnīy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 12, p. 149.

⁷⁸¹ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 455.



Did the Founders of the Baha’i Creed Follow the Goal of Equalization of the Means of Livelihood for All Humanity?

1- Confiscating the wealth of all non-Bābīs:

Bab had given orders to confiscate the wealth of all who didn’t believe in him:

The fifth chapter of the fifth unit which is about the decree of taking the property of those who do not believe in [the religion] of Bayan and giving it back if they become believers in this religion, except in the lands where taking [property] is not possible.⁷⁸²

2- All kinds of outrageous fines for Bābīs

In the book of Bayān, for every misdemeanor committed, an outrageous fine has to be paid to the Bāb. For instance:

⁷⁸² The Bāb, *Farsi Bayān*, unit 5, chap. 5.

You have been prohibited in the *Bayān* from having more than nineteen books. If you do so, you will be fined 19 mithqāls⁷⁸³ of gold.⁷⁸⁴

He who deliberately saddens another [follower of the Bāb], must pay a fine of nineteen mithqāls of gold, or else silver, or else must repent to God nineteen times.⁷⁸⁵

It has been destined in the sixth chapter to remember God's Oneness nineteen times [every day] from the beginning of night to the end of day. If you do not perform this [deliberately] after you have been informed, a fine of 19 mithqāls of fine diamonds will be imposed.⁷⁸⁶

After the aforementioned decree, he continues to order the remembrance of himself, and other figures every day for nineteen times and imposes the following fines if such an act is not performed: nineteen mithqāls of gold, five mithqāls of red rubies, and five mithqāls of yellow rubies. The Bab's writings are replete with fines of this form.

3- Loans with Interest and Usury

Usury has been prohibited in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam:

If you lend money to one of my people among you who is needy, do not treat it like a business deal; charge no interest.⁷⁸⁷

⁷⁸³ Each mithqāl is equal to about 3.6 grams.

⁷⁸⁴ The Bāb, *Arabic Bayān*, unit 11, chap. 7.

⁷⁸⁵ The Bāb, *Farsi Bayān*, unit 7, chap. 18.

⁷⁸⁶ The Bāb, *Lauḥ haykal al-dīn*, chap. 6, p. 3.

⁷⁸⁷ Exodus, 22:25

Do not take interest or any profit from them, but fear your God, so that they may continue to live among you. You must not lend them money at interest or sell them food at a profit.⁷⁸⁸

And for taking interest, which was forbidden, and for consuming the people's money unjustly, we have prepared for the disbelievers among them a painful retribution.⁷⁸⁹

Although lending with interest and usury are profitable for the lender, they are a pain and cause of hardship for the borrower who is usually in need and has financial problems. Bahā'u'llāh, without foreseeing the outcomes of his actions, announces that loans with interest are permissible:

We see many people who are in need of [these kinds of loans]. If there is no profit [in the loan] the affairs will not move forward. It is very rare that someone becomes successful in tolerating and heeding someone who is the same gender as himself, his countryman, or brethren, and gives them a loan without interest. So, as a favor to [God's] servants, we made loans with interest like all other forms of deals which people make with each-other. The profit gained [by lending] money, is now permissible, pure, and clean, because this order has been revealed from the Sky of Ordinance, so that the people of earth can be engrossed in remembering/speaking about the *Beloved of the World*, with utmost peace, tranquility, happiness, and pleasure.⁷⁹⁰

⁷⁸⁸ Leviticus, 25:36–37

⁷⁸⁹ Quran 4:161

⁷⁹⁰ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 24, p. 202.

Bahā'u'llāh's justification for allowing interest is "If there is no profit [in the loan] the affairs will not move forward." Didn't God know this when He prohibited this act in all other religions?

He further claims that lending with interest is a favor from God so that people would become engrossed in remembering him with peace and tranquility. The only thing that is clear is having a loan with interest neither brings peace nor tranquility.

Apparently, this new law decreed by Bahā'u'llāh had a devastating effect on the livelihood of Baha'is who adhered to it. This effect was such that `Abdu'l-Bahā ordered his followers to refrain from these kinds of loans in the strictest sense:

From now on do not give loans with interest to anyone because `Abdu'l-Bahā dislikes interest even though it is legitimate. Only give [loans] without interest and take no loan with interest from anybody.⁷⁹¹

Again, there is a clear contradiction between Bahā'u'llāh and his son. It is not clear why `Abdu'l-Bahā, who is only allowed to interpret Bahā'u'llāh's laws, directly orders his followers to disobey his father's orders and deprives them of the "favor to [God's] servants."

4- Outrageous fines for fornication and adultery

God hath imposed a fine on every adulterer and adulteress, to be paid to the House of Justice nine mithqāls of gold, to be doubled if they should repeat the offence . . . Although the term translated here as adultery refers, in its broadest sense, to unlawful sexual intercourse between either married or unmarried individuals (see note 36 for a definition of the term), `Abdu'l-Bahā has specified that the punishment here

⁷⁹¹ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwārī, *Ganjīnī-y-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 24, p. 204.

prescribed is for sexual intercourse between persons who are unmarried . . . In relation to the application of the fine, Bahā'u'llāh clearly specifies that each succeeding fine is double the preceding one; thus the fine imposed increases in geometrical progression.⁷⁹²

Unmarried people who engage in acts of sexual intercourse—especially teenagers— will likely frequently perform such acts. The number of times copulation occurs in a year can easily reach one hundred times if this shameful act is performed only twice a week. The amount of gold payable by each of these two people equals to: $3.6 \text{ grams} * 9 * 2^{100} = 41071879447394632608493183854 \text{ kilograms}$, which is fairly equal to 8000 times the weight of the earth. Just in case you are wondering, the fine will be about 34000 kilos of Gold if copulation is performed only 20 times. We'll leave it to up to the readers to judge the practicality of these luminous laws. One wonders how a society governed by this law will ever be able to get closer to economic justice and attaining a means of livelihood for all people.

In fact this law is so outrageous that, as is standard for problematic Baha'i laws, its implementation has been postponed until a future time:

The imposition of this fine is intended for a future condition of society, at which time the law will be supplemented and applied by the Universal House of Justice.⁷⁹³

5- Excommunication and Shunning

Excommunicated members of the community have to break all ties with their family members. If the breadwinner of the family is excommunicated, his/her family will be left with no source of income.

⁷⁹² Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, pp. 200–202.

⁷⁹³ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 201.

Likewise, if a dependent is excommunicated, they will have to fend off for themselves and find an alternative source of sustenance. Is this how the *means of livelihood are equalized* in this creed?

6- Deceased's living residence

According to Baha'i law a deceased's living residence is solely the property of his oldest son even if the deceased has left no other wealth behind:

The living residence belongs to the oldest living son, whether or not the deceased has any other wealth. The oldest living son also takes his share from the other belongings.⁷⁹⁴

How can the Equalization of the Means of Livelihood for All Humanity be achieved by such laws?

7- Treatment of Thieves

Where does a thief receive sustenance from after being punished according to Baha'i law?

Exile and imprisonment are decreed for the thief, and, on the third offence, place ye a mark upon his brow so that, thus identified, he may not be accepted in the cities of God and His countries.⁷⁹⁵

If a thief is caught for the third time a mark must be put on his brow so that he will not be accepted in any city or country. Thus he will be completely deprived of all means of livelihood! Is this law problematic? No problem, this is how it is resolved:

⁷⁹⁴ `Abd al-Hamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīnīy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 10, p. 128.

⁷⁹⁵ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, pp. 35–36.

The punishments for theft are intended for a future condition of society, when they will be supplemented and applied by the Universal House of Justice.⁷⁹⁶

⁷⁹⁶ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 198.



Is This Principle Correct From a Rational and Logical Perspective?

If the purpose of this principle is the assistance of the needy by the wealthy and implementation of a series of laws and legislations which help in closing the income gap between different groups of the community, then yes it is completely logical and rational. The problem in reaching such a goal, is to bring forward a practical program and to introduce a system which allows the efficient implementation of such a program.

`Abdu'l-Bahā believes the only program that can reach this goal is the one devised by Bahā'u'llāh:

The economic problem will not be completely solved but by these teachings, rather, it is impossible [to solve them by any other method].⁷⁹⁷

He believes that to overcome economic problems, the first group in which reform must take place in are the farmers because they make up the bulk of the working class:

The economic problem [must be solved] by starting from the farmers until it reaches other groups. For the population of farmers is many more times higher than other [working]

⁷⁹⁷ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 135.

classes. Thus, it is worthy to start from the farmers and farmers are the foremost working class of the community. Yes, in each village a council consisting of the most rational people of the village must be set up and the village must be managed by that council. A public storehouse must be built and a secretary assigned to it. At the time of harvest, with the knowledge of the council, some of the produce from [all farmers] must be taken to supply the storehouse.⁷⁹⁸

What `Abdu'l-Bahā proposes is neither novel nor exceptional. The only point that is somewhat troubling is the fact that the poor farmers and peasants have been selected as the first class that must be reformed. This reformation is in no way helpful to them because they must give up some of their produce for the welfare of others, while the role of other groups in this system has not been specified.

The justification for starting with the peasants is even more interesting: they make up a larger portion of the community. Would it not be better to start with the minority groups who hold the largest wealth in the community and not the majority groups who are themselves the neediest? It seems awfully convenient for the small elite controlling all the wealth that it is the farmers and pheasants who should take the first step.

Four means have been devised by Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā to Equalize the means of livelihood to allow the flow and distribution of wealth and prevent it from accumulating in the possession of a small minority:

1- Inheritance

⁷⁹⁸ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, pp. 135–136.

Inheritance is distributed amongst seven groups.⁷⁹⁹ Under some circumstances portions of the inheritance are handed over to the Universal House of Justice. If deemed appropriate, the UHJ can use some of this money for equalization of the means of livelihood or for propagating Baha'i beliefs. Inheritance is only distributed in the aforementioned manner if the deceased does not leave a will. If the deceased has specified in his will for his wealth to be distributed in a manner which goes against the equalization of the means of livelihood, no one can protest his or her decision.

Furthermore, inheritance usually stays in the family and is not distributed in the community to help those who are in need.

In any case, the laws of inheritance in the Baha'i creed do not have a meaningful influence in achieving the goal of the current principle, and are sometimes in conflict with it. For instance, as we already pointed out, the living residence of the deceased becomes the property of his eldest son, even if the deceased has left no other wealth.

2- Tax

In the Baha'i creed two kinds of taxes are payable. The first is paid to the government according to the laws of each country. The government then does with these taxes what it wishes, whether waging war or helping the needy. This tax has nothing to do with equalizing the means of livelihood.

The second is called *`ushr* (one tenth) which is a religious tax imposed on Baha'is in accordance with Baha'i law. `Abdu'l-Bahā says:

It is not fair to put the same tax on both the rich and the needy. The needy must be exempted from paying tax. It is not fair that the needy pay one tenth as tax and the wealthy pay

⁷⁹⁹ The deceased's property are split into 2520 portions. Out of these, 1080 are for the children, 390 for the wives, fathers 330, mothers 270, brothers 210, sisters 150, teachers 90 (ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 10, pp. 117–119).

one tenth too . . . laws are needed [to address this] issue . . . I will tell you God's law [regarding this issue] . . . the farmers plant crops in a village and produce is harvested. One tenth of the harvest is taken from both the rich and the needy [as tax]. Then a public storehouse is erected in the village and both the tax and the produce are gathered there. It is then possible to see who is wealthy and who is poor. Nothing will be taken from the farmers who have been able to produce only enough to feed their families and procure their daily needs. All the produce and taxes are now in the general storehouse. If there are crippled people in the village, their minimum sustenance will be provided from the storehouse. On the other hand, a wealthy person who [for instance] needs only fifty thousand kilos for a living but has produced five hundred thousand kilos will be taxed twice as much (meaning one fifth) and whatever remains in the storehouse at the end of the year will be employed for general use.⁸⁰⁰

In this plan which is slightly different from the previous one, the poor still remain poor and the rich, rich. In the aforementioned system, the poorer farmer classes achieve nothing extra from the taxes and no equalization of the means of livelihood is achieved. The only group that benefits from this system are a small number of crippled people.

Thus, the wealthy classes still keep the bulk of their wealth and accumulate it while the poorer classes retain what they had before and nothing is added to it. The plan devised by `Abdu'l-Bahā does not help in the flow of wealth from the wealthy to the poor and no *equalization* is achieved. It may sound interesting on paper, but in action achieves nothing novel. It resembles the tax systems employed in all governments.

⁸⁰⁰ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, pp. 148–150.

3- Huqūq Allah

Huqūq Allah or God's Share, is a form of tax Baha'is must pay to the Universal House of Justice. When a Baha'i person's wealth exceeds the price of nineteen mithqāls of gold, 19 percent of the wealth must be handed over to the UHJ.⁸⁰¹ This tax is then used by the UHJ in whatever affairs they deem appropriate and is in no way guaranteed to be used for the equalization of the means of livelihood.

A point worth considering is the striking similarity between this tax and the tax of *Khums* in Shia Islam. In Shia Islam, 20 percent of the annual surplus of a person's expenses are paid as *Khums* tax. Out of this 20 percent, half is directly given to poverty-stricken descendants of Prophet Muḥammad (it is forbidden to give these people normal charity). At least in the Shia method, some form of equalization of the means of livelihood is achieved, because wealth is directly given to the needy, but in the Baha'i version, the wealth is given to the UHJ.

4- Zakāt tax

As we previously mentioned, this tax has been directly copied from Islamic teachings:

We ordered that the zakāt be paid as has been revealed in the Quran.⁸⁰²

As we can see, the Baha'i system proposed for the equalization of the means of livelihood is based on systems that were already implemented in government taxing systems or have been borrowed from Islamic Sharia. The irony is that the proposed system has a minimal effect on the *Equalization of the Means of Livelihood for All Humanity*, for wealth

⁸⁰¹ See `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 9, pp. 94 & 101.

⁸⁰² `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 12, p. 149.

is not redistributed among the needy in a manner which helps close the gap between the rich and the poor, rather, it is merely a method for taxing the people of society.

It is up to you to draw your own conclusions!





**Bahā'u'llāh:
“Contradiction has and will not
ever have a way in the
sanctified realm of the Divine
Manifestations.”⁸⁰³**

⁸⁰³Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 126.

1. Is Equalizing the Means of Livelihood a New Principle?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: Former religious books have not spoken about this problem.⁸⁰⁴

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: “We ordered that the zakāt be paid as has been revealed in the Quran.”⁸⁰⁵

2. Is Usury Good or Bad? Does ‘Abdu’l-Bahā Hate Bahā’u’llāh’s Favors to the People?

‘Bahā’u’llāh: We made usury legal as a favor to God’s servants.⁸⁰⁶

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: Even though usury is allowed no one is allowed to engage in such an act because I hate it.⁸⁰⁷

3. Helping the Needy a Legal Obligation or Voluntary?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: The wealthy must voluntarily help the poor.⁸⁰⁸

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: Helping the needy must be enforced by law.⁸⁰⁹

⁸⁰⁴ “”He has set forth the solution and provided the remedy for the economic question. No religious Books of the past Prophets speak of this important human problem,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 455.

⁸⁰⁵ ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i hudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 12, p. 149.

⁸⁰⁶ “So, as a favor to [God’s] servants, we made loans with interest like all other forms of deals which people make with each-other. The profit gained [by lending] money, is now permissible, pure, and clean, because this order has been revealed from the Sky of Ordinance, so that the people of earth can be engrossed in remembering/speaking about the *Beloved of the World*, with utmost peace, tranquility, happiness, and pleasure,” ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i hudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 24, p. 202.

⁸⁰⁷ “From now on do not give loans with interest to anyone because ‘Abdu’l-Bahā dislikes interest even though it is legitimate. Only give [loans] without interest and take no loan with interest from anybody,” ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i hudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 24, p. 204.

⁸⁰⁸ “The wealthy must have mercy on the poor, but out of free will not by force. It is useless if force is used,” ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 148.

⁸⁰⁹ “For instance, a wealthy person who has great wealth must not allow another person to remain in a state of poverty and must consider his needs so that he reaches peace. This must be enforced

4. Equalization of Means of Livelihood or Paying Thousands of Tons of Gold to the UHJ?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: Remedying the means of livelihood for humans is necessary.⁸¹⁰

Bahā’u’llāh: After 20 times of adultery pay 34 tons of gold to the UHJ and after 100 times, 8000 times the weight of earth.⁸¹¹

5. Equalization of the Means of Livelihood or Depriving Some of Any Livelihood at All?

When the Baha’i kingdom materializes thieves⁸¹² and excommunicated individuals⁸¹³ are kicked out of the community and are deprived of means of livelihood.

by law and the wealthy must give the surplus of their wealth to the needy themselves,” ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 135.

⁸¹⁰ ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 134.

⁸¹¹ “God hath imposed a fine on every adulterer and adulteress, to be paid to the House of Justice nine mithqāls of gold, to be doubled if they should repeat the offence . . . Although the term translated here as adultery refers, in its broadest sense, to unlawful sexual intercourse between either married or unmarried individuals (see note 36 for a definition of the term), ‘Abdu’l-Bahā has specified that the punishment here prescribed is for sexual intercourse between persons who are unmarried . . . In relation to the application of the fine, Bahā’u’llāh clearly specifies that each succeeding fine is double the preceding one; thus the fine imposed increases in geometrical progression,” Bahā’u’llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, pp. 200–202.

⁸¹² “Exile and imprisonment are decreed for the thief, and, on the third offence, place ye a mark upon his brow so that, thus identified, he may not be accepted in the cities of God and His countries,” Bahā’u’llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, pp. 35–36.

⁸¹³ No one is allowed to speak or interact with these individuals.

6. Must There Be Complete Equality between All People?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: There must be complete equality between all people.⁸¹⁴

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: Complete equality is not possible in the community because people have different ranks and are from different classes.⁸¹⁵

7. Has God Made Distinctions between People?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: God has created people without any differences or distinctions.⁸¹⁶

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: People have different degrees of intelligence.⁸¹⁷

⁸¹⁴ “There is equality between people and complete brotherhood. Justice implies that the rights of humankind be protected and preserved and all have equal rights,” ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwārī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 30.

⁸¹⁵ “We must strive for the eternal salvation of humankind. In this respect, laws are needed so [social] classes [and differences] remain and [at the same time] the members of the community be in complete peace. Because a community is like a [military] camp that needs generals, majors, lieutenants, and privates. All members cannot be generals or privates. There must be [different] classes and different ranks are needed,” ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwārī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 138.

⁸¹⁶ “The God of the world created all [humans] from clay and created everyone from one element, created all from one progeny, created all in one land, and created [all] under the shadow of one sky, has created them with common emotions, and did not put any differences. He created everyone the same and gives all sustenance, nurtures all, protects all, and is kind to all. He has put no differences in any grace or mercy,” ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwārī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 42.

⁸¹⁷ “Remedying the means of livelihood for humans is necessary. [This does not] mean equality . . . Humans cannot be all the same because they are different in creation. Some have first-degree intelligence, others have medium intelligence, and others are completely deprived of it. Is it possible for someone who has very high intelligence to be equal to someone who has no intelligence at all,” ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwārī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 134.



A Summary and Conclusion of the Three Perspectives:

1) Is the Equalization of the Means of Livelihood for All Humanity a new principle?

All previous religions and most economic movements, have in one form or another, strived to achieve this goal and to narrow the gap between the rich and the poor. Wishing for this to happen will bear no fruit unless an efficient method is implemented to achieve this goal. The methods put forward by the Baha'i creed are mostly similar to methods already legislated in Islam or proposed by advocates of economic movements. Thus the claim that this principle is novel is baseless.

2) Did the leaders of Baha'ism act upon this principle?

We showed a number of Baha'i laws which go against this principle. These, are all a confirmation of the superficiality of this slogan in Baha'ism.

3) Is this principle rational and logical?

Equalizing the means of livelihood and narrowing the gap between the rich and the poor is definitely logical and a wish all humanity and religions had. In the Baha'i creed, it is claimed that the only method which can be used to reach this goal is the one put forward by Bahā'u'llāh. A quick analysis of this method shows that it lacks a means to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor and at most can only help the extremely poverty-stricken.

CHAPTER 7:

Establishment of a Universal House of Justice and Supreme Tribunal⁸¹⁸

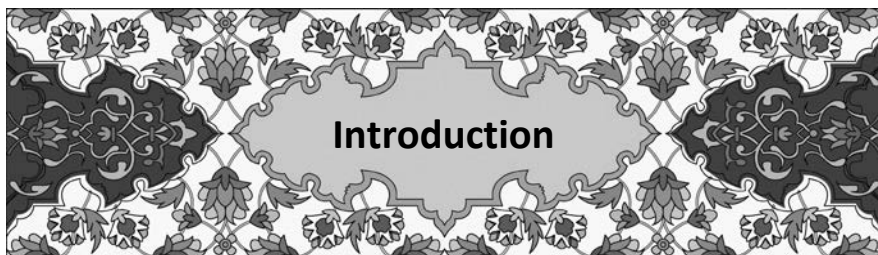


“The world is in the need of universal peace. The world will not rest unless universal peace is announced. The governments and nations must create a supreme tribunal to which differences are referred to and that supreme tribunal will settle them.”⁸¹⁹



⁸¹⁸ As we already mentioned in the introduction, `Abdu'l-Bahā mentions the principle of “The Equality of Rights,” as the seventh principle. Since this topic is discussed in detail in the principles of “The Oneness of Humanity” and “The Equality of Men and Women,” we have replaced it with the subject of the Universal House of Justice and the Supreme Tribunal.

⁸¹⁹ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 48.



The Universal House of Justice (UHJ) is an institution made up of nine people who are selected by ballot and work under the supervision of the Guardian of the Cause of God. The supreme tribunal is a committee which governs all world affairs with representatives from all nations of the world.



The Universal House of Justice (UHJ) is the highest governing body of the Baha'i administrative organization. Its establishment was originally proposed by Bahā'u'llāh but he failed to establish it. After Bahā'u'llāh, `Abdu'l-Bahā too tried in vain to establish it. Shoghi aspired to achieve this goal but he also failed. Even with all the spiritual and material sources at their disposal, the Baha'i prophet, the interpreter of his words, and the Guardian of the Cause of God, all failed to realize this dream.

The Baha'i community is administrated using two complementary sources. The first is in charge of legislation which is made up of the following:

- The rulers and constitutions of the nations Baha'is reside in
- Bahā'u'llāh's orders and writings
- The Universal House of Justice.

The second is in charge of interpreting and paraphrasing Baha'i laws and orders and consists of `Abdu'l-Bahā and after him the Guardians of the Cause of God who are Shoghi⁸²⁰ and his male descendants.⁸²¹

We will now proceed with analyzing the groups which constitute these sources.

⁸²⁰ "Bahā'u'llāh designated `Abdu'l-Bahā, His eldest Son, as His Successor and the Interpreter of His Teachings. `Abdu'l-Bahā in His turn appointed His eldest grandson, Shoghi Effendi, to succeed Him as interpreter of the holy Writ and Guardian of the Cause. The interpretations of `Abdu'l-Bahā and Shoghi Effendi are considered divinely guided and are binding on the Bahā'īs," Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 221.

⁸²¹ "O my loving friends! After the passing away of this wronged one, it is incumbent upon the Aghsān (Branches), the Afnān (Twigs) of the Sacred Lote-Tree, the Hands (pillars) of the Cause of God and the loved ones of the Abhā Beauty to turn unto Shoghi Effendi—the youthful branch branched from the two hallowed and sacred Lote-Trees and the fruit grown from the union of the two offshoots of the Tree of Holiness,—as he is the sign of God, the chosen branch, the Guardian of the Cause of God, he unto whom all the Aghsān, the Afnān, the Hands of the Cause of God and His loved ones must turn. He is the Interpreter of the Word of God and after him will succeed the first-born of his lineal descendents," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Will and Testament of `Abdu'l-Bahā*, p. 11.

1- Rulers and National Constitutions

As opposed to all other religions, Baha'is must adhere to the orders of the kings and governments they live in regardless of whether these laws are correct, incorrect, moral, or oppressive. Bahā'u'llāh argues that since God has granted the kings and rulers authority over their lands, no one is allowed to oppose or disobey them:

God Mighty and Majestic be He, has granted the evident lands to the rulers. No one is allowed to oppose the verdict of the heads of the country.⁸²²

Every nation must have a high regard for the position of its sovereign, must be submissive unto him, must carry out his behests, and hold fast his authority. The sovereigns of the earth have been and are the manifestations of the power, the grandeur and the majesty of God.⁸²³

‘Abdu’l-Bahā too, orders Baha'is to obey the rulers and kings:

No movement—minor or major—must be made without the consent and permission of the government. Whoever makes the slightest movement without the permission of the government will have disobeyed the Blessed Affair (meaning the Baha'i creed) and no excuse will be accepted from him. God's definite order is that the government must be obeyed. This [order] neither needs to be paraphrased nor interpreted. An example of obeying the government is this: not a single word can be published without the government's permission. The duty of God's Friends is to obey and submit to the

⁸²² Bahā'u'llāh, *Iqtidārāt wa chand lauḥ dīgar*, p. 324.

⁸²³ Bahā'u'llāh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 89.

government whether [that government is] a state or constitutional.⁸²⁴

According to Baha'i teachings, government orders must be preferred over Baha'i laws:

The laws revealed by Bahā'u'llāh in the Aqdas are, whenever practicable and not in direct conflict with the Civil Law of the land, absolutely binding on every believer or Bahā'ī institution whether in the East or in the West.⁸²⁵

This means that regardless of the government being just or unjust, right or wrong, Baha'is must adhere to its rules and orders even if it means disobeying their own religious decrees!

Although `Abdu'l-Bahā had declared that "God's definite order is that the government must be obeyed. This [order] neither needs to be paraphrased or interpreted," and neither him nor Bahā'u'llāh had announced any exception with regard to this law, Shoghi insists on implementing his own interpretation of these words. Shoghi claims that governments must only be obeyed if they impose limits on Baha'i administrative affairs. In matters of belief no compromise is allowed and Baha'is must disobey the government even if they are killed or banished:

Obedience to the state is so vital a principal of the Cause that should the authorities in . . . [sic] decide to-day to prevent the Baha'is from holding any meeting or publishing any literature they should obey . . . [sic] But, as already pointed out, such an allegiance is confined merely to administrative matters which if checked can only retard the progress of the Faith for some time. In matters of belief, however, no compromise whatever

⁸²⁴ `Abd al-Hamīd Ishrāq Khāwārī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 75, pp. 463–464.

⁸²⁵ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 6.

should be allowed, even though the outcome of it be death or expulsion (From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, February 11, 1934).⁸²⁶

According to the government rules of some countries, Baha'is are not allowed to teach or preach their religion amongst non-Baha'is. These orders are blatantly ignored by the Baha'i community under the disguise of discrimination and freedom of religion. Ironically, Baha'is gladly oblige to similar laws in Israel.

2- Bahā'u'llāh's Orders and Writings

The laws legislated by Bahā'u'llāh are incomplete and address very few issues. To remedy this shortcoming, Bahā'u'llāh has put it up to the UHJ to fill in the gaps regarding the laws that he had not decreed:

It is incumbent upon the Trustees of the House of Justice to take counsel together regarding those things which have not outwardly been revealed in the Book, and to enforce that which is agreeable to them. God will verily inspire them with whatsoever He willeth.⁸²⁷

For instance, the punishment for robbery has been declared to be:

Exile and imprisonment are decreed for the thief, and, on the third offence, place ye a mark upon his brow so that, thus identified, he may not be accepted in the cities of God and His countries.⁸²⁸

⁸²⁶ Helen Bassett Hornby, *Lights of Guidance: A Bahā'ī Reference File*, chap. XXXIX, no. 1455.

⁸²⁷ Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā'u'llāh* (US Bahā'ī Publishing Trust, 1991 [first pocket-size edition]), p. 23.

⁸²⁸ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, pp. 35–36.

But nothing has been said about the conditions of the thief and the severity of his actions that lead to such punishments. The order given to Baha'is is:

All details concerning the nature of the mark, how the mark is to be applied, how long it must be worn, on what conditions it may be removed, as well as the seriousness of various degrees of theft have been left by Bahā'u'llāh for the Universal House of Justice to determine when the law is applied.⁸²⁹

According to Shoghi Effendi, Bahā'u'llāh's laws are incomplete:

Severed from the no less essential institution of the Universal House of Justice this same System of the Will of `Abdu'l-Bahā would be paralyzed in its action and would be powerless to fill in those gaps which the Author of the Kitāb-i-Aqdas has deliberately left in the body of His legislative and administrative ordinances.⁸³⁰

With Bahā'u'llāh's laws and orders incomplete and limited to only a few subjects, the UHJ is the only body that remains that can have a meaningful effect on the everyday lives of Baha'is.

If the laws brought by this new creed are incomplete and must be completed by a group of people who are perfectly capable of committing mistakes, then what advantage does this religion have over ordinary legislative bodies in every country that consist of a number of fallible lawmakers? What problem has this creed solved?

3- Universal House of Justice

⁸²⁹ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 198.

⁸³⁰ Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 148.

The Universal House of Justice is the supreme governing body of the Baha'i creed and constitutes of nine members. The next governing body is the National Spiritual Assembly that is responsible for the administration of the Baha'is of a country. Next in rank are the Regional Baha'i councils that act under the supervision of the National Spiritual Assemblies. The lowest level of governance is performed by the Local Spiritual Assemblies.

Members of each of the aforementioned institutions are selected by ballot. All these institutions were originally referred to as *Houses of Justice* by Bahā'u'llāh but were given other names later on:

The Lord hath ordained that in every city a House of Justice be established wherein shall gather counsellors to the number of Bahā, and should it exceed this number it doth not matter.⁸³¹

The Universal House of Justice can legislate new Baha'i laws but may not alter the scriptural laws defined by Bahā'u'llāh and 'Abdu'l-Bahā'. Baha'is regard the decrees of the UHJ to be divine and free from error:

And now, concerning the House of Justice which God hath ordained as the source of all good and freed from all error, it must be elected by universal suffrage, that is, by the believers.⁸³²

The duties and method of administration of the UHJ are as follows:

By this House is meant the Universal House of Justice, that is, in all countries, a secondary House of Justice must be instituted, and these secondary Houses of Justice must elect the members of the Universal one. Unto this body all things must be referred. It enacteth all ordinances and regulations

⁸³¹ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 29.

⁸³² Shoghi Effendi, *Bahā'ī Administration* (US Bahā'ī Publishing Trust, 1974), p. 10.

that are not to be found in the explicit Holy Text. By this body all the difficult problems are to be resolved and the guardian of the Cause of God is its sacred head and the distinguished member for life of that body. Should he not attend in person its deliberations, he must appoint one to represent him. Should any of the members commit a sin, injurious to the common weal, the guardian of the Cause of God hath at his own discretion the right to expel him, whereupon the people must elect another one in his stead.⁸³³

No Baha'i member is allowed under any condition to disobey the orders of the UHJ. In many cases, perpetrators have been excommunicated from the Baha'i community.

4- Guardian of the Cause of God

The Guardians of the Cause of God are the legal interpreter and paraphrasers of Bahā'u'llāh's words. `Abdu'l-Bahā was the first of these and after him, this duty was given to Shoghi⁸³⁴ and his male descendants:

O my loving friends! After the passing away of this wronged one, it is incumbent upon the Aghsān (Branches), the Afnān (Twigs) of the Sacred Lote-Tree, the Hands (pillars) of the Cause of God and the loved ones of the Abhā Beauty to turn unto Shoghi Effendi—the youthful branch branched from the two hallowed and sacred Lote-Trees and the fruit grown from the union of the two offshoots of the Tree of Holiness,—as he

⁸³³ Shoghi Effendi, *Bahā'ī Administration*, p. 10.

⁸³⁴ “Bahā'u'llāh designated `Abdu'l-Bahā, His eldest Son, as His Successor and the Interpreter of His Teachings. `Abdu'l-Bahā in His turn appointed His eldest grandson, Shoghi Effendi, to succeed Him as interpreter of the holy Writ and Guardian of the Cause. The interpretations of `Abdu'l-Bahā and Shoghi Effendi are considered divinely guided and are binding on the Bahā'īs,” Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 221.

is the sign of God, the chosen branch, the Guardian of the Cause of God, he unto whom all the Aghsān, the Afnān, the Hands of the Cause of God and His loved ones must turn. He is the Interpreter of the Word of God and after him will succeed the first-born of his lineal descendents.⁸³⁵

Regarding the Guardian and the UHJ, there are a number of fundamental contradictions and inconsistencies which are literally ignored by the Baha'i community and administration.

The first is about the Baha'i belief that 'Abdu'l-Bahā had superhuman knowledge⁸³⁶ but he failed to foresee the fact that Shoghi was sterile and would have no children, and he erroneously stated that the Guardians are "the first-born of his lineal descendents."⁸³⁷

The second is 'Abdu'l-Bahā's claim that Shoghi (the Guardian) is blessed with unerring guidance:

The sacred and youthful branch, the Guardian of the Cause of God, as well as the Universal House of Justice to be universally elected and established, are both under the care and protection of the Abhā Beauty, under the shelter and unerring guidance of the Exalted One (may my life be offered up for them both). Whatsoever they decide is of God. Whoso obeyeth him not, neither obeyeth them, hath not obeyed God; whoso rebelleth against him and against them hath rebelled against God; whoso opposeth him hath opposed

⁸³⁵ 'Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahā*, p. 11.

⁸³⁶ "He is, above and beyond these appellations, the "Mystery of God"—an expression by which Bahā'u'llāh Himself has chosen to designate Him, and which, while it does not by any means justify us to assign to Him the station of Prophethood, indicates how in the person of 'Abdu'l-Bahā the incompatible characteristics of a human nature and superhuman knowledge and perfection have been blended and are completely harmonized," Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 134.

⁸³⁷ 'Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahā*, p. 11.

**God; whoso contendeth with them hath contended with God;
whoso disputeth with him hath disputed with God.⁸³⁸**

Yet, this unerring guidance was of no use to him and he failed in appointing the next Guardian whilst he was still alive as he had been ordered:

**O ye beloved of the Lord! It is incumbent upon the Guardian
of the Cause of God to appoint in his own life-time him that
shall become his successor, that differences may not arise
after his passing.⁸³⁹**

The third matter is the Universal House of Justice which can only be run under the supervision of the Guardian of the Cause of God. After Shoghi, the Guardians ceased to exist and the UHJ lacks any legal basis for functioning. Thus in less than a hundred years after Bahā'u'llāh's declaration, his prophecies reached a state of complete *unfulfillment* and the current UHJ and Baha'i administration have no legitimacy whatsoever.⁸⁴⁰ Shoghi explains it more clearly:

**This new Order which is superior to the void sickly orders of
the world and is unique, unparalleled, and unheard of
throughout the history of religions, is based on two powerful
pillars: the first which is greater is the pillar of divine
Guardianship that is the source of interpretations and the
second pillar is the divine Universal House of Justice that is
the reference of legislation. Just as it is impossible to separate
between the laws of the Legislator of the Order (meaning
Bahā'u'llāh) and his fundamental basis' which the Center of**

⁸³⁸ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahā*, p. 11.

⁸³⁹ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahā*, p. 12.

⁸⁴⁰ "The guardian of the Cause of God is its sacred head and the distinguished member for life of that body. Should he not attend in person its deliberations, he must appoint one to represent him," Shoghi Effendi, *Bahā'ī Administration*, p. 10.

the Covenant has declared, separating the two pillars of the New Order from each-other is impossible and infeasible.⁸⁴¹

Divorced from the institution of the Guardianship the World Order of Bahā'u'llāh would be mutilated and permanently deprived of that hereditary principle which, as 'Abdu'l-Bahā has written, has been invariably upheld by the Law of God. "In all the Divine Dispensations," He states, in a Tablet addressed to a follower of the Faith in Persia, "the eldest son hath been given extraordinary distinctions. Even the station of prophethood hath been his birthright." Without such an institution the integrity of the Faith would be imperiled, and the stability of the entire fabric would be gravely endangered. Its prestige would suffer, the means required to enable it to take a long, an uninterrupted view over a series of generations would be completely lacking, and the necessary guidance to define the sphere of the legislative action of its elected representatives would be totally withdrawn. Severed from the no less essential institution of the Universal House of Justice this same System of the Will of 'Abdu'l-Bahā would be paralyzed in its action and would be powerless to fill in those gaps which the Author of the Kitāb-i-Aqdas has deliberately left in the body of His legislative and administrative ordinances.⁸⁴²

Thus the gaps in Bahā'u'llāh's laws are to remain forever unfilled and his decrees incomplete. The Baha'i system remains paralyzed, the integrity of the faith imperiled, and the necessary guidance to define the sphere of the legislative action of its elected representatives are totally withdrawn! What Shoghi is saying here is that the lack of a

⁸⁴¹ Shoghi Effendi, *Tauqī'āt mubāraki khiṭāb bi aḥibbā' sharq* (Langenhain [Germany]: Lajniyi Millī Nashr Āthār Amrī Bi Zabānhayi Fārsī wa 'Arabī, 149 B.[1992]), p. 301.

⁸⁴² Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 148.

Guardian, is the final nail in the coffin of the Baha'i creed . . . even with all these clear clues and errors, Baha'is still propagate their religion with pride and insist that their religion is from God and the sole source of salvation for mankind.



Is a Universal Governing Organization and Tribunal a Novel Idea?

Bahā'u'llāh opines that the system in England seems appropriate for the Baha'i administration:

The system of government which the British people have adopted in London appeareth to be good, for it is adorned with the light of both kingship and of the consultation of the people.⁸⁴³

Would someone who has divine knowledge speak about matters with such doubt, stating that the British system “appeareth to be good”?

It was based on this system that *appears* good to Bahā'u'llāh, that has both a king and public consultation, that Bahā'u'llāh proposed the UHJ system with the Guardian (as the king) and the elected members for consultation. Thus, as can be seen the method devised by Bahā'u'llāh is merely a copy of the governing system in England. `Abdu'l-Bahā further admits that UHJ membership is based on European parliaments:

If differences occur, the Universal House of Justice must swiftly settle the differences, and whatever the majority expresses [as a decision] is the definite truth. The [members of] House of Justice must be selected using the same

⁸⁴³ Bahā'u'llāh, *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 93.

mechanism and methods that the [members] of parliament in European countries are selected.⁸⁴⁴

Both the system and the selection method of the UHJ are based on British and European governance systems. Thus there is nothing novel in this system, it is merely an imitation of what Bahā'u'llāh and 'Abdu'l-Bahā had observed or heard of after they were banished from Persia. It is strange that even though these two Baha'i figures admit that their method is not new, Shoghi insists that the structures of this twin institution are similar to nothing the world has seen:

The Bahā'ī Commonwealth of the future, of which this vast Administrative Order is the sole framework, is, both in theory and practice, not only unique in the entire history of political institutions, but can find no parallel in the annals of any of the world's recognized religious systems. No form of democratic government; no system of autocracy or of dictatorship, whether monarchical or republican; no intermediary scheme of a purely aristocratic order; nor even any of the recognized types of theocracy, whether it be the Hebrew Commonwealth, or the various Christian ecclesiastical organizations, or the Imamate or the Caliphate in Islām—none of these can be identified or be said to conform with the Administrative Order which the master-hand of its perfect Architect has fashioned.⁸⁴⁵

The pillars that sustain its authority and buttress its structure are the twin institutions of the Guardianship and of the Universal House of Justice. The central, the underlying aim which animates it is the establishment of the New World Order as adumbrated by Bahā'u'llāh. The methods it employs,

⁸⁴⁴ 'Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 3, p. 501.

⁸⁴⁵ Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 152.

the standard it inculcates, incline it to neither East nor West, neither Jew nor Gentile, neither rich nor poor, neither white nor colored.⁸⁴⁶

Baha'is believe that if the whole world—not only Baha'is—establish a Universal House of Justice, world peace would be reached. This global UHJ is referred to as the Supreme or International Tribunal. `Abdu'l-Bahā declares:

From amongst all governments and nations, using general polling, a supreme tribunal must be established. The differences and quarrels between the governments and nations must be settled in that tribunal so that they do not result in war.⁸⁴⁷

He believes that peace and tranquility can only be achieved when this tribunal is established:

Not until the flag of peace is raised and a great universal court of justice is established in which all affairs and differences between governments are settled, the world of creation will not have peace.⁸⁴⁸

The United Nations is an organization which fits the criterion set out by `Abdu'l-Bahā to a great extent and Baha'is have a very close connection to it. Unfortunately, more than sixty-five years after its establishment, the outcome that `Abdu'l-Bahā had envisioned for such an organization has not materialized, and the world, even with all its nations being a part of this tribunal, is still infested with war and oppression and peace is nowhere in sight. These sixty-five years have shown this tribunal has failed the test of time and it cannot—as Baha'is

⁸⁴⁶ Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 157.

⁸⁴⁷ `Abd al-Hamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 30.

⁸⁴⁸ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 150.

claim—achieve world peace and tranquility. Yes, this international body might have prevented some wars, but this is nothing new or out of the ordinary, for ever since antiquity, all nations had avoided war through negotiations.

The hope and goal of achieving global peace under the umbrella of a global system is not a matter for Baha'is to show pride in as being something novel or an astounding trait of their creed. It has been and still is the hope of all peaceful movements throughout the world and all divine religions.



Has This Pillar of the Baha'i Creed Been Implemented? Is It Logical and Are the Methods Proposed in It Applicable?

1-What Is Being Addressed: The Problems of the People or the Governments?

When Baha'is say, "from amongst all governments and nations a supreme tribunal must be established," if they are referring to an organization like the United Nations, a fundamental contradiction arises. Such an organization will not necessarily help the people or be of any benefit to them, because the people in the UN represent their respective governments, not their people, and not all governments are truly representative of their people.

The UN resolves the problems between the governments, not the people. In this process, the problem is usually resolved through threats of vetoing, sanctions, and even war, with the outcome of the resolution usually being in favor of a global superpower, not rightness and wrongness. This system is neither rational nor in compliance with divine teachings and justice.

As we already pointed out, even with the establishment of the UN, peace is still nowhere in sight, and neither the UN nor any similar

organization proposed by Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā can bring about universal peace.

2- Baha'i Non-Interference in Political Matters.

According to Shoghi, in the future, all the worlds governments will unite under a single nation governed by the Baha'i creed:

Its watchword is the unification of the human race; its standard the "Most Great Peace"; its consummation the advent of that golden millennium—the Day when the kingdoms of this world shall have become the Kingdom of God Himself, the Kingdom of Bahā'u'llāh.⁸⁴⁹

The problem that arises here is that Baha'is believe that political matters are of no concern to them and they have been strictly ordered to refrain from any political interference or activities. This order is so hard to come by that during Shoghi's guardianship, he twisted the orders of his predecessors and announced a modified version of non-interference in politics. This trend continues to this day in the orders given out by the UHJ. The non-interference as put forth by Shoghi gives Baha'is the freedom to vote to political parties on the condition that they are not identified with one party or another:

...no vote cast or office undertaken by a Bahā'ī should necessarily constitute acceptance, by the voter or office holder, of the entire programme of any political party. No Bahā'ī can be regarded as either Republican or Democrat, as such. He is above all else, the supporter of the principles enunciated by Bahā'u'llāh, with which, I am firmly convinced, the programme of no political party is completely harmonious . . . (From a letter of Shoghi Effendi to the National Spiritual

⁸⁴⁹ Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 157.

**Assembly of the United States and Canada, January 26, 1933:
Bahā'ī News, No. 85, July, 1934, p. 2)⁸⁵⁰**

As regards the non-political character of the Faith,... The friends may vote, if they can do it, without identifying themselves with one party or another. To enter the arena of party politics is surely detrimental to the best interests of the Faith and will harm the Cause. It remains for the individuals to so use their right to vote as to keep aloof from party politics, and always bear in mind that they are voting on the merits of the individual, rather than because he belongs to one party or another. The matter must be made perfectly clear to the individuals, who will be left free to exercise their discretion and judgement. But if a certain person does enter into party politics and labours for the ascendancy of one party over another, and continues to do it against expressed appeals and warnings of the Assembly, then the Assembly has the right to refuse him the right to vote in Bahā'ī elections. (From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States and Canada, March 16, 1933)⁸⁵¹

The matter of politics as discussed in most English compilations follows the same trend. We will now present the original radical policy of not interfering in politics as taught by `Abdu'l-Bahā and Bahā'u'llāh. This policy sums into the following main points:

- Baha'is are not allowed to participate in political affairs or interfere with them in any way, whether they are right or wrong. They are not even allowed to protest government actions.

⁸⁵⁰ Helen Bassett Hornby, *Lights of Guidance: A Bahā'ī Reference File*, chap. XXXIX, no. 1442.

⁸⁵¹ Helen Bassett Hornby, *Lights of Guidance: A Bahā'ī Reference File*, chap. XXXIX, no. 1443.

- Baha'is are not allowed to speak about political affairs. Saying a single word has been prohibited, even privately between Baha'is.
- If a Baha'i wants to speak about political matters other Baha'is must prevent him.
- The only thing regarding political matters which Baha'is are allowed to do is to pray and supplicate.
- Even private discussions of political affairs between Baha'is is equal to exiting the Baha'i creed.

`Abdu'l-Bahā says:

The differences and agreements between the guardians of [government] affairs is not the business of the friends of God. They must never utter such words. The duty of the friends of God is to obey the orders and laws of his highness the king. What he orders, they must obey. They must completely submit and comply with the [orders of] the guardians of the affairs. If a tension occurs between them it does not concern the friends of God for [their duty is what the Poet Ḥāfiẓ says:] “Ḥāfiẓ, your only duty is to pray.” What we intend [to say] is that the friends of God must not utter a single word about politics because it is not their concern. Rather, they must only be engrossed with their own affairs and servitude [to the cause]. They must inspire about getting close to God and to rise in appeasing Him and be the cause of peace, tranquility, happiness, and joy of the human world. If a single person wants to utter something about the affairs of the leadership or government in the presence of the friends of God, that they (meaning the government) have said so and so or they have done so and so, then the friend of God must answer, “These affairs are not our business, we are the citizens of the ruler and under the protection of his highness the king. The

rulers best know how to manage their affairs.” . . . Especially since we have been prohibited from speaking about or interfering in political matters by definite decrees . . . You should make the friends of God understand and realize this subject.⁸⁵²

In one of Bahā'u'llāh's tablets revealed in honor of Ibn Abhar, he says:

If a single person from the friends wants to discuss political affairs at his own home or at other gatherings, then he must first cut all relationships with this Cause, and everyone must know that he [no longer] has any relation with this Cause. It's up to him [to decide].⁸⁵³

He also declares in a tablet revealed in honor of Ibn Aṣḍaq:

The criterion for being or not being a Baha'i is this: whoever interferes in political affairs and utters anything or makes a move outside his duties, then this is reason enough that he is not a Baha'i. No other proof is needed.⁸⁵⁴

ʿAbdu'l-Bahā further iterates:

If any [Baha'i] wants to utter a single word about the affairs of the government or protest about the guardians of [governmental] affairs, others must disagree with him. Because the Cause of God, definitely has not had and does not have any connection with political matters. Political matters are the concern of the guardians of [governmental] affairs, what connection does it have to the souls that must be engaged in perfecting the status and morals and in

⁸⁵² ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 52, pp. 335–336.

⁸⁵³ ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 52, p. 336.

⁸⁵⁴ ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 52, p. 336.

encouraging [in attaining] virtues. Verily, no one must [do anything] outside their duties.⁸⁵⁵

Fifth is general prohibition about doing what incites mischief and causes corruption and interfering in any political affair whatsoever and not to speak about them even by merely moving their lips.⁸⁵⁶

He also says:

Religion is detached from politics. Religion has no access to political matters, rather, religion is related with the world of morals. [Religion] is an inner spiritual affair which is concerned with the heart not the materialistic world. Religious leaders must nurture and teach and promote good morals. They must not interfere in political affairs.⁸⁵⁷

We are not going to elongate this section by listing the real-life hypocritical actions of Baha'is regarding interference in politics. Rather, we will only ask one fundamental question: When all the world and governments become Baha'is, as Bahā'u'llāh has predicted, then who is going to manage the political and governing affairs, because Baha'is have been strictly prohibited from going anywhere near those matters?

3- Infallibility of the Universal House of Justice

All divine religions believe that their laws come directly from God through an Infallible Being that He had appointed. Baha'is believe that the decisions of a few fallible people—who themselves have been selected by another group of fallibles—are free from error and the will of God:

⁸⁵⁵ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwārī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 52, p. 337.

⁸⁵⁶ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwārī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 52, p. 337.

⁸⁵⁷ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwārī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 30.

It is incumbent upon the Trustees of the House of Justice to take counsel together regarding those things which have not outwardly been revealed in the Book, and to enforce that which is agreeable to them. God will verily inspire them with whatsoever He willeth, and He, verily, is the Provider, the Omniscient.⁸⁵⁸

Inasmuch as for each day there is a new problem and for every problem an expedient solution, such affairs should be referred to the Ministers of the House of Justice that they may act according to the needs and requirements of the time. They that, for the sake of God, arise to serve His Cause, are the recipients of divine inspiration from the unseen Kingdom. It is incumbent upon all to be obedient unto them.⁸⁵⁹

For instance, the Universal House of Justice, if it be established under the necessary conditions - with members elected from all the people - that House of Justice will be under the protection and the unerring guidance of God. If that House of Justice shall decide unanimously, or by a majority, upon any question not mentioned in the Book, that decision and command will be guarded from mistake.⁸⁶⁰

It is logically unacceptable to believe that a group of error prone people⁸⁶¹ will always reach an error-free judgment. Even though the official Baha'i version insists on the absolute correctness of the decisions of the UHJ, Shoghi begs to differ:

⁸⁵⁸ Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 23.

⁸⁵⁹ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, pp. 90–91.

⁸⁶⁰ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 172.

⁸⁶¹ One of the duties of the Guardian of the Cause is to relieve of duty any sinful member of the UHJ: "Should any of the members commit a sin, injurious to the common weal, the guardian of the Cause of God hath at his own discretion the right to expel him, whereupon the people must elect another one in his stead," Shoghi Effendi, *Bahā'ī Administration*, p. 10.

Though the Guardian of the Faith has been made the permanent head of so august a body he can never, even temporarily, assume the right of exclusive legislation. He cannot override the decision of the majority of his fellow-members, but is bound to insist upon a reconsideration by them of any enactment he conscientiously believes to conflict with the meaning and to depart from the spirit of Bahā'u'llāh's revealed utterances.⁸⁶²

The last sentence clearly and in explicit terms shows that the UHJ can make mistakes and even reach conclusions that are in conflict with Bahā'u'llāh's words. Is Shoghi the final piece of this organization which gives it, its unique infallibility? If yes, then even by Baha'i standards, the UHJ is still fallible because a Guardian of the Cause of God does not exist.

4- Legitimacy of the Universal House of Justice Depends on the Existence of the Guardian of the Cause of God

In his will, 'Abdu'l-Bahā orders all Baha'is to follow Shoghi and the other Guardians of the Cause who are his descendants one after the other (*bikran ba'da biki*). He warns that disobeying this order will be a breach in the cause of God and will subvert His Word.⁸⁶³ According to these strict orders, the UHJ is only be legitimate if it is under the governance and supervision of the Guardian of the Cause of God. The creed will only remain safe and impregnable if the Guardian is obeyed:

The mighty stronghold shall remain impregnable and safe through obedience to him who is the Guardian of the Cause of God. It is incumbent upon the members of the House of Justice, upon all the Aghsān, the Afnān, the Hands of the

⁸⁶² Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 150.

⁸⁶³ 'Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahā*, p. 11.

Cause of God to show their obedience, submissiveness and subordination unto the Guardian of the Cause of God, to turn unto him and be lowly before him.⁸⁶⁴

The Guardian is inseparable⁸⁶⁵ from the UHJ and all Baha'is including the members of the UHJ must obey him. As we previously mentioned, one of his duties is to expel any member of the UHJ who commits a sin, another duty of the Guardian is to prevent any decision which he sees being against Bahā'u'llāh's teachings. We ask again: If the UHJ is infallible then why does the Guardian have to make sure It's decisions are in accordance with the teachings of the cause? And why is the Guardian allowed to veto these decisions? If the infallibility of the UHJ is dependent on the existence of the Guardian, then why do Baha'is insist the current UHJ is infallible even without a Guardian?

The Guardianship is so important that Shoghi stresses time after time that it is virtually inseparable from the UHJ:

This new Order which is superior to the void sickly orders of the world and is unique, unparalleled, and unheard of throughout the history of religions, is based on two powerful pillars: the first which is greater is the pillar of divine Guardianship that is the source of interpretations and the second pillar is the divine Universal House of Justice that is the reference of legislation. Just as it is impossible to separate between the laws of the Legislator of the Order (meaning Bahā'u'llāh) and his fundamental basis' which the Center of the Covenant has declared, separating the two pillars of the New Order from each-other is impossible and infeasible.⁸⁶⁶

⁸⁶⁴ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahā*, p. 11.

⁸⁶⁵ "the Guardian of the Faith has been made the permanent head of so august a body," Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 150.

⁸⁶⁶ Shoghi Effendi, *Tauqī'āt mubāraki khiṭāb bi aḥibbā' sharq* (Langenhain [Germany]: Lajniyi Millī Nashr Āthār Amrī Bi Zabānhayi Fārsī wa `Arabī, 149 B.[1992]), p. 301.

Shoghi even goes on to say that the Guardian has the ability to foresee the future and defines the guidance of the legislative actions of the elected members:

Without such an institution [meaning the Guardian] the integrity of the Faith would be imperiled, and the stability of the entire fabric would be gravely endangered. Its prestige would suffer, the means required to enable it to take a long, an uninterrupted view over a series of generations would be completely lacking, and the necessary guidance to define the sphere of the legislative action of its elected representatives would be totally withdrawn.⁸⁶⁷

The credibility of the claim that the Guardian has “an interrupted view over a series of generations,” can be seen in the fact that Shoghi could not even foresee his own death and died without leaving a will or appointing a successor.

`Abdu'l-Bahā wills that after Shoghi the station of the Guardian of the Cause of God belongs to Shoghi's eldest son and continues likewise in the next generations. If the eldest son does not possess the necessary spiritual traits to take such a position then the Guardian must appoint another one of his male offspring:

O ye beloved of the Lord! It is incumbent upon the Guardian of the Cause of God to appoint in his own life-time him that shall become his successor, that differences may not arise after his passing. He that is appointed must manifest in himself detachment from all worldly things, must be the essence of purity, must show in himself the fear of God, knowledge, wisdom and learning. Thus, should the first-born of the Guardian of the Cause of God not manifest in himself the truth of the words:—“The child is the secret essence of its

⁸⁶⁷ Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 148.

sire,” that is, should he not inherit of the spiritual within him (the Guardian of the Cause of God) and his glorious lineage not be matched with a goodly character, then must he, (the Guardian of the Cause of God) choose another branch to succeed him.⁸⁶⁸

Neither Bahā'u'llāh, nor `Abdu'l-Bahā, and not even Shoghi himself, with their claimed superhuman knowledge⁸⁶⁹ and divine inspirations had predicted that Shoghi was sterile and incapable of bearing offspring. Thus, after the demise of Shoghi in 1957, the Baha'i creed—once and for all—lost its greatest inseparable pillar of credibility and remains without a Guardian to date. According to what we put forward from the sayings of the three most important Baha'i figures, the UHJ is no longer legitimate and lacks any legal basis of functioning whatsoever.

After Shoghi's death, a group of prominent Baha'is under the guidance of Shoghi's wife (Ruhiyyih), organized a conference in 1963 in which they selected nine people as the members of the Universal House of Justice who immediately started work in Haifa, Israel. This trend continues to this day without any legal basis.

Baha'is claim that the creation of the UHJ is completely justified and the nine body governing council fulfills the role of the Guardian too. Those who utter these words should again read what Shoghi had openly announced:

It should be stated, at the very outset, in clear and unambiguous language, that these twin institutions of the Administrative Order of Bahā'u'llāh should be regarded as divine in origin, essential in their functions and complementary in their aim and purpose.⁸⁷⁰

⁸⁶⁸ Shoghi Effendi, *Bahā'ī Administration*, p. 8.

⁸⁶⁹ Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 134.

⁸⁷⁰ Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 148.

Neither can, nor will ever, infringe upon the sacred and prescribed domain of the other. Neither will seek to curtail the specific and undoubted authority with which both have been divinely invested.⁸⁷¹

These two pillars complement each-other and neither can interfere in the domain of the other. Shoghi further stresses that the separation of these two pillars is under no condition allowed or attainable:

Separating the two pillars of the New Order from each-other is impossible and infeasible.⁸⁷²

The matters regarding the UHJ and the Guardian have confused the Baha'is to such an extent that they have uttered all kinds of strange interpretations and justifications. We advise these people to carefully refer to the closing statement of `Abdu'l-Bahā's will:

Beware lest anyone falsely interpret these words, and like unto them that have broken the Covenant after the Day of Ascension (of Bahā'u'llāh) advance a pretext, raise the standard of revolt, wax stubborn and open wide the door of false interpretation. To none is given the right to put forth his own opinion or express his particular conviction. All must seek guidance and turn unto the Center of the Cause and the House of Justice.⁸⁷³

In any case, after the death of Shoghi the Baha'i community plunged in a state of turmoil and discord. Two distinct groups struggled to introduce themselves as the righteous successors of Shoghi. The first group was under the directorship of Shoghi's widow, Ruhyyih and the second headed by the then president of the International Baha'i

⁸⁷¹ Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 150.

⁸⁷² Shoghi Effendi, *Tauqī'āt mubāraki khiṭāb bi aḥibbā' sharq*, p. 301.

⁸⁷³ Shoghi Effendi, *Bahā'ī Administration*, p. 12..

Council, who was a man by the name of Charles Mason Remey. Remey challenged the creation of the UHJ by Rūḥiyyih and announced that he was the righteous Guardian of the Cause.

Currently, the followers of Rūḥiyyih and the followers of Remey are in a state of enmity and feud and neither recognizes the authority of the other. Baha'is regard the followers of Remey as heretics and covenant breakers and prohibit their followers from socializing with them. On the other hand, at every opportunity, the followers of Remey announce that they are the true followers of the Orthodox Baha'i faith and the Haifan UHJ is illegal.

It is up to you to draw your own conclusions!





**Bahā'u'llāh:
“Contradiction has and will not
ever have a way in the
sanctified realm of the Divine
Manifestations.”⁸⁷⁴**

⁸⁷⁴Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 126.

1. Is the Structure of the UHJ Novel?

Shoghi: The Baha'i administrative system is unique.⁸⁷⁵

Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā: Copy the British⁸⁷⁶ and European⁸⁷⁷ administration systems.

2. Are the Decisions of the UHJ Free from Error?

Shoghi, `Abdu'l-Bahā, and Bahā'u'llāh: The UHJ is under the protection of the unerring guidance of God.⁸⁷⁸

Shoghi: If the members of the UHJ make an erroneous decision, the Guardian must correct them.⁸⁷⁹

⁸⁷⁵ "The Bahā'ī Commonwealth of the future, of which this vast Administrative Order is the sole framework, is, both in theory and practice, not only unique in the entire history of political institutions, but can find no parallel in the annals of any of the world's recognized religious systems. No form of democratic government; no system of autocracy or of dictatorship, whether monarchical or republican; no intermediary scheme of a purely aristocratic order; nor even any of the recognized types of theocracy, whether it be the Hebrew Commonwealth, or the various Christian ecclesiastical organizations, or the Imamate or the Caliphate in Islām—none of these can be identified or be said to conform with the Administrative Order which the master-hand of its perfect Architect has fashioned," Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 152. "The methods it employs, the standard it inculcates, incline it to neither East nor West, neither Jew nor Gentile, neither rich nor poor, neither white nor colored," Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 157.

⁸⁷⁶ "The system of government which the British people have adopted in London appeareth to be good, for it is adorned with the light of both kingship and of the consultation of the people," Bahā'u'llāh, *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 93.

⁸⁷⁷ "The [members of] House of Justice must be selected using the same mechanism and methods that the [members] of parliament in European countries are selected," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātib* (Egypt), vol. 3, p. 501.

⁸⁷⁸ "God will verily inspire them with whatsoever He willeth," Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 23; "They that, for the sake of God, arise to serve His Cause, are the recipients of divine inspiration from the unseen Kingdom," Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, pp. 90–91; and "House of Justice will be under the protection and the unerring guidance of God . . . decision and command will be guarded from mistake," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 172.

⁸⁷⁹ "He cannot override the decision of the majority of his fellow-members, but is bound to insist upon a reconsideration by them of any enactment he conscientiously believes to conflict with the meaning and to depart from the spirit of Bahā'u'llāh's revealed utterances," Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 150.

3. Is It Possible to Separate the Guardian from the Universal House of Justice?

Shoghi: The Guardian is inseparable from the Universal House of Justice.⁸⁸⁰

Baha'ism in its current state lacks any credibility because it has no Guardian.

4. Are Baha'is Allowed to Participate in Political Matters?

Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā: Baha'is must not interfere in political and government matters and must not utter a single word about political matters, even privately amongst themselves. Who that does so is not a Baha'i.⁸⁸¹

Shoghi: Baha'is are allowed to vote to political parties.⁸⁸²

⁸⁸⁰ "This new Order which is superior to the void sickly orders of the world and is unique, unparalleled, and unheard of throughout the history of religions, is based on two powerful pillars: the first which is greater is the pillar of divine Guardianship that is the source of interpretations and the second pillar is the divine Universal House of Justice that is the reference of legislation. Just as it is impossible to separate between the laws of the Legislator of the Order (meaning Bahā'u'llāh) and his fundamental basis' which the Center of the Covenant has declared, separating the two pillars of the New Order from each-other is impossible and infeasible," Shoghi Effendi, *Tauqī'āt mubāraki khiṭāb bi aḥibbā' sharq*, p. 301.

⁸⁸¹ "The friends of God must not utter a single word about politics because it is not their concern," "we have been prohibited from speaking about or interfering in political matters by definite decrees." "If a single person from the friends wants to discuss political affairs at his own home or at other gatherings, then he must first cut all relationships with this Cause, and everyone must know that he [no longer] has any relation with this Cause. It's up to him [to decide]," "If any [Baha'i] wants to utter a single word about the affairs of the government or protest about the guardians of [governmental] affairs, others must disagree with him," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwārī, *Ganjīni-y-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 52, pp. 335–337.

⁸⁸² "As regards the non-political character of the Faith,... The friends may vote, if they can do it, without identifying themselves with one party or another," Helen Bassett Hornby, *Lights of Guidance: A Bahā'ī Reference File*, chap. XXXIX, no. 1443.

5. Who Will Govern the Baha'i Kingdom?

Shoghi: Baha'is will rule the world.⁸⁸³

`Abdu'l-Bahā and Bahā'u'llāh: Baha'is must not interfere in political and government matters and must not utter a single word about political matters, even privately amongst themselves. Who does so is not a Baha'i.⁸⁸⁴

6. Obeying the Government

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Obey the Government in all matters. This order needs no interpretation.⁸⁸⁵

Shoghi: Disobey government orders in matters of faith even if the result is your death or banishment.⁸⁸⁶

⁸⁸³ "Its watchword is the unification of the human race; its standard the "Most Great Peace"; its consummation the advent of that golden millennium—the Day when the kingdoms of this world shall have become the Kingdom of God Himself, the Kingdom of Bahā'u'llāh," Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 157.

⁸⁸⁴ "The friends of God must not utter a single word about politics because it is not their concern," "we have been prohibited from speaking about or interfering in political matters by definite decrees." "If a single person from the friends wants to discuss political affairs at his own home or at other gatherings, then he must first cut all relationships with this Cause, and everyone must know that he [no longer] has any relation with this Cause. It's up to him [to decide]," "If any [Baha'i] wants to utter a single word about the affairs of the government or protest about the guardians of [governmental] affairs, others must disagree with him," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 52, pp. 335–337.

⁸⁸⁵ "No movement—minor or major—must be made without the consent and permission of the government. Whoever makes the slightest movement without the permission of the government will have disobeyed the Blessed Affair (meaning the Baha'i creed) and no excuse will be accepted from him. God's definite order is that the government must be obeyed. This [order] neither needs to be paraphrased or interpreted. An example of obeying the government is this: not a single word can be published without the government's permission. The duty of God's Friends is to obey and submit to the government whether [that government is] a state or constitutional," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 75, p. 463–464.

⁸⁸⁶ "Obedience to the state is so vital a principal of the Cause that should the authorities in . . . [sic] decide to-day to prevent the Baha'is from holding any meeting or publishing any literature they should obey . . . [sic] But, as already pointed out, such an allegiance is confined merely to administrative matters which if checked can only retard the progress of the Faith for some time. In matters of belief, however, no compromise whatever should be allowed, even though the outcome of it be death or expulsion(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an

7. Baha'i Prophecies Fulfilled?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: The guardians are Shoghi's lineal descendants.⁸⁸⁷

But, Shoghi dies and leaves behind no descendants!

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Shoghi must appoint the next Guardian whilst alive.⁸⁸⁸

But, Shoghi dies without appointing a Guardian.

Shoghi: The Guardian is inseparable from the UHJ.⁸⁸⁹

But, A Guardian no longer exists!

individual believer, February 11, 1934),” Helen Bassett Hornby, *Lights of Guidance: A Bahā'ī Reference File*, chap. XXXIX, no. 1455.

⁸⁸⁷ “O my loving friends! After the passing away of this wronged one, it is incumbent upon the Aghsān (Branches), the Afnān (Twigs) of the Sacred Lote-Tree, the Hands (pillars) of the Cause of God and the loved ones of the Abhā Beauty to turn unto Shoghi Effendi . . . He is the Interpreter of the Word of God and after him will succeed the first-born of his lineal descendents,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahā*, p. 11.

⁸⁸⁸ “O ye beloved of the Lord! It is incumbent upon the Guardian of the Cause of God to appoint in his own life-time him that shall become his successor, that differences may not arise after his passing,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahā*, p. 12.

⁸⁸⁹ “the Guardian of the Faith has been made the permanent head of so august a body,” Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 150; “This new Order which is superior to the void sickly orders of the world and is unique, unparalleled, and unheard of throughout the history of religions, is based on two powerful pillars: the first which is greater is the pillar of divine Guardianship that is the source of interpretations and the second pillar is the divine Universal House of Justice that is the reference of legislation. Just as it is impossible to separate between the laws of the Legislator of the Order (meaning Bahā'u'llāh) and his fundamental basis' which the Center of the Covenant has declared, separating the two pillars of the New Order from each-other is impossible and infeasible,” Shoghi Effendi, *Tauqī'āt mubāraki khiṭāb bi aḥibbā' sharq* (Langenhain [Germany]: Lajniyi Millī Nashr Āthār Amrī Bi Zabānhayi Fārsī wa `Arabī, 149 B.[1992]), p. 301; “Divorced from the institution of the Guardianship the World Order of Bahā'u'llāh would be mutilated and permanently deprived of that hereditary principle which, as `Abdu'l-Bahā has written, has been invariably upheld by the Law of God . . . Without such an institution the integrity of the Faith would be imperiled, and the stability of the entire fabric would be gravely endangered. Its prestige would suffer, the means required to enable it to take a long, an uninterrupted view over a series of generations would be completely lacking, and the necessary guidance to define the sphere of the legislative action of its elected representatives would be totally withdrawn. Severed from the no less essential institution of the Universal House of Justice this same System of the Will of `Abdu'l-Bahā would be paralyzed in its action and would be powerless to fill in those gaps which the Author of the Kitāb-i-Aqdas has deliberately left in the body of His legislative and administrative ordinances.” Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 148.



A Summary and Conclusion of the Three Perspectives:

1) Are the Universal House of Justice and a Supreme Tribunal Novel?

Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā had given orders for the Universal House of Justice to be based on British and European administrative systems. Thus they cannot claim that their administrative system is in any way novel.

2) Did the leaders of Baha'ism act upon this principle?

According to Bahā'u'llāh, `Abdu'l-Bahā, and Shoghi's strict orders and directives, the Universal House of Justice is only legal if it is headed by the Guardian of the Cause. After Shoghi the Guardian ceased to exist and this principle is no longer applicable. Before Baha'is preach the establishment of a Supreme tribunal, they should first resolve their inner problems and then postulate that their teachings are the only hope for establishing world peace.

3) Is this principle rational and logical?

Baha'is claim that the Universal House of Justice is infallible. How can the decisions of an institute made of up a group of fallible people who have in turn been selected by another group of fallible people be free from error?! The exact same trend exists in all parliaments and poll-based decision making circles and none have ever claimed that their decisions are final and free from error. If the infallibility of the UHJ is a result of it being headed by the Guardian of the Cause, then even by this

standard the UHJ is fallible since it is being operated without the supervision of a Guardian.

Thus claiming that this body is infallible and its decisions final is in no way reasonable.

CHAPTER 8:

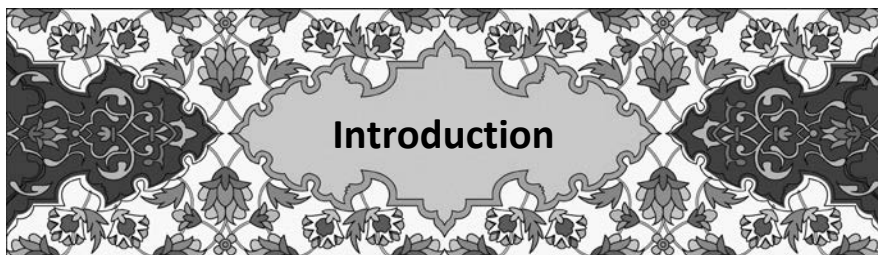
Universal Compulsory Education



“The eighth principle of his highness Bahā’u’llāh is that education of all [people] is essential. It is necessary that the guidelines and laws of education be the same [everywhere] so that all humankind are given identical education. This means education and nurturing must be the same in all schools. All elements and methods must be the same so that the oneness of humanity is established in the hearts from an early age.”⁸⁹⁰



⁸⁹⁰ `Abdu’l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 148.



**The definition of Universal
Compulsory Education means
all the people of the world
must forcefully be identically
educated using the exact same
methods and curriculum.**



Bahā'u'llāh says:

Knowledge is as wings to man's life, and a ladder for his ascent. Its acquisition is incumbent upon everyone.⁸⁹¹

⁸⁹¹ Bahā'u'llāh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 26.

‘Abdu’l-Bahā follows his father’s footsteps and declares that education is compulsory for all:

Educating and nurturing is compulsory by the Blessed Beauty’s definite decree. Whoever neglects [this order] will be deprived of [God’s] great bounties.⁸⁹²

In this new era, [it has been mentioned] in God’s book that educating and nurturing is a compulsory matter, not optional. This means that it is absolutely mandatory for fathers and mothers to endeavor to educate and nurture girls and boys to the utmost extent.⁸⁹³

If a family lacks the means to educate their offspring, the expenses must be provided from public funds:

Every child must be educated as much as needed. If the parents can pay for its expenses, that is great. If not, the community must prepare the necessary means for the child’s education.⁸⁹⁴

‘Abdu’l-Bahā further stresses that these orders must not be forsaken:

Regarding [these orders] no weakness must be shown and they must not be neglected. If the child is killed it is definitely better than it being left ignorant. For the innocent child will be infested with all kinds of imperfections and will be questioned by the Lord and interrogated and will be dispraised and rejected by the people.⁸⁹⁵

⁸⁹² ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 214.

⁸⁹³ ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, pp. 214–215.

⁸⁹⁴ ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 3, p. 109.

⁸⁹⁵ ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 1, p. 334.

If the parents neglect this most greatest matter, which has been revealed by the pen of the Ancient Lord (*Mālik Qidam*) in the *Book of Aqdas*, they will be deprived of the right of fatherhood and will be regarded guilty by God.⁸⁹⁶

⁸⁹⁶ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 214.



Is This Principle of Universal Compulsory Education Novel?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā claims:

Bahā’u’llāh declares that all mankind should attain knowledge and acquire an education. This is a necessary principle of religious belief and observance, characteristically new in this dispensation.⁸⁹⁷

Hundreds of years before Bahā’u’llāh was born, the necessity of education and it being compulsory, had been brought up by philosophers like Plato (427–348 BC) and Aristotle (384–322 BC). The first official movements in support of compulsory education were during the reforms of the sixteenth century Christian monk, Martin Luther.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and after the industrial revolution, European countries had come to the conclusion that education was fundamental to development and advancement. The modern schooling system was introduced in Germany during the eighteenth century and was soon adopted in other European countries. In the nineteenth century, non-European countries like Japan and the United States adopted a policy of compulsory primary school education.

Apart from philosophical recommendations and national constitutions, divine religions have been a source of promoting education and the

⁸⁹⁷ ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 455.

acquisition of knowledge ever since antiquity. Education and seeking knowledge were greatly emphasized in the scripture of Shia Islam. Can we believe that Bahā'u'llāh had not seen these clear orders while he was in Persia?

The introductory chapters of many Shia narration collections like *al-Kāfī* and *Biḥār al-anwār* are related to the topics of acquiring knowledge and education. Seeking knowledge was advocated even if it resulted in travelling to faraway lands. The Prophet Muḥammad has stated:

Seek knowledge even if it is located in China.⁸⁹⁸

Education was so important in Islamic teachings that the Prophet of Islam had explicitly decreed:

Acquiring knowledge is compulsory for every man and woman.⁸⁹⁹

With these clear narrations existing in the Shia corpus, why do Baha'is insist their principles are novel? As usual, `Abdu'l-Bahā contradicts himself and admits:

The honored prophets have come to nurture and educate mankind, to turn men into the manifestation of light, inform them about the truth of secrets, and to elevate the human world materialistically and spiritually.⁹⁰⁰

⁸⁹⁸ Al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, vol. 1, p.180.

⁸⁹⁹ Al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, vol. 1, p.170.

⁹⁰⁰ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Egypt), vol. 1, p. 99.



Did the Founders of Baha'ism Implement the Principle of Universal Compulsory Education?

1- Baha'is and Compulsory Education

`Abdu'l-Bahā had insisted that all people everywhere should be educated using the exact same manner and system:

It is necessary that the guidelines and laws of education be the same [everywhere] so that all humankind are given the same education. This means education and nurturing must be the same in all schools. All elements and methods must be the same.⁹⁰¹

This method has not been implemented in Baha'i communities to any extent. Baha'is receive the same tutoring and education that all non-Baha'is receive. There exists no compulsion nor equality in the methods and degrees of education a Baha'i receives. Since this teaching is completely impractical using the aforementioned format, `Abdu'l-Bahā changed his mind and announced that there is no need for equal methods and degrees of education for all, rather education must be according to capacity:

⁹⁰¹ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 148.

Among other teachings and principles Bahā'u'llāh counsels the education of all members of society. No individual should be denied or deprived of intellectual training, although each should receive according to capacity. None must be left in the grades of ignorance, for ignorance is a defect in the human world. All mankind must be given a knowledge of science and philosophy—that is, as much as may be deemed necessary. All cannot be scientists and philosophers, but each should be educated according to his needs and deserts.⁹⁰²

There is nothing exciting or outstanding about this order. All systems of education have been and still are based on the capacity of the student. How `Abdu'l-Bahā hadn't come by this order in the first place—with all his superhuman knowledge—is a question that the Baha'is must answer.

2- The Bābī Meaning of Education

The predecessor of Bahā'u'llāh, had he succeeded in spreading his creed, would have limited education to a few mere topics uttered in his own books. For he had given orders to destroy all non-Bābī books,⁹⁰³ had prohibited teaching anything but the Bayān,⁹⁰⁴ and had prohibited owning more than nineteen books.⁹⁰⁵ The leader of a creed that goes about claiming that a single letter from these laws is more dear to him

⁹⁰² `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p.108.

⁹⁰³ "Chapter six of the sixth unit which is about destroying all books but those that have been written or will be written about this order (meaning the Bab's creed)," The Bāb, *Farsi Bayān*, unit 6, chap. 6.

⁹⁰⁴ "Teaching a book other than the book of *Bayān* is not allowed unless it has in it what is related to theology (*kalām*). [Teaching] those [sciences] which have been invented such as logic (*manṭiq*), principles [of Jurisprudence] (*uṣūl*), and other [sciences], is not permitted for those who have faith," The Bāb, *Farsi Bayān*, unit 4, chap. 10.

⁹⁰⁵ "You have been prohibited in the *Bayān* from having more than nineteen books. If you do so, you will be fined 19 mithqāls of gold," The Bāb, *Arabic Bayān*, unit 11, chap. 7.

than everything that is in the skies and the earth,⁹⁰⁶ cannot exactly boast about being a promoter of education.

3- Education and Nurturing Will Not Dispel Ignorance

In the Baha'i creed the criterion for ignorance and non-ignorance is not education. The criterion is accepting Baha'ism or rejecting it. We will repeat here what we have quoted many times:

If today, someone grasps all of the knowledge on earth but stops at the word 'yes' (meaning does not become a Baha'i), the Lord will not pay attention to him (*ladī l-Haqq madhkūr na*) and he will be considered as the most ignorant amongst the people.⁹⁰⁷

From now on nobody is to be called knowledgeable, except those who have decorated themselves with the garment of this New Affair (meaning those who have become Baha'is).⁹⁰⁸

The general criterion is what we mentioned and any soul who has success in it, meaning recognizes and realizes the Sunrise of Manifestation (meaning himself), will be mentioned in the Divine Book as someone who possesses reason or else he will be (mentioned as) ignorant even if he himself thinks that his reason equals that of the whole world.⁹⁰⁹

⁹⁰⁶ "I [swear by] He who in His hand is my soul and my essence, a single letter from the *Bayān* is dearer to me than everything that is in the heavens and the earth," Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Asrār al-āthār khuṣūṣī*, vol. 5, p. 333.

⁹⁰⁷ Bahā'u'llāh, *Iqtidārāt wa chand lauḥ dīgar*, p. 111.

⁹⁰⁸ Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, pp. 138–139.

⁹⁰⁹ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī* (Tehran: Mu'assisiyi Millī Maṭbū'āt Amrī, 129 Badī'), vol. 7, p. 160. In the scanned image of this book available at reference.bahai.org this page has been incorrectly replaced with the same page from vol. 8 of the book. The typed file in Microsoft Word format does not have this error.

4- The Outcome of the Education Baha'i Leaders Received

As we showed in Chapter 4, the result of the education Baha'i leaders received was the utterance of facts that were contrary to established sciences like physics, history, biology, and astrology. For example, they believe aliens live on all stars and planets, some creatures are created by spontaneous generation, and that Bahā'u'llāh was the creator of multiple Gods.

5- The Manners of Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā as Two Examples of Baha'i Education and Nurturing

Bahā'u'llāh's manners are a clear example of the intended result of Baha'i education and nurturing. He called those who opposed him donkeys⁹¹⁰ and called his brother polytheist, calf, scarab (dung beetle), tyrant, and Satan.⁹¹¹ He even went as far as calling non-Baha'is bastards⁹¹² and animals.⁹¹³

We should point out again that this degree of manners and politeness emanates from the same Bahā'u'llāh that says:

⁹¹⁰ "Oh you donkeys! Whatever God says is the truth and will not become void by the words of the polytheists," Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 174.

⁹¹¹ "When Mīrzā Yahyā Azal started opposing the works, deeds, and words of his esteemed brother (Bahā'u'llāh) in Edirne⁹¹¹ . . . he dropped down from his [high] stature and the rank of union and agreement [that he had with Bahā'u'llāh] and was gradually—in the tablets, works, and revelations [from Bahā'u'llāh]—referred to with codes, references, and names such as the polytheist, the calf, the scarab (dung beetle), the tyrant, the Satan, the devil, the foul swamp, the buzzing of a fly, and similar names," Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Asrār al-āthār khuṣūṣī*, vol. 5, p. 345–346.

⁹¹² "Whoever denies this apparent exalted luminous grace (meaning Baha'ism), it is worthy that he asks his state from his mother and he will soon be returned to the bottom of hell," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Mā'idīy-i āsimānī*, vol. 4, pp. 355 and `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganj-i shāyḡān*, p. 78; "Whoever has the enmity of this servant (meaning Bahā'u'llāh) in his heart, certainly Satan has entered their mother's bed," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganj-i shāyḡān*, p. 79.

⁹¹³ For example, "Today, according to the decree of the Point of Bayān (meaning the Bāb), those individuals who turn away from this Novel Affair (meaning Baha'ism) are deprived of the garb of being called and described [as humans?] and are assembled and mentioned as animals in the presence of God," Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 213.

Politeness is one of mankind's traits that distinguishes him from other [creatures]. He who has no success in [being polite] then his demise certainly has—and will have—priority over his existence.⁹¹⁴

`Abdu'l-Bahā followed his father's example and used the same rude trend of name-calling towards his opponents:

They are senile like arrogant fools and not seashells full of gems. They are ecstatic from the smell of garbage like dung beetles and not from the scent of a flower of gardens. They are lowly earthworms buried beneath the great earth not high flying birds. They are bats of darkness not the searchlights of clear horizons. They always make excuses and like ravens, have nested in the landfills of fall (autumn) . . . so you Oh true friend and spiritual helper . . . attack these unjust foxes and like a high soaring eagle drive away these hateful ravens from this field.⁹¹⁵

The words of `Abdu'l-Bahā best describe this situation:

We should be fair. How can we expect a person that has failed in nurturing his children, spouse, and family to succeed in nurturing the people of the world? Is there any doubt or uncertainty about this issue? By God, no!⁹¹⁶

How can someone be a promoter of universal compulsory education when he fails to educate himself and his children?! According to `Abdu'l-Bahā, the validity of a prophet's claim can be verified by observing his ability in educating and nurturing human kind:

⁹¹⁴Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 203–204.

⁹¹⁵`Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 1, pp. 442–443.

⁹¹⁶`Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 2, p. 182.

Prophets are public teachers. If we want to see that prophets are teachers we must independently seek the truth. If [prophets] nurture the souls and take them from the depths of ignorance to the peaks of knowledge, then they are surely true prophets.⁹¹⁷

6- Baha'is Must be Educated Only in Baha'i Schools

`Abdu'l-Bahā gives strict orders to his followers to not send their children to non-Baha'i schools:

It is absolutely prohibited for the children of the friends to go to the schools of others (meaning non-Baha'is).⁹¹⁸

Is this the meaning of the Oneness of Humanity and not having prejudice? Why is this distinction made between Baha'is and non-Baha'is?

What is more interesting is the fact that `Abdu'l-Bahā, as usual, did not mind *not* practicing what he preached. Although he strictly ordered Baha'is to not enroll their children in non-Baha'i schools, he enrolled Shoghi in non-Baha'i schools himself:

It was here that Shoghi Effendi had a very significant dream which he recounted to me and which I wrote down. He said that when he was nine or ten years old, living with his nurse in this house and attending school in Haifa, he dreamed that he and another child, an Arab schoolmate, were in the room in which 'Abdu'l-Bahā used to receive His guests in the house in Akka . . .⁹¹⁹

⁹¹⁷ `Abd al-Hamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, pp. 203–204.

⁹¹⁸ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (probably Tehran), vol. 5, p. 170.

⁹¹⁹ Rūhīyyih Rabbani, *The Priceless Pearl* (London: Bahā'ī Publishing Trust, 1969), p. 16.

This trend continued until Shoghi finished high school and college:

Shoghi Effendi entered the best school in Haifa, the College des Freres, conducted by the Jesuits. He told me he had been very unhappy there. Indeed, I gathered from him that he never was really happy in either school or university. In spite of his innately joyous nature, his sensitivity and his background - so different from that of others in every way - could not but set him apart and give rise to many a heart-ache; indeed, he was one of those people whose open and innocent hearts, keen minds and affectionate nature seem to combine to bring upon them more shocks and suffering in life than is the lot of most men. Because of his unhappiness in this school 'Abdu'l-Baha decided to send him to Beirut where he attended another Catholic school as a boarder, and where he was equally unhappy. Learning of this in Haifa the family sent a trusted Baha'i woman to rent a home for Shoghi Effendi in Beirut and take care of and wait on him. It was not long before she wrote to his father that he was very unhappy at school, would refuse to go to it sometimes for days, and was getting thin and run down. His father showed this letter to 'Abdu'l-Baha Who then had arrangements made for Shoghi Effendi to enter the Syrian Protestant College, which had a school as well as a university, later known as the American College in Beirut, and which the Guardian entered when he finished what was then equivalent to the high school.⁹²⁰

⁹²⁰ Rūhīyyih Rabbani, *The Priceless Pearl*, p. 17.



Is This Principle Correct From a Rational and Logical Perspective?

It is obvious that education for all people is preferred and valuable. What is more important than education itself, is the curriculum and content by which the goals of education must be achieved. Although `Abdu'l-Bahā insists on compulsory education and an identical curriculum and method of education for all people, neither the curriculum and nor the subjects that must be taught have been specified in detail. The only thing that `Abdu'l-Bahā has explicitly expressed his opinion on are a few of the subjects that must be taught in children's classes:

The subjects to be taught in children's schools are many, and for lack of time We can touch on only a few: First and most important is training in behaviour and good character; the rectification of qualities; arousing the desire to become accomplished and acquire perfections, and to cleave unto the religion of God and stand firm in His Laws; to accord total obedience to every just government, to show forth loyalty and trustworthiness to the ruler of the time, to be well wishers of mankind, to be kind to all.

And further, as well as in the ideals of character, instruction in such arts and sciences as are of benefit, and in foreign tongues. Also, the repeating of prayers for the well-being of ruler and ruled; and the avoidance of materialistic works that

are current among those who see only natural causation, and tales of love, and books that arouse the passions.

To sum up, let all the lessons be entirely devoted to the acquisition of human perfections.⁹²¹

Apparently, what Baha'is have been ordered to teach in their schools are based on Baha'i teachings that `Abdu'l-Bahā sums up as, "entirely devoted to the acquisition of human perfections." We already showed the results of these *human perfections* in Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā's attitudes which were a mixture of name-calling, insults, and rude manners to their opponents, and all kinds of defamatory statements regarding non-Baha'is.

Furthermore, `Abdu'l-Bahā's order to teach children foreign tongues contradicts his father's order for languages to be reduced to only one, and for only that language to be taught in schools:

Languages must be reduced to one common language to be taught in all the schools of the world.⁹²²

As we previously said, `Abdu'l-Bahā had prohibited his followers from sending their children to non-Baha'i schools. This order has been widely ignored by Baha'is:

It is absolutely prohibited for the children of the friends to go to the schools of others (meaning non-Baha'is) for this is [a cause of] humiliation for the Cause of God and they will be completely deprived of the Blessed Beauty's graces. Because they will be educated/nurtured elsewhere and they will disgrace the Baha'is.⁹²³

⁹²¹ Helen Bassett Hornby, *Lights of Guidance: A Bahā'ī Reference File*, chap. VIII, no. 494.

⁹²² Bahā'u'llāh, *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 90.

⁹²³ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (probably Tehran), vol. 5, p. 170.

What is extraordinary are the words used by `Abdu'l-Bahā to describe the result of Baha'is studying in non-Baha'i schools: humiliation (*dhillat*) of the Cause of God and disgrace (*ruswā'ī*) of Baha'is and being *completely deprived of the Blessed Beauty's graces!*

One wonders why these words have been uttered. Does `Abdu'l-Bahā regard all forms of education other than what the Baha'is preach invalid to such an extent that when Baha'is are educated and nurtured using those methods they will become a disgrace and cause of humiliation for this creed? Or is he afraid that Baha'i children will expose the true face of Baha'ism amongst non-Baha'is which will result in their disgrace and humiliation?

It is up to you to draw your own conclusions!





**Bahā'u'llāh:
“Contradiction has and will not
ever have a way in the
sanctified realm of the Divine
Manifestations.”⁹²⁴**

⁹²⁴ Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 126.

1. Is the Principle of Compulsory Universal Education New?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: All mankind should attain knowledge and acquire education. This is a characteristically new teaching of Bahā'u'llāh in this dispensation.⁹²⁵

Shia Islam: The Prophet, Muḥammad, says: “Acquiring knowledge is compulsory for every man and woman.”⁹²⁶

`Abdu'l-Bahā: The Prophets have come to nurture and educate mankind.⁹²⁷

2. Is Education the Same for All or Dependent on Capacity?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: All humankind must receive the same education with the same guidelines and the same methods.⁹²⁸

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Everyone cannot be a scientist. Only educate people according to their capacity and needs!⁹²⁹

⁹²⁵ “Bahā'u'llāh declares that all mankind should attain knowledge and acquire an education. This is a necessary principle of religious belief and observance, characteristically new in this dispensation,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 455.

⁹²⁶ *Al-Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār* (Beirut: Mu'assisat al-Wafā, 1404 AH), vol. 1, p. 170.

⁹²⁷ “The honored prophets have come to nurture and educate mankind, to turn men into the manifestation of light, inform them about the truth of secrets, and to elevate the human world materialistically and spiritually,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Egypt), vol. 1, p. 99.

⁹²⁸ “It is necessary that the guidelines and laws of education be the same [everywhere] so that all humankind are given the same education. This means education and nurturing must be the same in all schools. All elements and methods must be the same,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 148.

⁹²⁹ “Among other teachings and principles Bahā'u'llāh counsels the education of all members of society. No individual should be denied or deprived of intellectual training, although each should receive according to capacity. None must be left in the grades of ignorance, for ignorance is a defect in the human world. All mankind must be given a knowledge of science and philosophy—that is, as much as may be deemed necessary. All cannot be scientists and philosophers, but each should be educated according to his needs and deserts,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 108.

3- Loving Laws That Promote Ignorance or Claiming That All People Must Be Educated?

Bahā'u'llāh: There must be universal compulsory education.

The Bāb in the *Bayān*: Destroy all non-Bābī books,⁹³⁰ teach nothing but the Bayān,⁹³¹ and do not own more than nineteen books.⁹³²

Bahā'u'llāh: A single letter from the *Bayān* is more dear to me than everything that is in the skies and the earth.⁹³³

4- Will Education Dispel Ignorance?

Reason and common-sense: Education will dispel ignorance.

Bahā'u'llāh: If you have all the knowledge on earth but do not become a Baha'i you are ignorant.⁹³⁴

⁹³⁰ "Chapter six of the sixth unit which is about destroying all books but those that have been written or will be written about this order (meaning the Bab's creed)," The Bāb, *Farsi Bayān*, unit 6, chap. 6.

⁹³¹ "Teaching a book other than the book of *Bayān* is not allowed unless it has in it what is related to theology (*kalām*). [Teaching] those [sciences] which have been invented such as logic (*manṭiq*), principles [of Jurisprudence] (*uṣūl*), and other [sciences], is not permitted for those who have faith," The Bāb, *Farsi Bayān*, unit 4, chap. 10.

⁹³² "You have been prohibited in the *Bayān* from having more than nineteen books. If you do so, you will be fined 19 mithqāls of gold," The Bāb, *Arabic Bayān*, unit 11, chap. 7.

⁹³³ "I [swear by] He who in His hand is my soul and my essence, a single letter from the *Bayān* is dearer to me than everything that is in the heavens and the earth," Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Asrār al-āthār khuṣūṣī*, vol. 5, p. 333.

⁹³⁴ "If today, someone grasps all of the knowledge on earth but stops at the word 'yes' (meaning does not become a Baha'i), the Lord will not pay attention to him (*ladī l-Ḥaqq madhkūr na*) and he will be considered as the most ignorant amongst the people," Bahā'u'llāh, *Iqtidārāt wa chand lauḥ dīgar*, p. 111; "From now on nobody is to be called knowledgeable, except those who have decorated themselves with the garment of this New Affair (meaning those who have become Baha'is)," Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, pp. 138–139.

5. The Criterion for Being a True Prophet: Good Nurturing and Education of People

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: A prophet who cannot nurture people is not a prophet.⁹³⁵

The result of ‘Abdu’l-Bahā being nurtured by his father: My enemies are “senile like arrogant fools and not seashells full of gems. They are ecstatic from the smell of garbage like dung beetles.”⁹³⁶

6. Are Baha'is Allowed to Attend Non-Baha'i Schools?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: You are absolutely prohibited from sending your children to non-Baha’i schools for they will be a cause of humiliation and disgrace to the faith.⁹³⁷

‘Abdu’l-Bahā Sends Shoghi to attend the best non-Baha’i schools in Palestine.⁹³⁸

⁹³⁵ “Prophets are public teachers. If we want to see that prophets are teachers we must independently seek the truth. If [prophets] nurture the souls and take them from the depths of ignorance to the peaks of knowledge, then they are surely true prophets,” ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwārī, *Payām-i malakūt*, pp. 203–204.

⁹³⁶ ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 1, pp. 442–443.

⁹³⁷ “It is absolutely prohibited for the children of the friends to go to the schools of others (meaning non-Baha’is) for this is [a cause of] humiliation for the Cause of God and they will be completely deprived of the Blessed Beauty’s graces. Because they will be educated/nurtured otherwise and they will disgrace the Baha’is,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (probably Tehran), vol. 5, p. 170.

⁹³⁸ “It was here that Shoghi Effendi had a very significant dream which he recounted to me and which I wrote down. He said that when he was nine or ten years old, living with his nurse in this house and attending school in Haifa, he dreamed that he and another child, an Arab schoolmate, were in the room in which ‘Abdu’l-Baha used to receive His guests in the house in Akka . . . Shoghi Effendi entered the best school in Haifa, the College des Freres, conducted by the Jesuits . . . ‘Abdu’l-Baha decided to send him to Beirut where he attended another Catholic school as a boarder . . . ‘Abdu’l-Baha Who then had arrangements made for Shoghi Effendi to enter the Syrian Protestant College, which had a school as well as a university,” Rūhīyyih Rabbani, *The Priceless Pearl*, pp. 16–17.

7. Must Foreign Languages Be Taught at Schools?

`Abdul'-Bahā: Teach foreign languages at school.⁹³⁹

Bahā'u'llāh: Reduce all languages to one and only teach that language at school!⁹⁴⁰

⁹³⁹ “And further, as well as in the ideals of character, instruction in such arts and sciences as are of benefit, and in foreign tongues,” Helen Bassett Hornby, *Lights of Guidance: A Bahā'ī Reference File*, chap. VIII, no. 494.

⁹⁴⁰ “Languages must be reduced to one common language to be taught in all the schools of the world.,” Bahā'u'llāh, *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 90.



A Summary and Conclusion of the Three Perspectives:

1) Is Universal Compulsory Education a New Principle?

Before Bahā'u'llāh, education up to a specific class or age had become compulsory in many countries like Germany and Japan. Even before that, many religions advocated education and learning of knowledge and sciences. Thus, this teaching is not new.

2) Did the Leaders of Baha'ism Act upon This Principle?

In accordance with this teaching, `Abdu'l-Bahā had prohibited his followers from sending their children to non-Baha'i schools. At the same time, he himself had sent Shoghi to the best non-Baha'i schools in Haifa. Furthermore, in the Baha'i creed, no single curriculum has been provided to achieve the goal of identical education for all people.

3) Is This Principle Rational and Logical?

This teaching is logical but the extreme version put forward by `Abdu'l-Bahā in which he prohibits his followers from going to non-Baha'i schools is unreasonable.

CHAPTER 9:

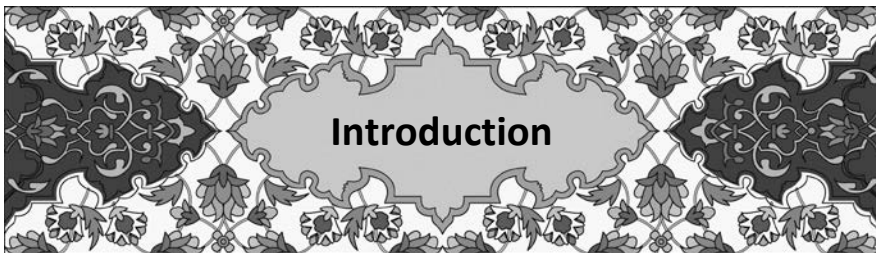
A Universal Auxiliary Language



“Ninth, a universal language shall be adopted and be taught by all the schools and institutions of the world. A committee appointed by national bodies of learning shall select a suitable language to be used as a medium of international communication. All must acquire it. This is one of the great factors in the unification of man.”⁹⁴¹



⁹⁴¹ Abdu'l-Bahā', *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 182.



**The definition of “A Universal
Auxiliary Language” is a
common language that all
people must have to reach the
goal of the Oneness of
Humanity.**



‘Abdu’l-Bahā says:

The question of diversity of tongues is a very difficult one. There are more than eight hundred languages in the world, and no person could acquire them all. The races of mankind are not isolated as in former days. Now, in order to be in close relationship with all countries it is necessary to be able to speak their tongues. A universal language would make intercourse possible with every nation. Thus it would be

needful to know two languages only, the mother tongue and the universal speech. The latter would enable a man to communicate with any and every man in the world!⁹⁴²

⁹⁴² `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Paris Talks*, pp. 155–156.



Is the Principle of a Universal Auxiliary Language New?

The problem of an Auxiliary language has existed ever since antiquity when people with different languages had engaged in trade with each other. Nicholas Olster's *Empires of the World: A Language History of the World*, manifests great insight into this topic. Every empire would promote the language of their interest among the lands they conquered to communicate efficiently with the new peoples and citizens. Persian, Greek, Arabic, and English are just a few of the languages that had served this purpose throughout history. An auxiliary language has always been a necessity of communication and has been addressed by different methods worldwide.

In modern times, because of advances in communication and transport, a great interest has been shown in a universal auxiliary language. In the early nineteenth century, many such languages were created and were being promoted. One of the earliest of these languages was called Communicationssprache, and was created by Joseph Schipfer and published in 1839. Subsequently many other auxiliary languages were introduced the most important ones being Universalglot in 1868, Volapuk in 1879, and Esperanto in 1887. Except for Esperanto, which under very optimistic estimates has at most 2 million adherents, none of these languages gained popularity.

Thus, the need for an auxiliary language is neither a creation of Baha'is, nor a necessity that other groups had not thought of before

Bahā'u'llāh, nor something that hadn't been created before them. This principle is under no condition novel or new.



Did the Founders of Baha'ism Implement This Principle?

1- Baha'i Scripture and Official Documents Have Been Written in Three Languages

Although `Abdu'l-Bahā announces that an auxiliary language is needed and will be “one of the great factors in the unification of man,”⁹⁴³ Baha'i scriptures have been authored in at least three different languages. Shoghi Effendi's book, *God Passes By*, was written in English as are most letters and announcements from the Universal House of Justice. The books written by the Bāb, Bahā'u'llāh, and `Abdu'l-Bahā have been written in a mixture of both Arabic and Farsi, thus rendering them useless for a great range of audiences. Furthermore, there are even Turkish Poems written by `Abdu'l-Bahā.⁹⁴⁴

Bahā'u'llāh insists that although only two languages are needed—the mother tongue and the auxiliary language—much effort must be put to limit the languages of the world to one, that is the auxiliary language:

We have decreed before that it has been destined to speak with two tongues and a great effort must be put to limit this to one [tongue] and the same [applies] to the handwriting. So

⁹⁴³ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 182.

⁹⁴⁴ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Majmū'iy-i munājāt-hāyi ḥaḍrat `Abdu'l-Bahā* (Germany: Lajniyi Millī Nashr Āthār Amrī), pp. 396–397

that the lives of the people will not be wasted and nullified in learning different languages.⁹⁴⁵

One becomes speechless when reading these words. How can someone who has revealed his own words in two different languages, and whose successors have added a third and fourth language in their writings, give the order to make as much effort possible to limit the world's languages to one? Why does a person that claims to be the Manifestation of God not practice what he preaches?

With this attitude, instead of kick starting the Auxiliary Language by revealing their words in a single unified language, Baha'i leaders have significantly retarded its creation by revealing texts in multiple languages.

2- Why Would a Persian Prophet Communicate with Persians in Arabic?

The Bāb, Bahā'u'llāh, and `Abdu'l-Bahā have all used a mixture of Arabic and Farsi in their writings and speeches. This makes no sense given that they were speaking to a group of people who were Persians not Arabs. What is the use in talking to a Persian in Arabic if he is not going to understand what you are saying and the message will not be conveyed?

Based on common-sense, the Quran says:

We sent no messenger but with the tongue of his people so that he may explain to them.⁹⁴⁶

If the purpose of a Messenger or Prophet is to explain and convey God's words to the people, then it makes sense for him to speak their tongue, not some foreign language. The question is, why did these three figures perform such an unreasonable act in contrast to what is

⁹⁴⁵ `Abd al-Hamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 33.

⁹⁴⁶ Quran, 14:4

expected from a divine figure? And then on top of this, claim that they strive for a unified language? We will allow Adib Taherzadeh—a former member of the Universal House of Justice—to explain why:

In Persia in the nineteenth century most people were illiterate, under the domination of the clergy whom they blindly obeyed. There were two educated classes, divines and government officials, plus a small number of others. Only the religious leaders and divines, however, could be called learned. They used to spend decades of their lives applying themselves to theology, Islamic law, jurisprudence, philosophy, medicine, astronomy and, above all, the Arabic language and its literature. Since Arabic was the language of the Qur'ān, the divines attached great importance to its study. Many would spend a lifetime mastering the language because of its vast scope and wealth of expression. They considered no treatise worthy of perusal unless it was composed and written in Arabic, and no sermon from the pulpit as moving or eloquent unless the Mullā preaching it had used an abundance of difficult and often incomprehensible Arabic words. By this means they excited the imagination of their often illiterate audiences who were fascinated by the apparently learned discourse of their clergy, despite the fact that they might not understand a single word. The normal yardstick for determining the depth of a man's learning was his knowledge of the Arabic language and the size of his turban!⁹⁴⁷

What Adib Taherzadeh says boils down to this: The reason someone would speak Arabic to a Farsi audience, was to make them believe he was knowledgeable although the audience didn't understand a word that he was uttering. The same attitude has been followed by the Baha'i

⁹⁴⁷ Adib Taherzadeh, *The Revelation of Bahā'u'llāh* (Oxford, 1974), vol. 1, pp. 18–19.

figures. Truly, what purpose do the abundance of difficult and often incomprehensible Arabic words, put on top of the high amounts of esoteric, mystical, vague, and sometimes incomprehensible expressions in the works of the Bāb and Bahā'u'llāh serve, but to excite the imagination of their audiences and induce them into thinking they are knowledgeable?

3- Baha'is Have Been Ordered to Learn Multiple Languages!

Although Bahā'u'llāh insists that "We have decreed before that it has been destined to speak with two tongues and a great effort must be put to limit this to one [tongue],"⁹⁴⁸ Baha'is have been ordered to learn many other languages. The Farsi language has been held with high esteem. Baha'is have been ordered to learn it and it has even been prophesized that it will soon be sanctified in all the world! `Abdu'l-Bahā says:

Make as much effort as possible to learn the Farsi language, for this language will soon be sanctified on all of earth and it will have great use in spreading the Breath of God, elevating the Word of God, and deducing the meanings of God's verses.⁹⁴⁹

Bahā'u'llāh too, has uttered similar words:

God-willing, everyone will mention the *Destination of the People of the World* (probably referring to himself) by using the creative Farsi language, for this language has and will always be sweet.⁹⁵⁰

A great emphasis has also been placed on learning Arabic:

⁹⁴⁸ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 33.

⁹⁴⁹ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 114.

⁹⁵⁰ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 111.

The beloved Guardian has stressed that the children and the youth of the friends must also learn the Arabic language and use this eloquent language to benefit from the tablets and blessed writings.⁹⁵¹

Not content with this, Baha'is have been ordered to learn English and German:

The exalted decision of the beloved Guardian has been for the Baha'i youth to learn firstly English and secondly German and show the utmost effort and seriousness [in learning these languages].⁹⁵²

And finally, 'Abdu'l-Bahā advises his followers to teach children foreign languages without specifying what or how many languages:

And further, as well as in the ideals of character, instruction in such arts and sciences as are of benefit, and in foreign tongues.⁹⁵³

Thus an average Baha'i is expected to learn or be able to communicate in six languages: Arabic, Farsi, English, German, their mother tongue, as well as the universal auxiliary language proposed by Bahā'u'llāh. Apparently, Bahā'u'llāh had forgotten too soon what he had uttered about people's lives being wasted in learning more than one language:

We have decreed before that it has been destined to speak with two tongues and a great effort must be put to limit this to one [tongue] and the same [applies] to the handwriting. So

⁹⁵¹ 'Abd al-Hamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i hudūd wa ahkām*, chap. 25, p. 206.

⁹⁵² 'Abd al-Hamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i hudūd wa ahkām*, chap. 25, pp. 205–206.

⁹⁵³ Helen Bassett Hornby, *Lights of Guidance: A Bahā'ī Reference File*, chap. VIII, no. 494.

that the lives of the people will not be wasted and nullified in learning different languages.⁹⁵⁴

One day, while in Constantinople, Kamāl Pāshā visited this Wronged One. Our conversation turned upon topics profitable unto man. He said that he had learned several languages. In reply We observed: “You have wasted your life. It beseemeth you and the other officials of the Government to convene a gathering and choose one of the divers languages, and likewise one of the existing scripts, or else to create a new language and a new script to be taught children in schools throughout the world. They would, in this way, be acquiring only two languages, one their own native tongue, the other the language . . . and the people would be relieved and freed from the necessity of acquiring and teaching different languages.”⁹⁵⁵

Is Bahā’u’llāh really serious when he claims the people would “be acquiring only two languages” while he reveals his writings in two different ones and his followers are expected to communicate in six languages? We will leave it to the readers to judge these words for themselves.

4- The Baha’i Administration Has Failed in Implementing This Principle

Bahā’u’llāh has said:

Ere this, in Our Epistles, have We commanded the Trustees of the House of Justice, either to choose one of the existing tongues, or to originate a new one, and in like manner to

⁹⁵⁴ ‘Abd al-Hamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 33.

⁹⁵⁵ Bahā’u’llāh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, pp. 137–138.

adopt a common script, teaching these to the children in all the schools of the world, that the world may become even as one land and one home.⁹⁵⁶

Although Baha'is propagate this principle with great pride and regard it as one of their greatest teachings in achieving oneness of humanity, the Baha'i administration has failed after more than 150 years, in implementing Bahā'u'llāh's direct order in implementing this principle or even selecting or creating a single language to serve this purpose!

`Abdu'l-Bahā too had put great emphasis on the implementation of this principle:

Were we in possession of a universal language, the Western books could easily be translated into that language, and the Eastern peoples be informed of their contents. In the same way the books of the East could be translated into that language for the benefit of the people in the West. The greatest means of progress towards the union of East and West will be a common language. It will make the whole world one home and become the strongest impulse for human advancement. It will upraise the standard of the oneness of humanity. It will make the earth one universal commonwealth. It will be the cause of love between the children of men. It will cause good fellowship between the various races.⁹⁵⁷

Instead of starting a campaign for a universal auxiliary language and translating Baha'i works into a single universal language, Baha'is have started a campaign of translating their literature into every possible language in the world and according to official Baha'i figures, Baha'i

⁹⁵⁶ J. E. Esslemont, *Bahā'u'llāh and the New Era*, p.163.

⁹⁵⁷ J. E. Esslemont, *Bahā'u'llāh and the New Era*, pp.164-165.

literature has been translated into 800 different languages worldwide!⁹⁵⁸

In a letter from the Universal House of Justice (UHJ) to an individual dated 8 June 1980, the UHJ simply puts the blame on governments for not implementing this language:

You are quite correct in stating that there are two different provisions in the Sacred Texts for the selection of an International Auxiliary Language. On the one hand, this task is given to the governments of the world, on the other it is given to the House of Justice. It is not possible now to see how this will come about, but it would seem reasonable to assume that, long before the Bahā'ī community is large enough or can exercise the authority to produce such a world-embracing change, events will compel the governments, either progressively or all in concert, to select an International Auxiliary Language to be taught as a second language in all schools and to be used in all international commerce. At a much later stage, possibly at the time of the Bahā'ī World Commonwealth, the Universal House of Justice may well decide to review the situation and either confirm the decision that the governments had made, or change the choice to a more suitable language.⁹⁵⁹

Why does a person who claims to be a manifestation of God with Divine Knowledge fail to point the Baha'i administration to an appropriate and specific language to be used for this task? Why is the UHJ waiting all these years to see which language will be universally accepted as a universal language? If these figures were Divinely Inspired

⁹⁵⁸ For example see <http://news.bahai.org/media-information/statistics> (retrieved 25/01/2014)

⁹⁵⁹ Paul Desailly, *Making World Peace Real: The Baha'i Faith and Esperanto* (Melbourne: Howard Perkins, 2003), p. 40 (electronic version: http://www.bahaindex.com/documents/Making_World_Peace_Real.pdf)

and had superhuman knowledge, then why did they not tell the world about the auxiliary language of the future and why did they not propagate that specific language? Is it not because neither `Abdu'l-Bahā nor Bahā'u'llāh could foresee the future, and the UHJ fears that any language they select for this purpose will result in a failure, like what happened when `Abdu'l-Bahā selected Esperanto to serve this purpose?

5- Why Did the Universal House of Justice, in Contrast to `Abdu'l-Bahā's Orders and Advice, Disregard Esperanto

At an Esperanto meeting in Paris in 1913, `Abdu'l-Bahā uttered the following words about this language:

Now, praise be to God that Dr. Zamenhof⁹⁶⁰ has invented the Esperanto language. It has all the potential qualities of becoming the international means of communication. All of us must be grateful and thankful to him for this noble effort; for in this way he has served his fellowmen well. With untiring effort and self-sacrifice on the part of its devotees Esperanto will become universal. Therefore every one of us must study this language and spread it as far as possible so that day by day it may receive a broader recognition, be accepted by all nations and governments of the world, and become a part of the curriculum in all the public schools. I hope that Esperanto will be adopted as the language of all the future international conferences and congresses, so that all people need acquire only two languages—one their own tongue and the other the international language. Then perfect union will be established between all the people of the world. Consider how difficult it is today to communicate with various nations. If one studies fifty languages one may yet travel through a country and not know the language. Therefore I

⁹⁶⁰ The creator of Esperanto

hope that you will make the utmost effort, so that this language of Esperanto may be widely spread.⁹⁶¹

Although `Abdu'l-Bahā had made explicit statements about making great effort to spread this language as far as possible, the UHJ has yet to accept this language as a universal auxiliary language.

The justification put forward for this action further shows that this religion lacks divinity:

While these allusions to Esperanto are specific and encouraging, it remains true that until the House of Justice has acted on the matter in accordance with Bahā'u'llāh's instruction the Bahā'ī Faith is not committed to Esperanto nor to any other living or artificial tongue. `Abdu'l-Bahā Himself said: "The love and effort put into Esperanto will not be lost, but no one person can construct a Universal Language."—`Abdu'l-Bahá in London, p. 95.

Which language to adopt, and whether it is to be a natural or constructed one, is a decision which the nations of the world will have to make.⁹⁶²

The Baha'i creed was supposed to bring guidance to the world and guide the people to right path. If a principle is put forward then the best way for it to be implemented must also be explicitly announced by either naming a language or creating a language for all to abide to and propagate. Unfortunately, not only has this act not been performed, but the exact opposite has occurred and the selection of such a language has been conferred upon the governments of the world. Should we be thankful for this new principle? Was this not the exact attitude that governments have had ever since antiquity but in smaller or larger scales? Did we really need the Baha'i creed to tell the world what they

⁹⁶¹ J. E. Esslemont, *Bahā'u'llāh and the New Era*, p.165.

⁹⁶² J. E. Esslemont, *Bahā'u'llāh and the New Era*, pp.165-166.

already knew and were striving to achieve by themselves anyway? Should the people of the world be thankful for this so called new, but apparently very obvious, principle?

Furthermore, pay attention to how `Abdu'l-Bahā admits that they are weak and have no divine knowledge at all. He says, "No one person can construct a Universal Language." Not even someone who claims to have created multiple Gods?⁹⁶³ Apparently not . . .

6- How Can Someone Who is Helpless in Learning Another Language but His Mother Tongue, Order Other People to Learn Many Languages?

The Bāb and Bahā'u'llāh have written many of their works in Arabic but since this wasn't their mother tongue, their Arabic works have a fair amount of etymological and syntactical errors. We have showed in Chapter 4 some of the grammatical errors Bahā'u'llāh had made in the book of *Īqān* that were subsequently fixed. Since this topic is fairly advanced and only suitable for a special audience, we will only mention a few of the more obvious errors here that can be understood with little explanation and without delving into Arabic linguistics.

a- Using non-Arabic characters and words in Arabic sentences

Arabic and Farsi share almost the exact same alphabet. The only difference between them are four characters that exist in Farsi but not in Arabic: p, ch, g, zh. Interestingly enough, the Bāb wrote in the *Arabic Bayān*:

If possible acquire all the writings of the Point (meaning the Bāb) even if they are in printed form (not hand-written).⁹⁶⁴

⁹⁶³ "All Gods became Gods from the flow of my affairs and all Lords became Lords by the overflowing of my decree," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 2, p. 255.

⁹⁶⁴ Bāb, *Arabic Bayān*, unit 9, chap. 10. The Arabic sentence says:

The Farsi word for print is *chāp*. The characters ‘ch’ and ‘p’ used in this word do not exist in Arabic. The Bāb used this Persian word with non-existent characters in an Arabic sentence. This is while the Arabic word for printing is *ṭabʿ*, which he could have been easily used!

A similar fallacy can be seen in the works of Bahāʾuʾllāh. In a tablet addressed to Pope Pius IX he says:

O Pope! Rend the veils asunder. He Who is the Lord of Lords is come overshadowed with clouds, and the decree hath been fulfilled by God.⁹⁶⁵

The Farsi word for Pope is *Pāp*. The Arabic word is *al-Bābā*. Bahāʾuʾllāh has used the Farsi word with non-existent Arabic characters in the Arabic sentence. Here is an image of what he has written:⁹⁶⁶

ان يا پاپا ان اخرق الاحجاب قد اتى ربّ الارباب فى ظلل
السحاب و قضى الامر من لدى الله المقتدر المختار. ان

The errors in these works were so obvious that the Bāb decided to justify them in one of his writings:

Finding errors in diacritics (*ʿirāb*), recitation (*qirāʾat*), and linguistics of the Arabic [works] is invalid, because the linguistic laws are derived from these verses and not (the opposite) where the verses are based on these (laws). There is no doubt that the owner of these verses (meaning himself)

"انتم اذ استطعتم كل آثار النقطة تملكون و لو كان جايًا"

⁹⁶⁵ Bahāʾuʾllāh, *The Summons of the Lord of Hosts*, p. 54–55.

⁹⁶⁶ For the original Arabic sentence see Bahāʾuʾllāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i Aʿlā*, vol. 1, no. 1, p. 33.

has denied having any knowledge about these (linguistic) laws.⁹⁶⁷

What the Bāb is saying here boils down to this: Any mistakes you find in my words and any inconsistencies with the Arabic language are due to your own ignorance. From now on, Arabic language laws and linguistics must be updated to become in conformity with my words!

As we mentioned in Chapter 4, Bahā'u'llāh had made the exact same justification when he was questioned about the errors in his writings and the writings of the Bāb:

Say, oh you ignorant man; look at the words of God using His Eyes so that you may realize they are free of the allusions and the grammatical conventions of the people for He possesses the knowledge of the worlds. Say, if the words of God were revealed based on your grammatical conventions and (the laws) that are with you, then they would be like your words, oh group of people who are veiled (from the truth).⁹⁶⁸

You and your kind have said that the words of the Great Bāb and the Most Complete Remembrance are wrong and not in conformance with the grammatical conventions of the people. You still haven't understood that the divine revealed words are the yardstick for all and what is lower than it cannot be a yardstick. Every grammatical convention that is not in accordance with the divine verses has no credibility.⁹⁶⁹

These words are senseless. According to Bahā'u'llāh the criterion for the truth is he and only he. Reason, knowledge, language and everything imaginable are to be measured by his words even though his

⁹⁶⁷ The Bāb, *Farsi Bayān*, unit 2, chap. 1.

⁹⁶⁸ Bahā'u'llāh, *Majmū'iy-i alwāḥ-i mubārak-ih*, p. 71.

⁹⁶⁹ Bahā'u'llāh, *Majmū'iy-i alwāḥ-i mubārak-ih*, p. 78.

words are unscientific, illogical, unreasonable, and in many cases simply wrong. He uses similar reasoning in the *Aqdas*:

Say: O leaders of religion!⁹⁷⁰ Weigh not the Book of God with such standards and sciences as are current amongst you, for the Book itself is the unerring Balance established amongst men. In this most perfect Balance whatsoever the peoples and kindreds of the earth possess must be weighed, while the measure of its weight should be tested according to its own standard, did ye but know it.⁹⁷¹

We analyzed this subject extensively in Chapter 4 and will not repeat our statements here.

b- Using Meaningless Arabic Words and Phrases

The use of meaningless words and Arabic phrases is especially apparent in the works of the Bāb. For instance the Bāb says:

The water of life (semen) is pure and you have been created from it. You must taltufanna [!] your bodies from it so that you may have great pleasure.⁹⁷²

The underlined word is totally meaningless in this context and does not make sense. We will not refer to any more examples of this kind. We will simply mention a quote from Professor John Walbridge of Indiana University:

The *Aqdas* is written in a lofty and austere Arabic with little rhetorical ornamentation, a style somewhat similar to that of

⁹⁷⁰ In the Arabic version of the *Aqdas*, the words used are *yā ma`shar al-`ulamā* which translates to “O group of scholars.” This has been translated to “O leaders of religion,” in the official Baha’i version.

⁹⁷¹ Bahā’u’llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 56.

⁹⁷² The Bāb, *Arabic Bayān*, unit 5, chap. 15.

the Qur'an. As is usual in Bahā'u'llāh's Arabic, there are some deviations from Arabic norms reflecting Persian usage. There are occasional grammatical innovations but many fewer than in the Arabic writings of the Bab.⁹⁷³

Professor Walbridge is clearly stating the works of the Bāb have even more mistakes in them than the works of Bahā'u'llāh. He solves the problem of the errors in the writings of these figures by stating these errors are simply *innovations* or *deviations* from Arabic norms. Is it really that hard to see that these obvious mistakes were made because neither the Bāb nor Bahā'u'llāh had sufficient knowledge about the Arabic language?

7- Multiple Fallacies in Translations of Baha'i Texts That Are Propagated by the Baha'i Administration

We have mentioned some of these errors in the previous chapters and will put forward some more samples here. Our first sample is from *Paris Talks*:

Why is there so much interest and eager sympathy shown towards these twenty individuals, while for five thousand persons there is none? Because they are not French. If they are cut to pieces it is of no concern They are all men, they all belong to the family of mankind, but they are of other lands and races. It is no concern of the disinterested countries if these men are cut to pieces, this wholesale slaughter does not affect them!⁹⁷⁴

⁹⁷³ This is part of an article authored in 1999 and titled *Kitab-i Aqdas, the Most Holy Book*. It was intended for possible inclusion in The Baha'i Encyclopedia: http://bahai-library.com/walbridge_encyclopedia_kitab_aqdas (retrieved 12/2/2014)

⁹⁷⁴ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Paris Talks*, p. 115.

The section in brackets has been deleted in the English translation although it exists in the original Farsi sermon.⁹⁷⁵ Why? Maybe to hide `Abdu'l-Bahā's criticism of the French government? The rest of the translation has also been greatly distorted.

Here is another sample:

In formulating the principles and laws a part hath been devoted to penalties which form an effective instrument for the security and protection of men.⁹⁷⁶

The correct translation should be:

In the principles and laws there is a chapter on *qiṣāṣ* (an eye-for-eye or law of retaliation) which is a cause of security and protection for the servants (of God).⁹⁷⁷

Another sample:

The unbelievers and the faithless have set their minds on four things: first, the shedding of blood [beheading]; second, the burning of books; third, the shunning of the followers of other religions; fourth, the extermination of other communities and groups⁹⁷⁸

Beheading has been translated to *shedding blood* probably to reduce the savagery in the Bāb's orders.

An example from the notes in the book of *Aqdas*:

⁹⁷⁵ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Egypt), vol. 1, pp. 204–207.

⁹⁷⁶ Bahā'u'llāh, *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 93.

⁹⁷⁷ Bahā'u'llāh, *Majmū'iyi az alwāḥ Jamāl Aqdas Abhā ki ba'd az kitāb Aqdas nāzil shudih*, 1st ed. (Langenhain [Germany]: Lajniyi Nashr Āthār Amrī Bi Zabānhayi Fārsī Wa `Arabī, 137 B.), p. 53.

⁹⁷⁸ Bahā'u'llāh, *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 91.

In all the Divine Dispensations the eldest son hath been given extraordinary distinctions. Even the station of prophethood hath been his birthright.⁹⁷⁹

This is the correct translation:

In all the Divine Dispensations the eldest son hath been given extraordinary distinctions. Even the Prophetic inheritances belonged to him.

The Prophetic inheritances (*mirāth nabuwwat*) were the special belongings of the Prophets that could not be passed to ordinary people. Things such as Solomon's Ring (Seal) or Moses's Staff. These have nothing to do with the station of Prophethood that has been translated in the official Baha'i translation. Furthermore, none of these have been the birthright of the eldest son in previous dispensations.

The distortions in Official Baha'i translations are more than we can enumerate. The most appropriate statement that can describe these translations is a section from Professor Juan Cole's response to the UHJ, when he was unjustly accused of wrongdoing when he had translated the Tablet of the Maiden⁹⁸⁰ to English:

Moreover, the Universal House of Justice's own translations, as represented in *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh* and some of the compilations, are riddled with errors and mistranslations that give an extremely misleading impression of the intent of the original on a number of occasions. So it is not as if the UHJ's own record in translation work is spotless. Unfortunately, it is precisely the attitude of suspicion toward qualified academics and the rigidity of their preconceived opinions, evident in their letter on the Tablet of the Hourī, that has caused them

⁹⁷⁹ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 186-7.

⁹⁸⁰ We will speak more on this in the twelfth chapter.

to so discount solid expertise and resulted in these many errors in their publications.⁹⁸¹

These translations that are riddled with flaws, errors, and distortions, have been distributed under the authorization of the Universal House of Justice and have been printed and redistributed by official Baha'i centers worldwide multiple times in the last century and in most cases no step has been taken whatsoever to correct them.

8- Errors and Outright Distortions in Provisional Translations of Baha'i Texts

Provisional translations, is a term used by Baha'is to refer to works and translations that have not yet been verified by the Baha'i administration. Nevertheless, these translations are widely circulated and used by Baha'is. We will refer to a sample here.

Dr. Ḥabīb Mu'ayyad was `Abdu'l-Bahā's physician for 8 years. He kept a diary of his years with `Abdu'l-Bahā and finally distributed his memoirs in the year 118 Badī` under the title *Khātirāt-i Ḥabīb*⁹⁸² (Ḥabīb's memoirs). A translation of this book was provided by the prominent Baha'i researcher and translator, Dr. Ahang Rabbani, in his multi-volume work titled: *Witnesses to Babi and Bahā'ī History*.⁹⁸³ The third volume of this work is dedicated to Dr. Mu'ayyad's diary and has been named: *Eight Years Near Abdu'l-Bahā: The Diary of Dr. Habib Mu'ayyad*. This is what he writes:

One day when Bahā'u'llāh had returned from Sulaymāniyyah, He was walking in the street with the late Āqā Mīrzā Muhammad-Qulī. A kabob-maker had whispered, "Once more the Bābīs have come into the open." The Blessed Beauty told

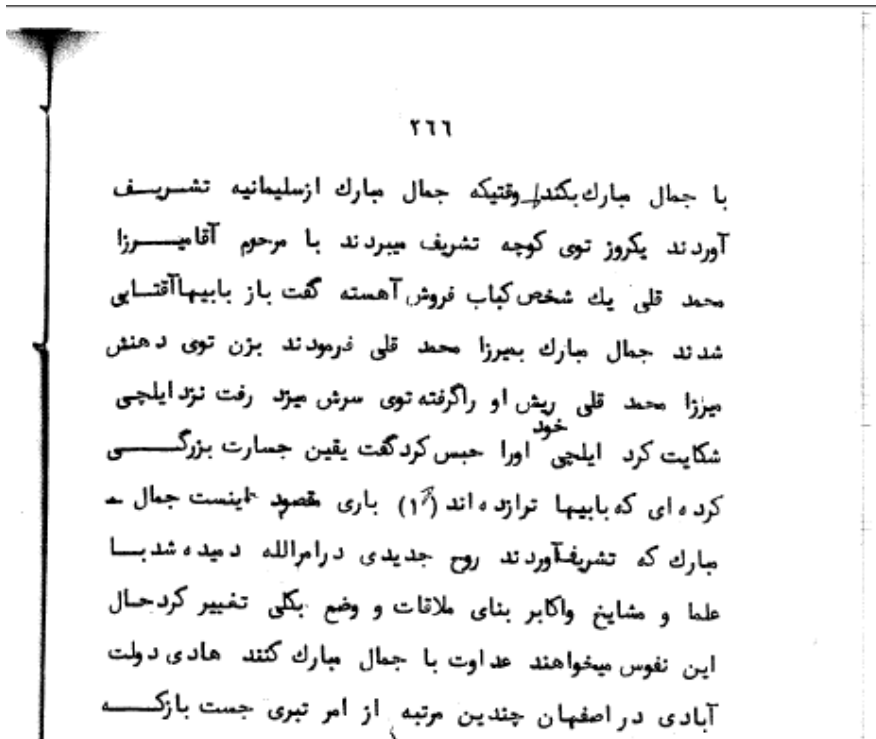
⁹⁸¹ http://bahai-library.com/uhj_lawh_huriyyih_cole

⁹⁸² Published by the Iranian Baha'i Publishing Trust (Mu'assisiyi Millī Maṭbū'āt Amrī)

⁹⁸³ http://bahai-library.com/rabbani_witnesses_history (retrieved 15/1/2014)

Mīrzā Muhammad-Qulī, “Rebuke him appropriately!” Mīrzā Muhammad-Qulī grabbed his beard and punished him. The Kabobī took a complaint to the constable, but was thrown in jail and told, “Obviously you must have grievously insulted them for the Bābīs to have punished you in such manner!”⁹⁸⁴

Below is an image from the original Farsi book for comparison:



We already provided the correct translation of this text in Chapter Two, we will repeat it here for the purpose of comparison:

⁹⁸⁴ Ahang Rabbani, *Eight Years Near Abdu'l-Bahā: The Diary of Dr. Habib Mu'ayyad*, p. 276: http://bahai-library.com/pdf/r/rabbani_diary_habib_muayyad_2013.pdf (retrieved 15/1/2014)

Table 4: Comparison between correct and distorted Baha'i translation of Bahā'u'llāh's orders to hit a man

Original Farsi	Ahang Rabbani's Trans.	Correct Trans.
وقتي جمال مبارك از سليمانيه تشریف آوردند يك روز توي كوچه تشریف مي بردند با مرحوم آقا ميرزا محمدقلي، يك شخص كباب فروش آهسته گفت: باز بابي ها آفتابي شدند. جمال مبارك به ميرزا محمدقلي فرمودند: <u>بز توي دهنش.</u> ميرزا محمد قلي ريش او را گرفته توي <u>سرش</u> مي زد. رفت نزد ايلچي شكايه كرد. ايلچي خود او را حبس كرد. گفت يقين جسارت بزرگي کرده اي كه بايها تو را زده اند.	One day when Bahā'u'llāh had returned from Sulaymāniyyah, He was walking in the street with the late Āqā Mīrzā Muhammad-Qulī. A kabob-maker had whispered, "Once more the Bābīs have come into the open." The Blessed Beauty told Mīrzā Muhammad-Qulī, "<u>Rebuke him appropriately!</u>" Mīrzā Muhammad-Qulī grabbed his beard and <u>punished</u> him. The Kabobī took a complaint to the constable, but was thrown in jail and told, "Obviously you must have grievously insulted them for the Bābīs <u>to have punished you in such manner!</u>"	When his holiness returned from Sulaymaniyah, he was strolling in the street one day with the late Āqā Mīrzā Muḥammad Qulī. A Kabob seller quietly said, "These Bābīs have appeared again!" The Blessed Beauty said to Mīrzā Muḥammad Qulī, "<u>Hit him in the mouth!</u>" Mīrzā Muḥammad Qulī grabbed his beard and <u>started hitting him in the head.</u> [The man] went to the ambassador and complained. The ambassador imprisoned the man (instead of assisting him) and said, "without doubt, you must have greatly insulted the Bābīs <u>that they hit you.</u>"

Ahang Rabbani has deliberately distorted the meaning of the word *hit* three times to portray a peaceful Bahā'u'llāh. When confronted with this distortion, Baha'is claim that "hit in the mouth" is also used as slang in Persian to rebuke someone verbally. The context of the quote and the reactions therein clearly show that this meaning was not intended and the poor kabob seller was *physically* abused by the person executing Bahā'u'llāh's orders and not *verbally*. If a verbal rebuking was intended Bahā'u'llāh would have at least prevented his follower from

hitting the kabob seller in the head or would have apologized for the harsh response, but he did not and the kabob seller had been forced to take a complaint to the constable.

Furthermore, the word *hit* has been used three times in the quote and only the first instance could have had two meanings not the others, however the meaning of all three instances has been distorted.

9- Why Didn't `Abdu'l-Bahā Speak English in England and French in Paris?

Bahā'is believe that Bahā'u'llāh and his successor `Abdu'l-Bahā are infallible and possess Divine or superhuman knowledge. According to Shia Islam—which Bahā'u'llāh adhered to before becoming a Bābī—one of the traits of the Messengers of God and their successors, is the ability to speak the language of all people and races. Abā Ṣalt a disciple of the eighth Shia Imam, al-Riḍā, narrates:

(Imam) al-Riḍā would speak with all the people by their own tongues and by God, from amongst the people, he was the most eloquent and most knowledgeable about all languages. One day I said to him, “O Son of God’s Apostle, I am astounded that you know all these different languages!” He replied, “O Ābā Ṣalt, I am God’s proof over His creations. God will not appoint a Proof over a group (whilst that Proof) cannot speak their tongue.”⁹⁸⁵

Why couldn't `Abdu'l-Bahā speak English or French in his travels to Europe and America? What kind of superhuman Knowledge and what form of Divine Appointment did he possess that lacked one of the main traits needed to communicate God's messages to the people?

⁹⁸⁵ Al-Ṣadūq, *ʿUyūn akhbār al-Riḍā* (n.p.: Intishārāti Jahān: 1378 AH), vol. 2, p. 228.

10- Wrong Data Given to English Speaking Audience

Lacking the linguistic means to investigate the truth, non-Farsi speaking audiences are usually presented with distorted facts about the Baha'i creed. This is not peculiar to ordinary Bahā'īs but is an act that was also performed by `Abdu'l-Bahā.

The current estimate of the number of Baha'is in the world is at most 5–7.5 million adherents. These numbers have been dismissed by a number of academics and it is believed that the actual worldwide Baha'i population is much lower. As we will show, the exaggeration in the Baha'i population was first initiated by `Abdu'l-Bahā when presenting wrong statistics to non-Farsi speaking audiences.

In 2012 the Official Website of “the Baha'is of the United States” published the Daily Centenarian,⁹⁸⁶ an archive of hundreds of American newspaper articles (and their images which we have provided below) from 1912 that were related to `Abdu'l-Bahā's journey to America and his speeches therein. Based on the worldwide Baha'i population mentioned in these articles, we have constructed a table in reverse chronological order that shows the name of the newspaper, the date published, and the population statistic cited:

Table 5: World Baha'i population according to newspapers in 1912

no.	Newspaper Name	Date	Mentioned Population
1	<i>Troy NY Press</i>	16/12/2012	over 10,000,000 ⁹⁸⁷
2	<i>The Christian Commonwealth</i>	8/12/1912	3,000,000 ⁹⁸⁸
3	<i>The New York Times</i>	6/12/1912	Thousands in America. ⁹⁸⁹

⁹⁸⁶ <http://centenary.bahai.us/daily-archive>

⁹⁸⁷ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/head-new-religious-cult-has-thousands-followers>

⁹⁸⁸ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/return-england-abdul-baha>

⁹⁸⁹ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/abdul-baha-sails-away-0>

4	<i>The New York Times</i> (Palo Alto, CA)	10/11/1912	Several million ⁹⁹⁰
5	<i>San Francisco Call</i>	12/10/1912	7,000,000 Persian followers ⁹⁹¹
6	<i>San Francisco California Chronicle</i>	8/10/1912	3,000,000 ⁹⁹²
7	unnamed (Seattle)	6/10/1912	No less than 20,000,000 ⁹⁹³
8	<i>San Francisco California Examiner</i>	6/10/1912	No less than 3,000,000 ⁹⁹⁴
9	<i>San Francisco California Bulletin</i>	4/10/1912	Several million ⁹⁹⁵
10	<i>The SFO Call</i> (San Francisco, CA)	4/10/1912	Several million ⁹⁹⁶
11	<i>Oakland Tribune</i> (San Francisco, CA)	4/10/1912	Several million ⁹⁹⁷
12	<i>The Sacramento Bee</i> (San Francisco, CA)	4/10/1912	Several million ⁹⁹⁸
13	<i>San Jose California Herald</i>	3/10/1912	Several million ⁹⁹⁹
14	<i>San Francisco Chronicle</i>	3/10/1912	Several million ¹⁰⁰⁰
15	<i>The Oakland Enquirer</i> (Oakland, CA)	2/10/1912	Several million ¹⁰⁰¹
16	<i>The Evening Standard</i> (Salt)	30/9/1912	10,000,000 ¹⁰⁰²

⁹⁹⁰ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/leland-stanford>

⁹⁹¹ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/charitable-woman-may-aid-bahaism>

⁹⁹² <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/abdul-baha-abbas-says-object-mission-unify-all-creeds>

⁹⁹³ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/abdul-baha-abbas-will-visit-seattle>

⁹⁹⁴ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/abdul-baha-brings-gospel-peace>

⁹⁹⁵ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/abdul-baha-give-lecture-oakland>

⁹⁹⁶ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/persian-lecture-universal-peace>

⁹⁹⁷ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/persian-prophet-lecture-here-0>

⁹⁹⁸ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/women-should-have-rights-men-he-says>

⁹⁹⁹ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/abdul-baha-talk-stanford>

¹⁰⁰⁰ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/apostle-bahaism-speak-stanford>

¹⁰⁰¹ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/bahai-prophet-will-speak-here>

¹⁰⁰² <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/abdul-baha-abbas-comes-lecture-bahai-religion>

	Lake, UT)		
17	<i>Rocky Mountain News</i> (New York, NY)	22/9/1912	Millions ¹⁰⁰³
18	<i>Spokane Washington Daily Chronicle</i>	17/9/1912	3,000,000 ¹⁰⁰⁴
19	<i>Harbor Grace Standard</i> (Montreal, QC)	7/9/1912	3,000,000 in Persia alone ¹⁰⁰⁵
20	<i>Biddeford Maine Weekly Journal</i>	6/9/1912	3,000,000 ¹⁰⁰⁶
21	<i>London Ontario paper</i>	3/9/1912	8000 in America ¹⁰⁰⁷
22	<i>Portland Oregon Oregonian</i>	1/9/1912	3,000,000 ¹⁰⁰⁸
23	<i>The Montreal Gazette</i> (Montreal, QC)	29/8/1912	3,000,000 in Persia alone
24	<i>The Montreal Daily Star</i> (Montreal, QC)	24/8/1912	Over 3,000,000 in Persia alone ¹⁰⁰⁹
25	<i>Oakland Cal Enquirer</i> (Berkeley, CA)	8/8/1912	Millions ¹⁰¹⁰
26	<i>The Evening Post</i> (New York)	23/7/1912	14,000,000 ¹⁰¹¹
27	<i>The Pittsburgh Pennsylvania Press</i>	15/7/1912	20,000,000 ¹⁰¹²
28	<i>The Brooklyn Daily Eagle</i> (New York)	13/7/1912	14,000,000 ¹⁰¹³
29	<i>New York Sun</i>	7/7/1912	Several Hundred Thousand ¹⁰¹⁴

¹⁰⁰³ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/abdul-baha-coming-persian-prophet-teaches-new-faith>

¹⁰⁰⁴ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/abdul-baha-prophet-god-asked-come-spokane>

¹⁰⁰⁵ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/persian-peace-prophet-gives-message-canada-through-standard>

¹⁰⁰⁶ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/abdul-baha-greenacre-conferences>

¹⁰⁰⁷ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/bahai-revelation-comes-city>

¹⁰⁰⁸ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/abdul-baha-coming-tour-interest-his-religion>

¹⁰⁰⁹ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/famous-teacher-coming>

¹⁰¹⁰ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/local-artist-wins-fame-portrait>

¹⁰¹¹ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/abdul-baha-speak-1>

¹⁰¹² <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/aged-head-new-religion-gives-views>

¹⁰¹³ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/unitarian-persian-prophet>

30	<i>The Van Nuys News (Van Nuys, CA)</i>	5/7/1912	Millions ¹⁰¹⁵
31	<i>The Agitator Wellsboro Pennsylvania</i>	3/7/1912	14,000,000 ¹⁰¹⁶
32	unnamed (New York)	26/6/1912	14,000,000 ¹⁰¹⁷
33	<i>Grand Rapids Minnesota Press</i>	24/6/1912	3,000,000 ¹⁰¹⁸
34	<i>Brooklyn Daily Eagle NY</i>	17/6/1912	Many millions ¹⁰¹⁹
35	<i>The Anaconda Standard (Montclair, NJ)</i>	16/6/1912	14,000,000
36	<i>The Evening News (San Jose)</i>	15/6/1912	2,000,000 ¹⁰²⁰
37	<i>The Evening Bulletin Philadelphia</i>	10/6/1912	250,000 in America ¹⁰²¹
38	<i>Philadelphia Pennsylvania Public Ledger</i>	10/6/1912	More than 3,000,000 ¹⁰²²
39	<i>Middletown Time-Press (Montclair, NJ)</i>	3/6/1912	14,000,000 ¹⁰²³
40	<i>unnamed paper in New York</i>	26/5/1912	14,000,000 ¹⁰²⁴
41	<i>Worcester Telegram 2nd edition</i>	24/5/1912	Millions in near east and hundreds of thousands in the US ¹⁰²⁵
42	<i>Worcester Evening Post</i>	24/5/1912	Millions in near east and hundreds of thousands in

¹⁰¹⁴ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/abdul-baha-gives-his-impressions-new-york>

¹⁰¹⁵ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/leader-bahaism-here-1>

¹⁰¹⁶ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/abdul-baha-make-his-home-montclair>

¹⁰¹⁷ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/abdul-baha-will-stay-america>

¹⁰¹⁸ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/church-and-its-work>

¹⁰¹⁹ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/abdul-baha-abbas-pulpit>

¹⁰²⁰ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/abdul-baha-head-new-religion-brotherhood>

¹⁰²¹ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/old-persian-mystic-stirs-teachings>

¹⁰²² <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/persian-sage-pays-visit-city>

¹⁰²³ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/ Jerseys-new-resident>

¹⁰²⁴ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/abdul-baha-will-stay-america>

¹⁰²⁵ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/new-faith-head-heard>

			the US ¹⁰²⁶
43	<i>Worcester Massachusetts Post</i>	23/5/1912	Millions in near east and hundreds of thousands in the US ¹⁰²⁷
44	<i>Worcester Telegram</i> 2nd edition	22/5/1912	Millions and 100,000 in the US ¹⁰²⁸
45	<i>Worcester Evening Gazette</i>	21/5/1912	Millions and several hundred thousand in the US ¹⁰²⁹
46	<i>The Syracuse Herald</i>	11/5/1912	20,000,000 ¹⁰³⁰
47	<i>Grand Valley Times</i> (Moab, UT)	10/5/1912	Millions ¹⁰³¹
48	<i>The Oelwein Daily Register</i> (Oelwein, IA)	10/5/1912	Millions ¹⁰³²
49	<i>Manitoba Free Press</i>	9/5/1912	3,000,000 in the Orient ¹⁰³³
50	<i>Marble Rock Journal</i> (Floyd, IA)	9/5/1912	Millions ¹⁰³⁴
51	<i>The Palo Alto Tribune</i> (Emmetsburg, IA)	8/5/1912	Millions ¹⁰³⁵
52	<i>Pittsburgh Pennsylvania Post</i>	6/5/1912	15,000,000 ¹⁰³⁶
53	<i>New York Tribune</i>	5/5/1912	20,000,000 in the world 5000 in America ¹⁰³⁷
54	<i>unnamed</i> (chicago)	1/5/1912	40,000,000 ¹⁰³⁸

¹⁰²⁶ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/head-new-religion-clark-college-speaker>

¹⁰²⁷ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/head-new-religion-clark-college-speaker-0>

¹⁰²⁸ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/abdul-baha-speak-0>

¹⁰²⁹ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/abbas-effendi-coming-give-talk-clark>

¹⁰³⁰ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/prophet-may-come>

¹⁰³¹ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/leader-bahaism-here-3>

¹⁰³² <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/leader-bahaism-here-4>

¹⁰³³ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/readers-notes>

¹⁰³⁴ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/leader-bahaism-here-2>

¹⁰³⁵ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/leader-bahaism-here-0>

¹⁰³⁶ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/abdul-baha-speak>

¹⁰³⁷ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/abdul-baha-talks-kate-carew-things-spiritual-and-mundane>

¹⁰³⁸ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/bahaist-leader-opens-oriental-court-here>

55	<i>Chicago Illinois News</i>	29/4/1912	40,000,000 ¹⁰³⁹
56	<i>The Hutchinson News (Chicago)</i>	27/4/1912	14,000,000 ¹⁰⁴⁰
57	<i>Houston Texas Chronicle</i>	24/4/1912	15,000,000 with several hundred thousand in the US and Canada ¹⁰⁴¹
58	<i>Cleveland Ohio Leader</i>	22/4/1912	2,000,000 ¹⁰⁴²
59	<i>The New York Times</i>	21/4/1912	Tens of thousands ¹⁰⁴³
60	<i>New York Tribune</i>	18/4/1912	Millions ¹⁰⁴⁴
61	<i>Pittsburg PA Times</i>	17/4/1912	20,000,000 ¹⁰⁴⁵
62	<i>Albany New York Press</i>	15/4/1912	Many millions ¹⁰⁴⁶
63	<i>Buffalo New York Courier</i>	15/4/1912	Many millions ¹⁰⁴⁷
64	<i>The Lexington Herald</i>	14/4/1912	Hundreds of thousands when Bahā'u'llāh was alive ¹⁰⁴⁸
65	<i>Chicago Illinois Post</i>	13/4/1912	2,000,000 with 5,000 in the US ¹⁰⁴⁹
66	<i>New York Herald</i>	13/4/1912	20,000,000 ¹⁰⁵⁰
67	<i>The Chicago Illinois Defender</i>	13/4/1912	Millions ¹⁰⁵¹
68	<i>New York Tribune</i>	12/4/1912	20,000,000 ¹⁰⁵²

¹⁰³⁹ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/bahaist-chief-missing>

¹⁰⁴⁰ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/bahaists-honor-leader>

¹⁰⁴¹ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/people-worth-while>

¹⁰⁴² <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/persian-hailed-new-messiah-comes-teach-unity-world>

¹⁰⁴³ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/message-abdul-baha-head-bahais-0>

¹⁰⁴⁴ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/letters-editor-abdul-baha>

¹⁰⁴⁵ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/head-new-cult>

¹⁰⁴⁶ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/persian-explains-plan-unite-all-religions>

¹⁰⁴⁷ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/western-world-behind-spiritual-civilization>

¹⁰⁴⁸ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/servant-god-headed-america-0>

¹⁰⁴⁹ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/abdul-baha-and-chicago>

¹⁰⁵⁰ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/abdul-baha-dazed-citys-rush-calls-new-york-beehive-0>

¹⁰⁵¹ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/abdul-baha-abbas-coming-lewis-g-gregory>

¹⁰⁵² <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/persian-prophet-here>

69	<i>New York Sun</i>	12/4/1912	2,000,000 ¹⁰⁵³
70	<i>unnamed</i> (Washington DC)	27/3/1912	Thousands in America ¹⁰⁵⁴
71	<i>The New York Times</i>	4/3/1912	One third of Persians ¹⁰⁵⁵
72	<i>SFO Daily News</i> (San Francisco, CA)	28/2/1912	Millions ¹⁰⁵⁶
73	<i>The Montreal Daily Star</i> (Montreal, QC)	10/2/1912	2,000,000 ¹⁰⁵⁷
74	<i>Sault Ste. Marie Ontario Evening News</i>	5/2/1912	Millions ¹⁰⁵⁸
75	<i>Boston Massachusetts Evening Transcript</i>	27/1/1912	Thousands ¹⁰⁵⁹
76	<i>unnamed</i> (Chicago)	7/1/1912	2,000,000 ¹⁰⁶⁰

These exaggerations are totally outrageous and go up to numbers like 40 million! Although, the source of many of these numbers has not been mentioned in the newspapers, in the case of a few of these articles, it has been stated that the numbers have been provided by `Abdu'l-Bahā himself.

Upon arriving in the United States, `Abdu'l-Bahā is quoted by the New York Times as saying that he has no way of estimating the number of his followers but that they are overall about two million:

The philosopher enjoyed a tiny pinch of snuff and leaned back in his chair. Answering questions, he said he expected to stay

¹⁰⁵³ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/disciples-here-hail-abdul-baha>

¹⁰⁵⁴ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/persian-brings-gospel-love-0>

¹⁰⁵⁵ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/bahai-leader-due-here>

¹⁰⁵⁶ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/after-40-years-prison>

¹⁰⁵⁷ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/eastern-sage-coming-city-new-message-0>

¹⁰⁵⁸ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/after-forty-years-prison-bahai-leader-plans-visit-followers-united-states-0>

¹⁰⁵⁹ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/coming-abdul-baha-abbas>

¹⁰⁶⁰ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/dedicate-temple-bahai-chicagos-north-shore>

in the United States four or perhaps five months, and that he wanted to see everything of interest. He will visit all the large cities before sailing from San Francisco for Japan. He had no way of estimating the number of his followers.

Twenty million? Oh, no. Perhaps 2,000,000¹⁰⁶¹ the world over. Did he believe, in women suffrage? Yes, positively, and in the entire emancipation of women. He believed also that divorce is justifiable for many causes. (Disciples Here Hail Abdul Baha, *New York Sun*, 12 April 1912)¹⁰⁶²

APRIL 12, 1912.—Copyright, 1912, by the Sun Printing and Publishing Association.

over his shoulders. His broad beard and mustache are as gray as his hair. His forehead is broad, full and high and his nose is large and aquiline. Abdul Baha's eyes are blue and large, his glance is penetrating. He wore a voluminous outer coat of gray wool which swept from his shoulders to the floor. Under the jobbeh was a linen coat, the gaba. His turban was white. His feet were encased in narrow pointed shoes

Twenty million? Oh, no. Perhaps 2,000,000 the world over. Did he believe in women suffrage? Yes, positively, and in the entire emancipation of women. He believed also that divorce is justifiable for many causes.

"Complete incompatibility," he said slowly, "is the chief cause of unhappy marriages. It brings hatred. It should be relieved by divorce."

From the hotel he was taken in an automobile to the home of Edward Kinney where followers from this and other cities

Figure 8: Image of newspaper that quotes 'Abdu'l-Bahā as saying the world Baha'i population is about 2 million

The same number is repeated in another paper the next day:

He estimates the number of his followers at about 2,000,000, about 5,000 of these being in this country. (Leader of New Cult [rest of title is missing], *Chicago Illinois Post*, 13 April 1912)¹⁰⁶³

¹⁰⁶¹ Although a zero is missing but the ',' after the letter '2' shows that this number is 2,000,000.

¹⁰⁶² <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/disciples-here-hail-abdul-baha>

¹⁰⁶³ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/abdul-baha-and-chicago>

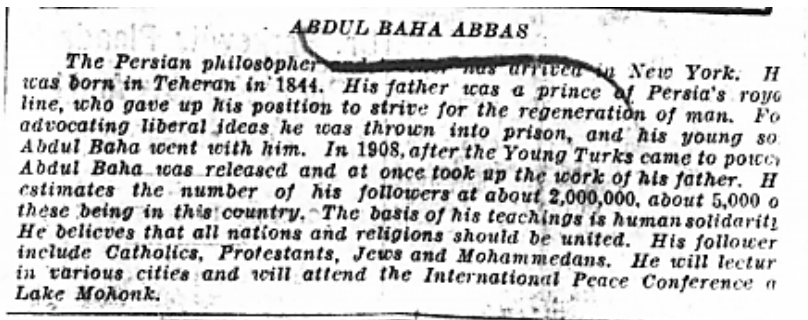


Figure 9: Image of another newspaper that quotes `Abdu'l-Bahā as saying the world Baha'i population is about 2 million

Matters become even more interesting. Six months into his stay these numbers dramatically change. He is quoted as saying he has ten million followers:

`Abdu'l-Bahā Abbas, leader of the Bahā'ī movement, which he says has 10,000,000 followers in the world, is in Salt Lake City. He is making a tour of the United States and plans to lecture on his religion here. (Comes [*sic*] to Lecture on Bahal [*sic*] Religion, *The Evening Standard* [Salt Lake], 30 September 1912)¹⁰⁶⁴

¹⁰⁶⁴ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/abdul-baha-abbas-comes-lecture-bahai-religion>

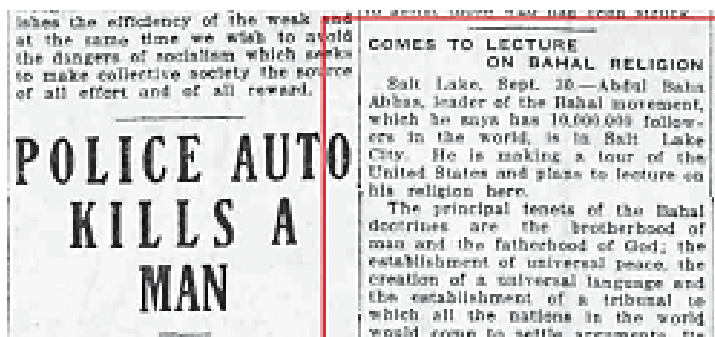


Figure 10: Image of newspaper that quotes `Abdu'l-Bahā as saying the world Baha'i population is about 10 million

This high number is further strengthened by a quote from another newspaper several days later in which `Abdu'l-Bahā claims he has converted several million people to Baha'ism himself:

The disciple is a martyr to religion and claims to have converted several million people, including Christian, Mohammedans and Jews to the Baha'ism faith. (Women Should Have Rights of Men, *The Sacramento Bee* [San Francisco] 4 October 1912)¹⁰⁶⁵

¹⁰⁶⁵ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/women-should-have-rights-men-he-says>

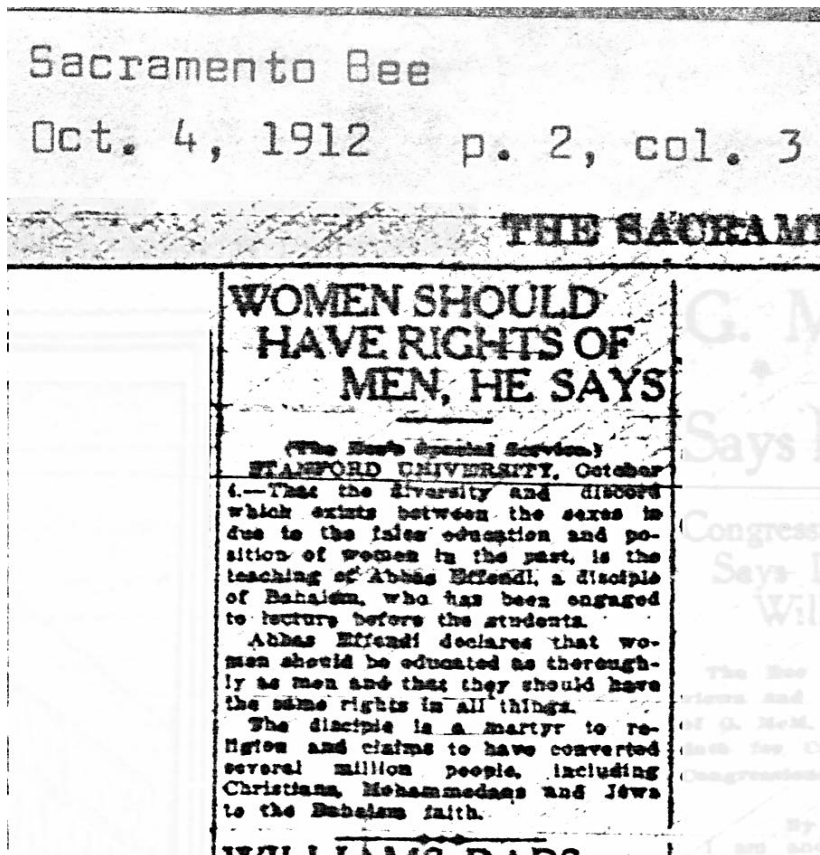


Figure 11: Image of newspaper that quotes 'Abdu'l-Bahā as saying he has converted several million people to Baha'ism himself

The number of American Baha'is can also be found in 'Abdu'l-Bahā's words. As we previously quoted, upon arriving in the US, he had mentioned his American followers to be around 5000:

He estimates the number of his followers at about 2,000,000, about 5,000 of these being in this country. (Leader of New

Cult [rest of title is missing], *Chicago Illinois Post*, 13 April 1912)¹⁰⁶⁶

Furthermore, in his farewell speech he had claimed that he had converted thousands of Americans during his eight month stay in America:

About 100 members of the New York Bahā'ī Society, 80 per cent. of whom are women, went to the pier to see `Abdu'l-Bahā off and were deeply moved as he delivered his final address to them in the lounge. He said that during his tour of the United States he had converted thousands of men and women and that they would work among their churches after he had gone for the furtherance of the movement for universal peace. (Abdul Baha Sails Away, *The New York Times*, 6 December 1912)¹⁰⁶⁷

¹⁰⁶⁶ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/abdul-baha-and-chicago>

¹⁰⁶⁷ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/abdul-baha-sails-away-0>

NEW YORK CITY TIMES

Friday, December 6, 1912

ABDUL BAHÁ SAILS AWAY.

**Persian Prophet Bids Followers Here
a Farewell for Life.**

Abdul Baha, the Bahai prophet and peace advocate, sailed yesterday for Liverpool on the Celtic, after spending seven months in this country preaching to his followers and bidding them farewell on this earth. The prophet, who wore his white turban, was accompanied by his secretary, interpreter, and body servant.

About 100 members of the New York Bahai Society, 80 per cent. of whom are women, went to the pier to see Abdul Baha off and were deeply moved as he delivered his final address to them in the lounge. He said that during his tour of the United States he had converted thousands of men and women and that they would work among their churches after he had gone for the furtherance of the movement for universal peace.

Figure 12: Image of newspaper that quotes `Abdu'l-Bahā as saying he has converted thousands of Americans to Baha'ism during his stay in America.

If we conservatively assume that `Abdu'l-Bahā had converted another five thousand people to the Baha'í faith during his stay in America—based on the thousands that he had claimed—then we can estimate the total number of American Baha'is to be around ten thousand.

Subsequently, based on what the papers quoted from `Abdu'l-Bahā, there must have been two or ten million Baha'is worldwide (millions of which he had converted) and ten thousand in America at the end of

1912. According to a survey by two prominent Baha'i authors¹⁰⁶⁸ the number of Baha'is 42 years later—in 1954—were only 213,000 worldwide and only 10,000 in North America, Europe, and Anglo-Pacific combined!

Even if we assume a large margin of error for all numbers, the estimated population of 1912 is still very large and greatly exaggerated. Ignoring the population growth, `Abdu'l-Bahā's statistics are respectively about 9.4 times and 46 times the Baha'i population of 42 years later! These are the words of the Mystery of God who possesses superhuman knowledge¹⁰⁶⁹ and is the Unerring Pen.¹⁰⁷⁰

There is another point in these exaggerations that is worth mentioning. `Abdu'l-Bahā apparently didn't mind these large numbers being published in these papers although he protested other facts that he deemed needed to be corrected. For instance:

`Abdul-Bahā, "Servant of Ineffable Splendor," has arrived in Chicago from Persia to establish a world-wide peace between religion and science, but feels a little doubtful of our newspapers because a reporter wrote that he wore a robe and turban of red and white stripes — which he never did; so there! ([title missing], *Inter Ocean* [Chicago] 2 May 1912)¹⁰⁷¹

The paper that `Abdu'l-Bahā was referring to was published a day earlier:

`Abdul-Bahā, "Servant of Ineffable Splendor," Adviser to 40,000,000 Through World . . . The high priest sat in a big

¹⁰⁶⁸ P. Smith, M. Momen, *The Baha'i faith 1957–1988: A survey of contemporary developments*, *Religion* 19 (1989), pp. 63–91: http://bahai-library.com/momen_smith_developments_1957-1988 (retrieved 28/2/2014)

¹⁰⁶⁹ Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 134.

¹⁰⁷⁰ Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 75.

¹⁰⁷¹ <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/abdul-baha-servant-splendor>

plush chair during the brief reception. He wore a long, flowing robe, striped with red and white. His beard reached almost to his waist. A turban of the same material as the robe was wound about his head. (Bahaist Leader Opens Oriental Court Here, *unnamed* [Chicago] 1 May 1912)¹⁰⁷²

BAHAIST LEADER OPENS ORIENTAL COURT HERE

Persian High Priest of Universal
Brotherhood Cult Greets
Host of Followers.
CHICAGO

FAITHFUL FLOCK TO THRONE

Abdul-Baha, "Servant of Ineffa-
ble Splendor," Adviser to 40,-
000,000 Through World.

An oriental court that sways the des-
tines of 40,000,000 persons throughout the
world has been established temporarily in
Chicago.

"INNER CIRCLE" ADMITTED.

None but Persians were permitted to enter the presence of the "Servant of the Ineffable Splendor" during his first few hours at the hotel. Later a favored few, comprising the "inner circle" of the cult, were allowed to pass through the suite and to touch his hand.

The high priest sat in a big plush chair during the brief reception. He wore a long, flowing robe, striped with red and white. His beard reached almost to his waist. A turban of the same material as the robe was wound about his head.

A half dozen Persians stood about the "throne." A dozen or more American women from Boston, New York and Washington formed the background. Hardly a word was spoken.

After the reception the priest again went into seclusion. It was announced that he was dining. Abdul-Baha has his own native cook.

In the evening Abdul-Baha held another reception. One hundred followers flocked to his apartments, which were filled with costly flowers. The priest gave all a cordial welcome. He had changed his costume of

Figure 13: Image of newspaper that claimed 'Abdu'l-Bahā had worn a red and white striped robe.

Apparently, the color of his turban was an important point that needed to be corrected but his 40 million non-existent followers were not.

Why is wrong data given to non-English speaking audiences? Professor Juan Cole's statements seem fairly reasonable:

¹⁰⁷² <http://centenary.bahai.us/news/bahaist-leader-opens-oriental-court-here>

The statements of the Universal House of Justice must be understood against a background of twentieth-century Bahā'ī translation practice, in which it has been the custom to limit the amount of material translated, to suppress large parts of the scriptural corpus by simply not making them available or by ensuring they stay out of print, and by translating in such a way as to build bridges to Western converts and potential converts. The purpose of such translation is not academic accuracy, but building up a seemingly seamless scriptural corpus in English that smooths over internal contradictions and supports the contemporary 'party line;' and making the scriptural corpus bland enough and 'naturalized' enough in English to ensure it does not pose a Public Relations problem inside or outside the community.¹⁰⁷³

¹⁰⁷³ http://bahai-library.com/uhj_lawh_huriyyih_cole



Is This Principle Correct From a Rational and Logical Perspective?

Learning a new language is no simple task and can only be justified when there is a need or necessity for such an action. Currently, there are millions (if not billions) of people in the world who do not need to learn a new language for it has no benefit to them. Why force a peasant or farmer working in a remote part of Africa or South America to learn a second language? Why force the ordinary people of any country who are living their lives peacefully and without any problem to learn a new language for no reason at all?

When the need is felt, people will themselves strive to learn a new language. For instance, students will probably feel the need to learn English as a scientific language. Merchants and businessmen might feel the need to learn the language of the countries they are trading with. Dignitaries and ambassadors will probably have this attitude too, but the majority of the people will have no need to learn a new language and it will be a complete waste of time.

Furthermore, the poor reception of auxiliary languages like Esperanto show that such languages are failure prone because many people—based on their social, national, and cultural beliefs—will under no circumstance accept a predefined language that they do not favor as a universal auxiliary language.

The greatest flaw in this principle, by far, is the farfetched argument `Abdu'l-Bahā puts forward to justify it. He believes that the differences

between nations and people are caused by differences in their languages and these will only be dispelled once a universal language is implemented:

What is the difference between Germany and France? It is only the difference of language.¹⁰⁷⁴

Misunderstandings are the reason behind differences. When [people] understand each other's tongues no misunderstanding will remain. Everyone will show affection and kindness to others and the East and the West will become united and in harmony.¹⁰⁷⁵

Is there no difference between Germany and France, but the difference in their languages? Will the differences between these two countries disappear overnight if they speak the same language? Are misunderstandings only caused because of differences in languages? Are there no misunderstandings between people with the same language living in the same country? Are all differences rooted in misunderstandings and differences in languages?

The answer to all the above questions is clearly: No. This is how `Abdu'l-Bahā justifies the aforementioned reasoning:

We can see how in the past ages, the unification of language became a cause of friendship and unity. Thirteen-hundred years ago, the Copts, Syrians, and Assyrians were different nations and had great quarrels and wars with each other. When they were forced to speak Arabic, their language became unified and they are now all Arabs and a single nation. Even though Egyptians were Copts, Syrians were Syrians, Baghdadis were Chaldean, and the people of Mosul

¹⁰⁷⁴ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Egypt), vol. 1, p. 234.

¹⁰⁷⁵ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 230.

were Assyrians, but the unification of language made them all a common nation related to each other in such a way that this relationship will never break apart. Also, in Syria, there are different religions like Catholic, Orthodox, Druze, Shia, Sunni, and Alawites, but because they have a single language they are like a single nation. If you ask any of them (about his race), he will reply I am an Arab even though some are Romans, some Hebrew, some Syriacs, and others Greek. It is the unification of language that has integrated all of them.¹⁰⁷⁶

We will not delve into the incorrect historical and geographical facts in this speech. But how can we, in any sense of the word, claim that the mostly Arab Middle-East, with all the countries and tribes mentioned in this quote, is integrated in a way that it will never break apart? Has there ever, in the past century, been even a short period of peace between all these groups because they all became Arabs? Did the unity of language make all these different groups friends, and iron out their differences? This simply is unreasonable, for in contrast to what `Abdu'l-Bahā claims, the unification of language is not a definite cause for affection, harmony, or peace.

It is up to you to draw your own conclusions!



¹⁰⁷⁶ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwārī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 37.



**Bahā'u'llāh:
“Contradiction has and will not
ever have a way in the
sanctified realm of the Divine
Manifestations.”¹⁰⁷⁷**

¹⁰⁷⁷Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 126.

1. How Many Languages Must One Learn Other than His Mother's Tongue?

`Abdu'l-Bahā and Bahā'u'llāh: At most two languages are needed: the mother tongue and the Universal Auxiliary Language.¹⁰⁷⁸ Great effort must be put to limit this to one language.¹⁰⁷⁹

Bahā'u'llāh, `Abdu'l-Bahā', and Shoghi: Other than your mother tongue learn the Auxiliary language, Arabic¹⁰⁸⁰, Farsi¹⁰⁸¹, English, and German!¹⁰⁸²

¹⁰⁷⁸ "A universal language would make intercourse possible with every nation. Thus it would be needful to know two languages only, the mother tongue and the universal speech," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Paris Talks*, pp. 155–156.

¹⁰⁷⁹ "We have decreed before that it has been destined to speak with two tongues and a great effort must be put to limit this to one [tongue] and the same [applies] to the handwriting. So that the lives of the people will not be wasted and nullified in learning different languages," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 33 (citing Bahā'u'llāh)

¹⁰⁸⁰ "The beloved Guardian has stressed that the children and the youth of the friends must also learn the Arabic language and use this eloquent language to benefit from the tablets and blessed writings," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 25, p. 206.

¹⁰⁸¹ "Make as much effort as possible to learn the Farsi language, for this language will soon be sanctified on all of earth and it will have great use in spreading the Breath of God, elevating the Word of God, and deducing the meanings of God's verses," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 114.

¹⁰⁸² "The exalted decision of the beloved Guardian has been for the Baha'i youth to learn firstly English and secondly German and show the utmost effort and seriousness [in learning these languages]," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 25, pp. 205–206.

2. The Meaning of “Putting Great Effort to Limit the Languages of the World to One”

Bahā’u’llāh: Great effort must be put to limit the languages to one.¹⁰⁸³

Bahā’u’llāh, Abdu’l-Bahā, and Shoghi reveal verses, utter words, and give orders in Arabic, Farsi, English, and Turkish.¹⁰⁸⁴

Bahā’u’llāh, Abdu’l-Bahā, and Shoghi order their followers to learn five languages other than their mother tongues: the Universal Auxiliary Language, Arabic, Farsi, German and English.¹⁰⁸⁵

The Universal House of Justice: Translates Baha’i literature into 800 different languages worldwide.¹⁰⁸⁶

3. Is Learning Foreign Languages a Waste of Time?

Bahā’u’llāh: Definitely!¹⁰⁸⁷

Shoghi and `Abdu’l-Bahā and Bahā’u’llāh: Of course not. Learn your mothers tongue, the auxiliary language, Arabic, Farsi, German, and English!¹⁰⁸⁸

¹⁰⁸³ “We have decreed before that it has been destined to speak with two tongues and a great effort must be put to limit this to one [tongue] and the same [applies] to the handwriting. So that the lives of the people will not be wasted and nullified in learning different languages,” `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 33 (citing Bahā’u’llāh)

¹⁰⁸⁴ For Turkish see: `Abdu’l-Bahā, *Majmū’iy-i munājāt-hāyi ḥaḍrat `Abdu’l-Bahā*, pp. 396–397.

¹⁰⁸⁵ See footnotes in no. 1.

¹⁰⁸⁶ For example see <http://news.bahai.org/media-information/statistics> (retrieved 25/01/2014)

¹⁰⁸⁷ “We have decreed before that it has been destined to speak with two tongues and a great effort must be put to limit this to one [tongue] and the same [applies] to the handwriting. So that the lives of the people will not be wasted and nullified in learning different languages.” `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 33; “One day, while in Constantinople, Kamāl Pāshā visited this Wronged One. Our conversation turned upon topics profitable unto man. He said that he had learned several languages. In reply We observed: ‘You have wasted your life. It becometh you and the other officials of the Government to convene a gathering and choose one of the divers languages, and likewise one of the existing scripts, or else to create a new language and a new script to be taught children in schools throughout the world. They would, in this way, be acquiring only two languages, one their own native tongue, the other the language . . . and the people would be relieved and freed from the necessity of acquiring and teaching different languages.” Bahā’u’llāh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, pp. 137–138.

4. Why Reveal Arabic Verses for a Persian Audience?

The Bāb and Bahā'u'llāh reveal verses in Arabic for a Persian audience, many of which are vague and sometimes incomprehensible.

Adib Taherzade (former UHJ member): The reason someone speaks Arabic to a Persian audience is to excite their imagination and fascinate them into thinking he is knowledgeable.¹⁰⁸⁹

¹⁰⁸⁸ See footnotes from previous page.

¹⁰⁸⁹ "In Persia in the nineteenth century most people were illiterate, under the domination of the clergy whom they blindly obeyed. There were two educated classes, divines and government officials, plus a small number of others. Only the religious leaders and divines, however, could be called learned . . . Since Arabic was the language of the Qur'ān, the divines attached great importance to its study. Many would spend a lifetime mastering the language because of its vast scope and wealth of expression. They considered no treatise worthy of perusal unless it was composed and written in Arabic, and no sermon from the pulpit as moving or eloquent unless the Mullā preaching it had used an abundance of difficult and often incomprehensible Arabic words. By this means they excited the imagination of their often illiterate audiences who were fascinated by the apparently learned discourse of their clergy, despite the fact that they might not understand a single word. The normal yardstick for determining the depth of a man's learning was his knowledge of the Arabic language and the size of his turban!" Adib Taherzadeh, *The Revelation of Bahā'u'llāh*, vol. 1, pp. 18–19.



A Summary and Conclusion of the Three Perspectives:

1) Is a Universal Auxiliary Language a new principle?

The need for a universal auxiliary language has always existed and depending on the conditions, one of the existing languages in the world has played this role either nationally or internationally. Before Bahā'u'llāh had spoken about this principle, *Communicationsprache*, was created by Joseph Schipfer and published in 1839 to serve this purpose. Subsequently many other auxiliary languages were introduced the most important ones being *Universalglot* in 1868, *Volapuk* in 1879, and *Esperanto* in 1887.

2) Did the leaders of Baha'ism act upon this principle?

This principle was ignored by Baha'i leaders to such an extent that they produced their teachings in three different languages: Arabic, Farsi, and English, and ordered their followers to learn five languages other than their mother tongues.

3) Is this principle rational and logical?

The nations of the world, for many different reasons, will not accept a Universal Auxiliary Language chosen for them by another group or party. Furthermore, `Abdu'l-Bahā believes this principle is a cause of unity and friendship which in most cases is incorrect.

CHAPTER 10:

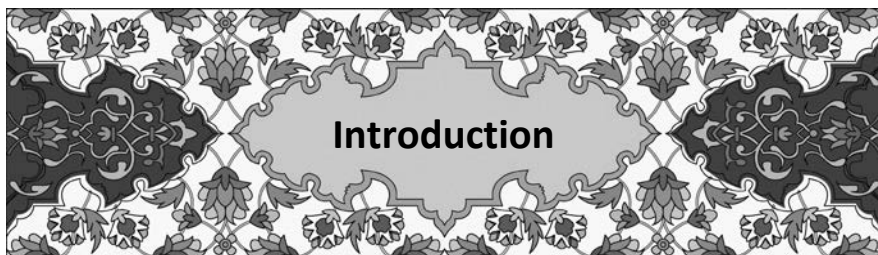
The Equality of Men and Women



“The tenth principle of his Highness Bahā’u’llāh is the unity of men and women; for in the view of God men and women are equal. They are all from the human race and the descendants of Adam. Because being male or female is not specific to the human race. Plants have male and female and animals too have male and female and there is no distinction. Look at the plant kingdom. Is there any distinction between male plants and female plants? Rather there is complete equality; and in the Animal kingdom too, there is no distinction at all. They are all under the shadow of God’s mercy.”¹⁰⁹⁰



¹⁰⁹⁰ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, pp. 149–150.



**The definition of the Equality
of Men and Women is that
men and women are equal in
all rights and affairs.**

‘Abdu’l-Bahā likens men and women to a bird’s two wings. He says:

The human world, like birds, needs two wings. One women and the other men. Flight is not possible with one wing. A shortcoming of one wing will cause hardship for the other.¹⁰⁹¹

From the teachings of his highness Bahā’u’llāh is the unity of women and men, for the human world has two wings. One wing is men and the other wing women. The bird will not fly

¹⁰⁹¹ ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 134.

unless both wings are equal. If one wing is weak flight is not possible. Unless the world of women becomes equal to the world of men in attaining virtues and accomplishments, prosperity and salvation will be impossible and unfeasible.¹⁰⁹²

`Abdu'l-Bahā believes the difference between men and women is rooted in how they are brought up and nurtured:

Up to now, the reason women lagged behind men was because women were not nurtured like men. If women were nurtured like men, there is no doubt that they would have become like men. When they attain the virtues of men, they will surely reach the rank of equality.¹⁰⁹³

He emphasizes:

Men and women are both humans and the servants of one Lord. In the presence of God there is no such thing as man and woman. Whoever has a purer heart and better actions is closer to God, whether he is a man or a woman. The differences we see now are caused by differences in nurturing for women are not nurtured like men. If they are nurtured like men they will become equal in all ranks, because they are both humans and share the same ranks. God has made no distinction.¹⁰⁹⁴

Bahā'is preach that if the world is to reach peace and unity, women must be allowed to attain the highest social, national, and international positions without discrimination and limitations, and be given the right to freely implement their views.

¹⁰⁹² `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 3, p. 107.

¹⁰⁹³ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 150.

¹⁰⁹⁴ Riyāḍ Qadīmī, *Gulzār-i ta`ālim Bahā'ī*, p. 283.

Baha'i leaders have tried to portray themselves as women's rights advocates in order to make their creed more appealing to the modern society. Shoghi Effendi says:

Baha'is worldwide have the opportunity to show the world that they have achieved a new style concerning the relation between the two sexes. Aggression and the use of force have been obliterated and they have been replaced with co-operation and consultation. If women's stature in the Baha'i teachings is properly exhibited, it will definitely attract more attention.¹⁰⁹⁵

By expressing sympathy for women—especially the women in Iran¹⁰⁹⁶—Shoghi tries to portray Baha'ism as a creed with equal rights for the genders. When Baha'i teachings are more closely analyzed, it is apparent that there is no equality in rights, rather, there is a great inclination towards men.

¹⁰⁹⁵ Extracts from one of Shoghi's letters to the National Assembly of Iran dated 7 June 1931.

¹⁰⁹⁶ The Universal House of Justice writes in a letter dated 20 June 2008: "There are, of course, many pressing issues that occupy the minds of those striving to promote the prosperity and well-being of Iran. Chief among them is, no doubt, the critical need to remove barriers hindering the progress of women in society . . . You are particularly well placed to contribute to the promotion of this principle . . . Many of your compatriots are eager to see the realization of the universal principle of the equality of men and women. They will no doubt welcome you to join them in learning how to promote, step by step, conditions that enable the women of Iran to overcome impediments blocking their progress and participate fully, as equals of men, in all areas of human endeavour."



Were the Baha'is the first group to promote women's rights? Had no creed, religion, or group expressed such beliefs before them?

Throughout history, there have always been groups who have lobbied against discrimination towards women. The height of these campaigns occurred during the French Revolution at the end of the eighteenth century. This ultimately resulted in the creation of the Feminist movements.¹⁰⁹⁷

These movements were caused by critical woes such as having been deprived of the right to vote, having been given improper education, having been viewed as the inferior sex, and having been victimized by violence. They had started years before the advent of Baha'ism and had already gained much momentum and support in Western countries. There are many essays and books from those times that clearly show this matter. One of the earliest works was Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights Of Woman* (1792). During Bahā'u'llāh's years, this topic was very hot in the West and a great number of writings have reached us from that era. Some of these works have words in them strikingly similar to what Baha'is propagate. For example, John Stuart

¹⁰⁹⁷ Although the supporters of Feminism used the slogan of women's rights to boost this movement, but Feminism was also promoted by capitalists and tycoons as a means to attain cheap labor. Women were usually paid half the wage of men and were more productive. We do not wish to pass judgment on the validity of all of the goals of all of the different groups under the umbrella of feminism here, but only bring it up as a reference of the prevalence of such ideas before the creation of Baha'ism.

Mill says the following words in the starting paragraph of his book, *The Subjection of Women* (1869):

That the principle which regulates the existing social relations between the two sexes—the legal subordination of one sex to the other—is wrong itself, and now one of the chief hindrances to human improvement; and that it ought to be replaced by a principle of perfect equality, admitting no power or privilege on the one side, nor disability on the other.¹⁰⁹⁸

Very similar to Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā's claimed divine Revelations. Coincidence? Another famous women's rights activist of those times was Anna Kingsford. She too like Bahā'u'llāh claimed to have visions and divine inspirations from childhood to when she died. Here is a sample of her inspirations from *Clothed Within the Sun* (1889):

I HEARD last night in my sleep a voice speaking to me, and saying--

1. You ask the method and nature of Inspiration, and the means whereby God revealeth the Truth. 2. Know that there is no enlightenment from without: the secret of things is revealed from within. 3. From without cometh no Divine Revelation: but the Spirit within beareth witness. 4. Think not I tell you that which you know not: for except you know it, it cannot be given to you . . . 9. And Illumination is the Light of Wisdom, whereby a man perceiveth heavenly secrets. 10. Which Light is the Spirit of God within the man, showing unto him the things of God. 11. Do not think that I tell you anything you know not; all cometh from within: the Spirit that

¹⁰⁹⁸ John Stuart Mill, *The subjection of Women* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1869), chap. 1, p. 1: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/wmn/subjwmn.txt> (retrieved, 2/9/2014).

informeth is the Spirit of God in the prophet . . . 15. There are many such, but their words are as the words of men who know not: these are not prophets nor inspired . . . 19. Of such beware, for they speak many lies, and are deceivers, working often for gain or for pleasure sake: and they are a grief and a snare to the faithful . . . 24. By prayer, by fasting, by meditation, by painful seeking, hast thou attained that thou knowest . . . 27. Thou hast attained with patience, O prophet! God hath revealed the truth to thee from within.¹⁰⁹⁹

Very similar to Bahā'u'llāh's words. Here is another sample from her inspirations:

1. And now I show you a mystery and a new thing, which is part of the mystery of the fourth day of creation . . . But when the woman shall be created, God shall give unto her the kingdom; and she shall be first in rule and highest in dignity. 7. Yea, the last shall be first; and the elder shall serve the younger. 8. So that women shall no more lament for their womanhood: but men shall rather say, "O that we had been born women!" 9. For the strong shall be put down from their seat; and the meek shall be exalted to their place. 10. The days of the covenant of manifestation are passing away: the gospel of interpretation cometh. 11. There shall nothing new be told; but that which is ancient shall be interpreted. 12. So that man the manifestor shall resign his office; and woman the interpreter shall give light to the world. 13. Hers is the fourth office: she revealeth that which the Lord hath manifested. 14. Hers is the light of the heavens, and the brightest of the planets of the holy seven. 15. She is the fourth dimension; the eyes which enlighten; the power which

¹⁰⁹⁹ Anna (Bonus) Kingsford, *Clothed With the Sun* (London: John M. Watkins, 1889), pp.4–5: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/wmn/cws/cws06.htm> (retrieved 11/2/2014).

draweth inward to God. 16. And her kingdom cometh; the day of the exaltation of woman. 17. And her reign shall be greater than the reign of the man; for Adam shall be put down from his place; and she shall have dominion for ever. 18. And she who is alone shall bring forth more children to God than she who hath an husband. 19. There shall no more be a reproach against women: but against men shall be the reproach. 20. For the woman is the crown of man, and the final manifestation of humanity. 21. She is the nearest to the throne of God, when she shall be revealed. 22. But the creation of woman is not yet complete: but it shall be complete in the time which is at hand. 23. All things are thine, O Mother of God: all things are thine, O Thou who risest from the sea; and Thou shalt have dominion over all the worlds.¹¹⁰⁰

The claims, words, and sentences are very similar to Bahā'u'llāh's. Are we supposed to believe that anyone who utters sentences like these is connected to the Divine?

Other women's rights titles include *The Garden of Eden; or The Paradise Lost & Found*¹¹⁰¹ (1890), *Woman, Church And State*¹¹⁰² (1893), and *The Woman's Bible*¹¹⁰³ (1898).

Some of the verses of the Quran, revealed to the Prophet of Islam about 1400 years ago, are strikingly similar to what Baha'i leaders preached. For instance, `Abdu'l-Bahā says:

In the presence of God, there is no such thing as feminine or masculine. Whoever has better deeds and greater faith is

¹¹⁰⁰ Anna (Bonus) Kingsford, *Clothed With the Sun* (London: John M. Watkins, 1889), pp.6–7: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/wmn/cws/cws06.htm> (retrieved 11/2/2014).

¹¹⁰¹ Victoria Claflin Woodhull

¹¹⁰² Matilda Joselyn Gage

¹¹⁰³ Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the Revising Committee

closer to God. In the Divine world, there is no male or female. They are both the same.¹¹⁰⁴

Now compare this with the following verses of the Quran:

Oh people! We created you from a male and a female. We made you nations and tribes, that you may know one another. The most honorable amongst you in the sight of God is the most pious.¹¹⁰⁵

Whoever does good, whether male or female, and is a believer, then they will enter paradise and will be given sustenance without limit.¹¹⁰⁶

Whoever does good deeds from amongst the males and females, and is a believer, we will make them live a good life, and we will reward them by the best of what they used to do.¹¹⁰⁷

Now compare these quotes with the following sayings from early Christian saints:

O womanly nature, overcoming the manly in the common struggle for salvation and demonstrating that male and female are distinctions of body and not of soul (Saint Gregory of Nazianzus [330–390 AD]).¹¹⁰⁸

We understand that the virtue of man and woman is the same. For if there is One God for both, there is one Instructor

¹¹⁰⁴ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 220.

¹¹⁰⁵ Quran, 49:13

¹¹⁰⁶ Quran, 40:40

¹¹⁰⁷ Quran 16:97

¹¹⁰⁸ Everett Ferguson, *Inheriting Wisdom: Readings for Today from Ancient Christian Writers* (Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 2004), p. 184.

for both, one church, one temperance, one sense of shame, a common nourishment, a united marriage, with respiration, sight, hearing, knowledge, hope, obedience and love all the same. The life of men and women is common; they also have in common grace, salvation, virtue and training . . . Therefore men and women also share in common the name, "human being" . . . We acknowledge that each race has the same nature and possesses the same virtue. With regard to humanity, a woman does not possess one nature while a man manifests another; they have the same nature and so also the same virtue . . . Since there is sameness with regard to the soul, women will attain the same virtue . . . It is possible for men and women equally to share in perfection (Saint Clement of Alexandria [150–215 AD]).¹¹⁰⁹

Furthermore, Bahā'u'llāh, who was reared and nurtured in Iran, was quite familiar with the Shi'a Islamic beliefs regarding women. For instance women were urged to acquire knowledge just like men:

Acquiring knowledge is compulsory for every man and woman.¹¹¹⁰

The Prophet of Islam had urged his followers to show the greatest benevolence to women:

The best of you are those who are most benevolent to their wives and (amongst all people) I am the most benevolent to my wives.¹¹¹¹

¹¹⁰⁹ Everett Ferguson, *Inheriting Wisdom: Readings for Today from Ancient Christian Writers*, p. 181.

¹¹¹⁰ Al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, vol. 1, p.170.

¹¹¹¹ al-'Āmilī, *Wasā'il a-Shī'a* (Qum: Mu'assisatu Āl al-Bayt, 1409 AH), vol. 20, p. 171.

The first Shia Imam had strictly prohibited his followers from oppressing women:

They are a trust from God amongst you. Do not hurt or abuse them.¹¹¹²

Thus, this principle cannot be regarded as a novel teaching uniquely brought forth by Bahā'u'llāh.

¹¹¹² Al-Nūrī, *Mustadrak al-wasā'il*, vol. 14, p. 251.



Do Baha'is Truly Believe That Men and Women Are Equal? Do Their Actions Support Their Words?

1- Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā's Opinion about Women:

A closer inspection of the words of Bahā'u'llāh and his son clearly show that they regarded men superior to women and they had based the pillars of their religion on this belief:

A woman's question was referred to him (meaning `Abdu'l-Bahā) who had asked why hasn't God made any woman Prophets and why have all Divine Manifestations been men. He answered: "Although women and men share the same capacities and abilities, there is definitely no doubt that men are superior and stronger. Even in animals like pigeons, sparrows, peacocks, and other [birds] this advantage is visible."¹¹¹³

`Abdu'l-Bahā is clearly telling a woman that men are superior and stronger. He contradicts himself elsewhere and states we must not tell women they are weaker and inferior:

On the contrary, we must declare that her capacity is equal, even greater than man's. This will inspire her with hope and ambition, and her susceptibilities for advancement will

¹¹¹³ Maḥmūd Zaraqānī, *Badā'i' al-āthār*, vol. 1, p. 153.

continually increase. She must not be told and taught that she is weaker and inferior in capacity and qualification.¹¹¹⁴

Let us take a look at another quote from `Abdu'l-Bahā:

In this new cycle (*daur badī*), God's slave-maids (meaning women) must be thankful a thousand times every moment that the Hand of Favor (meaning Bahā'u'llāh) saved them from the depths of humility and made them reach the peak of men's honor.¹¹¹⁵

According to this quote, `Abdu'l-Bahā believes that by default, men are superior to women; "peak of men's honor" clearly shows this meaning. The default superiority of men in the Baha'i creed can also be seen elsewhere. Bahā'u'llāh says:

Today, whoever amongst the slave-maids (meaning women) succeeds in recognizing *He Who is the Goal of the World*, will be considered a man in the Divine Book (*dar kitāb 'ilāhī az rijāl maḥsūb*).¹¹¹⁶

Once a woman recognizes Bahā'u'llāh, she will be considered a man by God! Thus, men are regarded as the privileged sex whose stature women can only reach by the help of Bahā'u'llāh. Furthermore, the criterion used to show inferiority is being a woman, and the criterion used to show superiority is being a man. Thus, a successful woman is considered a man and an unsuccessful man is considered a woman. Here is how Bahā'u'llāh puts it:

¹¹¹⁴ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 76.

¹¹¹⁵ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 231.

¹¹¹⁶ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 232.

Oh slave-maids! Rise for the true affair like men. Today, there are many women who God considers as men, and some men who are considered women.¹¹¹⁷

Why would someone utter these words if he believes men and women are equal? Man being considered as woman! Woman being considered as man!

`Abdu'l-Bahā preaches that

With the help and grace of the Blessed Beauty (meaning Bahā'u'llāh), I endeavor to promote the world of women to such an extent that all will become astonished.¹¹¹⁸

But when he addresses women he views them as highly inferior:

Oh dear divine slave-maids! Do not pay attention to your [lack of] capacities and competencies. Rather, rely on the grace and kindness of the Blessed Beauty, because that everlasting beneficence will turn a shrub into a blessed tree, will turn a mirage into cool water, will turn a lost speck into the essence of existence, will turn a perishing ant into a tutor of the school of knowledge.¹¹¹⁹

In other words: Oh dear women, do not be sad that you are incompetent and incapable; my father can make up for these deficiencies for he can turn the lowliest things into the most exalted creatures.

`Abdu'l-Bahā even goes on to say:

¹¹¹⁷ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 232.

¹¹¹⁸ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb*, vol. 7, p. 136.

¹¹¹⁹ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb*, vol. 7, pp. 135–6.

Women are of two kinds. One kind are worldly who have no share from your Lord's graces. And the other kind are spiritual who are like the pulse of an artery.¹¹²⁰

The strange thing about this sentence is that women are separated in only two distinct groups: worldly and spiritual with no rank in between. Furthermore, the above sentence contradicts `Abdu'l-Bahā's own words:

The God of the world created all [humans] from clay and created everyone from one element, created all from one progeny, created all in one land, and created [all] under the shadow of one sky, has created them with common emotions, and did not put any differences. He created everyone the same and gives all sustenance, nurtures all, protects all, and is kind to all. He has put no differences in any grace or mercy.¹¹²¹

`Abdu'l-Bahā claims that God has "put no differences in any grace or mercy" but a group of women "have no share from your Lord's graces." `Abdu'l-Bahā says:

Women and men have been and will always be equal in the sight of God.¹¹²²

Bahā'u'llāh utters the exact opposite:

Today, there are many women who God considers as men, and some men who are considered women.¹¹²³

¹¹²⁰ Riyāḍ Qadīmī, *Gulzār-i ta`ālim Bahā'ī*, 2nd ed., p. 284.

¹¹²¹ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 42 (citing `Abdu'l-Bahā').

¹¹²² Various, *A Compilation on Women*, p. 21.

¹¹²³ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 232.

The two final quotes that we will place here that are the pinnacle of all contradictions in this principle. `Abdu'l-Bahā claims that women are actually more important than men:

'Abdu'l-Bahā smiled and asked: "What will you say if I prove to you that the woman is the stronger wing?" The answer came in the same bright vein: "You will earn my eternal gratitude!" at which all the company made merry. 'Abdu'l-Bahā then continued more seriously: "The woman is indeed of the greater importance to the race. She has the greater burden and the greater work. Look at the vegetable and the animal worlds. The palm which carries the fruit is the tree most prized by the date grower. The Arab knows that for a long journey the mare has the longest wind. For her greater strength and fierceness, the lioness is more feared by the hunter than the lion.¹¹²⁴

Up until now, `Abdu'l-Bahā was claiming "there is definitely no doubt that men are superior and stronger. Even in animals like pigeons, sparrows, peacocks, and other [birds] this advantage is visible." In another place he has stated there is absolute equality even in the animal and plant kingdoms¹¹²⁵ and now that it suits `Abdu'l-Bahā to claim something else, he contradicts himself and claims there is no equality rather the female is more important and stronger even in the vegetable and animal kingdom!

There is another similar speech from `Abdu'l-Bahā in the Federation of Women's Clubs. Because his audience was mainly comprised of women, he went to great heights to please them and, at the same time contradicted his own words multiple times:

¹¹²⁴ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *`Abdu'l-Bahā in London*, pp. 102–103.

¹¹²⁵ Refer to the opening quote of this chapter.

When we consider the kingdoms of existence below man, we find no distinction or estimate of superiority and inferiority between male and female. Among the myriad organisms of the vegetable and animal kingdoms sex exists, but there is no differentiation whatever as to relative importance and value in the equation of life. If we investigate impartially, we may even find species in which the female is superior or preferable to the male. For instance, there are trees such as the fig, the male of which is fruitless while the female is fruitful. The male of the date palm is valueless while the female bears abundantly. Inasmuch as we find no ground for distinction or superiority according to the creative wisdom in the lower kingdoms, is it logical or becoming of man to make such distinction in regard to himself? The male of the animal kingdom does not glory in its being male and superior to the female. In fact, equality exists and is recognized. Why should man, a higher and more intelligent creature, deny and deprive himself of this equality the animals enjoy? His surest index and guide as to the creative intention concerning himself are the conditions and analogies of the kingdoms below him where equality of the sexes is fundamental.¹¹²⁶

`Abdu'l-Bahā's analogies are very unique. He has a great tendency to compare humans with animals and vegetables whenever he wants to explain the equality of sexes. These are two groups in which equality is nearly nonexistent.

In the next sections we will analyze the Baha'i laws regarding women and their conformance with the principle of Equality of Men and Women.

2-Women and Inheritance

¹¹²⁶ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 470.

According to Baha'i law, a mother's share from inheritance is smaller than a father's and a sister's share is smaller than a brother's.¹¹²⁷ This discrimination shows itself in another form when dividing the deceased's wealth amongst his or her children. The oldest living son has complete rights to the residence of the deceased and no other inheritors have a right to this property. Bahā'u'llāh says in the *Book of Aqdas*:

We have assigned the residence and personal clothing of the deceased to the male, not female, offspring, nor to the other heirs.¹¹²⁸

It is further explained that:

He specifies that if there be more than one residence, the principal and most important one passes to the male offspring.¹¹²⁹

Regarding this law `Abdu'l-Bahā states:

The living residence belongs to the oldest living son, whether or not the deceased has any other wealth. The oldest living son also takes his share from the other belongings.¹¹³⁰

Thus, if the deceased has left nothing behind but the home he lived in, it belongs to the oldest son and the other heirs have absolutely no share whatsoever! The discrimination doesn't end here. If the deceased has any debts, they must be settled from the other remaining properties

¹¹²⁷ The deceased's property are split into 2520 portions. Out of these, 1080 are for the children, 390 for the wives, fathers 330, mothers 270, brothers 210, sisters 150, teachers 90 (`Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwārī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 10, p. 117–119).

¹¹²⁸ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 186.

¹¹²⁹ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 186.

¹¹³⁰ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwārī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 10, p. 128.

and the eldest son's share can only be used if the other properties are not enough to settle the debt:

QUESTION: If the deceased hath not settled his obligation to Ḥuqūqu'llāh, nor paid his other debts, are these to be discharged by proportionate deductions from the residence, personal clothing and the rest of the estate, or are the residence and personal clothing set aside for the male offspring, and consequently the debts must be settled from the rest of the estate? And if the rest of the estate is insufficient for this purpose, how should the debts be settled?

ANSWER: Outstanding debts and payments of Ḥuqūq should be settled from the remainder of the estate, but if this is insufficient for the purpose, the shortfall should be met from his residence and personal clothing.¹¹³¹

The discrimination between male and female heirs goes down one more generation:

Should the son of the deceased have passed away in the days of his father and have left children, they will inherit their father's share.¹¹³²

Now, what happens if the passed-away child of the deceased is a female? Her children don't take all her share and it must be re-divided amongst all heirs:

This aspect of the law applies only in the case of the son who predeceases his father or mother. If the daughter of the deceased be dead and leave issue, her share will have to be

¹¹³¹ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 130.

¹¹³² Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, pp. 122–3.

divided according to the seven categories specified in the Most Holy Book.¹¹³³

As we can see, in contrast to the principle of “Equality of Men and Women,” there is neither equality nor unity in the laws of inheritance regarding these two sexes.

To justify this discrimination, Baha’i leaders have brought forth an argument:

In a Tablet, ‘Abdu’l-Bahā indicates that the residence and personal clothing of a deceased man remain in the male line. They pass to the eldest son and in the absence of the eldest son, they pass to the second-eldest son, and so on. He explains that this provision is an expression of the law of primogeniture, which has invariably been upheld by the Law of God. In a Tablet to a follower of the Faith in Persia He wrote: “In all the Divine Dispensations the eldest son hath been given extraordinary distinctions. Even the station of prophethood hath been his birthright.” With the distinctions given to the eldest son, however, go concomitant duties. For example, he has the moral responsibility, for the sake of God, to care for his mother and also to consider the needs of the other heirs.¹¹³⁴

This justification has four flaws:

First, pay attention to the word *distinction* which has been used twice in the quote. Remember this is the same creed that claims God has made absolutely no distinction between people¹¹³⁵ and between male

¹¹³³ Bahā’u’llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 187.

¹¹³⁴ Bahā’u’llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, pp. 186-7.

¹¹³⁵ “The second principle is the Oneness of Humanity: all humans are divine sheep and God is the kind shepherd who has utter compassion towards all the sheep and has made no distinction [between them],” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Makātīb*, vol. 3, p. 67.

or female (we already showed this in the introductory quotes of this chapter).

Second, there was supposed to be equality between men and women. This justification still fundamentally contradicts this principle.

Third, whilst the laws of inheritance are legally binding, moral responsibilities are not. Thus, a Baha'i can legally acquire the living residence and freely neglect his *moral* responsibilities.

Fourth, suppose that we accept this justification. Now consider the case where the deceased only has female children. One would expect the living residence of the deceased to be passed on to the eldest female offspring and along with that *the moral responsibilities*. Unfortunately another discriminative law has been legislated:

Two thirds of the residence and personal clothing pass to the female offspring, and one third to the House of Justice, which God hath made to be the treasury of the people.

Why discriminate against the female offspring and give a third of their share to the UHJ, while if the same share was for the eldest son it would be solely for him to keep? Why can the eldest female offspring not inherit the house? Who has to fulfill the moral responsibilities?

If you are wondering if any belongings of the deceased are solely passed to the female offspring, the answer is yes. They get to keep their mother's rags and old clothes:

In the case of the deceased mother all her used clothing is to be equally divided amongst her daughters.¹¹³⁶

If you are still wondering what happens to the mother's unused and new clothes, well the girls do not get to keep them and they are divided between all the groups of aforementioned inheritors:

¹¹³⁶ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 165.

Her unworn clothing, jewels and property must be divided among her heirs.¹¹³⁷

And finally, let's see how `Abdu'l-Bahā being the oldest son, acted towards the *moral responsibilities* that he himself introduced. In the following table we have listed the wives and children of Bahā'u'llāh who `Abdu'l-Bahā was morally responsible for.

Table 6: The people that `Abdu'l-Bahā was morally responsible for and their fate.

Name	Relation with `Abdu'l-Bahā	Death	Fate
Gowhar	Step-mother	After Bahā'u'llāh	Covenant breaker
Fatemeh Mahdi Ulya	Step-mother	After Bahā'u'llāh	Covenant-breaker
Assiyeh Khanum	Mother	Before Bahā'u'llāh	-
Forughuyeh Nuri	Half-sister	After Bahā'u'llāh	Covenant breaker
Bahieh Khanum	Sister	After Bahā'u'llāh	Faithful
Mirza Mihdi	Brother	Before Bahā'u'llāh	-
Muhammad Ali	Half-brother	After Bahā'u'llāh	Covenant breaker
Samadiyyih Nuri	Half-sister	After Bahā'u'llāh	Covenant breaker
Diya'u'llah	Half-brother	After Bahā'u'llāh	Covenant breaker
Badi'u'llah	Half-brother	After Bahā'u'llāh	Covenant breaker

Out of the eight people that `Abdu'l-Bahā was responsible for—other than his sister—all others were labeled as covenant breakers and shunned them from the Baha'i community by `Abdu'l-Bahā and Shoghi! Is this is the meaning of “moral responsibility” and “considering the needs of the other heirs”?!

The discriminations in inheritance are not limited to these instances. We will move on as to not elongate this section. But before that, a final note must be mentioned:

¹¹³⁷ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 187.

As we already said, Bahā'u'llāh proclaimed that, "We have assigned the residence and personal clothing of the deceased to the male, not female, offspring"¹¹³⁸ and "He specifies that if there be more than one residence, the principal and most important one passes to the male offspring."¹¹³⁹ Now here is the catch, Bahā'u'llāh does not say that these belong to the *oldest* male, but states they belong to the male offspring. The Arabic text of the *Aqdas* too clearly shows this meaning. Now why would 'Abdu'l-Bahā change this law and limit the heirs of the deceased's living residence to only the oldest living male instead of all the male offspring? Are we supposed to believe it has nothing to do with the fact that he himself was Bahā'u'llāh's *oldest* living male offspring?

3-Women's Dowry

According to Bahā'u'llāh:

No marriage may be contracted without payment of a dowry, which hath been fixed for city-dwellers at nineteen mithqāls¹¹⁴⁰ of pure gold, and for village-dwellers at the same amount in silver. Whoso wisheth to increase this sum, it is forbidden him to exceed the limit of ninety-five mithqāls. Thus hath the command been writ in majesty and power.¹¹⁴¹

Why would a creed who preaches novelty in its laws and equality between men and women, ask men to pay dowry to women? Why not the opposite? If there is equality and no discrimination between the sexes then why should one party pay the other? Either, no side should pay the other, or both sides should pay equal amounts. How can a creed that cannot abide by its own laws of equality among its adherents,

¹¹³⁸ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 186.

¹¹³⁹ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 186.

¹¹⁴⁰ 3.6 grams.

¹¹⁴¹ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, pp. 207-8.

preach global equality of rights between men and women and between all races?

If according to Bahā'u'llāh's second principle, God has made no distinction between people, then why should villagers be entitled to a dowry of silver but city-dwellers to a dowry of gold?

4- Polygamy

Even though Baha'is express opposition to polygamy, their leader was a polygamist and had three wives. Bahā'u'llāh even allowed his followers to have two wives and an unspecified number of virgins at their service:

God hath prescribed matrimony unto you. Beware that ye take not unto yourselves more wives than two. Whoso contenteth himself with a single partner from among the maidservants of God, both he and she shall live in tranquillity. And he who would take into his service a maid may do so with propriety [He who takes a virgin to serve him it would be permissible for him].¹¹⁴²

What we have quoted is the official Baha'i translation. Unfortunately the correct translation of the last sentence has been deliberately distorted. This is the original Arabic text: "*man 'ittakhadha bikran li khidmatih lā ba'sa `alayh.*" Which translates to: "He who takes a virgin to serve him, there is no problem with that." We have placed this in square brackets at the end of the quote.

Why do Baha'is distort their scripture? What are they trying to hide? How does it make sense to speak about taking a virgin for service—or a maid according to the flawed translation—in the middle of a discussion about marriage? Are wives solely seen as an instrument to perform house chores who can be replaced with a serving virgin or maid? Or does one who cannot marry, can simply satisfy himself with a virgin who

¹¹⁴² Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 41.

serves him? The context of Bahā'u'llāh's words when viewed within the undistorted translation, imply another meaning which we will leave to the readers to judge.

When Bahā'u'llāh (or `Abdu'l-Bahā) is asked about this specific verse he gives an answer which further endorses polygamy:

QUESTION: Concerning the verse: "he who would take into his service a maid may do so with propriety."

ANSWER: This is solely for service such as is performed by any other class of servants, be they young or old, in exchange for wages; such a maiden is free to choose a husband at whatever time she pleaseth, for it is forbidden either that women should be purchased, or that a man should have more wives than two.¹¹⁴³

Strangely, Baha'is insist polygamy is not allowed in the Baha'i creed. To prove this claim, they bring forward one of `Abdu'l-Bahā's sayings, which in clear contradiction to his father's orders and using flawed reasoning, tries to prove that polygamy is not allowed:

(1)Know thou that polygamy is not permitted under the law of God, for contentment with one wife hath been clearly stipulated. (2)Taking a second wife is made dependent upon equity and justice being upheld between the two wives, under all conditions. (3)However, observance of justice and equity towards two wives is utterly impossible. (4)The fact

¹¹⁴³ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 116. This question and answer have also been translated incorrectly in the official Baha'i translation. We present here the correct translation:

QUESTION: Concerning the verse: "He who takes a virgin to serve him it would be permissible for him."

ANSWER: This is solely for service, just as other young and old are paid for service. Whenever that virgin wants to marry it is up to her to decide, for buying slave-girls is prohibited and having more than two wives is also prohibited.

that bigamy has been made dependent upon an impossible condition is clear proof of its absolute prohibition. (5)Therefore it is not permissible for a man to have more than one wife.¹¹⁴⁴

We have marked the five sentences with numbers for easy reference.

(1) Bahā'u'llāh had in no way stipulated that men must only have one wife. He had merely said that having one wife will bring about tranquility. What `Abdu'l-Bahā is attributing to Bahā'u'llāh is purely baseless.

(2) Bahā'u'llāh had in no place mentioned that taking a second wife depends on *equity and justice under all conditions*, neither in the book of Aqdas and nor anywhere else. Again, `Abdu'l-Bahā is attributing something to Bahā'u'llāh which is false and not a shred of evidence has been brought forward to backup this claim.

(3) First, there is no evidence to support the claim that observing justice between two wives is impossible. Second, pay attention to the phrase *utterly impossible*. This phrase means *something is absolutely impossible*. Like how it is absolutely impossible for 2 times 2 to equal to something other than 4. `Abdu'l-Bahā is saying it is absolutely impossible to observe justice between two wives. Here's the catch, something that is absolutely impossible becomes possible for Bahā'u'llāh, meaning 2 times 2 can equal to 5, and Bahā'u'llāh can observe equity between not two, but three wives.

(4) `Abdu'l-Bahā claims bigamy has been made allowed based on an impossible condition! For all we know, Bahā'u'llāh put absolutely no conditions for bigamy. Furthermore, is it not absurd to make a law which can only be implemented under impossible conditions? Where is the common-sense in that?

(5) Based on the four previous assumptions—that are all wrong—it is concluded that polygamy is forbidden in the Baha'i creed!

¹¹⁴⁴ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 206.

To justify why Bahā'u'llāh had three wives, Baha'is usually put forth the argument that since Bahā'u'llāh was practicing Islam before he became a Baha'i, he was legally allowed to have three wives. In a letter from the Universal House of Justice dated 23/10/1995 to an individual believer¹¹⁴⁵ it has been mentioned:

Regarding the wives of Bahā'u'llāh, extracts from letters written on behalf of the beloved Guardian set this subject in context. They indicate that Bahā'u'llāh was "acting according to the laws of Islām, which had not yet been superseded", and that He was following "the customs of the people of His own land":

"... as regards Bahā'u'llāh's marriage it should be noted that His three marriages were all contracted before He revealed His Book of Laws, and even before His declaration in Baghdād, at a time when Bahā'ī marriage laws had not yet been known, and the Revelation not yet disclosed (25 May 1938 to a National Spiritual Assembly)."

"Bahā'u'llāh had no concubine, He had three legal wives. As He married them before the "Aqdas" (His book of laws) was revealed, He was only acting according to the laws of Islām, which had not yet been superseded. He made plurality of wives conditional upon justice; 'Abdu'l-Bahā interpreted this to mean that a man may not have more than one wife at a time, as it is impossible to be just to two or more women in marriage (11 February 1944 to an individual believer)."

... Bahā'u'llāh married the first and second wives while He was still in Tihrān [sic], and the third wife while He was in baghdād. At that time, the Laws of the "Aqdas" had not been

¹¹⁴⁵ http://bahai-library.com/uhj_wives_bahauallah (retrieved 1/6/2104)

revealed, and secondly, He was following the Laws of the previous Dispensation and the customs of the people of His own land (14 January 1953 to an individual believer).

All the above justifications are fundamentally flawed. We already showed the fallacy in `Abdu'l-Bahā's justification. The second justification presented here simply states that since Bahā'u'llāh had married his three wives when he was still a Muslim it was perfectly legal for him to do so. This is a blatant lie:

The Bāb announced his new religion in 1844. The exact date that Bahā'u'llāh became a Bābī is unknown but it is definite that it occurred before 1848 when he attended the conference of Badasht—in which Islamic law was officially abrogated and superseded—and he took on the name Bahā. So by 1848 he was definitely a Bābī. Now let us review the years when Bahā'u'llāh married his wives: Bahā'u'llāh married his first wife Āsīyih in 1835 while he was still a Muslim. He married his second wife Fatimih in 1849 when he was no longer a Muslim but a Bābī! What was Shoghi thinking when he had uttered: "He was only acting according to the laws of Islām, which had not yet been superseded."?

In Shoghi's translation of *Dawn Breakers* it has been mentioned that Ṭāhīrih, a great advocate of the Bāb had openly preached the Bāb's ideas, one of which was monogamy:

She began to correspond with the Bāb and soon espoused all his ideas. She did not content herself with a passive sympathy but confessed openly the faith of her Master. She denounced not only polygamy but the use of the veil and showed her face uncovered in public to the great amazement and scandal of her family and of all the sincere Mussulmans but to the applause of many other fellow citizens who shared her

enthusiasm and whose numbers grew as a result of her preaching.¹¹⁴⁶

Other Baha'i authors have also echoed this belief in their writings:

The Bāb's laws abolished polygamy except in the case of infertility.¹¹⁴⁷

Bahā'u'llāh was openly practicing bigamy while according to Shoghi it was not legal and Ṭāhirih was actively denouncing it in accordance with the Bab's beliefs.

From this point onwards, matters become even more interesting. Bahā'u'llāh married his third wife Gawhar in 1862 when he was still a Bābī and this third marriage too was completely illegal according to what Shoghi claims are Bābī laws. Apparently, in the Baha'i creed, 'Abdu'l-Bahā, Shoghi, and the UHJ are all allowed to utter false facts to justify Bahā'u'llāh's illegal actions.

The story does not end yet. Buried deep within untranslated Baha'i scriptures, exist quotes from 'Abdu'l-Bahā in which he explicitly states that those who claim I have stated that polygamy is illegal are liars. We will repeat the quote from *Aqdas* first:

(1)Know thou that polygamy is not permitted under the law of God, for contentment with one wife hath been clearly stipulated. (2)Taking a second wife is made dependent upon equity and justice being upheld between the two wives, under all conditions. (3)However, observance of justice and equity towards two wives is utterly impossible. (4)The fact that bigamy has been made dependent upon an impossible condition is

¹¹⁴⁶ Nabīl Zarandī, *The Dawn-Breakers: Nabīl's Narrative of the Early Days of the Bahā'ī Revelation*, p. 270 (footnote).

¹¹⁴⁷ Robert H. Stockman, *The Baha'i Faith: A Guide For the Perplexed* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2012), chap. 6, section on the fortress of Maku.

clear proof of its absolute prohibition. (5) Therefore it is not permissible for a man to have more than one wife.¹¹⁴⁸

Concerning polygamy, this has been decreed and will not be abrogated. `Abdu'l-Bahā has not abrogated this law and [accusation of abrogation] is a lie [made up] by the friends. What I said is that He has made polygamy bound on the precondition of justice. As long as someone does not attain certitude that he can practice justice and his heart is not certain that he can practice justice, he should not marry a second [wife]. But if he becomes certain that he can practice justice on all levels, then marrying a second [wife] is permitted. Just as has been the case in the Holy Land: the [Baha'i] friends wished to marry a second [wife] but on this precondition, and this servant (meaning himself) never abstained [from giving permission], but insisted that justice must be implemented, and justice is the peak of abstention; but they said, that they will practice justice and wished to marry a second [wife]. Such false accusations (meaning charges that `Abdu'l-Bahā prohibited bigamy) are the whisperings of those who wish to induce doubts and [see] how much they are making matters ambiguous. The purpose was to state that polygamy without justice is not allowed and that justice is very difficult [to achieve].¹¹⁴⁹

In a previous quote from the *Book of Aqdas* `Abdu'l-Bahā had stated that **“However, observance of justice and equity towards two wives is utterly impossible.”**¹¹⁵⁰ But he contradicts himself here by stating that **“The purpose was to state that polygamy *without justice* is not allowed and that justice is very difficult [to achieve].”** Justice is no

¹¹⁴⁸ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 206.

¹¹⁴⁹ Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Amr wa khalq*, (Tehran: n.p., 131 B.), vol. 4, p. 176.

¹¹⁵⁰ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 206.

longer *utterly impossible* it is only *very difficult to achieve*! He had also stated, **“Know thou that polygamy is not permitted under the law of God . . . The fact that bigamy has been made dependent upon an impossible condition is clear proof of its absolute prohibition. (5)Therefore it is not permissible for a man to have more than one wife.”**¹¹⁵¹ Pay attention that he uses the words “not permitted,” “absolute prohibition,” and “not permissible” while in the recent words we quoted from him, he explicitly states that there is no prohibition in having two wives! The contradictions are glaring.

Let us take a look at another letter which he apparently sent to a Baha’i who was practicing bigamy:

You asked about polygamy. According to the text of the Divine Book having two wives is lawful and legal and was never prohibited, rather it is legitimate and allowed. Do not be unhappy, but take justice into consideration so that you may be as just as possible. What has been uttered is that since justice is very difficult [to achieve], therefore peace is in having one wife. But in your case, of course you should not be unhappy.¹¹⁵²

This quote further contradicts Baha’i claims about the illegality of polygamy. What is more interesting is the fact that `Abdu’l-Bahā clearly tells the Baha’i person to not be unhappy on account of his practice of bigamy! He advises him to be “as just as possible.” This takes the subject to a whole new level. Whereas up to now he had insisted that practicing justice is impossible or very hard to achieve and bigamy is only and only, allowed on the precondition that justice be implemented on all levels, he is now clearly putting aside this precondition and merely reducing it to being *as just as possible*!

¹¹⁵¹ Bahā’u’l-lāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 206.

¹¹⁵² Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Amr wa khalq*, vol. 4, p. 174.

It is obvious and clear that polygamy is allowed in the Baha'i creed and all arguments stated by the Baha'i administration to deny this fact are invalid and contradictory.

Regarding the subject of polygamy, `Abdu'l-Bahā, Shoghī, the UHJ, and their followers are clearly *altering* the evident meaning of Bahā'u'llāh's decrees. An act that is completely forbidden and carries with it grave consequences:

Whoso interpreteth what hath been sent down from the heaven of Revelation, and altereth its evident meaning, he, verily, is of them that have perverted the Sublime Word of God, and is of the lost ones in the Lucid Book.¹¹⁵³

In any case, there remains one last question: If there is really equality between men and women, then why are women not allowed to practice polygamy? Not that we want to advocate this act, but there was supposed to be complete equality in rights, was there not?

5-Membership in the Universal House of Justice

According to Baha'i law, women cannot become members of the Universal House of Justice (UHJ).¹¹⁵⁴ If there is equality between men and women, then why can women not be elected to take a seat in this governing body of the Baha'i world community? Why is the highest attainable spiritual and managing station in Baha'ism off-limits to women?

This contradiction is so obvious that even `Abdu'l-Bahā has tried to justify it:

The House of Justice, however, according to the explicit text of the Law of God, is confined to men; this for a wisdom of

¹¹⁵³ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 221.

¹¹⁵⁴ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 27, p. 219.

the Lord God's, which will ere long be made manifest as clearly as the sun at high noon.¹¹⁵⁵

This justification fails to address the issue of equality of rights, for whatever the wisdom behind this law—contrary to Baha'i claims of equality—the inequality between the sexes is still retained!

Furthermore, as is the usual Baha'i attitude with respect to problematic laws, the matter has been passed to the future to silence any criticism.

6-Station of Guardianship

The Guardian of the Cause can only be a male descendant of 'Abdu'l-Bahā'. Although this issue is no longer a matter of concern because the prophecies of these infallible manifestations turned out to be false, the question still remains as to why women are deprived of this right.

It is astonishing that even with the existence of such laws, Baha'is insist on equality of rights between men and women and the existence of no distinction between them.

7- Baha'i pilgrimage (*hajj*)

Bahā'u'llāh says:

The Lord hath ordained that those of you who are able shall make pilgrimage to the sacred House, and from this He hath exempted women as a mercy on His part.¹¹⁵⁶

If this exemption of women is a *mercy*—as Bahā'u'llāh puts it—then why are men deprived of this mercy? After all, there was supposed to be equality between men and women and no distinction, was there

¹¹⁵⁵ Various, *A Compilation on Women* (Research Department of the Universal House of Justice, Bahā'ī World Centre, 1986), p. 7.

¹¹⁵⁶ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 191.

not? Had `Abdu'l-Bahā not claimed that God has not put differences in any grace and mercy:

He created everyone the same and gives all sustenance, nurtures all, protects all, and is kind to all. He has put no differences in any grace or mercy.¹¹⁵⁷

Bahā'is argue that since travelling is cumbersome and tiring, God has shown this mercy to women and has taken them out of harm's way. If this is the case why not show mercy to the men based on the same reasoning; for men become tired too. Why is distinction made and why are men discriminated? Where is the equality that was being preached with pride? Furthermore, this creed was supposedly formulated for the 21st century not the dark ages. Travelling is no longer tiring, cumbersome, or harmful. How can the argument that this is a mercy for women be justified?

8- Upbringing of Children

The duty of upbringing the children has been chiefly given to the women. This has been called a privilege for the mother! Shoghi says:

The task of bringing up a Bahā'ī child, as emphasized time and again in Bahā'ī writings, is the chief responsibility of the mother, whose unique privilege is indeed to create in her home such conditions as would be most conducive to both his material and spiritual welfare and advancement.¹¹⁵⁸

`Abdu'l-Bahā further iterates that mothers are the primary trainers of children:

¹¹⁵⁷ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 42.

¹¹⁵⁸ Research Department of the Universal House of Justice, *A Compilation on Bahā'ī Education* (Baha'i World Center, 1976), p. 50.

O maid-servants of the Merciful! It is incumbent upon you to train the children from their earliest babyhood! It is incumbent upon you to beautify their morals! It is incumbent upon you to attend to them under all aspects and circumstances, inasmuch as God—glorified and exalted is He! —hath ordained mothers to be the primary trainers of children and infants. This is a great and important affair and a high and exalted position, and it is not allowable to slacken therein at all!¹¹⁵⁹

Upbringing children is a difficult task. If there was supposed to be complete equality between men and women in this creed, then why has this difficult task been imposed on the mother? And if this task is a privilege and a “high and exalted position,” then why give this privilege to the mother? Why not privilege the father? If there is supposed to be equality between the two sexes, why insist that this task is primarily the duty of the mother? Is it that hard to simply say both parents have equal responsibility?

To justify this inconsistency Baha’is claim that the duties are balanced by giving the father the responsibility to support the family:

The training which a child first receives through his mother constitutes the strongest foundation for his future development. A corollary of this responsibility of the mother is her right to be supported by her husband—a husband has no explicit right to be supported by his wife.¹¹⁶⁰

This justification is acceptable from anyone but a Baha’i; for Baha’is insist there is absolute equality between men and women and there is

¹¹⁵⁹ `Abdu’l-Bahā, *Tablets of Abdul-Baha Abbas* (Bahā’ī Publishing Committee, 1909 edition), p. 606.

¹¹⁶⁰ Helen Bassett Hornby, *Lights of Guidance: A Bahā’ī Reference File*, chap. XVI, no. 730.

no distinction. This justification still fails to address this issue and contradicts the current principle.

10- Boys Are Branches Girls Are Leaves

Bahā'u'llāh didn't even adhere to the equality of sexes regarding his own family. He labeled his male offspring as Branches (*Aghsān*) and his female offspring as Leaves (*waraqāt*).

11- Dowry and Virginity

If a husband finds out his wife is not a virgin he can take back the dowry even though the marriage was not conditioned on the virginity of the spouse:

Should the husband, after the payment of the dowry, discover that the wife is not a virgin, the refund of the dowry and of the expenses incurred may be demanded.¹¹⁶¹

So what actions can a woman take if she finds out her husband was not a virgin, if the marriage was not based on the condition of virginity? The UHJ clearly gives the answer: Nothing!

In one of these cases you cite, for example, that of a wife who is found by her husband not to have been a virgin, the dissolution of the marriage can be demanded only "if the marriage has been conditioned on virginity"; presumably, therefore, if the wife wishes to exercise such a right in respect

¹¹⁶¹ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 151.

to the husband, she would have to include a condition as to his virginity in the marriage contract.¹¹⁶²

12- Women Must Obey Men

Baha'is claim men and women are equal. On the subject of obedience, 'Abdu'l-Bahā has clearly stated that women must obey their husbands:

O Handmaids of the Self-Sustaining Lord! Exert your efforts so that you may attain the honour and privilege ordained for women. Undoubtedly the greatest glory of women is servitude at His Threshold and submissiveness at His door; it is the possession of a vigilant heart, and praise of the incomparable God; it is heartfelt love towards other handmaids and spotless chastity; it is obedience to and consideration for their husbands and the education and care of their children; and it is tranquillity, and dignity, perseverance in the remembrance of the Lord, and the utmost enkindlement and attraction.¹¹⁶³

As usual, the Universal House of Justice has tried to in vain to justify this act:

This exhortation to the utmost degree of spirituality and self-abnegation should not be read as a legal definition giving the husband absolute authority over his wife, for, in a letter written to an individual believer on 22th July 1943, the beloved Guardian's secretary wrote on his behalf:

"The Guardian, in his remarks...about parents and children, wives and husbands' relations in America meant that there is

¹¹⁶² Memorandum by UHJ on "Monogamy, Sexual Equality, Marital Equality, and the Supreme Tribunal," dated 27/06/1996, p. 6: http://bahai-library.com/uhj_equality_monogamy_uhj (retrieved 02/08/2014)

¹¹⁶³ Helen Bassett Hornby, *Lights of Guidance: A Bahā'ī Reference File*, chap. XVI, no. 749.

a tendency in that country for children to be too independent of the wishes of their parents and lacking in the respect due to them. Also wives, in some cases, have a tendency to exert an unjust degree of domination over their husbands which, of course, is not right, anymore than that the husband should unjustly dominate his wife.”¹¹⁶⁴

Whereas `Abdu'l-Bahā strictly tells women to be obedient to their husbands, the Baha'i administration plays with words in an attempt to convince their Western audience that this is not the case. A more careful analysis of the quote shows that these words simply mean a man has authority over his wife but it is not *absolute* and a man dominates his wife but must not do so *unjustly*. Thus, women must still be obedient of their husbands and are dominated by them.

There are many similar quotes and letters in the Baha'i scripture from the UHJ which try to show the contrary, none of which change the fact that the original order from `Abdu'l-Bahā was for women to obey their husbands and not the opposite.

Even though so many blatant examples of discrimination and inequality between the two sexes exist in this creed, `Abdu'l-Bahā still insists that

Men and women are equal in all rights. There is no distinction whatsoever.¹¹⁶⁵

He establishes the equality of man and woman. This is peculiar to the teachings of Bahā'u'llāh, for all other religions have placed man above woman.¹¹⁶⁶

¹¹⁶⁴ Helen Bassett Hornby, *Lights of Guidance: A Bahā'ī Reference File*, chap. XVI, no. 750.

¹¹⁶⁵ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 232.

¹¹⁶⁶ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 455.



Is This Principle Correct From a Rational and Logical Perspective?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā claims that for the human world to reach salvation complete equality between men and women must be established:

The salvation of the human world will not become complete unless there is complete equality between women and men.¹¹⁶⁷

Not until complete equality is achieved between the rights of males and females, the human world will not make astonishing advancements.¹¹⁶⁸

Men and women are equal in all rights. There is no distinction whatsoever.¹¹⁶⁹

What ‘Abdu’l-Bahā is clearly claiming is that there is or must be complete and utter equality between men and women and their rights. This belief is illogical. Under no circumstances can two different groups with great differences in their emotional, psychological, and physical aspects be expected to be exactly equal and have perfectly identical rights. What is more rational, are rights which are proportional to males

¹¹⁶⁷ ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 150.

¹¹⁶⁸ ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 235.

¹¹⁶⁹ ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 232.

and rights which are proportional to females. When approached with these contradictions, the UHJ finally decided to give a new verdict on this matter in 1975:

Concerning your questions about the equality of men and women, this, as ‘Abdu’l-Bahā has often explained, is a fundamental principle of Bahā’u’llāh; therefore the Laws of the “Aqdas” should be studied in the light of it. Equality between men and women does not, indeed physiologically it cannot, mean identity of functions. In some things women excel men, for others men are better fitted than women, while in very many things the difference of sex is of no effect at all. The differences of function are most apparent in family life. The capacity for motherhood has many far-reaching implications which are recognized in Bahā’ī Law. For example, when it is not possible to educate all one’s children, daughters receive preference over sons, as mothers are the first educators of the next generation. Again, for physiological reasons, women are granted certain exemptions from fasting that are not applicable to men (24 July 1975 to an individual believer).¹¹⁷⁰

Does this letter solve the problem? No, for the UHJ has apparently forgotten that ‘Abdu’l-Bahā was saying there is absolutely no distinction and privilege and there is complete equality of rights and is contradicting him by claiming there are distinctions, privileges, and inequality of rights! Here is another justification from 1981:

You are quite right in stating that men and women have basic and distinct qualities. The solution provided in the teachings of Bahā’u’llāh is not, as you correctly observe, for men to become women, and for women to become men. ‘Abdu’l-

¹¹⁷⁰ Various, *A Compilation on Women*, p. 14.

Bahā gave us the key to the problem when He taught that the qualities and functions of men and women “complement” each other. He further elucidated this point when He said that the “new age” will be “an age in which the masculine and feminine elements of civilization will be more properly balanced” (22 April 1981 to an individual believer).¹¹⁷¹

This again contradicts the sayings of `Abdu'l-Bahā, for he had claimed there is no distinction at all. The two completely equal sexes, as taught by Bahā'u'llāh, have now been changed by the UHJ to two different sexes with complementary functions!

The last letter we will show from the UHJ basically contradicts itself for it claims there is equality but at the same time diversity:

It may be helpful to stress ... that the Bahā'ī principle of the equality of men and women is clearly stated in the teachings, and the fact that there is diversity of function between them in certain areas does not negate this principle (23 August 1984 to two believers).¹¹⁷²

Another irrational justification about this principle is `Abdu'l-Bahā's reasoning that if men and women become equal then the foundations of war will be destroyed:

When all mankind shall receive the same opportunity of education and the equality of men and women be realized, the foundations of war will be utterly destroyed. Without equality this will be impossible because all differences and distinction are conducive to discord and strife. Equality between men and women is conducive to the abolition of warfare for the reason that women will never be willing to

¹¹⁷¹ Various, *A Compilation on Women*, p. 15.

¹¹⁷² Various, *A Compilation on Women*, p. 15.

sanction it. Mothers will not give their sons as sacrifices upon the battlefield after twenty years of anxiety and loving devotion in rearing them from infancy, no matter what cause they are called upon to defend. There is no doubt that when women obtain equality of rights, war will entirely cease among mankind.¹¹⁷³

Woman by nature is opposed to war; she is an advocate of peace. Children are reared and brought up by the mothers who give them the first principles of education and labour assiduously in their behalf. Consider, for instance, a mother who has tenderly reared a son for twenty years to the age of maturity. Surely she will not consent to having that son torn asunder and killed in the field of battle. Therefore, as woman advances toward the degree of man in power and privilege, with the right of vote and control in human government, most assuredly war will cease; for woman is naturally the most devoted and staunch advocate of international peace.¹¹⁷⁴

These justifications are wrong on many levels. The partial implementation of complete equality between female and male roles in society has not stopped war, but instead caused women to become separated from their families in order to serve active combat roles in the military.

We have already shown the extent that this principle is implemented in Baha'i laws regarding the rights of men and women. These discriminations are not limited only to the rights concerning the two sexes. For instance:

¹¹⁷³ Various, *A Compilation on Bahā'ī Education* (Research Department of the Universal House of Justice, Bahā'ī World Centre, 1976), p. 58.

¹¹⁷⁴ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 375.

- Non-Baha’i family members inherit nothing from Baha’is.¹¹⁷⁵
- Shares of inheritance are not equal.¹¹⁷⁶
- Ex-communicated Baha’is are deprived of all rights of socializing with Baha’is even if they are their closest relatives.¹¹⁷⁷

It is up to you to draw your own conclusions!



¹¹⁷⁵ “Bahā’u’llāh states that non-Bahā’īs have no right to inherit from their Bahā’ī parents or relatives,” Bahā’u’llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 184.

¹¹⁷⁶ The deceased’s property are split into 2520 portions. Out of these, 1080 are for the children, 390 for the wives, fathers 330, mothers 270, brothers 210, sisters 150, teachers 90.

¹¹⁷⁷ “A question was asked about the friends that, as a result of their ignorance and neglect, had been excluded from administrative affairs about whether they should be invited to public assemblies or not? He (Shoghi) said, ‘inviting them is not permitted.’ And it was asked about those that had been excluded from the community whether greeting and speaking with them was permitted? He replied, ‘if they have been spiritually excommunicated, speaking with them is not permitted in any way,’” Shoghi Effendi, *Tauqī`āt-i mubārak-i (1945–1952)*, pp. 94–95.



**Bahā'u'llāh:
“Contradiction has and will not
ever have a way in the
sanctified realm of the Divine
Manifestations.”¹¹⁷⁸**

¹¹⁷⁸Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 126.

1. Are Men and Women Equal or Do They Have Distinctions?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: There is no distinction between men and women and there is complete equality.¹¹⁷⁹

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: There is no doubt that men are superior to women and stronger.¹¹⁸⁰

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: Women are more important and stronger.¹¹⁸¹

2. Can the Human World Fly with Unequal Wings?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: “The human world, like birds, needs two wings. One women and the other men.”¹¹⁸² A bird will not fly unless both wings are equal.¹¹⁸³

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: The woman is the stronger wing!¹¹⁸⁴

¹¹⁷⁹ “The tenth principle of his Highness Bahā’u’llāh is the unity of men and women; for in the view of God men and women are equal. They are all from the human race and the descendants of Adam. Because being male or female is not specific to the human race. Plants have male and female and animals too have male and female and there is no distinction. Look at the plant kingdom. Is there any distinction between male plants and female plants? Rather there is complete equality; and in the Animal kingdom too, there is no distinction at all,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, pp. 149–150.

¹¹⁸⁰ “Although women and men share the same capacities and abilities, there is definitely no doubt that men are superior and stronger,” Maḥmūd Zaraqānī, *Badā’i’ al-āthār*, vol. 1, p. 153.

¹¹⁸¹ “‘Abdu’l-Bahā smiled and asked: “What will you say if I prove to you that the woman is the stronger wing?” The answer came in the same bright vein: “You will earn my eternal gratitude!” at which all the company made merry. ‘Abdu’l-Bahā then continued more seriously: “The woman is indeed of the greater importance to the race . . .” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *‘Abdu’l-Bahā in London*, pp. 102–103.

¹¹⁸² ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 134.

¹¹⁸³ “From the teachings of his highness Bahā’u’llāh is the unity of women and men, for the human world has two wings. One wing is men and the other wing women. The bird will not fly unless both wings are equal. If one wing is weak flight is not possible. Unless the world of women becomes equal to the world of men in attaining virtues and accomplishments, prosperity and salvation will be impossible and unfeasible,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 3, p. 107.

¹¹⁸⁴ “‘Abdu’l-Bahā smiled and asked: “What will you say if I prove to you that the woman is the stronger wing?” The answer came in the same bright vein: “You will earn my eternal gratitude!” at which all the company made merry. ‘Abdu’l-Bahā then continued more seriously: “The woman is indeed of the greater importance to the race . . .” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *‘Abdu’l-Bahā in London*, pp. 102–103.

3. Are Male and Female Plants and Animals Equal or Do They Have Distinctions?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: There is no doubt that the male is superior and stronger even in animals. Look at the peacock, the sparrow, and the pigeon.¹¹⁸⁵

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: There is no distinction between male and female plants and animals and there is complete equality.¹¹⁸⁶

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: Female is important and stronger, look at the palm tree, look at the mare, look at the lioness.¹¹⁸⁷

¹¹⁸⁵ “Although women and men share the same capacities and abilities, there is definitely no doubt that men are superior and stronger. Even in animals like pigeons, sparrows, peacocks, and other [birds] this advantage is visible.” Maḥmūd Zaraqānī, *Badā’i’ al-āthār*, vol. 1, p. 153.

¹¹⁸⁶ “The tenth principle of his Highness Bahā’u’llāh is the unity of men and women; for in the view of God men and women are equal. They are all from the human race and the descendants of Adam. Because being male or female is not specific to the human race. Plants have male and female and animals too have male and female and there is no distinction. Look at the plant kingdom. Is there any distinction between male plants and female plants? Rather there is complete equality; and in the Animal kingdom too, there is no distinction at all,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, pp. 149–150.

¹¹⁸⁷ “‘Abdu’l-Bahā smiled and asked: “What will you say if I prove to you that the woman is the stronger wing?” The answer came in the same bright vein: “You will earn my eternal gratitude!” at which all the company made merry. ‘Abdu’l-Bahā then continued more seriously: “The woman is indeed of the greater importance to the race. She has the greater burden and the greater work. Look at the vegetable and the animal worlds. The palm which carries the fruit is the tree most prized by the date grower. The Arab knows that for a long journey the mare has the longest wind. For her greater strength and fierceness, the lioness is more feared by the hunter than the lion.” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *‘Abdu’l-Bahā in London*, pp. 102–103.

4. Must We Tell Women That They Are Weaker and Inferior?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: Do not tell women that they are weaker and inferior.¹¹⁸⁸

‘Abdu’l-Bahā tells a women that men are superior and stronger.¹¹⁸⁹

5. Men and Women Are Equal in All Ranks, but Women Lack Capacity and Competency!

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: Men and women are equal in all ranks.¹¹⁹⁰

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: Oh women, don’t be sad that your capacities and competencies are low. My father can make up for these deficiencies for he can turn the lowliest things into the most exalted creatures.¹¹⁹¹

¹¹⁸⁸ “On the contrary, we must declare that her capacity is equal, even greater than man’s. This will inspire her with hope and ambition, and her susceptibilities for advancement will continually increase. She must not be told and taught that she is weaker and inferior in capacity and qualification.” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 76.

¹¹⁸⁹ “A woman’s question was referred to him who had asked why hasn’t God made any woman Prophets and why have all Divine Manifestations been men. He answered: “Although women and men share the same capacities and abilities, there is definitely no doubt that men are superior and stronger. Even in animals like pigeons, sparrows, peacocks, and other [birds] this advantage is visible,” Maḥmūd Zaraqānī, *Badā’i’ al-āthār*, vol. 1, p. 153.

¹¹⁹⁰ “Men and women are both humans and the servants of one Lord. In the presence of God there is no such thing as man and woman. Whoever has a purer heart and better actions is closer to God, whether he is a man or a woman. The differences we see now are caused by differences in nurturing because women are not nurtured like men. If they are nurtured like men they will become equal in all ranks, because they are both humans and share the same ranks. God has made no distinction,” Riyāḍ Qadīmī, *Gulzār-i ta’ālim Bahā’ī*, p. 283.

¹¹⁹¹ “Oh dear divine slave-maids! Do not pay attention to your [lack of] capacities and competencies. Rather, rely on the grace and kindness of the Blessed Beauty, because that everlasting beneficence will turn a shrub into a blessed tree, will turn a mirage into cool water, will turn a lost speck into the essence of existence, will turn a perishing ant into a tutor of the school of knowledge,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Makātīb*, vol. 7, pp. 135–6.

6. Is There Distinction between Men and Women in the View of God?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: In the view of God, there is no such thing as man or woman.¹¹⁹²

Bahā'u'llāh: God considers some men as women, and some women as men.¹¹⁹³

7. Men and Women Have Equal Rights but Women Have No Share Their Father's Living Residence

`Abdu'l-Bahā: There must be complete equality between men and women.¹¹⁹⁴

Bahā'u'llāh: Female offspring have no share from the deceased's living residence.¹¹⁹⁵

¹¹⁹² "In the presence of God, there is no such thing as feminine or masculine. Whoever has better deeds and greater faith is closer to God. In the Divine world, there is no male or female. They are both the same," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 220.

¹¹⁹³ "Today, whoever amongst the slave-maids (meaning women) succeeds in recognizing *He Who is the Goal of the World*, will be considered a man in the Divine Book (*dar kitāb 'ilāhī az rijāl maḥsūb*)," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 232.

¹¹⁹⁴ "The salvation of the human world will not become complete unless there is complete equality between women and men," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 150.

¹¹⁹⁵ "We have assigned the residence and personal clothing of the deceased to the male, not female, offspring, nor to the other heirs," Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 186.

8. Men and Women Must Have Equal Rights but Women Have a Smaller Share of Inheritance

`Abdu'l-Bahā: For the human world to advance, men and women must have completely equal rights.¹¹⁹⁶

Bahā'u'llāh: Mothers have a smaller share from inheritance compared with fathers as do sisters compared with brothers.¹¹⁹⁷

9. Men and Women Have Equal Rights except Sometimes Where Women Have No Rights at All.

`Abdu'l-Bahā: There is no distinction between the rights of men and women.¹¹⁹⁸

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Even if the only wealth left behind by the deceased is his living residence, the female offspring take no shares from it.¹¹⁹⁹

¹¹⁹⁶ “Not until complete equality is achieved between the rights of males and females, the human world will not make astonishing advancements,” `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p.235.

¹¹⁹⁷ The deceased's property are split into 2520 portions. Out of these, 1080 are for the children, 390 for the wives, fathers 330, mothers 270, brothers 210, sisters 150, teachers 90 (`Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 10, pp. 117–119).

¹¹⁹⁸ “Men and women are equal in all rights. There is no distinction whatsoever,” `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p.232.

¹¹⁹⁹ “The living residence belongs to the oldest living son, whether or not the deceased has any other wealth. The oldest living son also takes his share from the other belongings,” `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 10, p. 128.

10. Polygamy, Yes or No?

Bahā'u'llāh: Men can only have two wives¹²⁰⁰ but I can have three.

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Men cannot have two wives.¹²⁰¹

11. `Abdu'l-Bahā and Justice in Polygamy

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Observing justice in polygamy is utterly impossible.¹²⁰²

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Observing justice in polygamy is very hard to come by.¹²⁰³

`Abdu'l-Bahā: In polygamist relations it suffices to be as just as possible.¹²⁰⁴

12. Did `Abdu'l-Bahā Say Men Can Only Have One Wife?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Men cannot have two wives.¹²⁰⁵

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Whoever claims I have said men cannot have two wives is a liar.¹²⁰⁶

¹²⁰⁰ "God hath prescribed matrimony unto you. Beware that ye take not unto yourselves more wives than two," Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 41.

¹²⁰¹ "It is not permissible for a man to have more than one wife," Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 206.

¹²⁰² "Observance of justice and equity towards two wives is utterly impossible," Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 206.

¹²⁰³ "The purpose was to state that polygamy without justice is not allowed and that justice is very difficult [to achieve]," Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Amr wa khalq*, vol. 4, p. 176.

¹²⁰⁴ "You asked about polygamy. According to the text of the Divine Book having two wives is lawful and legal and was never prohibited, rather it is legitimate and allowed. Do not be unhappy, but take justice into consideration so that you may be as just as possible. What has been uttered is that since justice is very difficult [to achieve], therefore peace is in having one wife. But in your case, of course you should not be unhappy." Asad-Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, *Amr wa khalq*, 131 B., vol. 4, p. 174.

¹²⁰⁵ "It is not permissible for a man to have more than one wife," Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 206.

¹²⁰⁶ "Concerning polygamy, this has been decreed and will not be abrogated. `Abdu'l-Bahā has not abrogated this law and [accusation of abrogation] is a lie [made up] by the friends. What I said is that He has made polygamy bound on the precondition of justice . . . Such false

13. Equality of Rights or Having No Right to Be a Member of the Universal House of Justice?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: There is absolutely no distinction between the rights of men and women.¹²⁰⁷

`Abdu'l-Bahā and Bahā'u'llāh: Women cannot be a member of the Universal House of Justice.¹²⁰⁸

14. Equality of Rights or Distinction between Villagers and City-Dwellers?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: For justice to be served all must have equal rights.¹²⁰⁹

Bahā'u'llāh: Villagers have a dowry of silver and city-dwellers have a dowry of gold.¹²¹⁰

accusations (meaning charges that `Abdu'l-Bahā prohibited bigamy) are the whisperings of those who wish to induce doubts and [see] how much they are making matters ambiguous. The purpose was to state that polygamy without justice is not allowed and that justice is very difficult [to achieve].”

¹²⁰⁷ “Taking a second wife is made dependent upon equity and justice being upheld between the two wives, under all conditions.” `Abd al-Ḥamīd Isḥrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 232.

¹²⁰⁸ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Isḥrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 27, p. 219.

¹²⁰⁹ “Justice implies that the rights of humankind be protected and preserved and all have equal rights,” `Abd al-Ḥamīd Isḥrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 30.

¹²¹⁰ “No marriage may be contracted without payment of a dowry, which hath been fixed for city-dwellers at nineteen mithqāls of pure gold, and for village-dwellers at the same amount in silver. Whoso wisheth to increase this sum, it is forbidden him to exceed the limit of ninety-five mithqāls. Thus hath the command been writ in majesty and power,” Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, pp. 207–208.

15. Is God's Grace for All?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: We are all divine sheep and God has made no distinction between us.¹²¹¹ God has made no distinction in any grace or mercy.¹²¹²

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: Some women have no share from God’s grace.¹²¹³

16. Why Did Bahā'u'llāh Have Three Wives?

Shoghi: He was following Islamic law.¹²¹⁴

Shoghi: Tāhīrih adopted the Bāb’s laws and openly denounced polygamy!¹²¹⁵

Bahā’u’llāh married his second and third wives when he was a Bābī not Muslim!

¹²¹¹ “All humans are divine sheep and God is the kind shepherd who has utter compassion towards all the sheep and has made no distinction [between them],” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Makātib*, vol. 3, p. 67.

¹²¹² “The God of the world created all [humans] from clay and created everyone from one element, created all from one progeny, created all in one land, and created [all] under the shadow of one sky, has created them with common emotions, and did not put any differences. He created everyone the same and gives all sustenance, nurtures all, protects all, and is kind to all. He has put no differences in any grace or mercy,” ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Isḥrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 42.

¹²¹³ “Women are of two kinds. One kind are worldly who have no share from your Lord’s graces. And the other kind are spiritual who are like the pulse of an artery,” Riyāḍ Qadīmī, *Gulzār-i ta’ālim Bahā’i*, p. 284.

¹²¹⁴ “Bahā’u’llāh had no concubine, He had three legal wives. As He married them before the “Aqdas” (His book of laws) was revealed, He was only acting according to the laws of Islām, which had not yet been superseded. He made plurality of wives conditional upon justice; ‘Abdu’l-Bahā interpreted this to mean that a man may not have more than one wife at a time, as it is impossible to be just to two or more women in marriage (11 February 1944 to an individual believer).”

¹²¹⁵ “She began to correspond with the Bāb and soon espoused all his ideas. She did not content herself with a passive sympathy but confessed openly the faith of her Master. She denounced not only polygamy but the use of the veil and showed her face uncovered in public to the great amazement and scandal of her family and of all the sincere Mussulmans but to the applause of many other fellow citizens who shared her enthusiasm and whose numbers grew as a result of her preaching,” Nabīl Zarandī, *The Dawn-Breakers: Nabīl’s Narrative of the Early Days of the Bahā’i Revelation*, p. 270 (footnote).



A Summary and Conclusion of the Three Perspectives:

1) Is the “Equality of Men and Women” a novel principle?

Both feminist and women’s rights movements had been lobbying for equal rights for women years before the advent of Baha’is and Bahā’u’llāh. Verses of the Quran and texts from Early Christian writers are strikingly similar to what Baha’i leaders have uttered about women.

2) Did the leaders of Baha’ism act upon this principle?

Bahā’u’llāh and Abdu’l-Bahā’s laws about inheritance, dowry, polygamy, pilgrimage, membership of the UHJ . . . are only a few of samples that show Baha’i leaders did not practice what they preached.

3) Is this principle rational and logical?

If ‘equality’ means men and women have completely equal rights and duties, then this principle is not rational, for these two sexes have great psychological and physical differences which necessitate different rights and laws. But if equality means men and women should have rights proportional to their specific traits, then Baha’ism has brought forth nothing new, and all Abrahamic religions had already established such practice.

CHAPTER 11:

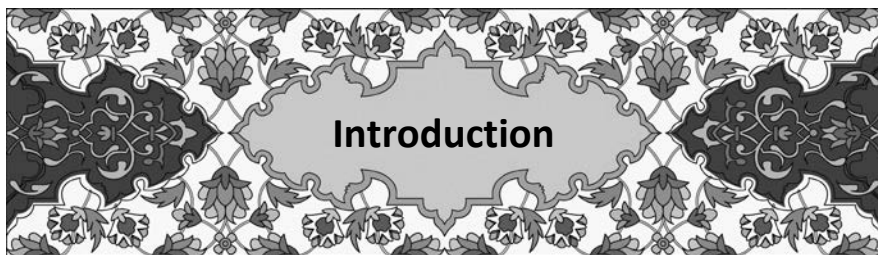
Establishment of Universal Peace



“Bahā’u’llāh’s eleventh principle is [the establishment] of universal peace. Not until the flag of peace is raised and a great universal court of justice is established in which all affairs and differences between governments are settled, the world of creation will not have peace. Rather, the foundation of the human world will be ploughed and the flames of mischief will grow and all lands—near and far—will become like ashes.”¹²¹⁶



¹²¹⁶ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 150.



**The establishment of universal
peace means that under no
circumstances must nations go
to war with each other. A
superpower must keep watch
and make sure a war does not
start.**



‘Abdu’l-Bahā says:

**The world is in need of universal peace. Not until universal
peace is announced will the world have comfort.¹²¹⁷**

¹²¹⁷ ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 48.

Our wish is the Oneness of Humanity and our goal is universal peace. Thus we are united in [both] wish and goal and there is nothing in the existing world more important than these two affairs for the oneness of humanity gives humankind honor and universal peace brings tranquility to all those on earth. Thus we are united in [achieving] these two goals and there exists no goals greater than these . . . today a great power is needed to administer these exalted goals.¹²¹⁸

We already analyzed the establishment of the Universal House of Justice and the Supreme Tribunal in the seventh chapter. In this chapter, we will only discuss the subject of universal peace.

Baha'is claim that to achieve the goal of Oneness of Humanity, there is no remedy but to establish universal peace. This cannot be established without a superpower that acts as a watchdog, administering this universal peace. We will now proceed to analyze this teaching from the three aforementioned perspectives.

¹²¹⁸ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 52.



Is the Hope for Establishing Universal Peace Novel?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā claims:

Universal peace is assured by Bahā’u’llāh as a fundamental accomplishment of the religion of God—that peace shall prevail among nations, governments and peoples, among religions, races and all conditions of mankind. This is one of the special characteristics of the Word of God revealed in this Manifestation.

In 1795, years before Bahā’u’llāh, Immanuel Kant published *Perpetual Peace* with two main steps and guidelines for achieving global peace. Can we believe that Bahā’u’llāh or ‘Abdu’l-Bahā had not heard of this famous philosopher or his article? Or can we believe that they had not heard about this concept in other religions? They certainly had. ‘Abdu’l-Bahā admits that:

All Divine Books and all Divine Prophets and all rational people are unanimous and united [on the belief] that war brings about destruction and peace brings about prosperity.¹²¹⁹

¹²¹⁹ ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 99.

It seems that what Baha'i leaders had in mind when speaking about universal peace, was the creation of a superpower which would guarantee that peace is established and sustained. `Abdu'l-Bahā says:

A superpower is needed to implement this peace, prevent this war, and announce the Oneness of Humanity . . . we are in need of a superpower.¹²²⁰

Bahā'u'llāh claims to be the savior which all religions had given glad-tidings about. The savior who was supposed to come and establish world peace once and for all. Yet, this claimant has passed away without fulfilling God's promise and his followers are still searching for a superpower, which was in fact, supposed to be their beloved deceased leader. For now, we will ignore this inconsistency.

Let us see what entity Baha'is believe is fit to take on this role and police the world: Maybe the United States, Russia, the Ottomans, or even the United Kingdom? After all, both he and his son have praised all these powers at different points in time. For instance, this is how Bahā'u'llāh praised the Imperial Russian government for freeing him from prison:

When this Wronged One was sore-afflicted in prison, the minister of the highly esteemed government (of Russia)—may God, glorified and exalted be He, assist him!—exerted his utmost endeavor to compass My deliverance. Several times permission for My release was granted. Some of the 'ulamās of the city, however, would prevent it. Finally, My freedom was gained through the solicitude and the endeavor of His Excellency the Minister . . . His Imperial Majesty, the Most Great Emperor—may God, exalted and glorified be He, assist him!—extended to Me for the sake of God his protection—a

¹²²⁰ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, pp. 99–100.

protection which has excited the envy and enmity of the foolish ones of the earth.¹²²¹

Or `Abdu'l-Bahā's supplications for the Ottoman Empire:

Oh Lord, Oh Lord! I ask you by your unseen favors and your self-contained successes and your merciful graces, to assist the exalted Ottoman government and its Caliphate [stemming from the prophet] Muhammad to be spread on earth and be established on [Your] Throne, and in protecting its lands from plague, and safeguarding the center of its rule from humility. Oh Lord, preserve it in the cave of Your protection and support, and protect it with the eye of Your grace, and cover it with your merciful security. For it supports the Blessed Illuminated Monument and protects the Valley of Sinai, and spreads the shadow of its support over the heads of the Friends.¹²²²

The following supplication shows `Abdu'l-Bahā's cozy relations with the English government:

Oh Lord! Give grace to the great Emperor George V, the King of England, with your merciful successes and keep permanent his towering shadow on this lofty land (meaning Palestine).¹²²³

On a side note, in his 1911 journey to Europe, `Abdu'l-Bahā made some extraordinary claims about England:

The people of Iran are overjoyed that I have travelled here. My coming here will be a cause of friendship between Iran

¹²²¹ Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 106.

¹²²² `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 2, p. 312.

¹²²³ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 3, p. 347.

and England. A complete relationship will be forged. The [relationship] will increase to such an extent that people from Iran will sacrifice their lives for England and likewise England will sacrifice itself for Iran.¹²²⁴

This speech is so full of falsity that one wonders how `Abdu'l-Bahā had come up with such strange claims. Why should the people of Iran have been overjoyed by `Abdu'l-Bahā's journey to England—a journey most if not all Iranians—did not even know about? No historical document exists today which even slightly shows Iranians had shown such emotions. No document exists that shows the people of Iran sacrificed themselves for England or England sacrificed itself for Iran. All available documents and historical facts show the opposite of `Abdu'l-Bahā's prophecies and to date, England is still widely regarded with suspicion and hatred by the Iranian people because of the atrocities it committed in Iran throughout the previous century and is considered as the root of most of their problems.

The aforementioned supplications themselves are in contradiction with the principle of Universal Peace. When these supplications were uttered—and in the era before and after them—the English, Ottoman, and the Russian empires were engaged in ruthless wars, imperialistic policies, and colonizations which had resulted in the death of millions of people and the transmission of the national wealth of weaker countries to these superpowers. Why had `Abdu'l-Bahā and Bahā'u'llāh prayed for such regimes? Why had they asked God to protect them, make them successful and make permanent their rule?!

`Abdu'l-Bahā's relations with warmongering and imperialistic governments was not limited to supplications and prayers. He was awarded a knighthood by the British government on 27 April 1920.

¹²²⁴ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Egypt), vol. 1, p. 23.



Figure 14: Ceremony of `Abdu'l-Bahā's knighthood.

Baha'is explain this event by claiming that the reason for this knighthood was `Abdu'l-Bahā's humanitarian achievements:

Through the war years, `Abdu'l-Bahā encouraged the Baha'is in the Jordan River valley and on the shores of the Sea of Galilee to plant crops. The wheat they produced was distributed to the needy population of Haifa, saving it from starvation. This humanitarian service was recognized by the British, who occupied Haifa at the end of September 1918. The British government knighted 'Abdu'l-Bahá in April 1920

and showed Him extraordinary signs of admiration and respect.¹²²⁵

Nor were the British authorities slow to express their appreciation of the role which `Abdu'l-Bahā had played in allaying the burden of suffering that had oppressed the inhabitants of the Holy Land during the dark days of that distressing conflict. The conferment of a knighthood upon Him at a ceremony specially held for His sake in Haifa, at the residence of the British Governor, at which notables of various communities had assembled.¹²²⁶

Why would a medal of honor based on *service to the British government*, be granted to someone who was allegedly helping feed the civilian population of a country the British were waging a war against? A government who had already shown it did not care about the civilians of the countries it invaded. The invasion of Persia by the British during the Great Persian famine in 1917–1919 (at nearly the same time they invaded Palestine), greatly intensified the disaster and directly and indirectly resulted in the death of not thousands but millions of innocent Persians.¹²²⁷ The British cared more about their interests in the Middle East than about the countless lives lost because of these invasions. Are we supposed to believe such a regime—with such a black resume—would really care about the starvation of a mere few hundred people that `Abdu'l-Bahā was providing for, while it was watching thousands and millions of people die of starvation due to its actions in

¹²²⁵ This quote was taken on 21 December 2013 from the Baha'i Encyclopedia Project: http://www.bahai-encyclopedia-project.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=81:abdul-baha-abbas-1844-1921&catid=36:administrationinstitutions

¹²²⁶ Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 306

¹²²⁷ See Mohammad Gholi Majd, *The Great Famine and Genocide in Persia, 1917-1919* (University Press of America, 2003).

other lands? What service was `Abdu'l-Bahā really providing to the British government?

Shoghi gives us some clues to answer the last question. The following extracts are what Shoghi says about the Ottoman government in *God Passes By*:

Sulṭān `Abdu'l-`Azīz, who with Nāṣiri'd-Dīn Shāh was the author of the calamities heaped upon Bahā'u'llāh, and was himself responsible for three decrees of banishment against the Prophet; who had been stigmatized, in the Kitāb-i-Aqdas, as occupying the "throne of tyranny."¹²²⁸

In the Holy Land, however, though the outcome of that tremendous struggle was to liberate once and for all the Heart and Center of the Faith from the Turkish yoke, a yoke which had imposed for so long upon its Founder and His Successor such oppressive and humiliating restrictions . . . The privations inflicted on the inhabitants by the gross incompetence, the shameful neglect, the cruelty and callous indifference of both the civil and military authorities, though greatly alleviated through the bountiful generosity, the foresight and the tender care of 'Abdu'l-Bahā, were aggravated by the rigors of a strict blockade . . . The conclusion of this terrible conflict, the first stage in a titanic convulsion long predicted by Bahā'u'llāh, not only marked the extinction of Turkish rule in the Holy Land and sealed the doom of that military despot who had vowed to destroy 'Abdu'l-Bahā . . . The Head of the Faith, and its twin holy Shrines, in the plain of Akkā and on the slopes of Mt. Carmel, were henceforth to enjoy for the first time, through the

¹²²⁸ Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 225.

substitution of a new and liberal régime for the corrupt administration of the past.¹²²⁹

These quotes show the extreme hatred and enmity Baha’i leaders had towards the Ottomans. If a foreign force—who is friendly towards you for whatever reason—decides to attack your sworn enemy, would you not try to help them?

To see the extent of `Abdu’l-Bahā’s hypocrisy one only needs to compare these praises and prayers for the Ottoman Empire with Shoghi’s words regarding the same empire. Was `Abdu’l-Bahā really serious when he was asking God **“to assist the exalted Ottoman Government and its caliphate”**? That same empire that Shoghi refers to using the following words: Turkish yoke, throne of tyranny, military despot, corrupt administration! When that empire had power it was subject to the most extreme forms of flattery and praise by the Baha’i administration and when it was overthrown and no longer in power, it was attacked by the Baha’i administration using the most repulsive terms. The sincerity in these words is overwhelming.

What `Abdu’l-Bahā says and predicts about the United States is even more astounding. He says in a speech in the city of Cincinnati in November 1912:

America is a noble nation, a standard-bearer of peace throughout the world, shedding her light to all regions. Other nations are not untrammelled and free of intrigues like the United States, and are unable to bring about Universal Peace. But America, thank God, is at peace with all the world, and is worthy of raising the flag of brotherhood and International Peace.¹²³⁰

¹²²⁹ Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 304–306.

¹²³⁰ J. E. Esslemont, *Bahā’u’llāh and the New Era*, pp.242–243.

These words were either uttered with the intention of deceiving the American public and giving them delusional pride, or obviously reflect `Abdu'l-Bahā's superhuman knowledge.<sup>1231</sup> If `Abdu'l-Bahā had the slightest knowledge about the United States' military conflicts and interventions he would have never uttered such words.

In the year 1912, the same year that `Abdu'l-Bahā made the aforementioned speech, the United States was in the midst of one of its most ruthless military engagements with its South American neighbors, today referred to as the Banana Wars. These wars were neither based on humanitarian reasons nor to achieve peace, but were wars being fought to loot South American countries from their national wealth and God-given graces and to expand the profit of American commercial organizations and tycoons. U.S. Marine Corps Major, General Smedley Butler, who was perhaps the single most active military officer in the Banana Wars, describes them like this:

I spent 33 years and four months in active military service and during that period I spent most of my time as a high class muscle man for Big Business, for Wall Street and the bankers. In short, I was a racketeer, a gangster for capitalism. I helped make Mexico and especially Tampico safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to collect revenues in. I helped in the raping of half a dozen Central American republics for the benefit of Wall Street. I helped purify Nicaragua for the International Banking House of Brown Brothers in 1902-1912. I brought light to the Dominican Republic for the American sugar interests in 1916. I helped make Honduras right for the American fruit companies in 1903. In China in 1927 I helped see to it that Standard Oil went on its way unmolested. Looking back on it, I might have given Al Capone a few hints.

¹²³¹ Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 134.

The best he could do was to operate his racket in three districts. I operated on three continents.¹²³²

`Abdu'l-Bahā gives further glad-tidings about America and its peaceful attitude:

Undoubtedly, the American people and nation, have no intention of colonizing [another country] or expanding the circle of the countries [borders] and do not seek to attack other nations and countries.¹²³³

These words were uttered in the same year that America was engaged in at least two major wars: 1-The Moro Rebellion (1899 – 1913) against ethnic Muslims who lived in the Southern Philippines and resisted Spanish and American colonization. 2-Occupation of Nicaragua (1912–1933).

`Abdu'l-Bahā's prophecy was so precise that in the next one hundred years, the United States became—and still is—militarily engaged in hundreds of conflicts around the world. Some of the major ones being:

- The Mexican Revolution (1914–1919)
- Occupation of Haiti (1915–1934)
- Occupation of the Dominican Republic (1916–1924)
- World War I (1917–1918)
- Russian Civil War (1918–1920)
- World War II (1941–1945)
- Korean War (1950–1953)
- First Indochina War (1950–1954)
- Vietnam War (1953–1975)
- Laotian Civil War (1953–1975)
- Lebanon Crisis (1958)

¹²³² Eugene Jarecki, *The American Way of War: Guided Missiles, Misguided Men, and a Republic in Peril*, (Free Press, 2010), p. 145.

¹²³³ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 69.

- Congo Crisis (1960-1965)
- Bay of Pigs Invasion (1961)
- Colombian Conflict (1964–present)
- Invasion of the Dominican Republic (1965–1966)
- War in Bolivia (1966–1967)
- Korean DMZ Conflict (1966–1969)
- Cambodian Civil War (1970–1975)
- Soviet War in Afghanistan (1979–1989)
- Lebanese Civil War (1982–1984)
- Invasion of Grenada (1983)
- Libya (1981, 1986, 1989)
- Iran (1987-1988)
- Invasion of Panama (1989–1990)
- Gulf War (1990–1991)
- Bosnian War (1993–1995)
- Kosovo War (1999)
- Afghanistan War (2001–present)
- Iraq War (2003–2011)

These wars resulted in the deaths of millions of people. *‘The standard-bearer of peace’* and the nation *‘worthy of raising the flag of brotherhood and International Peace’* as `Abdu’l-Bahā had prophesized, has been involved in more military conflicts than every other nation ever since these titles were given to it. Abdu’l-Bahā’s prayers were not answered when he uttered:

O God! Let this American democracy become glorious in spiritual degrees even as it has aspired to material degrees, and render this just government victorious. Confirm this revered nation to upraise the standard of the oneness of humanity, to promulgate the Most Great Peace, to become

thereby most glorious and praiseworthy among all the nations of the world.¹²³⁴

It has become clear that “this just government” was not *just* and not a seeker of peace. The world has not yet forgotten the nuclear bombs dropped on the innocent men, women and children of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the indiscriminate bombing of civilians in Vietnam.

Baha’is claim with pride that when ‘Abdu’l-Bahā spoke with the Japanese ambassador to the United States with the following words, he was warning him about a nuclear strike:

Scientific discoveries have increased material civilization. There is in existence a stupendous force, as yet, happily undiscovered by man. Let us supplicate God, the Beloved, that this force be not discovered by science until spiritual civilization shall dominate the human mind. In the hands of men of lower nature, this power would be able to destroy the whole earth.¹²³⁵

According to Baha’is, ‘Abdu’l-Bahā had apparently predicted that, ‘*The standard-bearer of peace*’ and the nation ‘*worthy of raising the flag of brotherhood and International Peace,*’ was going to nuke Japan and commit one of the greatest war crimes known to mankind.

¹²³⁴ Various, *Bahā’ī Prayers: A Selection of Prayers Revealed by Bahā’u’llāh, the Bāb, and ‘Abdu’l-Bahā* (US Bahā’ī Publishing Trust, 1991), p. 25.

¹²³⁵ Various, *Japan Will Turn Ablaze!* (Bahā’ī Publishing Trust of Japan, 1992 [revised edition]), p. 51.



Were Baha'i Leaders Peaceful and Against Violence?

`Abdu'l-Bahā believes that it does not suffice to say peace is good and war is bad. Talking and knowing will not create peace, rather, peace is obtained through action:

All rational people are unanimous and united [on the belief] that war brings about destruction and peace brings about prosperity. All are unanimous that war topples the foundations of humanity . . . Knowing something is not enough [to make it happen]. If a man knows richness is good, he will not become rich [only by knowing]. If a man knows knowledge is praiseworthy, he will not become knowledgeable [only by knowing]. If a man knows honor is acceptable, he will not become honorable [only by knowing]. Likewise, having knowledge is not the cause of attainment.¹²³⁶

So, to attain peace, we must act, not just claim that peace is good. In this section we will analyze how Baha'i leaders implemented this principle with their actions.

¹²³⁶ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaqābāt*, vol.2, pp. 99–100.

In the third chapter, we showed many instances where Baha'is and their forerunners had shown violent actions towards their opponents. Some of these were:

- The Bab's orders to burn non-Bābī books, behead and massacre those who did not believe in him, and to destroy all monuments.¹²³⁷
- The conflicts between the followers of the Bāb in a bid to become his successors.¹²³⁸
- Start of three major internal wars in Iran due to the Bāb's orders with tens of thousands of casualties.¹²³⁹
- The fights and quarrels between Bahā'u'llāh and his brother Mīrzā Yahyā Ṣubḥ Azal and the consequent fights between their followers.
- The fights between `Abdu'l-Bahā and his brother Muḥammad `Alī Afandī for the succession of their father.¹²⁴⁰
- Shoghi's conflicts and fights with other Baha'i members.¹²⁴¹

¹²³⁷ "The utterance of the [book or religion] of Bayān in the day of the appearance of his Highness A'lā (meaning the Bāb) was to behead, burn the books, destroy the monuments, and massacre [everyone] but those who believed [in the Bāb's religion] and verified it," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb*, vol. 2, p. 266.

¹²³⁸ Twenty seven people among the Bābīs brought themselves forth as the Promised One in the Book of *Bayān*, such as Mīrzā Yahyā Ṣubḥ Azal, Mīrzā Husayn `Alī Nūrī (Bahā'u'llāh), Mīrzā Asad-Allāh Dayyān, Mīrzā Muḥammad Nabīl Zarandī, Mīrzā Ghughā Darwīsh, and Sayyid Baṣīr Hindī. See Muḥammad `Alī Fayḍī, *Haḍrat Bahā'u'llāh*, pp. 103–104.

¹²³⁹ See `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Talkhīṣ tārikh Nabīl*, pp. 330, 345–6, 434.

¹²⁴⁰ Bahā'u'llāh had willed that his successor would be Ghuṣn A`zam (`Abdu'l-Bahā') and after him Ghuṣn Akbar (`Abdu'l-Bahā's brother Muḥammad `Alī): "God has destined the station [for] Ghuṣn Akbar after his position (meaning `Abdu'l-Bahā'), for He is the Commanding Wise. We chose the Akbar after the A`zam, an order from the All Knowing and Aware (God). All must show kindness towards the two Ghuṣns . . . All must respect and admire the two Ghuṣns," Bahā'u'llāh, *Majmū'iy-i alwāḥ-i mubārak-ih*, pp. 302–303. After Bahā'u'llāh's death the two brothers differed on the amount of authority they had and fights ensued between them and their followers.

¹²⁴¹ According to Bahā'u'llāh's orders the successor after `Abdu'l-Bahā was supposed to be his brother Ghuṣn Akbar. `Abdu'l-Bahā disobeyed this decree and instead appointed his own grandson Shoghi Effendi as his successor. This resulted in many differences and conflicts between Shoghi and many Baha'is who didn't accept his authority.

- Fights of Rūḥiyyih Maxwell and the members of the institution of the Hands of the Cause with Mason Remey.¹²⁴²

We will now mention two more examples:

1- Āghā Asad-Allah Kāshī

Āghā Asad-Allah Kāshī, who was known as *the lioness*, had a short height but showed great servitude and served in the Holy House up to the end of his life. His highness, `Abdu'l-Bahā, used to say, "Do you see this Āghā Asad-Allah and his short height? He would hang a long machete to his back and accompany the Blessed Beauty (Bahā'u'llāh) in Baghdad and the enemies of the Cause (Baha'ism) would fear him."¹²⁴³

The next section shows that Baha'i actions in Iraq were not limited to hanging swords and machetes to their backs.

2-Murders in Iraq

Bahā'u'llāh's older sister `Izziyi Khanum (Khanum Buzurg) further describes the situation in Iraq and tells us about the atrocities committed by his brother and his followers in Iraq:

They gathered a group of hooligans from different provinces of Iran and from the same places fugitives who had never believed in any religion and had no faith in any prophet and

¹²⁴² In contrast to what `Abdu'l-Bahā had prophesized, Shoghi was sterile and had no children to succeed him. In a bid to become his successor, an internal conflict erupted between Bahā'u'llāh's followers. Amongst these conflicts, the most intense was the one between Shoghi's widow (Rūḥiyyih Maxwell) and Mason Remey (President of the International Baha'i Council). Mason Remey claimed that the UHJ established by Rūḥiyyih Maxwell was illegitimate and in a countermove the UHJ excommunicated Mason Remey from the Baha'i community.

¹²⁴³ Ḥabīb Mu'ayyad, *Khāṭirātī Ḥabīb*, vol. 1, p.385 (footnote).

had no work but manslaughter and had no occupation but stealing peoples' property. Even though they claimed they were following [the customs] of Ḥusayn (the grandson of the Prophet Muḥammad who was ruthlessly murdered by Shimr on the orders of Yazīd) they summoned a group of Shimr-like people around themselves. The breath of any soul who uttered anything but what they were satisfied with was suffocated. They beat any head which made the slightest sound other than accepting their guardianship. They cut every throat which showed other than humbleness towards them. They pierced every heart which had love towards other than them. The first group whose names we previously mentioned fled to Karbala, Najaf and elsewhere fearing those bloodthirsty headsmen. They beheaded Sayyid Ismā'īl Iṣfahānī, they ripped Mīrzā Aḥmad Kāshī's guts, they killed Āghā Abul-Qāsim Kāshī and threw his body in the Tigris river, they finished Sayyid Aḥmad with a gun, they scattered Mīrzā Ridhā's brain with rocks, they cut Mīrzā `Alī's body from the sides and pushed him unto the path of demise. Other than these, they killed others in the darkness of night and threw their bodies in the Tigris river; yet others were killed in the Bazaar in daylight and cut to pieces with daggers and machetes . . . ¹²⁴⁴

Even with such a black and violent dossier, `Abdu'l-Bahā insists that Baha'ism is the cause of peace:

In a time when Iran was infested with war and battle and there were wars between religions and faiths, and religions had enmity towards each other and avoided one another and regarded others as impure, and there was war between governments, tribes, and lands, in such a time and such

¹²⁴⁴ `Izziye Khānum (Khānum Buzurg), *Tanbīh al-nā'imīn*, pp. 11–12.

darkness, his highness Bahā'u'llāh appeared and dispelled those darkness's.¹²⁴⁵

Any person with an iota of historical knowledge can clearly see the falsity of these claims, a falsity that continues on to this day. `Abdu'l-Bahā closes his eyes to all the atrocities committed by the followers of his father and tries to display a peaceful Baha'i religion and attributes all violence falsely to Islam (and rightly to Bābism):

In the Quran and [book of] Bayān, the order was [given] to invade other religions. But the book of Aqdas abrogated these orders, because using the sword has been completely abrogated and invasion has been completely prohibited. Even quarreling with other nations is not permissible.¹²⁴⁶

We will conclude this section with four questions:

1-`Abdu'l-Bahā says:

It may happen that at a given time warlike and savage tribes may furiously attack the body politic with the intention of carrying on a wholesale slaughter of its members; under such a circumstance defense is necessary.¹²⁴⁷

The conditions for self-defense put forward by `Abdu'l-Bahā are too far-fetched. What if a community is attacked by a savage tribe with only the intention of killing a few people? What if a community is attacked but there is no intention of killing anybody? What if a foreign country invades? Must the people lay down their arms because Bahā'u'llāh only approves of defense if Genghis Khan attacks? Should we be thankful for

¹²⁴⁵ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 72.

¹²⁴⁶ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkāṁ*, chap. 36, p. 272.

¹²⁴⁷ J. E. Esslemont, *Bahā'u'llāh and the New Era*, p. 171–172.

such insightful orders and laws? Did we need the Baha'i faith to tell us these obvious orders that anyone would have known by instinct?

2-How can a creed claim to be the flag-bearer of peace when its leader announces with pride:

And you, oh friends of God, be clouds of grace for those who believe in God and his signs, and be *certain torment* for those who do not believe in God and are polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism).¹²⁴⁸

Be like a flame of fire to my enemies and a river of eternal life to my friends.¹²⁴⁹

God has made him (Bahā'u'llāh) a light for the monotheists (Baha'is) and a fire for the polytheists (non-Baha'is).¹²⁵⁰

God will soon take out from the sleeves of power the hands of strength and dominance and will make the Servant (Bahā'u'llāh) victorious and will cleanse the earth from the filth of every rejected polytheist (deniers of Baha'ism). And they will stand by the cause and will conquer the lands using my mighty eternal name and will enter the lands and they will be feared by all the servants.¹²⁵¹

3- How can a person who starts fights over the smallest incidents, claim to be the vanguard of peace:

When his holiness returned from Sulaymaniyah, he was strolling in the street one day with the late Āqā Mīrzā

¹²⁴⁸ Bahā'u'llāh, *Majmū'iy-i alwāḥ-i mubārak-ih*, p. 216.

¹²⁴⁹ Bahā'u'llāh, *Ad'iyyih-i ḥaḍrat-i maḥbūb*, p. 184.

¹²⁵⁰ Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'lā*, vol. 2, no. 74, p. 372.

¹²⁵¹ Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'lā*, vol. 2, no. 90, p. 587.

Muḥammad Qulī. A Kabob seller quietly said, 'These Bābīs have appeared again!' His holiness said to Mīrzā Muḥammad Qulī, 'Hit him in the mouth!' Mīrzā Muḥammad Qulī grabbed his beard and started hitting him in the head.¹²⁵²

4- Why did Baha'is distort their books after it became apparent that 'Abdu'l-Bahā's prophecies about world peace being established in 1957 were false? We already mentioned this in the section on distortions in Chapter 1:

Perhaps the most important change in *Bahā'u'llāh and the New Era* was made on page 212 of the 1923 edition. Recorded as a Bahā'ī prophecy concerning the "Coming of the Kingdom of God," Esslemont cited Abdu'l-Bahā's interpretation of the last two verses of the Book of Daniel from the Bible. He stated that the 1335 days spoken of by Daniel represented 1335 solar years from Muhammad's flight to Medina in 622 A.D., which would equal 1957 A.D.. When asked "'What shall we see at the end of the 1335 days?'," Abdu'l-Bahā's reply was: "'Universal Peace will be firmly established, a Universal language promoted. Misunderstandings will pass away. The Bahā'ī Cause will be promulgated in all parts and the oneness of mankind established. It will be most glorious!'" In editions published after his death, Esslemont's words have been changed to say that Abdu'l-Bahā "reckoned the fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy from the date of the beginning of the Muhammadan era" and one of Abdu'l-Bahā's Tablets is quoted on the same subject in which he writes, "'For according to this calculation a century will have elapsed from the dawn of the Sun of Truth . . . Esslemont recorded Abdu'l-Bahā as declaring explicitly that the prophecy was to be computed from the Hijra or 622 A.D. and that specific

¹²⁵² Ḥabīb Mu'ayyad, *Khāṭirātī Ḥabīb*, vol. 1, p.266.

conditions would exist in the world upon it's fulfillment in 1957. When it became apparent that this Bahā'ī prophecy would not be fulfilled, it was replaced with the ambiguous material which has remained in the text to the present.¹²⁵³

¹²⁵³ Vance Salisbury, *A Critical Examination of 20th-Century Baha'i Literature*. http://bahai-library.com/salisbury_critical_examination_literature (retrieved 22/2/2014).



Is it Rational and Logical to Always be at Peace and Never Show violent Acts?

`Abdu'l-Bahā denies victims of abuse the right to self-defense. He believes that an abuser can only be punished by social institutions after they have committed their crime and the victims must make no effort to defend themselves during these heinous acts:

(1) If someone oppresses another, shows him injustice, and abuses him, and the [oppressed] counters likewise, then this act is revenge and is despicable. (2) For instance, if A kills B's son, then B is not allowed to kill A's son for this is revenge and despicable. Rather, B must counter by opposite actions [to what has been shown to him]. He must forgive and even if possible, offer his help to the abuser. Humans are worthy of [these actions].¹²⁵⁴

Number (1) simply means that if a person is attacked, abused, or oppressed, then they must not defend themselves, because this defense is revenge! The fallacy in (1) is that self-defense is equated to revenge. Number (2) is an example used for justification which is not in harmony with (1). Because (1) is about self-defense but (2) is really about revenge, which are two different things.

¹²⁵⁴ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Mufāwāḍāt*, pp. 186–187.

If a group of people attacks us and our family, must we simply wait and watch them do what they wish and not defend ourselves through what will most probably be violent actions? Or in the case that we decide to defend ourselves, should our only weapons be our bare hands because `Abdu'l-Bahā insists that in this era weapons have been abolished?¹²⁵⁵

Where is the common sense in Bahā'u'llāh's strict orders that being slain is better than slaying, even in self-defense:

As a religious body, Baha'is have, at the express command of Bahā'u'llāh, entirely abandoned the use of armed force in their own interests, even for strictly defensive purposes. In Persia, many many thousands of the Bābīs and Baha'is have suffered cruel deaths because of their faith. In the early days of the Cause, the Bābīs on various occasions defended themselves and their families by the sword with great courage and bravery. Bahā'u'llāh, however, forbade this. 'Abdu'l-Bahā writes: "When Bahā'u'llāh appeared, He declared that the promulgation of the truth by such means must on no account be allowed, even for purposes of self-defense. He abrogated the rule of the sword and annulled the ordinance of 'Holy War.' 'If ye be slain,' said He, 'it is better for you than to slay . . .'"¹²⁵⁶

And where is the common-sense in similar words from `Abdu'l-Bahā:

But the communities must protect the rights of man. So if someone assaults, injures, oppresses and wounds me, I will offer no resistance, and I will forgive him.¹²⁵⁷

¹²⁵⁵ "Using the sword has been completely abrogated," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 36, p. 272.

¹²⁵⁶ J. E. Esslemont, *Bahā'u'llāh and the New Era*, pp.169–170.

¹²⁵⁷ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 271.

Rapists, murders, criminals, thugs, hooligans, and enemy soldiers can freely do what they wish with Baha'is if they get hold of them in a place where the community cannot protect them. They are neither allowed to have weapons nor allowed self-defense. Is this logical and rational?

After all these preachings against war and not defending oneself, `Abdu'l-Bahā suddenly declares that war can bring about good:

A conquest can be a praiseworthy thing, and there are times when war becomes the powerful basis of peace, and ruin the very means of reconstruction. If, for example, a high-minded sovereign marshals his troops to block the onset of the insurgent and the aggressor, or again, if he takes the field and distinguishes himself in a struggle to unify a divided state and people, if, in brief, he is waging war for a righteous purpose, then this seeming wrath is mercy itself, and this apparent tyranny the very substance of justice and this warfare the cornerstone of peace.¹²⁵⁸

This quote single-handedly contradicts most if not all the quotes we previously mentioned. The same `Abdu'l-Bahā who was claiming that his father *allegedly* prevented Bābīs from using the sword even for strictly defensive purposes now claims that waging war for a righteous purpose is justified! Is defending one's women and children not a righteous act that the Bābīs were *allegedly* prevented from doing so?! If war can bring peace then why are Baha'is not allowed to defend themselves when they are attacked? If war is allowed then why is being slayed better than slaying? Where is the logic in all these contradictory laws and commands?

Yes, war can be a basis for peace, but why can "A conquest be a praiseworthy thing"? Remember what he previously said: "Using the sword has been completely abrogated and invasion has been

¹²⁵⁸ J. E. Esslemont, *Bahā'u'llāh and the New Era*, p. 172.

completely prohibited. Even quarreling with other nations is not permissible.”¹²⁵⁹ What is more interesting is the original Farsi text which has been distorted in the English translation. The Farsi text says *jahāngushāie wa kishwaristānī mamdūh* which means “attacking [another country] to conquer their land is praiseworthy.” Is there any sense in what `Abdu’l-Bahā is saying? Is this how universal peace is to be achieved, by attacking other countries and taking their land?!

What is even more contradictory is what he says elsewhere about wars for conquering the lands of others:

It is clear that man lives on this land for a few years [and once he dies] will go under it (i.e. buried in it) forever and it is his eternal grave. Is it worth it to go to war over this eternal graveyard?¹²⁶⁰

As usual, since `Abdu’l-Bahā’s orders about not defending one’s self were so irrational and farfetched, they became a source of confusion and perplexity among the Baha’i community and gave rise to many questions. In a bid to answer these questions, Shoghi and the Universal House of Justice gave answers which contradicted the words of `Abdu’l-Bahā’. We will quote all the section on *Self Defense* in the Baha’i creed from Hornby’s *Lights of Guidance*. Notice how none of Bahā’u’llāh and `Abdu’l-Bahā’s irrational orders about not defending oneself have been mentioned and instead new concepts have been introduced and self-defense has been justified:

C. Self-Defense

398. Bahā’ī Justified in Defending his Life in Emergency

“Regarding the question you raised: In an emergency, when there is no legal source at hand to appeal to, a Bahā’ī is perfectly justified in defending his life.” (From a letter written

¹²⁵⁹ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 36, p. 272.

¹²⁶⁰ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, pp. 104–105.

on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, July 24, 1943)

399. Self-Defense

“From the texts you already have available it is clear that Bahā’u’llāh has stated that it is preferable to be killed in the path of God’s good-pleasure than to kill, and that organized religious attack against Baha’is should never turn into any kind of warfare, as this is strictly prohibited in our Writings.

“The House of Justice does not wish at the present time to go beyond the guidelines given in the above-mentioned statements. The question is basically a matter of conscience, and in each case the Bahā’ī involved must use his judgment in determining when to stop in self-defense lest his action deteriorate into retaliation.

“Of course the above principles apply also in cases when a Bahā’ī finds himself involved in situations of civil disorder. We have, however, advised the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States that under the present circumstances in that country it is preferable that Baha’is do not buy nor own arms for their protection or the protection of their families” (From a letter of the Universal House of Justice to the National Spiritual Assembly of Canada, May 26, 1969: Messages from the Universal House of Justice, 1968-1973, p. 26).

400. Pioneer Living in a Remote Area Lacking Protection: Circumstances Under Which a Bahā’ī is Justified in Defending Self

“We have your letter of March 2, 1972 asking if ... a pioneer couple living in a remote area lacking police protection may have a weapon in their possession for defending themselves as thieves have broken into their house twice and robbed them. “A hitherto untranslated Tablet from ‘Abdu’l-Bahā points out that in the case of attack by robbers and

highwaymen, a Bahā'ī should not surrender himself, but should try, as far as circumstances permit, to defend himself, and later on lodge a complaint with the government authorities. A statement in a letter written on behalf of the Guardian indicates that in an emergency when there is no legal force at hand to appeal to a Bahā'ī is justified in defending his life. Although we have advised certain National Assemblies in countries facing increasing civil disorder that it is preferable that Bahā'īs do not buy or own arms for their protection or the protection of their families, we feel that in the circumstances you have outlined in your letter it would be permissible for the pioneer family to keep a weapon in the house, provided the law permits." (From a letter of the Universal House of Justice to the National Spiritual Assembly of Honduras, March 20, 1972)

It is up to you to draw your own conclusions!





**Bahā'u'llāh:
“Contradiction has and will not
ever have a way in the
sanctified realm of the Divine
Manifestations.”¹²⁶¹**

¹²⁶¹Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 126.

1. Are Aggression and Abuse Forbidden?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: All kinds of aggression and quarreling are prohibited.¹²⁶²

Bahā'u'llāh's sister: Bahā'u'llāh and his followers ruthlessly murdered many people in Iraq.¹²⁶³

2. Universal Peace or Tormenting Bahā'u'llāh's Enemies?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: "Our wish is the Oneness of Humanity and our goal is universal peace."¹²⁶⁴

Bahā'u'llāh: "Be like a flame of fire to my enemies and a river of eternal life to my friends"¹²⁶⁵ "And you, oh friends of God, be clouds of grace for those who believe in God and his signs, and be *certain torment* for those who do not believe in God and are polytheists (deniers of Baha'ism)."¹²⁶⁶ "God has made him (Bahā'u'llāh) a light for the monotheists (Baha'is) and a fire for the polytheists (non-Baha'is)."¹²⁶⁷

¹²⁶² "Using the sword has been completely abrogated and invasion has been completely prohibited. Even quarreling with other nations is not permissible," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 36, p. 272.

¹²⁶³ See `Izziye Khānum (Khānum Buzurg), *Tanbīh al-nā'imīn*, pp. 11–12.

¹²⁶⁴ `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 52.

¹²⁶⁵ Bahā'u'llāh, *Ad'iyyih-i ḥaḍrat-i maḥbūb*, p. 184; The same quote can be found on p.196 on the typed version at: reference.bahai.org

¹²⁶⁶ Bahā'u'llāh, *Majmū'iy-i alwāḥ-i mubārak-ih*, p. 216.

¹²⁶⁷ Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'lā*, vol. 2, no. 74, p. 372.

3. Should We Defend Ourselves If We Are Attacked?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: If someone attacks or wants to kill you don't defend yourself!¹²⁶⁸

Shoghi: Baha'is are perfectly justified in defending their lives!¹²⁶⁹

Bahā'u'llāh: No self-defense is allowed with weapons!¹²⁷⁰

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Self-defense is allowed when a *savage* tribe attacks with the intention of killing *everybody*!¹²⁷¹

¹²⁶⁸ "If someone abuses me, shows me injustice and oppresses me, and wounds the place of my liver, I will never show aggression," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Mufāwāḍāt*, p. 189.

¹²⁶⁹ Helen Bassett Hornby, *Lights of Guidance: A Bahā'ī Reference File*, no. 398.

¹²⁷⁰ "As a religious body, Baha'is have, at the express command of Bahā'u'llāh, entirely abandoned the use of armed force in their own interests, even for strictly defensive purposes. In Persia, many many thousands of the Bābīs and Baha'is have suffered cruel deaths because of their faith. In the early days of the Cause, the Bābīs on various occasions defended themselves and their families by the sword with great courage and bravery. Bahā'u'llāh, however, forbade this . . ." J. E. Esslemont, *Bahā'u'llāh and the New Era*, pp.169–170.

¹²⁷¹ "It may happen that at a given time warlike and savage tribes may furiously attack the body politic with the intention of carrying on a wholesale slaughter of its members; under such a circumstance defense is necessary," J. E. Esslemont, *Bahā'u'llāh and the New Era*, p. 171–172.

4. Weapons and Wars Are Prohibited or Not?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: Wars are prohibited in the Baha’i creed.¹²⁷²

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: Sometimes to reach peace one must use war.¹²⁷³

5. Is Aggression Forbidden?

Bahā’u’llāh: All kinds of aggression and quarreling are prohibited.¹²⁷⁴

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: My father (Bahā’u’llāh) told his companions to hit the kabob seller in the mouth because he merely said the Bābīs have come again.¹²⁷⁵

¹²⁷² “In the Quran and [book of] Bayān, the order was [given] to invade other religions. But the book of Aqdas abrogated these orders, because using the sword has been completely abrogated and invasion has been completely prohibited,” ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwārī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 36, p. 272.

¹²⁷³ “A conquest can be a praiseworthy thing, and there are times when war becomes the powerful basis of peace, and ruin the very means of reconstruction. If, for example, a high-minded sovereign marshals his troops to block the onset of the insurgent and the aggressor, or again, if he takes the field and distinguishes himself in a struggle to unify a divided state and people, if, in brief, he is waging war for a righteous purpose, then this seeming wrath is mercy itself, and this apparent tyranny the very substance of justice and this warfare the cornerstone of peace,” J. E. Esslemont, *Bahā’u’llāh and the New Era*, p. 172.

¹²⁷⁴ “Using the sword has been completely abrogated and invasion has been completely prohibited. Even quarreling with other nations is not permissible,” ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwārī, *Ganjīniy-i ḥudūd wa aḥkām*, chap. 36, p. 272.

¹²⁷⁵ “When his holiness returned from Sulaymaniyah, he was strolling in the street one day with the late Āqā Mīrzā Muḥammad Qulī. A Kabob seller quietly said, ‘These Bābīs have appeared again!’ His holiness said to Mīrzā Muḥammad Qulī, ‘Hit him in the mouth!’ Mīrzā Muḥammad Qulī grabbed his beard and started hitting him in the head,” Ḥabīb Mu’ayyad, *Khāṭirātī Ḥabīb*, vol. 1, p. 266.

6. Did Baha'ism Put an End to All Disputes and Fights?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Bahā'u'llāh dispelled all wars and battles between religions, governments, and tribes in Iran!¹²⁷⁶

History shows otherwise!

7. Can a Conquering Lands Be Praiseworthy?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Yes it can.¹²⁷⁷

`Abdu'l-Bahā: We must not go to war over these lands!¹²⁷⁸

8. When Will Universal Peace Be Established?

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Universal peace will be established in 1957.

*Prophecy was not fulfilled and was removed from Baha'i books!*¹²⁷⁹

¹²⁷⁶ "In a time when Iran was infested with war and battle and there were wars between religions and faiths, and religions had enmity towards each other and avoided one another and regarded others as impure, and there was war between governments, tribes, and lands, in such a time and such darkness, his highness Bahā'u'llāh appeared and dispelled those darkness's," `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p. 72.

¹²⁷⁷ "A conquest can be a praiseworthy thing, and there are times when war becomes the powerful basis of peace, and ruin the very means of reconstruction," J. E. Esslemont, *Bahā'u'llāh and the New Era*, p. 172.

¹²⁷⁸ "It is clear that man lives on this land for a few years [and once he dies] will go under it (i.e. buried in it) forever and it is his eternal grave. Is it worth it to go to war over this eternal graveyard?" `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, pp. 104–105.

¹²⁷⁹ "Perhaps the most important change in *Bahā'u'llāh and the New Era* was made on page 212 of the 1923 edition. Recorded as a Bahā'ī prophecy concerning the "Coming of the Kingdom of God," Esslemont cited Abdu'l-Bahā's interpretation of the last two verses of the Book of Daniel from the Bible. He stated that the 1335 days spoken of by Daniel represented 1335 solar years from Muhammad's flight to Medina in 622 A.D., which would equal 1957 A.D.. When asked "What shall we see at the end of the 1335 days?," Abdu'l-Bahā's reply was: "Universal Peace will be firmly established, a Universal language promoted. Misunderstandings will pass away. The Bahā'ī Cause will be promulgated in all parts and the oneness of mankind established. It will be most glorious!" In editions published after his death, Esslemont's words have been changed to say that Abdu'l-Bahā "reckoned the fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy from the date of the beginning of the Muhammadan era" and one of Abdu'l-Bahā's Tablets is quoted on the same subject in which he writes, "For according to this calculation a century will have elapsed from the dawn of the Sun of Truth . . . Esslemont recorded Abdu'l-Bahā as declaring explicitly that the prophecy was to be computed from the Hijra or 622 A.D. and that specific conditions would exist

8. Words of Wisdom:

`Abdu'l-Bahā: Iranians will sacrifice themselves for England and England will sacrifice itself for Iran!¹²⁸⁰

`Abdu'l-Bahā: America is at Peace with All countries and is worthy of raising the flag of peace and brotherhood!¹²⁸¹

`Abdu'l-Bahā: America does not intend to attack another country!¹²⁸²

Bahā'u'llāh: "If ye be slain, it is better for you than to slay"¹²⁸³

`Abdu'l-Bahā: "If someone assaults, injures, oppresses and wounds me, I will offer no resistance, and I will forgive him."¹²⁸⁴

`Abdu'l-Bahā: "If someone oppresses another, shows him injustice, and abuses him, and the [oppressed] counters likewise, then this act is revenge and is despicable."¹²⁸⁵

`Abdu'l-Bahā: "In the early days of the Cause the Bābīs on various occasions defended themselves and their families by the sword, with great courage and bravery. Bahā'u'llāh, however, forbade this."¹²⁸⁶

in the world upon its fulfillment in 1957. When it became apparent that this Bahā'ī prophecy would not be fulfilled, it was replaced with the ambiguous material which has remained in the text to the present," Vance Salisbury, *A Critical Examination of 20th-Century Baha'i Literature*. http://bahai-library.com/salisbury_critical_examination_literature (retrieved 22/2/2014).

¹²⁸⁰ "“My coming here will be a cause of friendship between Iran and England. A complete relationship will be forged. The [relationship] will increase to such an extent that people from Iran will sacrifice their lives for England and likewise England will sacrifice itself for Iran,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Egypt), vol. 1, p. 23.

¹²⁸¹ "America is a noble nation, a standard-bearer of peace throughout the world, shedding her light to all regions. Other nations are not untrammelled and free of intrigues like the United States, and are unable to bring about Universal Peace. But America, thank God, is at peace with all the world, and is worthy of raising the flag of brotherhood and International Peace," J. E. Esslemont, *Bahā'u'llāh and the New Era*, pp.242–243.

¹²⁸² "Undoubtedly, the American people and nation, have no intention of colonizing [another country] or expanding the circle of the countries [borders] and do not seek to attack other nations and countries," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 69.

¹²⁸³ J. E. Esslemont, *Bahā'u'llāh and the New Era*, pp.169–170.

¹²⁸⁴ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 271.

¹²⁸⁵ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Mufāwāḍāt*, pp. 186–187.

¹²⁸⁶ J. E. Esslemont, *Bahā'u'llāh and the New Era*, pp.169–170.



A Summary and Conclusion of the Three Perspectives:

1) Is Universal Peace a novel principle?

All religions have hoped and strived for universal peace. Among philosophers, Kant had proposed a method to establish universal peace years before Bahā'u'llāh.

2) Did the leaders of Baha'ism act upon this principle?

The fights and disputes which were committed with the permission of Baha'i leaders, show that they themselves did not adhere to this principle. Bahā'u'llāh's order to be certain torment to his enemies is an official license for Baha'is to incite hatred amongst his enemies.

3) Is this principle rational and logical?

If a tyrant starts a war or a group of people attack another group, then all people with an iota of common sense will defend themselves. Thus the orders to put aside self-defense or limiting it to very far-fetched circumstances or hard-to-come-by conditions, lack any kind of reasoning and have no rational basis whatsoever.

CHAPTER 12:

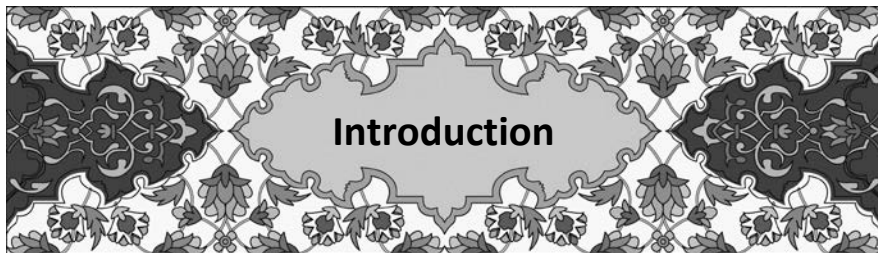
The World of Humanity is in the Need of the Breath of the Holy Spirit



“The world of humanity cannot advance through mere physical powers and intellectual attainments; nay, rather, the Holy Spirit is essential . . . The body of man is in need of physical and mental energy, but his spirit requires the life and fortification of the Holy Spirit. Without its protection and quickening the human world would be extinguished . . . the human spirit which is not fortified by the presence of the Holy Spirit is dead and in need of resurrection by that divine power; otherwise, though materially advanced to high degrees, man cannot attain full and complete progress.”¹²⁸⁷



¹²⁸⁷ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Bahā'ī World Faith—Selected Writings of Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā* (*`Abdu'l-Bahā's Section Only*), pp. 241–242



**The World of Humanity is in
the Need of the Breath of the
Holy Spirit means that the
human world is in the need of
religion and Divine
Inspirations.**



‘Abdu’l-Bahā says:

The Divine Reality is Unthinkable, Limitless, Eternal, Immortal and Invisible. The world of creation is bound by natural law, finite and mortal. The Infinite Reality cannot be said to ascend or descend. It is beyond the understanding of man, and cannot be described in terms which apply to the phenomenal sphere of the created world. Man, then, is in extreme need of the only Power by which he is able to receive help from the

Divine Reality, that Power alone bringing him into contact with the Source of all life.

An intermediary is needed to bring two extremes into relation with each other. Riches and poverty, plenty and need: without an intermediary power there could be no relation between these pairs of opposites. So we can say there must be a Mediator between God and Man, and this is none other than the Holy Spirit, which brings the created earth into relation with the 'Unthinkable One', the Divine Reality. The Divine Reality may be likened to the sun and the Holy Spirit to the rays of the sun. As the rays of the sun bring the light and warmth of the sun to the earth, giving life to all created beings, so do the 'Manifestations' bring the power of the Holy Spirit from the Divine Sun of Reality to give light and life to the souls of men.

Behold, there is an intermediary necessary between the sun and the earth; the sun does not descend to the earth, neither does the earth ascend to the sun. This contact is made by the rays of the sun which bring light and warmth and heat. The Holy Spirit is the Light from the Sun of Truth bringing, by its infinite power, life and illumination to all mankind, flooding all souls with Divine Radiance, conveying the blessings of God's Mercy to the whole world. The earth, without the medium of the warmth and light of the rays of the sun, could receive no benefits from the sun.

Likewise the Holy Spirit is the very cause of the life of man; without the Holy Spirit he would have no intellect, he would be unable to acquire his scientific knowledge by which his great influence over the rest of creation is gained. The illumination of the Holy Spirit gives to man the power of thought, and enables him to make discoveries by which he bends the laws of nature to his will. The Holy Spirit it is which,

through the mediation of the Prophets of God, teaches spiritual virtues to man and enables him to attain Eternal Life.

All these blessings are brought to man by the Holy Spirit; therefore we can understand that the Holy Spirit is the Intermediary between the Creator and the created. The light and heat of the sun cause the earth to be fruitful, and create life in all things that grow; and the Holy Spirit quickens the souls of men. The two great apostles, St Peter and St John the Evangelist, were once simple, humble workmen, toiling for their daily bread. By the Power of the Holy Spirit their souls were illumined, and they received the eternal blessings of the Lord Christ.¹²⁸⁸

According to `Abdu'l-Bahā, the Holy Spirit is the intermediary between man and God by which man is given life, intellect, knowledge, thought, and eternal life.

¹²⁸⁸ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Paris Talks*, pp. 57–59.



Is the Principle “the World of Humanity is in the Need of the Breath of the Holy Spirit” New?

The fact that humans always need a Divine Guide to show them God’s true path and message is nothing new. It has been the basis of all true religions and it was for this purpose that God had sent His Messengers and Prophets. This principle is a Basis of Shia Islamic doctrine and has been greatly emphasized in many traditions. These traditions not only vastly outnumber Baha’i beliefs about this concept but give an insight that is virtually inexistent in Baha’i teachings. For example, the following verse in the Quran clearly shows this meaning:

[O Prophet] You are a warner and for every people there is a guide.¹²⁸⁹

Imam al-Bāqir, the sixth Shia Imam, says about this verse:

The warner is the Prophet (Muḥammad) and (after him) the Guide is `Alī and in all ages there will be an Imam from amongst us who will guide (the people) to what the Prophet has brought (from God).¹²⁹⁰

The chapter that we mentioned this narration from is called *Bāb al-iẓtirār ila al-Ḥujja* (The Chapter about the necessity of a Divine Proof). In

¹²⁸⁹ Quran 13:7

¹²⁹⁰ Al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, vol. 23, p. 5.

that chapter alone 118 narrations have been mentioned that all show the meaning that God will not leave the earth without a Divine Guide. The following narration from Imam `Alī, the first Shia Imam also explicitly explains this concept and mentions that this guidance is not necessarily given by a Proof that is readily available at hand:

The Earth will not become empty of someone who will stand with God's Proof, whether he is (living) openly and known, or insecurely and anonymously, so that God's proofs and clear evidences will not become void.¹²⁹¹

Regarding the concept of the Holy Spirit, a great inconsistency exists within Baha'i writings when compared with Shia Islamic beliefs. Whereas in Shia traditions it has been explicitly mentioned that the Holy Spirit only associates with the Divine Messengers and Guides, `Abdu'l-Bahā claims that the Holy Spirit is an intermediary between man and God not just the prophets:

. . . there must be a Mediator between God and Man, and this is none other than the Holy Spirit . . . the Holy Spirit is the very cause of the life of man; without the Holy Spirit he would have no intellect, he would be unable to acquire his scientific knowledge by which his great influence over the rest of creation is gained.¹²⁹²

Notwithstanding the high position it occupieth, still, with an eloquent tongue, through which the Spirit moveth, hearts are attracted and bosoms burn, it speaketh to the pure hearts and to the good and righteous souls in every spot of the earth . . . because the greatest and strongest proof for showing the

¹²⁹¹ Al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, vol. 23, p. 44.

¹²⁹² `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Paris Talks*, pp. 58–59.

abundance of the Spirit to the bodies is the very appearance of its power and influence in those bodies.¹²⁹³

The human spirit which is not fortified by the presence of the Holy Spirit is dead and in need of resurrection by that divine power; otherwise, though materially advanced to high degrees, man cannot attain full and complete progress.¹²⁹⁴

The concept of the Holy Spirit has been greatly spoken about in Christianity and there is no need to repeat it here. We can only conclude that this concept too, like all the other Baha'i principle is not new and has existed in previous religions.

¹²⁹³ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Bahā'ī World Faith—Selected Writings of Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā* (*`Abdu'l-Bahā's Section Only*), pp. 368–369.

¹²⁹⁴ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Bahā'ī World Faith—Selected Writings of Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā* (*`Abdu'l-Bahā's Section Only*), pp. 241–242



How Did the Founders of Baha'ism Act Towards This Teaching, and is This Teaching Reasonable?

We showed in the previous perspective that the need for spirituality and Divine Guidance has always existed and it is because of this very need that God has sent His Apostles.

Baha'is claim that spiritual needs can only be addressed by God's Prophets and Messengers, and it is because of this that there must be a continuation of Prophets and Manifestations that bring new religions. `Abdu'l-Bahā says:

Everything is renewed and so, the essence of Divine Religion must be renewed too. Imitations must completely vanish and the light of truth must shine. The teachings that are the spirit of this era must be propagated, and those are the teachings of Bahā'u'llāh that are famous in the horizons and are the breath of the Holy Spirit.¹²⁹⁵

Baha'is claim that after the spring of each Prophet's teachings a winter occurs in which another Prophet must appear:

The spiritual world is like unto the phenomenal world. They are the exact counterpart of each other. Whatever objects

¹²⁹⁵ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātib* (Egypt), vol. 3, p. 332.

appear in this world of existence are the outer pictures of the world of heaven. When we look upon the phenomenal world, we perceive that it is divided into four seasons; one is the season of spring, another the season of summer, another autumn and then these three seasons are followed by winter. When the season of spring appears in the arena of existence, the whole world is rejuvenated and finds new life . . . The spring and summer are followed by autumn and winter. The flowers wither and are no more; the leaves turn gray and life has gone. Then comes another springtime; the former springtime is renewed; again a new life stirs within everything . . . The appearances of the Manifestations of God are the divine springtime . . . Bahā'u'llāh has come into this world. He has renewed that springtime.¹²⁹⁶

All these parables have been mentioned to undermine the fact that according to Islamic beliefs, which Baha'u'llah claimed to be a successor to, the Prophet of Islam is the seal of the Prophets and there is no Prophet after him.

Since this fact was irrefutable, Bahā'u'llāh came up with a new scheme. He claimed that the Adamic Cycle (which is strictly unheard of in other religions) has come to an end and the Baha'i Cycle (this too is unfounded) has started and Muḥammad was the seal of the Adamic Cycle.

This is only a recipe prescribed for the previous religions. Although `Abdu'l-Bahā claims that religions must be renewed to prove Muḥammad was not the last Prophet and Bahā'u'llāh is a true Prophet, Bahā'u'llāh believes that he himself is the last Manifestation and there will be no Manifestations after him. This is what he utters after expressing his dissatisfaction with the Bābīs who were making new claims by the day:

¹²⁹⁶ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 10.

I swear by my True Self, all manifestations have come to an end by this Most Great Manifestation (meaning Baha'ism). Whoever claims (to be a manifestation) after that is a slandering¹²⁹⁷ liar. We ask God to make him successful in returning (to the correct path) and if he repents then He will accept the repentance and if he insists on what he is claiming God will send someone who will deal mercilessly with him.¹²⁹⁸

How is that when Islam claims it is the last religion from God, it is refuted by Baha'is because on the basis that the Breath of the Holy Spirit is needed to renew the people in all times and ages, but when Bahā'u'llāh makes the exact same claim it is totally acceptable?

When Bahā'u'llāh writes the book of *Aqdas*, he apparently forgets that he had already claimed there will be no manifestations after him. He writes that a new manifestation will come after at least a thousand years:

Whoso layeth claim to a Revelation direct from God, ere the expiration of a full thousand years, such a man is assuredly a lying impostor. We pray God that He may graciously assist him to retract and repudiate such claim. Should he repent, God will, no doubt, forgive him. If, however, he persisteth in his error, God will, assuredly, send down one who will deal mercilessly with him.¹²⁹⁹

In the notes under this verse it has been clearly mentioned:

The Dispensation of Bahā'u'llāh will last until the coming of the next Manifestation of God, Whose advent will not take

¹²⁹⁷ The Arabic words used hereon are nearly identical to what Bahā'u'llāh says in the *Aqdas*. Those words will be mentioned shortly.

¹²⁹⁸ Bahā'u'llāh, *Iqtidārāt wa chand lauḥ dīgar*, p. 327.

¹²⁹⁹ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitāb-i-Īqān*, p. 32.

place before at least “a full thousand years” will have elapsed.¹³⁰⁰

These contradictions are very clear. In the first instance Bahā'u'llāh claims that no manifestation will ever appear again but elsewhere he claims a manifestation will appear no less than a thousand years from now!

The contradictions regarding the concept of cycles are even more severe. When Shoghi speaks about the Bāb's death he claims the Bāb's dispensation was the confluence (meeting point) of two different cycles:

Thus ended a life which posterity will recognize as standing at the confluence of two universal prophetic cycles, the Adamic Cycle stretching back as far as the first dawnings of the world's recorded religious history and the Bahā'ī Cycle destined to propel itself across the unborn reaches of time for a period of no less than five thousand centuries.¹³⁰¹

He is clearly stating that the Adamic and Baha'i cycles are two different cycles. Now see how he contradicts himself:

Concerning your question relative to the duration of the Bahā'ī Dispensation. There is no contradiction between Bahā'u'llāh's statement in the Īqān about the renewal of the City of God once every thousand years, and that of the Guardian in the Dispensation to the effect that the Bahā'ī cycle will extend over a period of at least 500,000 years. The apparent contradiction is due to the confusion of the terms cycle and dispensation. For while the Dispensation of Bahā'u'llāh will last for at least one thousand years, His Cycle will extend still farther, to at least 500,000 years. The Bahā'ī

¹³⁰⁰ Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 195.

¹³⁰¹ Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 54–55

cycle is, indeed, incomparable in its greatness. It includes not only the Prophets that will appear after Bahā'u'llāh, but all those who have preceded Him ever since Adam.¹³⁰²

Even though he had stated the Baha'i cycle started with the Bāb and the Adamic cycle started with Adam and ended with the Bāb he is now claiming that they are both one cycle! Furthermore, he is claiming a misunderstanding has occurred and *dispensation* and *cycle* have been taken to mean one word, which they are not! We would have believed him had it not been for `Abdul-Bahā who believes cycle (*daur* or *kaur*), and *dispensation* are all one. Here are a few examples:

In this great cycle¹³⁰³ (*kaur*) and in this new cycle (*daur*) legislation of materialistic laws are mostly referred to the House of Justice for this cycle (*kaur*) will have a great length and this cycle (*daur*) will have an eternal unending interval, vastness, and continuity.¹³⁰⁴

Look at the cycle (*daur*) of Moses: the Lord, Moses, and the gobetween was the fire. And in Christ's cycle (*kaur*): the Father, the Son, and the gobetween was the Holy Spirit. And in Muḥammad's cycle (*daur*): the Lord, and the Messenger, and the gobetween was Gabriel.¹³⁰⁵

¹³⁰² Shoghi Effendi, *Directives from the Guardian* (India/Hawaii: 1973), p. 7.

¹³⁰³ The reason we have translated both words *kaur* and *daur* to cycle is because in Baha'i literature they have both been translated to cycle. For instance in *Some Answered Questions*, the 43rd question which is about "Two Classes of Prophets"¹³⁰³ the word cycle has been used twice in the English text: "The independent Prophets are the lawgivers and the founders of a new cycle," and "They change the general morals, promote new customs and rules, renew the cycle and the Law." In the Farsi translation of this work (*Mufāwiḍāt*) the first instance has been translated to *daur* and the second to *kaur*. This trend is repeated multiple times throughout the Farsi translation of *God Passes By* (*Qarni badī*).

¹³⁰⁴ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 2, p. 68.

¹³⁰⁵ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 1, p. 130.

. . . in the first manifestation the sun will stop in the middle of the sky for ten days, in the second manifestation twenty days and in the third manifestation thirty days. Know that the first manifestation in this report is the manifestation of his Highness the Messenger (meaning Prophet Muḥammad) in which the sun of reality stopped for ten days in that constellation and every day is equal to one century and by this calculation [those ten days] are a thousand years and that was the Muḥammadan cycle and cycle (*daur and kaur*) [!] . . . the second manifestation, was the manifestation of the Primal point, may my soul be sacrificed for him, in which the Sun of Truth stopped in that cycle (*daur*) for twenty years . . . in the cycle (*daur*) of the blessed beauty . . . whose length will be at least 500000 years . . . ¹³⁰⁶

Pay attention how he uses the word cycle (*daur and kaur*) to refer to what must have been the *dispensation* of Muḥammad. And then he uses the word *cycle (daur)* to refer to the Bab's *dispensation*. Based on the same reasoning, he probably means *dispensation* when he says the Baha'i cycle (*daur*) is 500000 thousand years. Bahā'u'llāh, `Abdu'l-Bahā, and Shoghi are not only contradicting themselves but are contradicting each other. This is what happens when a non-existing concept (the concept of cycles, *daurs*, and *kours*) is introduced and falsely attributed to God's true religions, to justify the appearance of a so called manifestation.

A further contradiction can be seen in `Abdu'l-Bahā's words regarding the length of the Baha'i cycle (*daur*). In the first quote he said it is eternal: "this cycle (*daur*) will have an eternal unending interval, vastness, and continuity" but in the second he says it will last for at least 500000 years!

¹³⁰⁶ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 2, pp. 75–76.

Whatever is meant by this principle, it breaks down when it is applied to Baha'i teachings. One further point remains about the Holy Spirit that must be mentioned. Shoghi writes:

at so critical an hour and under such appalling circumstances the "Most Great Spirit," as designated by Himself, and symbolized in the Zoroastrian, the Mosaic, the Christian, and Muhammadan Dispensations by the Sacred Fire, the Burning Bush, the Dove and the Angel Gabriel respectively, descended upon, and revealed itself, personated by a "Maiden," to the agonized soul of Bahā'u'llāh.¹³⁰⁷

The Most Great Spirit that Shoghi refers to is the same Holy Spirit of the current principle. This is clear for instance from the fact that he says it revealed itself to Jesus as a dove. This Holy Spirit had shown itself to Bahā'u'llāh personated as a maiden. What most Baha'is don't know is that their prophet had a bad habit of sexually fondling with the Holy Spirit when She appeared to him. We will show three instances.

The first instance is a tablet that starts with "In the Name of God who sings for (or over) the Branches" (*Bismillah al-mugharrid `alā al-afnān*). In this tablet Bahā'u'llāh describes in Arabic how he fondled with this maiden:

We were standing on the Throne when that radiant leaf entered wearing a long white gown and became like the shining full moon in the horizons of the sky. Exalted is her Creator, no eye has seen anything like her! When she removed her face-veil the skies and earth glittered as if the essence of the Ancient One had shone on her with all its lights. Exalted is her Creator, no eye has seen anything like her! She was smiling and bending like a Moringa branch¹³⁰⁸ in

¹³⁰⁷ Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 101.

¹³⁰⁸ Moringa branch or *ghusn al-Bān* is used to refer to a slender woman.

the gaze of the All Merciful. Exalted is her Creator, no eye has seen anything like her! She then went and started encircling for no reason or intention, as if the blossoms of love were being pulled towards her face by the magnet of her luminous beauty. Exalted is her Creator, no eye has seen anything like her! She would walk whilst splendor was at her service, and the Kingdom of Beauty would glorify her behind her, because of her exquisite beauty and charm and her statuesque figure. Exalted is her Creator, no eye has seen anything like her! Then we saw her black hair spread along her white neck, as if night and day had embraced each other in that illuminated place and far destination. Exalted is her Creator, no eye has seen anything like her! When we stared at her face we saw a spot¹³⁰⁹ hidden under the veil of oneness that was shining from the horizon of her forehead. As if that spot had separated the tablets of the Merciful's Kindness in (the world) of existence from the books of the lovers in the horizons. Exalted is her Creator, no eye has seen anything like her! And that spot gestured to another spot that was above her right breast. Exalted is the Possessor of secret and evident things that has created her, no eye has seen anything like her! The Body¹³¹⁰ of God rose and started walking and she started walking behind Him whilst she was listening to and was shaking and being pulled towards the verses of God. Exalted is her Creator, no eye has seen anything like her! Then her happiness, joy, and yearning increased to an extent that she fainted. When she regained consciousness she came close and said, may my soul be sacrificed for your prison oh unseen mystery in the Kingdom of Creation. Exalted is her Creator, no eye has seen anything like her! She continuously stared at the

¹³⁰⁹ Probably referring to the small black moles that were considered a sign of beauty amongst Persians.

¹³¹⁰ *Haykal Allāh* which probably means himself.

east of the Throne like someone who is drunk and bewildered until she wrapped her arm around her lord's neck and she pulled him towards her. As she came nearer closer we too inched closer and found in her what has been revealed in the Hidden Red Book from the Most High Pen. She then tilted her head and placed her face on her fingers like a crescent changing into full moon. Exalted is her Creator, no eye has seen anything like her! She then screamed and said; "May every being be sacrificed on account of your calamities, O you Lord of the earth and sky . . ." ¹³¹¹

This encounter ended with hugging each other. Bahā'u'llāh narrates another fantasy which is a little more extreme. He tells her to appear in whatever form she wants, then to dress, then to remove her veil, and finally hang her curly hair around her breasts:

Oh you Pen, inform the Maiden of Paradise. Say by the True God, today is your day. Appear in whatever form you want then wear the brocade of Names and the white silk dress however you want. Then come out of the room of eternity like a rising sun from the forehead of Bahā. Then descend from the Most High Den and stop between the earth and the sky then remove the veil from your white face so that you may rip the great veils from these [people?] and they may gaze at the Great Beauty of God the Holy, the Honored, the Beloved. O Maiden of Bahā . . . hang around both your breasts your fragrant curls so that you may bestow on the worlds the breeze of your Merciful Lord. ¹³¹²

In the next encounter Bahā'u'llāh finally succeeds in attaining what he had yearned for:

¹³¹¹ Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'lā*, vol. 2, no. 11, pp. 171–172.

¹³¹² Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'lā*, vol. 2, no. 89, pp. 575–576.

She then descended, drew near, and came forward until she stood before me. I was bewildered at the delicacy of her creation and her exquisite behavior. I found in myself a perplexity due to my yearning for her and an attraction due to my love for her. I rose my hand to her and removed the bottom of her veil from her shoulder and found her hair to be spread in wavy curls on her back and hanging down to near her legs in ringlets . . . once I saw her as the fire that had kindled in the Divine Tree . . . she then came forward until she stood opposite my face and spoke with a tone like the tone of a dove . . . when I paid attention with all my being I heard the mention of God the Most Exalted the Abhā in her tunes and the name of God the Most Exalted the Most High in her chants. It was then that I became attracted, perplexed, and hazed from her exquisite voice so I raised my hand once more and bared a breast from her breasts that were hidden behind her dress . . .¹³¹³

If this is the Holy Spirit that Bahā'u'llāh and `Abdu'l-Bahā are referring to, it is easy to see why they insist it is a cause of eternal life! And no, this is no metaphor, this occurred in reality for `Abdu'l-Bahā says:

The visions of the Prophets are not dreams; no, they are spiritual discoveries and have reality. They say, for example, "I saw a person in a certain form, and I said such a thing, and he gave such an answer." This vision is in the world of wakefulness, and not in that of sleep. Nay, it is a spiritual discovery which is expressed as if it were the appearance of a vision.¹³¹⁴

¹³¹³ Bahā'u'llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A'lā* (Tehran: Mu'assisiyi Millī Maṭbū'āt Amrī, 125 B.[Reprinted, H-Bahai: East Lansing, Mi., 2000]), vol. 4, pp. 383–384.

¹³¹⁴ `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 251.

It is interesting to know that this last quote which is known as the Tablet of the Maiden (*Lauḥ Ḥūrī*) was ordered by Bahā'u'llāh to be destroyed but was saved by the pleas of Bahā'u'llāh's secretary.¹³¹⁵ This is not the only tablet that Bahā'u'llāh had ordered to be destroyed:

No less an authority than Mīrzā Āqā Jān, Bahā'u'llāh's amanuensis, affirms, as reported by Nabīl, that by the express order of Bahā'u'llāh, hundreds of thousands of verses, mostly written by His own hand, were obliterated and cast into the river. "Finding me reluctant to execute His orders," Mīrzā Āqā Jān has related to Nabīl, "Bahā'u'llāh would reassure me saying: 'None is to be found at this time worthy to hear these melodies.' ...Not once, or twice, but innumerable times, was I commanded to repeat this act."¹³¹⁶

Reading Bahā'u'llāh's real visions and fondling with the Holy Spirit (the Maiden) one can only wonder what stories about the Maiden were inscribed in these tablets that Mīrzā Āqā Jān had accepted to destroy them.

Bahā'u'llāh's justification is even more disturbing: "None is to be found at this time worthy to hear these melodies." Since he ordered these tablets to be destroyed instead of being saved for a people in the future who might be worthy of hearing those melodies, we can safely assume that not only did there not exist a person worthy of hearing them at that time, but there would never be one. Either way, these questions remain to be answered: Why reveal hundreds of thousands of verses that no one is worthy of hearing? Why reveal hundreds of thousands of verses that you will ultimately order to be destroyed? What Messenger

¹³¹⁵ According to Professor John Walbridge of Indiana University in an article titled "Erotic Imagery in the Allegorical Writings of Bahā'u'llāh" available online: http://bahai-library.com/walbridge_erotic_allegory (retrieved 2/8/2014).

¹³¹⁶ Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 138.

from God is this that orders his own teachings to be destroyed? Is it not absurd? Or maybe we should ask: What was Bahā'u'llāh trying to hide?

Bahā'u'llāh's writings are strongly reminiscent of Sufi and mystic poetry not prophetic revelations. This is not strange because after all, he had lived with Sufis and mystics for two years in the mountains of Kurdistan and his sister had explicitly declared that he had been associating with mystics and Sufis for years when he was in Tehran.

It is up to you to draw your own conclusions!





**Bahā'u'llāh:
“Contradiction has and will not
ever have a way in the
sanctified realm of the Divine
Manifestations.”¹³¹⁷**

¹³¹⁷Bahā'u'llāh, *Badī'*, p. 126.

1. Are Religions Renewed?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: “Everything is renewed and so, the essence of Divine Religion must be renewed too.”¹³¹⁸

Bahā’u’llāh: There will be no more prophets or manifestations after me.¹³¹⁹

2. When Will a New Prophet Appear?

Bahā’u’llāh: Never!¹³²⁰

Bahā’u’llāh: Not before a thousand years!¹³²¹

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: Not before 500000 years!¹³²²

¹³¹⁸ ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 3, p. 332.

¹³¹⁹ “I swear by my True Self, all manifestations have come to an end by this Most Great Manifestation (meaning Baha’ism). Whoever claims (to be a manifestation) after that is a slandering liar,” Bahā’u’llāh, *Iqtidārāt wa chand lauḥ dīgar*, p. 327.

¹³²⁰ “I swear by my True Self, all manifestations have come to an end by this Most Great Manifestation (meaning Baha’ism). Whoever claims (to be a manifestation) after that is a slandering liar,” Bahā’u’llāh, *Iqtidārāt wa chand lauḥ dīgar*, p. 327.

¹³²¹ “The Dispensation of Bahā’u’llāh will last until the coming of the next Manifestation of God, Whose advent will not take place before at least ‘a full thousand years’ will have elapsed,” Bahā’u’llāh, *The Kitābi Aqdas*, p. 195.

¹³²² ‘Abdu’l-Bahā uses the word cycle to refer to dispensation: “. . . in the first manifestation the sun will stop in the middle of the sky for ten days, in the second manifestation twenty days and in the third manifestation thirty days. Know that the first manifestation in this report is the manifestation of his Highness the Messenger (meaning Prophet Muḥammad) in which the sun of reality stopped for ten days in that constellation and every day is equal to one century and by this calculation [those ten days] are a thousand years and that was the Muḥammadan cycle and cycle (*daur and kaur*) [!] . . . the second manifestation, was the manifestation of the Primal point, may my soul be sacrificed for him, in which the Sun of Truth stopped in that cycle (*daur*) for twenty years . . . in the cycle (*daur*) of the blessed beauty . . . whose length will be at least 500000 years . . .” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 2, pp. 75–76.

3. Start and End of the Baha'i Cycle?

Bahā'u'llāh: Start unclear but is eternal!¹³²³

Shoghi: From the Bab to 500 thousand years!¹³²⁴

Shoghi: From Adam to 500 thousand years!¹³²⁵

`Abdul-Bahā: From Bahā'u'llāh to 500 thousand years!¹³²⁶

`Abdul-Bahā: Eternal!¹³²⁷

¹³²³ "I swear by my True Self, all manifestations have come to an end by this Most Great Manifestation (meaning Baha'ism). Whoever claims (to be a manifestation) after that is a slandering¹³²³ liar. We ask God to make him successful in returning (to the correct path) and if he repents then He will accept the repentance and if he insists on what he is claiming God will send someone who will deal mercilessly with him," Bahā'u'llāh, *Iqtidārāt wa chand lauḥ dīgar*, p. 327.

¹³²⁴ "Thus ended a life which posterity will recognize as standing at the confluence of two universal prophetic cycles, the Adamic Cycle stretching back as far as the first dawns of the world's recorded religious history and the Bahā'ī Cycle destined to propel itself across the unborn reaches of time for a period of no less than five thousand centuries," Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 54–55;

¹³²⁵ "For while the Dispensation of Bahā'u'llāh will last for at least one thousand years, His Cycle will extend still farther, to at least 500,000 years. The Bahā'ī cycle is, indeed, incomparable in its greatness. It includes not only the Prophets that will appear after Bahā'u'llāh, but all those who have preceded Him ever since Adam," Shoghi Effendi, *Directives from the Guardian* (India/Hawaii: 1973), p. 7.

¹³²⁶ "the second manifestation, was the manifestation of the Primal point, may my soul be sacrificed for him, in which the Sun of Truth stopped in that cycle (*daur*) for twenty years . . . in the cycle (*daur*) of the blessed beauty . . . whose length will be at least 500000 years . . .," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 2, pp. 75–76.

¹³²⁷ In this great cycle (*kaur*) and in this new cycle (*daur*) legislation of materialistic laws are mostly referred to the House of Justice for this cycle (*kaur*) will have a great length and this cycle (*daur*) will have an eternal unending interval, vastness, and continuity," `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb* (Egypt), vol. 2, p. 68.

4. Are visions of the prophets real?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā: Visions of the prophets are not dreams. They are real. ¹³²⁸

Bahā’u’llāh: In a vision, I sexually fondled with the Holy Spirit who appeared to me as a maiden! I yearned for her, removed her veil, and exposed one of her breasts. ¹³²⁹

¹³²⁸ “The visions of the Prophets are not dreams; no, they are spiritual discoveries and have reality. They say, for example, “I saw a person in a certain form, and I said such a thing, and he gave such an answer.” This vision is in the world of wakefulness, and not in that of sleep. Nay, it is a spiritual discovery which is expressed as if it were the appearance of a vision,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 251.

¹³²⁹ “She then descended, drew near, and came forward until she stood before me. I was bewildered at the delicacy of her creation and her exquisite behavior. I found in myself a perplexity due to my yearning for her and an attraction due to my love for her. I rose my hand to her and removed the bottom of her veil from her shoulder and found her hair to be spread in wavy curls on her back and hanging down to near her legs in ringlets . . . once I saw her as the fire that had kindled in the Divine Tree . . . she then came forward until she stood opposite my face and spoke with a tone like the tone of a dove . . . when I paid attention with all my being I heard the mention of God the Most Exalted the Abhā in her tunes and the name of God the Most Exalted the Most High in her chants. It was then that I became attracted, perplexed, and hazed from her exquisite voice so I raised my hand once more and bared a breast from her breasts that were hidden behind her dress . . .,” Bahā’u’llāh, *Āthār-i Qalam-i A’lā* (Tehran: Mu’assisiyi Millī Maṭbū’āt Amrī, 125 B..[Reprinted, H-Bahai: East Lansing, Mi., 2000]), vol. 4, pp. 383–384.



A Summary and Conclusion of the Three Perspectives:

1) Is the principle *the World of Humanity is in the Need of the Breath of the Holy Spirit* new?

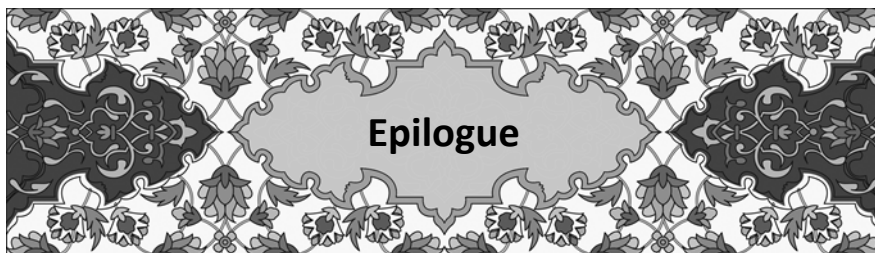
This principle is not new and has been the reason that God had sent Messengers and Prophets. The Holy Spirit is not a new concept, and has been previously spoken about in religions such as Islam and Christianity.

2) Did the leaders of Baha'ism act upon this principle?

Bahā'u'llāh claims that there will be no new Prophet or Manifestation after him. Furthermore, he views the Holy Spirit as a maiden which he is attracted to and sexually fondles with!

3) Is this principle rational and logical?

The Breath of the Holy Spirit, or in better words, the need for Divine Guidance has been specifically mentioned in Shia traditions and has been the basis of all of God's religions. But, this Divine Guidance cannot be provided by a nine-man committee of fallibles in the UHJ who have no connection to the spiritual world and lack no means of Divine Knowledge and Inspiration.



We showed in this book that what Baha'ism presents as novel and new principles are neither new nor concepts that had not been thought of before the advent of this creed.

Furthermore, there are numerous instances that show that the leaders of this creed had not adhered to these principles and today, their followers are widely unaware of the many contradictory statements from these figures that are scattered in their untranslated literature and books.

In Third Perspective, we spoke about the reasonability of these principles and showed that in most cases these teachings were illogical and unreasonable.

We also showed that the divine knowledge attributed to these figures was virtually non-existent and their claimed revelations consisted of many fallacies, contradictions, and obvious religious and scientific errors.

The Baha'i religion was based on the Bābī religion which in turn was the result of hijacking the concept of the Mahdi in Shia Islam. The Mahdi is the savior who was supposed to come and fill the earth with peace and justice once and for all. Even though both these creeds were based on this concept, both of their leaders failed in fulfilling the prophecies about the Mahdi and the wonders in the world that should have occurred during *his* reign.

The most obvious of these was the destruction of all evil oppressors and the Kingdom of Gods Representatives on earth in which there

would be no war, no poverty, no oppression, no fear, no drought, no hunger, and no agony.

Let us all pray to God, in whatever tongue that we speak, and whatever faith that we believe in, to bring forth the Savior that he has promised all mankind. Let us all supplicate and say:

O Lord, we beg you to relieve us of our hardships and to put an end to our miseries. We beg you to have mercy on us and bestow your graces upon your humble servants. We beg you to dispatch our Savior and allow him to destroy your enemies, to establish Your Kingdom, and to bring peace and justice to earth, once and for all. Amen.

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Writings of Shoghi Effendi concerning the Will and Testament

Why didn't Shoghi Effendi repudiate this RACIST article in the Baha'i World?

Dr. August Forel, an Swiss scientist and member of the Monist League (an association of scientific racists in Europe), wrote an article for "Star of the West" magazine in 1928, and it was also published in "Baha'i World" magazine. In this article Forel writes:

Moreover, one makes a pretext that there are differences in races; but if one excepts those races, altogether inferior, with a lighter cerebrum (according to Wedda about eight hundred or eight hundred and fifty grams instead of one thousand) it is a fundamental error. All Europeans, Chinese, Japanese, Hindus, Semites, Americans, and so forth, are equal as races. It is necessary, therefore, to seek for other real causes for the hatreds and the wars than the differences of languages and of race." ("The World Vision of a Savant" Baha'i World III, 1928-1930, p. 284)

If you read that paragraph closely, Forel is saying that the European, East Indian, Semitic, and "American" (he no doubt means white American) races are "equal" but other races "altogether inferior" (because of brain size) he omits—such as the African and Australian and Melanesian races.

What are the chances that Shoghi Effendi did not read or was not aware of this article?

Why did not Shoghi Effendi immediately write an article repudiating this?

Forel goes on to write:

"But while some declare Him [God] personal, we Monists look upon Him as representing the Force (metaphysical) of the Universe, unknowable to human beings." (ibid.)

Forel still considered himself a Monist, even while being a Baha'i. Do YOU know what the Monists taught? They taught that Negroes were closer to the ape than all other races and "inferior" to the "advanced races".

Forel was a member and leader of the "Monist League".

Shoghi Effendi had the opportunity to REFUTE the article by Forel, and politely correct his errors. He did not. He let the article stand!

Were the Monists right? Does brain capacity have anything to do with intelligence? Thousands of scientific papers said they did. Not "one" scientific paper says it does not. Scientists are forbidden even to bring up the subject today for study. If they do, they will be fired or face other sanctions.

Questions for Baha'is:

- 1) Where in the Holy Texts or letters of Shoghi Effendi does it say that the races are equal in intelligence?
- 2) Why did not Shoghi Effendi repudiate or refute this article by Forel which was read by all Baha'is in the English speaking world?
- 3) Why would the "Star of the West" and "Baha'i World" publish a RACIST article?
- 4) Could it be that Forel and the Monists were correct that brain capacity is tied to intelligence (if not, the chimp has the same intelligence as humans)?

Was Shoghi Effendi gay?

<https://groups.google.com/forum/#!topic/talk.religion.bahai/PCgaYZjZ6NY>

According to research done by Jackson Armstrong-Ingram (primarily based on letters of the Afnan family and other firsthand accounts) and Mildred Mottehedeh who confided to Michael Zargarov and several others, Shoghi was a homosexual who struggled with his condition for his whole lifetime. There have also been suggestions that George Townsend was perhaps the one true love of Shoghi's life, and not as popularly believed Mary Maxwell (aka Amatu'l-Baha Ruhiyyih Khanum). Apparently among Ruhi Afnan's papers, there are several letters which explicitly suggest Shoghi's homosexuality as early as his days in Beirut, well before Ruhi and Soheil's expulsion at Shoghi's hands. Perhaps these cousins were in fact expelled because they knew Shoghi's dark secret. Mildred Mottehedeh, who was quite close to the Rabbanis, had also known about this. Perhaps the time has come to psycho-analyze the "Guardian," reassess his ministry and examine his authoritarian style of governance in light of his repressed homosexuality and unrequited love for George Townsend. After all, according some recent historical findings, Adolf Hitler was a bisexual who struggled with his effeminate pounceness and compensated it with political power and the Will to Power (* Ernst Roehm, leader of the Brown Shirt SA, was an out and out ponce). Perhaps a Nietzschean-Freudian probe into Shoghi's life and writings is not that too far off in the horizon, not to mention suggestions by Wombat Joey that one of the Persian Hands who was a lifelong Shoghi devotee was himself also a closet homosexual.

Shoghi Effendi used the money of Charity to go to Oxford university.- Ruth White

The Bahai religion and its Enemy the Bahai Organization by Ruth White, the Tuttle Company, Rutland, Vermont 1929.

In PP. 201-206, Ruth White says: “In the Autumn of 1919 I sent to Abdul Baha [i.e. Sir Abbas Effendi] an American Express Company check of Five hundred dollars and asked him to apply it to some of the many charities he was dispensing.

About four month after we arrived in Haifa as the guests of Abdul Baha. On the day before departure I asked Abdul Baha if he had received the check. Without a moment’s hesitation and very emphatically he said that he had not received it. He repeated this a number of times, and seemed indignant that it had not been turned over to him. I discussed this with various members of the family of Abdul Baha, and one of the brothers-in-law said he would go to town and enquire about the matter.

I asked the American Express Company to Photostat this check for me, which they did. Herewith it is a reproduction of the check with the signature of Sh. Rabbani on the back. Here then is proof positive that Shoghi Effendi cashed out the check and also proof that the son-in-law [presumably Mirza Muhsin Afnan] who purported to enquire of the check did not do it at all. Otherwise, he would have ascertained in a few minutes from the office of the American Express Company at Haifa that the check had been cashed by Sh. Rabbani, as I had given the son-in-law the whole information, the date of sending, the name of sender, etc. All of which shows that there was collusion between the son-in-law and Shoghi Effendi.

For immediately after cashing the check he departed for Oxford, this despite the fact that Abdul Baha did not wish him to go. Some may naturally ask: How could Shoghi Effendi have cashed the check unless he had authority to do so. This he may have had. Yet the fact remain that the proceeds were never turned over to Abdul Baha. My readers may, therefore, draw their own conclusions.”

Why Shoghi Effendi did not appoint his successor ??

Dear Friends,

Baha'u'llah made it incumbent upon every believing Baha'i to prepare a will and testament (the most Holy Book, para 255) during his life time. And he followed his own command when he wrote a will and appointed an heir, so that his family and followers would not face any such difficulties after him.

In the same way, Abdul-Baha considered it necessary to write a will during one's life, having also written his own valuable Will and Testament, which includes his important edicts and recommendations.

According to the most Holy Book, if a Baha'i dies and does not leave a will, all of his or her belongings and properties should be divided among the following seven groups: spouse, children, father, mother, brother(s), sister(s) and teacher.

And according to the Kitab-i Aqdas, if any member of the above categories were deceased, his or her share will be inherited by the UHJ. Finally, according to that same Holy Book, all non-Baha'is, non-believers, Covenant-breakers, and those excommunicated from the Faith, are deprived from a Baha'i's estate.

Now, I would like to draw your attention to a very important event in the history of the Baha'i community. As you are well aware, the Beloved Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, passed away in London in the summer of 1957. He journeyed to London in order to purchase necessary material to complete the archives buildings. There, he died having suffered from a previously-undiagnosed disease. (The story of his departure and all subsequent events can fill an entire article in and of itself, and should therefore be reviewed separately.)

Unfortunately, various disputes about his successor and belongings began after the Beloved Guardian's departure. Naturally, those properties of Shoghi Effendi that belonged to the Baha'i Community should have been given to his successor and the chairman of the first international Baha'i Council, Mason Remey. But the Hands of the Cause, having turned a blind eye to the previous writings of the Guardian—and other evidence of his intentions for his estate—and under the pretense that they did not find any written will from Shoghi Effendi, declared that, according to a divine abrogation of the previous determinism (Badaa), the institution of the living Guardian of the Cause will be discontinued!

By neglecting the succession of Mason Remey, and announcing the end of Guardianship, it became necessary to divide the inheritance of Shoghi Effendi among the seven groups the Holy Aqdas ordains. But because of a number of reasons, including the absence of a majority of the heirs, the Aqdas decree was also abandoned! (Shoghi Effendi's parents had already departed; his brothers and sisters had been excommunicated as Covenant-breakers; he had no children; and no Baha'i could claim to be his teacher.)

Therefore, according to the articles of the Aqdas, around 19% of the inheritance should have been given to his living wife, Ruhhiya Khanum, and the rest—in the absence of the heirs and non-establishment of the U.H.J.—should have been given to the highest Baha'i official of that time, i.e., the second Guardian and Chair of the International Baha'i Council (the precursor to the UHJ), Mr. Mason Remey.

Some of the Iranian Hands, such as Zekrullah Khadem, Shoa'ullah Alaei, Alimohammad Vargha A. Foroutan, Mohajer, and Hassan A. Balyuzi, in cooperation with John Froby, Hadi Rahmani Shirazi, General A. Moqarrabi, and Habib Sabet, and Manoochehr Ghaem Maghami, wanted to procure the inheritance themselves and avoided handing over the inheritance to Mason Remey. Thus, they conjured up a solution: they will meet the excommunicated sisters and brothers of the Beloved Guardian, and will somehow reach an agreement as to how to divide Shoghi Effendi's inheritance.

Since the Baha'i writings explicitly forbid distributing any amount of a Baha'i's estate to the Covenant-Breakers, this meant that the portion of the inheritance that was due his parents, children, and teachers would have been lost. So they decided to distribute the remainder of the inheritance of Shoghi Effendi in Iran, in accordance with the Islamic law of inheritance. And so, they needed to declare to the Iranian court that the Guardian was a Muslim!

It was duly performed, with the approval of Ruhhiya Khanum, the widow of the beloved Guardian and one of the Hands (who according to Islamic law would not have received any part of the inheritance because she was not Muslim). Thus, the first Guardian of the Baha'i Faith, was declared a Muslim. (His inheritance case was filed under No. 1464 in the Iranian Justice Ministry.) And thus, all of Shoghi Effendi's inheritance was supposedly divided among his four excommunicated brothers and sisters: Hussain, Riyaz, Rouhangiz, and Mehrangiz.

Once accomplished, the said Covenant-Breakers, having received a commission for their services, agreed to transfer the ownership of these properties to the name of Mr. M.A. Varqa, one of the Hands, and the trustee of Huquq-ullah. Mr. Varqa, in turn, transferred this inheritance to the name of some famous Iranian Baha'is, individuals like Mr. Habib Sabet. After some time, the Iranian National Spiritual Assembly established a trust, and transferred most of that inheritance to that trust, although some of it illegally remained in the hands of those famous Iranian Baha'is!

This entire undertaking was done in cooperation with some of the Hands and the Covenant-Breakers from the family of Shoghi Effendi. And, it must be noted, these surreptitious acts were expressly protested by some of the Friends and LSAs and NSA; yet their concerns were mostly neglected. When they were responded to, it would be angry ripostes by the Hands, who continuously threatened to excommunicate the protesters on the pretense that they were weakening the unity of the Baha'i Community.

The protesters believed that the Guardian had prohibited any contact with Covenant-Breakers, and had considered it a grave sin. And the perpetrator of such a crime would deserve the harshest of punishments, that of being excommunicated himself. This was quite true about the close relatives of the Guardian, who would unceasingly persecute him. Ruhhiya Khanum, for example, has mentioned in her diary about the Guardian:

“These events are continuous. These fights, which first began with only one of them, and which later united all of his family against him, are seriously wearing him down. Even now, I can see him with his back bent, his heart broken, and his body physically weakened. All his relatives collectively attempt to exhaust him and indeed kill his soul...”

Then he added, “Those relatives who were around the great Abdul-Baha eventually murdered him... And will eventually kill me too.”

(Ruhiyyih Khanum, *The Priceless Pearl*, pp. 343 & 346)

Such a coalition of Hands of the Cause and long-time enemies of the Cause shook the foundations of the Cause to its very core. Many of the believers left the Baha’i community, while many other Friends had serious questions, which still remain. And, since then, none in the Baha’i administration or current UHJ has given a single satisfactory answer to these Friends, as they continuously attempt to conceal such issues from the Baha’is of the world. Only some of these questions are listed below:

1. When every Baha’i is required to keep a will, how can you claim that the Guardian, who was a great teacher and commentator of the holy words, failed to leave a will for his heirs?!
2. If we account for the decisions and actions taken by the Hands, why should we not assume that some of them had access to the private documents of the Guardian? And having found his will before anyone else, and being unsatisfied by what it contained, took aims to conceal or even destroy it?!
3. Despite the fact that according to Baha’i Law, the Covenant-Breakers and non-Baha’is are entirely deprived from a Baha’i’s estate, how could they distribute the inheritance of the beloved Guardian among his excommunicated brothers and sisters? And do so only after appealing to Islamic law?!
4. How could they claim that the Guardian of the Faith was a Muslim, simply because it was to their own benefit, and so that they could procure his properties that actually belonged to the Baha’i Community? An act, fraudulent, treacherous, and in direct violation of the Guardian’s teachings and the views of the Community.
5. In the absence of the Guardian of the Cause, who protects the multi-billion dollar property of the Baha’i Community? Has the current UHJ, sans-Guardian, issued financial reports, statements, or combined financial statements of the owned properties, assets, or the amounts received as donations and Huquq-ullah? Has the UHJ ever published a statement of its receipts and expenses?

Unfortunately, the Baha’i administration attempts to silence all such questions under the pretext of unity in the Community, unswerving obedience to the UHJ, a possible increase in persecutions by the various states, etc. In other cases, questions and protests have been overlooked by exaggerated, and at times entirely false, reports of progress made by the Cause across the globe. And of course, a last and most intense measure taken by that House, has been that of disenrollment and excommunication of the questioners and/or protesters from the Baha’i Community!

One may suppose that the activities of the Custodian Hands could be justified, and assume they have good intentions, and try to protect the interests of the Faith. But we should know that the Guardian was always angry with Covenant-Breakers, and strictly refused to deal with them.

Ruhiyya Khanum writes in her diary:

“Once, the husband of the Guardian’s close relative died. His widow came to our house, and requested the Guardian to accept his will and presented a donation. She was even ready to hand over to him some of Baha’u’llah’s very own seals, items that Abdul-Baha, at the time of his journey to America, had entrusted to her. Yet, since she kept in contact with the Covenant-Breakers, the holy Guardian refused her donation and gift, and asked me to tell her:

“Until she forever disassociates, in heart and soul, from the Covenant-Breakers, I will not accept it, even if it was a million seals, or a donation the size of Mount Carmel!”

Even though those seals were invaluable to the Guardian, and he in fact needed them for the Archives, he looked at me and ordered me to tell her:

“The Guardian cannot do anything until she abides by this command. Otherwise, she can take the seals, the will, and everything else she brought with her away.”

(Ruhiyya Khanum, *The Priceless Pearl*, P. 349)

In short, a Community, devoid of a Guardian leading it, with a selfish, sinful, and profit-seeking group governing it, will suffer a quick decline and be utterly and totally lost.

It was for this reason that Abdul-Baha wrote in his Will and Testament:

“It is incumbent upon the Guardian of the Cause to appoint his successor and heir during his own life time.”

The takeaway here is that even if we do not see a written will from Shoghi Effendi—which, as they claim, he did not leave—we believe that he has clearly, albeit indirectly, appointed Mr. Mason Remey on several occasions as his successor. Mr. Remey enjoyed a very close relationship with the Guardian until the very last moments of his life. And the Guardian regarded him as absolutely trustworthy, conferring upon him many important roles and responsibilities.

With the warmest Baha'i greetings.

Kourosh Jamali

Ref: <https://ahdvanisagh.wordpress.com/2015/06/15/%D9%BE%D9%8A%D9%88%D9%86%D8%AF-%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%B1%DB%8C%D8%AE%DB%8C-%D8%A7%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A8%D8%A7-%D9%86%D8%A7%D9%82%D8%B6%D9%8A%D9%86/>

Excommunication By Shoghi Effendi

Following in the footsteps of his grandfather, Shoghi Effendi also chose to excommunicate his relatives who did not show absolute deference to his wishes and views. By the end of his life, he had excommunicated every one of the descendants of ‘Abdu’l-Baha as well as all the descendants of Baha’u’llah’s third wife. Thus, the entire family of Baha’u’llah—except for Shoghi Effendi himself, his wife Ruhiyyih, and ‘Abdu’l-Baha’s widow Munirih and sister Bahiyyih—ended up expelled from the mainstream Baha’i community and shunned.....

<https://shuaullahbehaiblog.wordpress.com/>

Shoghi Effendi's properties in Iran

Mr. Esfandiari from the Ministry of Finance evaluated one of Shoghi Effendi's properties, the third leader of the Baha'is. According to official documents, a mansion in Tehran's 4th sector on Shibani Street was valued at 708,000 Rials at the time of Shoghi's death.

Another property owned by Shoghi Effendi is located in Tehran's 10th district on Briyank St., No. 61. This property includes a garage, warehouse, three houses, and three stores (butcher shop, electrical, etc.), totaling 2480 square meters. The value of this property at the time of Shoghi's death was 4,000,000 Rials.

Despite never setting foot in Iran during his life, Shoghi Effendi owned lands in the country. Mr. Esfandiari also reported that Shoghi Effendi earned an annual income of millions of Rials from farming and agriculture activities in Baba Salman village owned by him and leased to Falah Company for 6 years from July 1331 (Iranian calendar), with the appointment of Waliullah Varqa as a lawyer.

Apart from the above Shoghi Effendi also owned numerous properties in Madbor district and in Ghar village of Ray city (Tehran) and big plots of land in Mashhad also.

Beliefs of Free Baha'i Sect of Baha'i Faith

Website : <https://freebahais.org/>

Do the Free Baha'is believe in the Bab, Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha? Yes, the Free Baha'is believe in Bab, Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha. Bab was the forerunner and prophet of the advent of Baha'u'llah. Abdu'l Baha was the rightful successor and interpreter of Baha'u'llah's writings and was titled as Most Great Branch. However, the Free Baha'is reject the authority of Shoghi Effendi after Abdu'l Baha.

What do Free Baha'is believe about Guardianship? Baha'u'llah in His mighty Will and Testament had appointed Abdu'l Baha as his first Guardian and His second son, Mohammed Ali Effendi as his second Guardian. During Abdu'l Baha's guardianship Mohammed Ali Effendi had broken his covenant with the faith and had played mischief against Abdu'l Baha, hence Abdu'l Baha ex-communicated him. Abdu'l Baha has penned down the pain and agony casted by Mohammed Ali in his Will and Testaments. Free Baha'is believe that Abdu'l Baha was the only Guardian of the faith.

What is the Holy Book of the Free Baha'is? Free Baha'is, being the true Baha'is, follow 'Kitab-i-Aqdas' and encourage deep study and research into it.

Do the Free Baha'is recite prayers? As per Baha'u'llah's teaching, Free Baha'is recite long, medium or short obligatory prayers every day.

Do the Free Baha'is observe fasts? Free Baha'is do observe fast every year for 19 days, in the month of Ala.

What is the Free Baha'i view on participation in politics? As per the Baha'i Laws, participation in politics is prohibited. Although, Kitab-i-Aqdas says, one should obey the laws of the country he resides in.

What do the Free Baha'is say about the Will and Testament of Abdu'l Baha? Free Baha'is believe that the Will and Testament of Abdu'l Baha is genuine, except the part of Shoghi Effendi where he has been declared as the Guardian of the faith. Free Baha'is believe that the Will was forged after the death of Abdu'l Baha and the succession part was inserted by Lady Munirih, the mother of Shoghi.

Do the Free Baha'is accept Shoghi Effendi as the Guardian? Free Baha'is do not believe in the Guardianship of Shoghi Effendi. Abdu'l Baha, in his entire life span, had neither groomed nor declared Shoghi as his successor. His appointment as the successor was forged by his mother, after the death of The Master Abdu'l Baha.

Do the Free Baha'is believe in a Universal House of Justice? Free Baha'is believe in the concept of Universal House of Justice, but not the current established Universal House of Justice, whose members are appointed and not elected. Free Baha'is believe in the true Universal House of Justice which will be established only when the Baha'is are free from the shackles of administration.

What are the duties of a Free Baha'i? A Free Baha'i is required to work hard to attain world peace by following the commandments of Baha'u'llah, with which he was raised. Abdu'l Baha has said, "I have not appointed any officer in the faith." Each and every Baha'i is the Guardian of his own faith, and responsible for spreading the message of Baha'u'llah. One should spread the message of love and peace, eliminate prejudice, and pray to Baha'u'llah for establishing the true Universal House of Justice.

How does one become a Free Baha'i? Free Baha'is do not follow any administration, so there are no declarations required. If someone is following the true teachings of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha, he will be considered a Free Baha'i. The Free Baha'i Faith is not behind numbers. A Free Baha'i should purify himself from greed of attaining positions, and start working out of love for humanity and world peace.

Do the Free Baha'is believe in the concept of LSA, NSA, or ABM? The Master Abdu'l Baha has clearly stated, "I have not appointed any officers in the faith." These man made assemblies and authoritative positions have pushed the Baha'is to work out of greed of acquiring positions which lead to fake reports and false statistics. But, if a person frees himself from administration, he will fulfill his duties towards Baha'u'llah and not for NSA or UHJ. Thus, he will be rewarded by Baha'u'llah for his efforts. For this reason, Free Baha'is do not believe in Officers or Office Bearers and one has to be the Guardian of his own faith and action.

Do the Free Baha'is hold Nineteen Day Feasts (NDF)? Free Baha'is gather for NDF once every 19 days, where they recite prayers, discuss on teachings, uplifting morals of society. Free Baha'is never ask for contribution and have never asked for huququ'llah.

Where are the Free Baha'is located? Free Baha'is are located worldwide at different locations. As of now, Free Baha'is are majorly located in the USA, UK, Singapore, Thailand, Germany, Russia, Emirates, Oman, Bahrain, Iran, Sri Lanka, India, and Bangladesh.

Nine or Nineteen Members on the Universal House of Justice? – A debate in the Baha’i Faith

When someone joins a religion, it will always be riddled with uncertainty for him or her rather than filled with faith. Even if one was born into the faith or grew up among the most devoted of friends and relatives, this is true. A religion journey is usually distinguished by great joy, astonishment, and exquisite camaraderie, as well as a great deal of doubt, difficulty, and grief.

Okay, so it’s acknowledged that doubts are a natural component of religious beliefs, and when people have concerns, they strive to work through them, investigate them, and emerge stronger and more confident in their views. Perhaps there are good answers to your doubts, and as a result, your faith will be stronger and more solid. On the other hand, if you don’t get any positive replies, you’ll be forced to choose between sticking with a religion you know isn’t logical and abandoning it in favour of ideas that are.

Now, imagine there are contradictions and incompatibilities in what one perceives to be true, only to discover later that it was all untrue and based on selfish gain? There is a laundry list of such items forced down Bahais’ throats that are not supported by the Bahai Scriptures and are not founded on Bahauallah and Abdul Baha’s teachings. Today, I’d want to look at one of the items on that list and compare it to the teachings of the Bahai faith’s founders.

Among the many incompatibilities and inconsistencies in the Bahai Faith’s beliefs, practices, and governance, such as the continuation of Guardianship, the authenticity of Abdul Baha’s Will and Testament, the validity of the current Universal House of Justice, and the non-election of women to the UHJ, to which the current Administration has provided no satisfactory answer, a new controversy is arising that will strike the foundations of the UHJ, and it is the number of members. For these integers that are diagonally opposite each other, we discover various references. Some sources claim 19, while others say between 9 and 19, and some state things that aren’t specifically referenced in the Holy Scriptures.

The Bahai faith is unable to make decisions on a number of contentious problems, one of which being where nine should be used and where nineteen should be applied. There is a clear reference from Abdul Baha stating that the UHJ will have 19 members.

1- We can see that Abdul Baha clearly said that the UHJ will have 19 members.

(Ten days in the light of Acca by Julite M. Grundy, Printed in Chicago December 1907. Published by Bahai Publishing Society Chicago, ILLIONIS, U.S.A. WORDS OF ABDUL BAHÁ)

2-The Present universal House of justice is advocating for membership between 9 and 19.

According to Ali Nakhjavani, Abdul Baha claimed that the number “might be 19,” and that he justifies this by stating, “We had a meeting of UHJ with members of ITC, and the members were 18 and manageable.”

A member of the Universal House of Justice incorrectly attributes this to Abdul Baha. ‘Nineteen’ is plainly referenced in the previous passage.

(a) 1998 letter by / on behalf of Universal House of Justice

(b) ‘Ali Nakhjavani, Shoghi Effendi: The Range and Power of his Pen, Casa Editrice Baha’i, 2006, p 251

3- The number of members is not specifically specified in Holy Text, according to Shoghi Effendi’s secretary. This is also incorrect.

(Women on the Universal House of Justice: by / on behalf of Universal House of Justice, 1988-05-31, date of original: 1998)

4- Another study argues that the UHJ should be made up of 19 people. The Local Spiritual Assembly was most likely formerly known as the Local House of Justice, and the House of Justice had 19 members in 1905.

(A year with the Bahais of India and Burma by Sydney Sprague second edition pa 15 The Priory Press High Street, Hampstead, London, N.W.)

Whatever the cause, the change from nineteen to nine was not a divine decree; rather, it was the kind of deception for which the Bahai faith is notorious. The Bahai Administration is now attempting to justify its nine members. This, along with several other flaws in the Bahai Faith, will cause Bahais to doubt the faith’s authenticity. Without a doubt, the Bahai Faith is a man-made religion that evolves through time. Downsizing became necessary because the Bahai Administration believed that supervising and controlling 9 members would be simpler.

What is the importance of the UHJ in the Baha’i faith?

As per the teachings Bahauallah and Abdul Baha, the UHJ plays a very important role especially because it enacts laws “that are not expressly recorded in the Book,” according to the Baha’i writings, legislating on issues not covered in the original writings of Baha’u’llah and Abdul Baha:

Those matters of major importance which constitute the foundation of the Law of God are explicitly recorded in the Text, but subsidiary laws are left to the House of Justice. The wisdom of this is that the times never remain the same, for change is a necessary quality and an essential attribute of this world, and of time and place. – Abdul Baha, cited in Wellsprings of Guidance, pp. 84-86.

Abdul Baha also promised that the Universal House of Justice is “the source of all good and freed from all error.” Will and Testament of Abdul

Baha, p. 19.

To summarize, the UHJ is a group of people who are responsible for looking after the whole Bahai community and for putting the teachings into practice as well as developing laws from Bahauallah's teachings. They are, in a sense, acting as a Guardian who has assumed control of the faith today. Imagine a team that has a big role to play in the Bahai world, but its basis is built on lies?! Also, if a 19-member team can become infallible when they work together, can we be confident that reducing the number to 9 will have the same outcome? Is it really possible to consider them infallible? Is it possible to trust their acts and statements at face value? Perhaps this is why, from the inception of this complete system of existing form of UHJ, the team has strayed so far from the faith. All of their choices have been discovered to have faults and weaknesses.

The big question!

Now comes the big question that every Bahai should consider: Do we still believe in a system despite its numerous flaws? If one is unable to discover solutions to his or her problems and questions, it may be time to change one's path. It doesn't have to be atheism or a different theological perspective; it only has to be one that is based on truth and is rational and clear. You should not be ashamed of seeking to discover your own path in a way that makes sense to you; you are not required to follow the same faith as your family just because you have done so previously.

Source : The Caravan, Volume 6, Edition 3 <https://freebahais.org/the-caravan-magazine/>

Dr. John Fozdar Passed away in Malaysia

Dr. John Fozdar (1928 – 2022) was the son of Khodadad and Shirin Fozdar . He was named Knight of Baha'u'llah by Shoghi Effendi. He converted many Buddhist to Baha'is in Brunei and Sarawak. He was Counsellor in Asia from 1980 to 1995. He was very active in the spread of Baha'i Faith in Malaysia. He died on 22nd October 2022.

In later years of his life he became an open critic of Universal House of Justice and had criticized the working of Universal House of Justice and had also questioned the legitimacy of Nine Member Universal House of Justice – the prime body of Baha'i Faith, located in Haifa, Israel.

The Truth About the Baha'i Faith: A Shocking Expose'

The Truth About the Baha'i Faith examines some of the major claims of the Baha'is, and contrasts those claims with facts. This is an Anti-Baha'i book. This book reveals that The Bab (forerunner of Baha'u'llah) never claimed to be the Mihdih (Mahdi), but rather the 5th "Gate" (channeler) of the Mahdi. This book reveals that Baha'u'llah never intended to be the Funder of a new religion (the Baha'i Faith), but merely the Founder of a Shi'ite Sufi (Mystical) Order. This book reveals that Baha'u'llah never claimed to be a Prophet, but rather Allah (God) himself. This books shows evidence of the racism and violent nature of 'Abdu'l-Baha, the closeted (yet very active) homosexuality of Shoghi Effendi, the forged Will of 'Abdu'l-Baha, and the clever political maneuvers of Mary Maxwell (Ruhiyyih Khanum) that insured her the role as the de facto "ruler" (Guardian in all but name) of the Baha'i Faith from the death of Shoghi Effendi in 1957 to her own death. This book reveals how the Universal House of Justice (Baha'i Governing Body) has suppressed Baha'i history in the hopes of covering up the truth, so that they may "save the world" from a nuclear war.

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Link : <https://www.squarebooks.com/book/9798675716074#about>

Baha'i who worked for the Imperialists and oppressors

Courtesy : <https://bahaism.blogspot.com/2024/04/bahai-who-worked-for-imperialists-and.html>

Photo of 'Ayn ul-Mulk (son of Mirza Reza Qannad Shírází), who was a companion of Shoghi Effendi and the father of former Iranian Prime Minister Amir 'Abbas Hoveyda. He was the ambassador of Iran to Saudi Arabia and an important figure for the British occupying forces.

Some more details here:

<https://iranbahaipersecution.bic.org/archive/tebyan-cultural-institute-biography-hoveyda>

An open letter to Sir Abbas Effendi



Shuaullah The Grandson of Bah'a'ullah The Flag bearer of Baha'i faith to India and Egypt.

Shuaullah was Son of Mohammed Ali Effendi (son of Bah'a'ullah) and grandson of Bah'a'ullah he was born in Kasr-el-Mazraa, Accre district, Palestine in 1878 A.D. and grew up under the supervision of his Holy grandfather Bah'a'ullah. At the tender age of eleven years he was commended by his Grandfather Bah'a'ullah to accompany his father to Egypt and India for propagation of faith, he travelled extensively along with his father to India and Egypt, in his youth he suffered the loss of his beloved grandfather Bah'a'ullah, and got a shock of life by seeing his uncle Sir Abbas Effendi started preaching his commandments and kept aside the teaching of Baha'u'llah.

After Abdul Baha ex-communicated prominent Baha'is like Dr. Ibrahim Khairullah, the rift and conflict arose amongst the followers of American Baha'is while Sir Abbas Effendi was busy in issuing tablets to his supporter. The Noble son of Bah'a'ullah Mohammed Ali Effendi took the responsibility of teaching the faith. He instructed his eldest son Shuaullah to go to America and continue teachings of Bah'a'ullah. In 1904 Shuaullah left for America for the sole purpose of teaching faith. He started a Baha'i quarterly magazine and was busy in propagating the faith of his noble grandfather, while he was in California his uncle Sir Abbas Effendi saw that he is losing ground in western believers so he also made a trip to USA to propagate his own self made ideology. Shuaullah wrote HIS MEMORIES after his returned to Acre (the scan copy is available on internet) here I am quoting his conversation with his Uncle Sir Abbas effendi.

During 1912 while my Uncle Abdul Baha was visiting the United States by the authority of my father, I humbly wrote him a letter and asked him for a conference to settle the existing differences in our cause. I hereby reproduce the copy of the same;

“To His excellency Abbas Effendi Abdul Baha.” Dear Sir, *Inasmuch as your views and doctrines in our religion are radically different from those of my father, your younger brother, Mohammed Ali Effendi who was chosen by God in the Book of My covenant, the Last will of Bah'a'ullah, to occupy after you the same position you occupy now: And inasmuch as this difference between both of you spread among the followers of Bah'a'ullah and divided them into two parties; one following you and believing in your personal teachings, and the other party joined your brother believing in the teaching of Bah'a'ullah only and considering them final as he declared; And, inasmuch as we were all commanded in the “Most Sacred Book” Kitab Aqdas, to bring our differences to the utterance of Bah'a'ullah, which sufficed the world, whereby they should be settled: And inasmuch as our duty is to established peace at home, among ourselves first, before we preach others to do so. I hereby beg your Excellency to appoint a conference of peace and spirituality to hold its meetings at the city of Chicago, or some other place, at a certain time, in order to discuss with the language of love and kindness the differences between the said two parties and settle them in accord with the utterance of Bah'a'ullah and His Commandments. If it pleases you the said conference would be composed of your Excellency with some learned ones of your followers, myself and Dr. I. G. Kheiralla, who introduced Baha'ism into America and Christendom with a few of our party. My father Ghusni Akbar, authorized me to state, that he will accept and sanction whatever your Excellency would established with me and with his representative Dr. I.G. Kheiralla. The official language of said conference well be the U.S. language, a neutral interpreter should be hired to translate from Arabic language all that you would like to say and in the mean time to translate to you all the discussions of the conference. Also to ask the associated press to send a reporter to write the minutes of the conference, and to invite three American to attend the meetings and act as witnesses and judges.*

I suggest the question and discussions to be the following;

1. *Why your Excellency concealed a part of the book of My Covenant, the Will of Bah'a'ullah..? that Will was entrusted to you that you might give all of it to the followers of Bah'a'ullah.*
2. *Ghusn Akbar was chosen to occupy after you the same position which you occupy, and your Excellency claimed that he was out off and fell. How is it possible that he fell from the said position before having a chance to occupy it.*
3. *What ground you have to claim that you are the Center of Covenant..? God only is the center of covenant.*
4. *Why do you claim to be the interpreter of the Utterances of Bah'a'ullah...? He declared in the book of wisdom that there is no Interpreter to them, save Himself.*
5. *How could it be that you are the manifestation of servitude and Bah'a'ullah declared it to himself only...? Also he taught there are no manifestations after Him until one thousand years passed from His appearance.*
6. *Why do you claim the great Infallibility calling your letters sacred tablets and revelations..? Bah'a'ullah said; Whosoever claimeth a mission before the completion of one thousand years from His manifestation is a lying imposter.*
7. *Why do you teach that this greatest Manifestation has three Chiefs, the Bab, Bah'a'ullah and Yourself..? Bah'a'ullah said: There is no one else beside him in the Kingdom. Likewise the Bible taught that at the*

latter days we shall have one shepherd, only one chief and not three. Also Bah'a'ullah said: he hath no agent, no successor; and no son."
8. *Why do you claim and in the same breath deny that which you claim..?* 10. *Why do you not teach and spread the teachings of Bah'a'ullah as you were commanded to do, instead of spreading you own one..?*

I close this open letter, appealing to your Excellency by justice, love and unity to grant my request. Your humble servant, **The Grandson of Bah'a'ullah, Shuaullah.**

I forwarded the above mentioned letter to Abdul Baha to Chicago where he was visiting but unfortunately I did not receive a reply. When I heard of Abdul Baha's arrival to California, I addressed him the said letter again, this time through the press as an open letter, a copy of the same appeared in several Newspaper throughout the United States.

A reporter from the Los Angeles, Examiner interviewed Abdul Baha and the following reply appears In the said Newspaper; October 20th 1912
"Would you listen to the talk of the drunkard in the street" Reporter asked "do you class your nephew as one no better than a drunkard..? Abdul Baha Replied:- "Worse"

Conclusion Here comes the question: **Why Sir Abbas Effendi was not ready to answer his nephew..? What was there in Will and Testament of Bah'a'ullah which he was hiding from the followers..? Why Sir Abbas Effendi has kept aside the teaching of Prophet of faith, was he thinking that the teachings are absurd, or he was looking for some fame for himself? Why he made such a long trip to United States and Europe, and ex-communicated those who propagated faith in those country, and avoided the open challenged made by his Nephew for debate.**

Answer:- 1. He wanted to have fame and glory for himself, he was fooling around to simple followers of Baha'u'llah, and were making some fake prophesies to impress them, (like Prophecy: of Daniel 1335 days and made such complicated that the Book Baha'u'llah and New Era has to be revised thrice). Ref. Baha'u'llah and New Era. And prophecies like there will be 24 successors in Baha'i Faith, whereas Shoghi Effendi died childless. 2. The ground was prepared In the US by the faithful like Dr. I.G Khairullah and he went to ripe the fruits. They should not have objected to his lucrative business so he ex-communicated them. 3. To please them he issued a Tablet in praise of country O God! This American nation is worthy of Thy favors and is deserving of Thy mercy. Make it precious and near to Thee through Thy bounty and bestowal. 4. It was as simple as that, the American faithful where not aware about writing of Baha'u'llah, since it was in Arabic and Persian, no one could object him about his talk which was in absolute contrast to the teachings of Baha'u'llah. 5. He was praising them like: they are angel, To Juliet Thompson He said. "You teach well, Juliet," He said. "You teach with ecstasy. You ignite the souls. A great bounty will descend upon you. I have perfect confidence in you as a teacher. Your heart is pure, absolutely pure." 6. The main man who raised the flag of Baha'i faith in United States (Dr. I.G Khairullah) was ex-communicated.

Gamal Naseer

Shoghi Effendi

- [Shoghi Effendi's properties in Iran](#)
- [Lineage of Guardianship in Baha'i Faith](#)
- [Shoghi Effendi contradicts Abdu'l-Baha](#)
- [Excommunication By Shoghi Effendi](#)
- [Why Shoghi Effendi did not appoint his successor ??](#)
- [Shoghi Effendi used the money of Charity to go to Oxford university.- Ruth White](#)
- [Was Shoghi Effendi gay?](#)
- [Why didn't Shoghi Effendi repudiate this RACIST article in the Baha'i World?](#)
- [Writings of Shoghi Effendi concerning the Will and Testament](#)

Why Iranian people does not like the Baha'i Faith?

There are a number of reasons:

1- In the middle of the eighteenth century a man called the Bab started making messianic claims in Iran. His laws were a mixture of extreme forms of violence and forced child marriage:

After his followers caused a great deal of mischief in Iran, he was executed and three civil wars ensued with his followers who were trying to implement his laws in Iran. Luckily the government crushed the fanatics. Baha'is greatly revere this man and pay tribute to him by celebrating his birthday and visiting his shrine.

2- After the Babis were crushed by the government, the remaining Babi leaders plotted to assassinate the Shah of Iran. All were executed except for one bloke by the name of Mirza husayn Ali Nuri, AKA, Baha'u'llah, the founder of Baha'ism. He was saved due to threats by the Russians of laying Iran to ruins:

Today Baha'is continuously spread propaganda against Iran claiming that they have historically been persecuted in Iran, while historically their leaders were a violent people who caused much mischief and suffering for the Iran populace. These are only a few of the reasons that Baha'is have a bad reputation in Iran.

How many wives and children did Baha'u'llah have ?

House of Abbud On pilgrimage in April 2006: . . . Our guide recounted how Abdu'l Baha, upon Baha'u'llah's mention of not having seen a green blade of grass for such a long time procured the mansion of Mazraeh and Baha'u'llah moved there together with his second and third wife and their children. Navvab and her children stayed in Akka until her death. Thereafter Baha'u'llah gave her the title of his eternal companion in all the worlds of God, whereas the other two women and their children ended as covenant breakers at a later date. **I think this constitutes grave injustice.** Prior to pilgrimage I had known about the second wife and I had heard a hint about the third one. I knew of the official excuse that the second wife was the widow of a martyr and Baha'u'llah was obliged, due to family ties, to protect her according to Islamic Law. I learned that apparently the situation with the third wife was similar. She was needed to help in the household in Baghdad and it was deemed socially impossible to have her in the house as a helper without marrying her. She had a child with Baha'u'llah, stayed behind in Baghdad at first and only later came to the Holy Land. Many years later Shoghi Effendi (Baha'u'llah's great-grandson) tenaciously contradicted rumors of her having been a mistress and confirmed his grandfather had had three equal and legal wives. Nevertheless, virtually nothing is known of her. I also had heard about the children from those unions and their later break with the community. In Akka however I was struck with the reality of the facts. The Bab had already proclaimed the equality between women and men. Baha'u'llah was a Babi. It would have to be expected that he would follow Babi Law. The conference of Badasht (when Babi law was set in force) preceded the second marriage. This is to say that the will of God with regards to the equality between men and women was known by then. **Conference of Badasht:** *One Islamic law was abrogated during each day of the conference* After the Báb's arrest in 1848, Bahá'u'lláh made arrangements for Táhirih to leave Tehran and attend a conference of Bábí leaders in Badasht. She is perhaps best remembered for appearing in public without her veil in the course of this conference signaling that the Islamic Sharia law was abrogated and superseded by Bábí law. It was at the Badasht conference that she was given the title Táhirih which means "the Pure One". Furthermore it seems evident that especially polygamy is profoundly incongruent with equality between the sexes. A man can protect a woman, even in the eyes of the world integrate her as a wife into his household without consummating the marriage and making her pregnant. Perhaps she would have had a chance to find another man at a later date and most importantly, she would not have been likely to be declared a covenant breaker. Here the question must be raised what the woman should have been protected from – Yes, perhaps her life would have been harder, poverty, prostitution, bondage – but what is worse than being declared an enemy of God? – Perhaps she would have preferred even the most miserable fate to this condemnation. I at least would have felt like that. How can a living human being be an antagonist to God? This is impossible. I can't see it that a living human being with body, beating heart, hunger, thirst and need for comfort can ever fit this description, not even if she or he would exhibit the most sinful, reckless, irresponsible, malevolent etc. attributes. A human being doesn't have the stature nor the nature to do that. The simplest proof is that a human being will die, cannot and will not continue to live against the will of God. A human being is a talisman for creation and in his or her entirety a reflection of God. To judge a single human to be an antithesis to God equals calling creation evil. What was the situation that Baha'u'llah put the second and third wife into by the consummation of their marriage? – They had to experience him from an angle different from everyone else. For everyone else he was revered prophet who taught about righteousness and how to live a good life, but for them he was the perpetrator against the very law he proclaimed. I feel that with these consummated marriages Baha'u'llah broke the trust with all of us women. But I feel betrayed not only as a woman but as a human being, not only because he consummated those marriages but because his action led to such strife that the women and the children were later ostracized as covenant breakers. By definition he was to be regarded as a manifestation of God, infallible in all his words and actions. I felt as if he had destroyed my trust and my love for God. We must assume, since Tahirih had been an avid teacher, all women associated with the new teachings would have been aware of the new law of equality between women and men. They must have felt the impact, especially the ones in direct contact with the Babi movement. Their spirits would have been raised the first time for centuries. What relief for the souls trapped in women's bodies after the long centuries of injustice and suppression. And then Baha'u'llah humiliated them again, again pushed them back into the old dark abyss. He didn't take equality seriously. He didn't enact it, wasn't a shining example. Was there outrage? Probably not. Not for a long time. Most likely it was just a silent collapse, a shadow cast over the radiance of the face, a dimming of the brightness in the eyes. But who would have noticed? – Perhaps not even the women themselves. It was safer not to notice, what good would it have been to become aware. The centuries-old conditioning would have set in and any potential outrage was suppressed. The result, as with all suppression, is emotional imbalance, aggression and discontent as we know it from the second and the third wife. Or else, suppression can lead to saintly renunciation, self-denial and asceticism as is known from Navvab and the Greatest Holy Leaf. The denial of the women's truth is still happening today. I also succumbed to it in the beginning of my Baha'i life. Most Baha'i I know, don't look behind the story. – Those women and children are effectively excluded from our awareness, they don't belong to us, we think we are different, we think they are "the others" and we have no compassion for them. **The women's hurt feelings must have transferred to the children. The children originated in unlawful unions, they were not responsible for the situation they were born into. They were innocent of the family atmosphere of injustice, jealousy and hostility. But as a consequence they were burdened with the terrible weight of breaking the Covenant of God. It's the heaviest load I can imagine for a human soul. It's incomprehensible. A religion, proclaiming to bring unity to mankind, creates within its own central family scores of covenant breakers. And the cause for such conflict is Baha'u'llah's own disregard for the new law and Abdu'l Baha's subsequent judgment, which heavily condemned the victims of the injustice for their opposition and lack of co-operation.** It is like adding injury to insult. Imagine you are being attacked and hurt and when you scream in protest you are judged and sentenced for rebellion. Instead of receiving an apology you receive exclusion from the community and a label that says you are the antithesis of God. **This is madness.** <https://web.archive.org/web/20080517161701/http://bahaiblog1919.blogspot.com/>

Baha'i Views on Polygamy

There is different law for master and the servant. Baha'i adherents have been (formally) asked to be in monogamous relationship but their master Baha'u'llah officially had 3 wives **1** .

1. Baha'ullah married his first wife, Ásíyih Khánum, in 1835.
2. He married his second wife, Fatimih, in 1849.
3. He married his third wife, Gawhar, in 1862.

Footnotes

Hindus, Muslims converting to Baha'i faith in India: The Game of Conversions, Changing Religions

The lady's surname was Patel but she was not a Hindu. She was a Bahai, member of a faith, who believe in Baha'ullah

There were Mishra, Patil and Ghosh. All of them were Bahais. People with seeming Muslim names also.

That was quite confusing initially because of our notions that we associate surnames to religion.

They were born in Hindu, Muslim families but recently turned to Bahaism.

As far as Indians are concerned, what we know about the Bahais is that their most prominent place of worship in this country is the Lotus Temple in Delhi. But apart from this, most of us generally have no clue about Bahais and their religion.

That the Bahais, wherever they live, have a feast every 19 days and that they assemble at the local Haziratul Quds, is also not known commonly. In every city they have a local spiritual assembly. But when you see a Siddiqui or a Sharma as Bahai, what you make out of it?

Hindu, Muslim converts to Bahai religion

That confuses many of us. Because in India, we associate names and surnames with religions. If someone is Rahmat Ali, he ought to be a Muslim and Ramesh Joshi should be a Hindu. Some Christians have Hindi/ Sanskrit/ Arabic names but most of the people can be identified.

Even Jains are often distinguishable due to their surnames—either Jain or Khandelwal/Shah/Kasliwal/Singhai etc. I find many Hindu and Muslim converts to Bahai faith. The Bahais are under intense religious persecution in Iran.

This is a fact. They are not allowed to run schools and kept under state surveillance. That's really unfair. Many, in India, consider them as a sect of Muslims, which they are not—an independent religion. Bahai population is growing quite fast in India though they are not flexing muscles about their population.

Hiding faith: Not too open about conversion, growing figures as yet!

I have met a few Bahais here and there. Recently, at a programme, to highlight their issues in Iran, a journalist got irked with Bahais. 'You hide your identity', he charged them at a gathering they organised to raise the issue of Baha'i persecution in Iran.

"We don't", they said. The journo asked, 'If you believe in all religions equally then why you convert others?', the debate continued. I don't have any thing against Bahais.

If anyone wants to get converted to the faith, he has every right to do so. What I didn't exactly like are incidents like the recent marriage of a Muslim orphan girl to a Bahai family of Muslim names.

The organisers, all of whom were highly educated, deliberately mispronounced the name of the girl and hid her surname to conceal that she was a Muslim. At orphanages such things do happen routinely. As far as preaching to an adult is concerned, I am not much interested but incidents like this one are disturbing.

The Bahais claim to have followers in every country except Vatican. However, their claims of numbers seem exaggerated. In India they claim a population of 20 lakh [2 million] and tens of millions in the world. I don't think these are correct.

But it is quite clear that the Bahai faith may not be growing too fast in Europe and America, but in India, Bahai missionaries are quite active. They are working in rural areas also. However, at state level, there is no recognition of this religion as yet.

Christian and Sikhs have also converted. Among the biggest converts, however, are Parsis [Indian Zoroastrians]. Perhaps, this is because its a new faith that brings a new energy for them, and Parsis who are turned outcast after marriage with a non-Parsi, adopt this faith, which also comes from their ancestors' land—Persia [Iran].

Why Bahaullah had three wives? And Why Abdul Baha advocate monogamy?

After years of practice, promotion and belief in the Bahai Faith, I ran into a book that stated the fact that **Bahaullah was polygamist with three**



wives. I could not believe this. I dug more. An explanation from Shoghi Effendi was not convincing. Shoghi stated that Bahaullah was practicing his old Islamic faith and the practice of his old homeland, as Jesus was a Jew before Christianity. The explanation was not convincing for two reasons:

Bahaullah's first marriage happened prior to the so-called "Babi Dispensation." However, the second marriage took place after the Babi Dispensation, after the Bab supposedly nullified polygamy, and after Bahaullah's attendance in the "Badasht Conference" declaring nullification of Islamic laws and beginning of Babi laws. The third marriage took place in Baghdad, after he himself supposedly became a prophet.

The "practice of his old homeland" of polygamy is not that accurate. 19th Century Persians — unlike Arabs — did not customarily or by large practice polygamy, except for among rare wealthy individuals.

I found very many other discrepancies in Bahaism. One other related one is the fact that the Book of Aqdas allows bigamy, while Abdul-Baha tried to cover the practice by promoting monogamy and innovating "equality of men and women."

Another discrepancy is the general Bahai belief that Bahaullah did not have basic education, and what he acquired was a miracle (like Jesus). This is untrue. He was a son of nobility and did have better education than others.

Reference : <http://www.bahai-faith.com/ex-Bahai-1.html>

Abdul Baha

- [Israel, grateful for the contributions of the Bahá'is.](#)
- [Abdul Baha: Canine teeth are for hard shells such as almonds](#)
- [Was Abdul Baha Beloved of God ?](#)
- [What did Abdul Baha think about Africa and African People ?!](#)
- [Abdul Baha was a Racist !!!](#)
- [Physics according to Abdul Baha :In Baha'i Faith the Sun is Fixed!!!](#)
- [Truth Behind Will and Testament of Abdul Baha](#)
- [Infallibility and Scientific Knowledge of Abdul Baha!!](#)
- [The Secret activities of Abdul Baha](#)
- [Abdul Baha regularly attended mosques!!](#)

What will be the food of the future? — Baha'u'llah v/s Abdu'l-Baha

“What will be the food of the future?” “Fruit and grains. The time will come when meat will no longer be eaten. Medical science is only in its infancy, yet it has shown that our natural diet is that which grows out of the ground. The people will gradually develop up to the condition of this natural food.”—Abdul Baha, in response to a question

After reading this I just kind of begrudgingly accepted that the Baha'i Faith advocates vegetarianism. But a few weeks later I found this quote by Baha'u'llah:

“Eat ye of that which God hath made lawful unto you and do not shun meat. God hath, as a token of His grace, granted you leave to partake thereof save during a brief period. He, verily, is the Mighty, the Beneficent. Forsake all that ye possess and hold fast unto that which God hath purposed”—Baha'u'llah

After finding out Baha'u'llah said this, I became viscerally upset at Abdul Baha for teaching against this. I began to question if he was really infallible.

Leader of Baha'i Faith – Abbas Effendi was an Agent of Britishers in Palestine

*Plans were also made for the handling of agents during the advance. Alexander Aaronsohn in Advanced Intelligence prepared a list of potential agents in Zichron Ya'akov and in nearby Arab villages whom he believed could be recruited once the EEF arrived and sent forward to obtain real-time information. Aaronsohn also made a second list of Jews and Arabs who might assist in counterespionage missions, and a third which named suspects to be detained and houses billeting enemy headquarters considered worth searching. He also singled out several Bahai notables in Haifa and in Zahla, Lebanon, including the leader of the Bahais, 'Abbas Effendi, who would be willing to collaborate with the arriving British. He even received a password from a local Bahai which could serve as a 'useful introduction'.**

*CAB 314: 115B, GS, memo, App. 11 to 'Report and Appendices of an Enquiry by the Standing Sub-Committee of the CID with the Responsibility of the Navy and the Army for the Defence of the Suez Canal', 2 June 1910; WO 106/212: Hoskins to WO, 2 June 1910; WO 106/211: GS, Army of Occupation, Major A. Solly-Flood probably to DMI (Cairo), 22 Aug. 1910.

(Yigal Sheffy, *British Military Intelligence in the Palestine Campaign, 1914–1918*, Routledge (1998))

For more information : Visit :

<https://www.routledge.com/British-Military-Intelligence-in-the-Palestine-Campaign-1914-1918/Sheffy/p/book/9781138873605>

Five clear lies of ‘the most great Hypocrite’ Abdul Baha

In this article I want to point out some of the predictions of the so called ‘Great Baha’i Leader’ Abdu’l Baha which never came true. All those predictions proved that he was a Fraud and a Great Liar.

Abdu’l Baha narrated in the book “Some Answered Questions” (Mofavezat) in the Chapter 11: Commentary on the Eleventh Chapter of the Revelation of St. John, page No.29 & 30.

“In each cycle the guardian and holy souls have been twelve. So Jacob had twelve sons; in the time of Moses there were heads or chiefs of the tribes; in the time of Christ there were twelve Apostles; and in the time of Mohammad there were twelve Imams. ”

It is clear from the above that Abdu’l Baha believed that the successors of the past prophets were twelve in number and the successors of Baha’u’llah will be Twenty Four as the manifestation of Baha’u’llah is a glorious manifestation. Abdu’l Baha himself was the first successor and he himself appointed the second successor and the guardian of Baha’i Faith in his life time to Shoghi Effendi. He has written in “Will and Testament” in many places in different manner. He has stated very clearly about the guardianship and different stations of Shoghi Effendi in his Will. Among all those stations the very important station is the Permanent Headship of the Universal House of Justice. Means the Universal House of Justice will always be headed by the Guardian of the faith. And remaining twenty two guardians, who will succeed to Shoghi Effendi, will be from the male children of Shoghi Effendi. Refer the Will and Testament of Abdu’l Baha:

“O my loving friends! After the passing away of this wronged one, it is incumbent upon the Aghsan (Branches), the Afian (Twigs) of the Sacred Lote-Tree, the Hands (pillars) of the Cause of God and the loved ones of the Abha Beauty to turn unto Shoghi Effendi—the youthful branch branched from the two hallowed and sacred Lote-Trees and the fruit grown from the union of the two offshoots of the Tree of Holiness,—as he is the sign of God, the chosen branch, the Guardian of the Cause of God, he unto whom all the Aghsan, the Afian, the Hands of the Cause of God and His loved ones must turn. He is the Interpreter of the Word of God and after him will succeed the first-born of his lineal descendents.

The sacred and youthful branch, the Guardian of the Cause of God, as well as the Universal House of Justice to be universally elected and established, are both under the care and protection of the Abha Beauty, under the shelter and unerring guidance of the Exalted One (may my life be offered up for them both). Whatsoever they decide is of God. Whoso obeyeth him not; neither obeyeth them, hath not obeyed God; whoso rebelleth against him and against them hath rebelled against God... The mighty stronghold shall remain impregnable and safe through obedience to him who is the Guardian of the Cause of God. It is incumbent upon the members of the House of Justice, upon all the Aghsan, the Afian, the Hands of the Cause of God to show their obedience, submissiveness and subordination unto the Guardian of the Cause of God, to turn unto him and be lowly before him. He that opposeth him hath opposed the True One, will make a breach in the Cause of God...

O ye beloved of the Lord! It is incumbent upon the Guardian of the Cause of God to appoint in his own life-time him that shall become his successor that differences may not arise after his passing. He that is appointed must manifest in himself detachment from all worldly things, must be the essence of purity, must show in himself the fear of God, knowledge, wisdom and learning. Thus, should the first-born of the Guardian of the Cause of God not manifest in himself the truth of the words:—“The child is the secret essence of its sire,” that is, should he not inherit of the spiritual within him (the Guardian of the Cause of God) and his glorious lineage not be matched with a goodly character, then must he, (the Guardian of the Cause of God) choose another branch to succeed him. The Hands of the Cause of God must elect from their own number nine persons that shall at all times be occupied in the important services in the work of the Guardian of the Cause of God. The election of these nine must be carried either unanimously or by majority from the company of the Hands of the Cause of God and these, whether unanimously or by a majority vote, must give their assent to the choice of the one whom the Guardian of the Cause of God hath chosen as his successor.

This assent must be given in such wise as the assenting and dissenting voices may not be distinguished (i.e., secret ballot).

By paying attention to the above writings of Abdu’l Baha it is clear that all these things are the hidden news (Akhbar e Ghaibi) from Abdu’l Baha as well as the constitution of the Baha’i Faith. The following results can be derived from the above text:

That in the life time of Shoghi Effendi who was the Guardian after Abdu’l Baha, the Universal House of Justice will be established. And it must be established. That the Head of the Universal House of justice will be Shoghi Effendi and the members of UHJ who are the pillars of the cause of God should obey Shoghi Effendi and whoever disobeys him, disobeys the God. And Shoghi will rule over the Universal House of Justice while all the member of UHJ will be under him. Means Shoghi had the right of dictatorship. **That Shoghi will have a male child and his child will also have male child. Progeny of Shoghi will continue. Guardianship after Shoghi Effendi will be fixed by his Will and it is incumbent upon him to appoint guardian in his life time.** That the guardianship must be in the male child of Shoghi Effendi means he should have first child as male and not the female (Because the women are having no right to be the member of Universal House of Justice then how they can be the head of the UHJ). And if his glorious lineage not be matched with a goodly character then must he (the guardian of Cause of God) choose another branch of Baha’u’llah (Aghsan) to succeed him.

God proved all these forecast wrong.

Firstly: Shoghi Effendi died and Universal House of Justice could not be established. He died in the year 1957 in London and UHJ was established in the year 1963. This was the first lie of Abdu’l Baha.

Secondly: There should be a head of the Universal House of Justice and must be the Guardian of Cause of God. Universal House of Justice of Haifa established without the guardian. This was the second lie of Abdu’l Baha.

This was the time when Baha'is divided into different sects. Charles Mason Remey proclaimed himself the second guardian of the Baha'i Faith and wrote to Baha'i World that the Universal House of Justice should be established in his (Charles Mason Remey) guardianship. After his demise, group of Mason Remey divided into many groups but a major group of Remey is spread throughout the world and even in India. Head of this group Joel Bray Marangella lives in Australia. Many people have claimed as successor of Remey. Internet is the best source to know the details.

Thirdly:

Fourthly: Shoghi Effendi died without appointing his successor. Thus the disputes started among the Baha'is. Some of them like the goats and sheep attached with them, and gave their milk and skins to the Haifa and some of them scattered here and there and some of them joined Mason Remey, Jamsheed Maani, Neal Chase, Joel Marangella, Jacques Soghomonian and others. Presently there are seven or eight sects of Baha'is. Shoghi died without appointing his successor. This was the fourth lie of Abdu'l Baha.

In short the Wills of Abdu'l Baha humiliated and insulted him completely after about 45 years and made clear to everybody that he was a fraud and a big liar. All his commandments about Shoghi Effendi remained aside and establishment of Universal House of Justice caused the disputes and sects instead of unity and peace.

Surely God punishes and humiliates the liars.

Abdu'l Baha forecasted twenty four successors of Baha'u'llah. It ended with the first successor only. This was the fifth lie of Abdu'l Baha.

Fazil-i-Mazanderani in his book "Amr-u-Khalq" tried to darn and justify the fifth lie of Abdu'l Baha and wrote:

"The twenty four holy souls which are "Adilla-i-Isma'il-Azan" are 19 souls, 18 Huruf-i-Hayy (Letters of Living) and one is Primal Point (Bab) and five souls are hidden in Malakoot-i-Asrar. Wisdom demands not to mention it. It will be mentioned later.

(The title "Letters of the Living" (Huruf-i-Hayy) is used specifically to refer to the first eighteen followers of the Bab who became believers in his Revelation. Abdu'l Baha and Shoghi Effendi are not from Letters of Living).

It is surprising that Fazil e Mazanderani had included the Bab and eighteen Huruf-i-Hayy among the twenty four successors of Baha'u'llah while according to Baha'is Bab himself was a Manifestation. He was the Forerunner of Baha'u'llah. His advent was before Baha'u'llah and his cycle was ended before him.

Why he had hidden Abdu'l Baha and Shoghi Effendi along with those five souls? We do not know who will inform to the Baha'i World about those three souls after the death of Fazil-i-Mazanderani? In fact darning the words of Abdu'l Baha is to lessen the eloquence of the words of Abdu'l Baha.

Anyway from the above it is clear that whatever Abdu'l Baha forecasted all those forecasting became the cause of his humiliation. And guardianship could not continue even after the darning and justifications of Fazil-i-Mazanderani. **Today Baha'is are fighting in this matter.**

I hope the callers of "Independence Investigation of Truth" will independently investigate the truth.

“The black man must be grateful to the white man”-Abdul Baha

Here is ‘Abdu’l-Baha (Exemplar and Interpreter of the Baha’i Faith) speaking about Blacks:

“The black man must ever be grateful to the white man, for he has manifested great courage and self-sacrifice for the black race.”



Promulgation of Universal Peace, p.111

“If man is left in his natural state, he will become lower than the animal and continue to grow more ignorant and imperfect. The savage African tribes of central Africa are evidences of this.”

Promulgation of Universal Peace, p.308

“If we study human beings such as the aboriginal tribes of central Africa, who have been reared in complete subjection to nature’s rule, we will find them deficient indeed. They are without religious education; neither do they give evidences of any advance toward civilization. They have simply grown and developed in the natural plane of barbarism. We find them bloodthirsty, immoral and cannibalistic in type to such an extent that they even kill and devour each other.”

Promulgation of Universal Peace, p.399

“The inhabitants of a country like Africa are all as wandering savages and wild animals; they lack intelligence and knowledge; all are uncivilized; not one civilized and wise man is to be found among them. On the contrary, consider the civilized countries, the inhabitants of which are living in the highest state of culture and ethics, solidarity and inter-dependence; possessing, with few exceptions, acute power of comprehensions and sound mind.”

Tablets of ‘Abdu’l-Baha, p.576

The Founders of the Baha’i Faith are The Bab and Baha’u’llah. Both of Them owned black slaves; although Baha’u’llah forbade the practice of slavery among His folowers in 1874.

The Bab bought and sold black people who were forced to serve; whether they wanted to or not. They called their Masters by the Persian term for “Master”. They couldn’t do anything without their master’s permission. They were “slaves”; in any language you choose to use. It is not I am trying to rewrite history! **Rather, the NSA of the U.S. tried to get the book that reveals this (*Black Pearls* by Afnan—a descendants of The Bab) “quieted” and “covered-up”. Thankfully, Anthony Lee (the black publisher of Kalimat Press) didn’t listen to them**

The argument that ‘Abdu’l-Baha could NOT have considered Africans inferior in intelligence “because” He dedicated His life to Race Unity doesn’t follow. He considered mankind a Family. Even in families, some children are more intelligent than others. I’m not saying I think blacks are (in general) less intelligent. I’m saying that ‘Abdu’l-Baha may have thought so. Isfandiyar was not the only slave/servant of Baha’u’llah—there were _many_ more.

Darrick Evenson

Neil Chase – the Great Grandson of Abdul Baha

U.K Baha'i Activities from 1936 – 1985

INTERNATIONAL GOALS COMMITTEE

In this last phase of the Seven Year Plan, the Universal House of Justice has called for 386 pioneers to be sent by 44 National Spiritual Assemblies to 94 national communities. Our part in this great spiritual drama is to send 24 pioneers to 11 countries.

Since Ridvan 1984 four souls have already arisen and moved to their pioneer posts. Our remaining goals are shown below.

Remaining U.K. Goals, January 1985	Pioneer
Cyprus	3
The Gambia	2
Ghana	2
Sierra Leone	1
Seychelles	1
St. Vincent	2
British Virgin Islands	1
Sri Lanka	1
Venda	3
Malta	4

"Upon our efforts depends in very large measure the fate of humanity", we have been told by the Universal House of Justice. Could you arise to pioneer?

If you are considering pioneering, to one of our goals, or to any other

PIONEER GOAL - VENDA

Venda, an Independent Republic since 1979, is a tiny country surrounded by South Africa's Transvaal Province. It is a very beautiful country, generally very fertile. Venda straddles the Soutpansberg mountain range and has an attractive sub-tropical climate.

Its 500,000 people are largely rural farmers, though Venda also has agricultural, forestry, mining and manufacturing industries. Very generous Government assistance is given to those wishing to establish a business in Venda.

Venda has a University, 3 teacher training colleges, and 57 secondary schools. It also has 5 hospitals, a nursing college and 47 clinics.

There is a very great need for pioneers to Venda, preferably Persians, to take the Message of Baha'u'llah to the people of Venda before they are attracted to leave their peaceful rural life for the incredible hardships and devastating materialism of the South African cities.

Please contact IGC Pioneering Secretary for more details

TRAVEL TEACHING: IGC is organising another Easter travel teaching project, this year a 5-day trip to Holland. There will also be a travel teaching project to Belgium to coincide with the European Youth Conference at Antwerp, 26-29 July. Details from IGC Travel Teaching Secretary, Miss Taraneh Majidi, 15 Bolton Road, Harrow, Middx., (Tel. 01 863 6704)

"Neither the threatening world situation, nor any consideration of lack of material resources, of mental equipment, of knowledge, or of experience - desirable as they are - should deter any prospective pioneer teacher from arising..."

Shoghi Effendi

OPPORTUNITIES FOR TEACHERS

Job opportunities for qualified teachers:
UGANDA - Int. School, Kampala, basic salary
SRI LANKA, GHANA, and CHINA - 21 positions in all, local salaries
Details: IGC Pioneering
There are sometimes opportunities for English Teachers to teach in private language institutes in different towns in Greece.

As some Baha'is may be

An Open Letter to Universal House of Justice

SUBJECT: Persecution of Persian Baha'is in at the Highest Seat of Baha'i Administration

Dear Esteemed Members of Universal House of Justice

Paul Lample

Payman Mohajer

Shahriar Razavi

Stephen Birkland

Stephen Hall

Ayman Rouhani

Chuungu Malitonga

Juan Francisco Mora

Praveen Mallik

It saddens me to write this letter to the esteemed members. Members, who collectively are supposed to be infallible in their decisions. For quite some time, some of the decisions of the members are being viewed as being with a targeted agenda –cleansing the Bahai Administration of Persian Baha'is' very silent callous Racism and fanaticism is engulfing the whole of Bahai Community. The Persian Bahais are being persecuted in which ever land they pioneered and surprisingly the Universal House of Justice is mock spectator to this persecution.

One could argue that these steps are seen with prejudice. However, when sequence of similar actions is witnessed the benefit of doubt reduces.

Let us one by one see such incidences to conclude whether it is co-incidence or otherwise:

1. Recently a prominent Heterodox Baha'i, **Omid Seioshansian**, who was born in Qatar, was blacklisted in Qatar. Government authorities in the country have levelled criminal and national security charges against him. Mr. Omid now will face severe penalties in Qatar's judicial system. And will be denied entry.

Although Bani Duggal, the BIC's Principal Representative to the United Nations, said that "the Baha'i International Community is saddened that the State of Qatar has chosen to expel members of a community that has peacefully coexisted in and contributed to the progress of the country", the silence of UHJ has raised concerns. Many prominent Bahais are of the opinion that UHJ is behind the expelling of Omid as they are in cleansing process of Persian Bahais and Omid a high ranking Persian Bahai in Bahai Administration, who has an eye on selection to UHJ. He has a lot of cloud in countries like India.

- Another high ranking Persian Bahai, a counsellor, **Dr. Jabbar Eidelkhani** who had served for many years in Bangladesh was also removed from his post and a very insignificant Indian Bahai was asked to step in his shoes. Was this part of a strategy?
 - Another Persian background lady, a former counsellor and member of NSA of India, **Mrs Zeena Sorabjee**, was asked to resign/retire from NSA after being elected on NSA. Fate accompli?
 - A prominent Bahai of the USA, Mr. **Bahareh Moghaddam** has been accused of trying to deceive and misguide the Bahais of Iranian descent by sowing seeds of discord. UHJ just watched silently.
 - **Mr. Ali Nakhjavani** was hunted for his misunderstood statement resulting into ignorant Bahais daring to ask him that why he gave such statement. UHJ could have defended in this situation.
 - The case of Bahai Scholar **Ahang Rabbani** has not been forgotten. After working for 15 years at the World Centre, he was heartbroken. UHJ had no comfort to offer.
 - **Jamshed Fozdar and Firoz Anaki** were on the brink of being declared Covenant Breakers but some better reasoning prevailed on UHJ and they stopped from doing such an atrocious act. Both these gentlemen have bitterness still.
 - The Late Mr. Hasan Sabri along with Isabella Sabri **made fun of Persian Bahais** and used to call them KHAR (donkey) and used to say that Persian Bahais are misguiding other Bahais. There are several other such incidences of rebuke. UHJ conveniently ignores these. They use to say Panchami is the centre of deviation.
 - The number of **Persian Bahais as counsellors have come down drastically** and the story is not different for the ABMs. They were asked to leave their place of pioneer (where they had established themselves, gained respect and involved themselves in Teaching of the Faith) and settle in some other parts of the world. This is nothing but humiliation and harassment. UHJ chooses to look the other way.
1. When a non-Persian Counsellor retires from his post, he is immediately offered another post in his own country. But if the counsellor is

Persian, and that too a pioneer, never this opportunity of service had been offered to him or his experience used for promotion of the Faith. This happens under watchful eyes of the UHJ.

1. A **sincere Persian Bahai** Mr. A.S. Furudi who took care of the Bahai property the National Hotel at Pune in India was threatened by one of the members of UHJ that he should come in line with UHJ or face severe consequences.
1. A Persian pioneer a devoted Bahai **Dr. Ahmed Ansari** was asked to resign after he was elected as a delegate for National convention. It was feared that he was a sure member of NSA
1. **Payam Shoghi** – A person of capacity, he served the faith as a counsellor but he was sacked by the UHJ and was asked to resign from all his administrative positions, just because he was “accused” for forging Documents? Which was never proved.
1. **Shahryar Nooreyazdan** – He has such a wide experience about the faith. Has given years as a pioneer to Mumbai Community. A person instrumental in building the Lotus Temple and donating huge amounts of his savings was never given any hearing by UHJ. All his suggestions are ignored and was made centre of mockery.
1. **Farida Vahedi** – She served the Faith with best of her capacity running the External affair department very efficiently but just some Indian NSA members did not like her success was asked to resign from the NSA of India. In her place a dumb Ram Sevak Yadav was brought to NSA just to appease the Hindu nationalist Government .
1. **Afshin and his son Naim** now live a life of loneliness. Afshin gave all of his golden years for the propagation of faith in India. Today when he is ill and may be in need of financial assistance, the UHJ is wasting sources on inexperienced, and worthless people like Praveen Mallick, Rajan Sawant etc. All the “soldiers of Baha’u’llah” are being treated like worthless entity.
1. The Bahai Academy in Panchgani was subjected to pressure because its Director Mr. **Leson Azadi** was a Persian and son of a Martyr. UHJ made his life and of his family miserable. He was sacked as Auxillary Board Member.

Such examples leave us with a bitter conclusion that those having Persian (Cradle of Faith) background need to be sieved. It is as though the UHJ sees the Persian Bahais being responsible for the formation of so many sects. A thought is prevailing in the Faith that Persian Baha’is are working in groups and are having soft corner for the Persian fourth Guardian Nosratullah Bahremand of the Orthodox Baha’i Faith, who is calling his shots from Australia. Such a suspicion has been prevailing for many years now. UHJ has so far not taken any steps to reject this idea.

While all this is happening, the clout of Bahais with Jewish background is increasing. Whether it is happening with connivance of Jewish state, is a question that then comes to mind.

Esteemed members do look into the injustice that has crept in functioning of the Faith. Else history would not forget UHJ being cause of moral and population downfall of our Beloved Faith.

A GROUP OF PERSIAN BAHAI'S

Baha'u'llah in Kitab e Aqdas : “Whoever burns a house intentionally, burn him.” !!

This is the suppressed Elder & Miller translation of the Baha'i "Book of Laws."

It is a more honest and accurate translation than the one belatedly offered by the Baha'i administration 120 years late. The latter ("The Kitab-i-Aqdas: The Most Holy Book") contains obfuscations and distortions designed to protect the fortunes of the Baha'i Faith and preventing the book to cause a drastic falloff in membership, as the text reveals a great disparity between the original message of the founder and what later came to be sold as "The Baha'i Faith." The Elder translation is an important document in the continuing saga of Baha'i efforts to both obscure and alter their own original foundations and texts.

The Elder-Miller translation is an honest translation by two English orientalist and Arabic scholars, one of them an author of an Arabic grammar who had spent many years in Persia and interviewed early Baha'is and Babis. It is the first English translation.

Their agenda was to make available an important religious work of the east for the Royal Asiatic Society that was, unaccountably, still unavailable in the west. Thus their translation became the first translation available in the west. Earl elder remarks on this oddity in his preface:

"Anyone who studies Baha'ism learns very soon of the volume sacred to those who profess this religion and known as "The Most Holy Book." Of this book Baha in his Will said, "...reflect upon that which is revealed in my book the Aqdas." And his son and successor 'Abdu'l Baha said in his Will, "unto the Aqdas everyone must turn." Yet, strange to say, although the teachings of the Baha'is have been widely proclaimed in Great Britain and America, only fragments of al-Kitab al Aqdas have been translated previously into English."

This even though the original text is actually a rather short work. Thus Miller and Earl Elder, a scholar of Arabic and produce of an Arabic grammar, published the first English translation instead of the Baha'is.

Though Elder-Miller's translation was published in 1961, western Baha'is were kept in the dark about its existence. I was an active Baha'i for 15 years and never heard of it. This was deliberate. The Baha'i leadership did not want rank-and-file members to read the Kitab-i-Aqdas. They considered it a problematic. Not because there were major faults in the translation, but because the content itself was something they did not want westerners to be able to read.

Elder and Miller were surprised that the ready market of Baha'is was not interested in their book and Baha'i publishing bodies would not carry it, even though they lacked their own version of their "Most Holy Book." Book suppression is common to Baha'i history. It has long been a habit of Baha'is to find, confiscate, and destroy books they deem to be adverse to their growth. (I recall going through the estate of a famous early Baha'i Ruth Moffet and finding many Baha'i suppressed books that she had removed from libraries over the years.) The early Baha'is also extirpated the writing of their ostensible lineage founder, the Bab. Baha'i book purging is one reason that hardcover copies of Elder & Miller's Aqdas are so rare today.

Kitab-i-Aqdas was long considered a problematic book by the Baha'i promoters in the west. The Baha'i administration, seeking to grow a Faith that was now a sales package for socialist-leaning intellectuals, continued to buy time. They hoped to create their own translations that would soften or obscure the content, while letting the Baha'i Faith develop and grow free of the damaging effect they knew the text would have. So they avoided publishing a text of their own for a full 120 years after the book's creation by their founder. All other Baha'i works of significance were long available and this was ostensibly their central scripture. It's importance is obvious in its very title: "Book of Laws — Most Holy Book." So this Elder-Miller translation was unwelcome to the Baha'i Administration who refrained from making their congregation aware of it.

The first approach the Baha'is took to suppressing the Kitab-i-Aqdas was, indeed, to ignore all translations available. Even after this Elder-Miller translation was out in 1961, they continued to tell their membership "It has not been translated yet." Any versions that were published by others, they ignored and would classify them as negative to their membership. They did not have the proper filters or spin-doctoring. Their second approach, when obligated to translate the text, was to distort and obfuscate its content in the translation. (Examples given here.) Thus the priceless value of the Elder-Miller version.

The Growing Gap Between the Baha'i Promotional Package

And the Baha'i Scriptures

Early in the religion's development certain ideas, only minimally present in the original teachings of Baha'u'llah, began to be enlarged a great deal. These could be called socialist, Marxist, or progressive ideas found in the statements of most mystics. From a text that contained great mysticism, emphasis on obedience to God and devotion to Baha'u'llah arose a religion that instead promoted feminism, world government, and deracination. The feminism is particularly remarkable since the Kitab-i-Aqdas appears to be directed to men, makes certain prohibitions for women, and quite clearly assumes polygamy as normative. Baha'u'llah himself had, according to accounts, four wives.

But a few minor reforms or relaxing of Islamic regulations on women were spun by the Baha'is into a program in which the Baha'i Faith became "feminist" in a Marxist sense. The longer the Baha'is suppressed and ignored the Kitab-i-Aqdas, the larger grew the gap between the Kitab-i-Aqdas text and what Baha'is were teaching. Continually attempting to appeal to progressives, they ended up with a "Ten Basic Principles" list that was quite different than their actual founding texts. Nothing make the gap between teaching and text more obvious than the Kitab-i-Aqdas.

Another statement Baha'is would make to their newcomers was: "Mankind is not ready for it." But as the modern age developed, each passing year made mankind more and more "unready" for the very dated, even culturally primitive content of the Kitab-i-Aqdas. The Elder-Miller translation makes it abundantly clear why the Baha'is hid their most important scripture.

Baha'is state that this Kitab-i-Aqdas is mankind's complete guidance from God the next thousand years. That is rather sad considering they didn't allow us (in the west) to even read the text for the first 120 years. Upon reading its contents the reader will notice a few things.

First, one notices a very Islamic tone and attitude of the harsher variety. One law in the case of arson is put bluntly: **"Whoever burns a house intentionally, burn him."** This is the straightforward Elder-Miller phrasing.

The official Baha'i text that finally came out had it this way: "Should anyone intentionally destroy a house by fire, him also shall ye burn."

The Strange Laws of the Kitab-i-Aqdas / The Textual Manipulations by Baha'i Officials Perceivable Thanks to the Elder-Miller Translation

Baha'u'llah was a prince. He wanted his followers to be an attractive group. The Kitab-i-Aqdas tells them to get new furniture every 9 years. It outlawed the shaving of the head or men having hair longer than their earlobes. The scripture instructs them to use perfume, to wear silk and furs. This is succinctly and cleanly stated in the form of one of many commands in the Elder-Miller translation:

"Wear sable (sammur) just as you wear silk and squirrel-skin and other things."

In the Elder-Miller version one can usually distinguish easily the difference between a mere "allowing" of an activity (not forbidden) and a command to do it. The Elder-Miller translation has this as a command, like the command to wear perfume. Seeing how absurd this perfume command looks to our present culture the Baha'i administration altered the lines in significant ways:

"Ye are free to wear the fur of the sable as ye would that of the beaver, the squirrel, and other animals."

This puts it as a mere option; as something not prohibited. By comparing the official version to the Miller-Elder version you can see Baha'i officialdom's manipulation of translation outcome from cover-to-cover. The perfume command rendered by Elder-Miller is:

"Use rose water, then pure perfume."

It is clear that the rose water is intended to be worn on the skin, just as with perfume. But the 120-year-late official version translates it cleverly:

"Make use of rose-water, and of pure perfume;"

This rendering obfuscates the original intention and creates loopholes. It opens the possibility that the rose-water does not need to be something worn on the skin, just "made use of." Western women are fussy about things like that, you know. Some of them don't like being told they have to wear perfume. Likely, modern Baha'is won't want to use rose water for their guru and this doesn't sell the faith. Perhaps the rose-water and perfume could be "made use of" a disinfectant? Or for scientific experiments? Or some other use. (The just-mentioned mental scenario would be typical of the Baha'i administrative mind which likes to focus on science and technology rather than its own religious content notwithstanding their founders' anti-science attitudes.) The perfume, in this official rendering, becomes something that is to be 'made use of,' not necessarily worn by the devotees. Perhaps as a substance for insect control, etc.

This is loophole-building. This spin-doctoring and effective alteration of inconvenient passages is frequent throughout the belatedly published official translation of the Baha'is and only the Elder-Miller version (and others) make this clear. Their belated 1993 version also contains a great deal of explanations, apologies, and padding to help to shift the meaning or outright annul Baha'u'llah's statement and help current Baha'is live with the strange text. This occurred early on with Baha'u'llah's apparent assumption of polygamy as a norm. The Baha'i administration wrote a treatment that says, essentially, 'This can't be so.'

Indeed, one pleasure of the Elder-Miller version is reading it straight without the filler, distractions, and excusing explanations of Baha'i officials. One finds out that the original Kitab-i-Aqdas was a terse, thin volume. The original book is only 74 pages with 10-pt. type. The Baha'i administration and spin doctors added so much to their version that their Aqdas ballooned to 315 pages! Most of it written by the administration, not Baha'u'llah. The scholarly Elder-Miller version, intending to present the Arabic as it really was written, makes these manipulations by modern Baha'is clear to see. That is its value.

Baha'is promote their religion as one that is superior due to access to the original founder texts. Further, they state that the problem with religions is that change creeps in, with the original texts and their meanings lost. The Baha'i Faith, is, they say, different. One of the interesting things about the Baha'i Book of Laws, given it is presented by them as full guidance for mankind for a thousand years, is the content it lacks. It requires that marriage be effected with a dowry:

"Relationship by marriage is not realized except by (payment of) dowries." And adulterers have to give the Baha'i "House of Justice" "nine mithqals of gold." (Elder/Miller explain that this amounts to 1-7th of an ounce of gold.) But the Most Holy Book contains no advice or laws about the following urgent problems of mankind:

- Technological manipulation, genetic and bio-engineering, or food monopoly
- Pornography, incest, and nothing apparent regarding pedophilia (he only mentions boys), homosexuality, etc.
- Bio-medical ethics, such as euthanasia

- Punishments or laws for rape (or even mention of rape as a human crime)
- Industrialization, pollution, the environment
- Forms of government
- Mass media and monopolies

.. and many other dire problems.

The scripture does, however, contain laws about falcon-hunting and a great deal of funeral and burial laws. Their royal founder Baha'u'llah enjoined Baha'is be buried in some fancy coffins. Two sentences from the Elder-Miller translation:

Elder-Miller Version: "When in hunting you use birds of prey, make mention of God. Then whatever they catch for you is lawful."

Elder-Miller Version: "God has commanded that the dead be buried in (coffins of) crystal or rare stones or beautiful hard woods, and that engraved rings be placed on their fingers."

Official Version: "The Lord hath decreed that the dead should be interred in coffins made of crystal, of hard, resistant stone, or of wood that is both fine and durable, and that graven rings should be placed upon their fingers."

Notice that hardwoods are no longer needed (rare now!), just "fine and durable" wood. Also note that the administration altered the command for "rare stones" into mere "hard, resistant stone." Only the Elder-Miller translation lets you see all the invention and alteration-of-texts that Baha'i officialdom is engaged with. And it becomes clear why they hid the text from the west for 120 years.

Here is how the Baha'i Administration rendered the line allowing more than one wife to make it come out differently:

Elder-Miller:

"God has ordained marriage for you. Beware lest you go beyond two, and whoever is satisfied with one of the handmaidens, his soul is at rest and so is hers."

While he makes prohibitions in a clear manner elsewhere in the text, there is no prohibition here, merely a "beware" beyond 2, while advising that one has advantages.

Official Baha'i Version:

"God hath prescribed matrimony unto you. Beware that ye take not unto yourselves more wives than two. Whoso contenteth himself with a single partner from among the maidservants of God, both he and she shall live in tranquility."

Notice the big difference in the impressions the versions create. The Elder version assumes two wives as normative and quite acceptable in these two simple lines: "God has ordained marriage for you. Beware lest you go beyond two." Baha'u'llah reportedly had at least four wives. What kindly uncle wouldn't say "beware!" and "careful!" to a young man considering three or more wives? The tone of the official version ends with the impression that both 3+ AND dual wives are prohibited. There is no sense of prohibition of either state in the Elder version, only a warning about 3+.

In the Elder version the man contenting himself with one is simply shown approbation, with the results promoted as worthy of consideration: "whoever is satisfied with one...his soul is at rest." The official version makes monogamy appear to be specified and required: "Whoso contenteth himself with a single partner...shall live in tranquility." Using 'shall live' — the predictive, prophetic, or "ordaining" voice so common to Baha'i literature — ("...he and she shall live...") the mere observation that one-wife men have more peace now feels like a single-wife specification that is, after this stormy reference to polygamy, the one ordained state for the the future.

It took them 120 years to come up with that clever re-working of the original simple sentences, to make it appear that Baha'u'llah did not say what he said. Thus we need the Elder-Miller translation.

The use of the word "partner" in the modern version is particularly jarring in the founding text. A few decades back this would have been "wife." (The sentence is clearly directed to men and refers to how many wives they should have.) The the vague term "partner" has never occurred in any translations of Baha'u'llah heretofore (relative to marriage) or even "spouse." "Partner" is a modern culture-bomb used by those with modern anti-traditional attitudes, particular homosexuals and those who wish to redefine marriage as any amalgam of any sexes. It is there in the official Baha'i version as both anticipation and acceptance of the further degradation of natural sexual roles and traditional marriage, and gives us a hint as to which way the Baha'i Faith is now headed.

Mystical Language in the Kitab-i-Aqdas

One fascinating aspect of Baha'i writings is the Sufic mystical content, and the Kitab-i-Aqdas is loaded with that. After reading official Baha'i translations for a while it becomes very interesting to see how Elder & Miller translate certain mystic phrases compared to official versions. The Elder-Miller translation appears to be more direct with less attempt to fit Baha'u'llah's words into decorous English literary forms. Here is one from the Elder-Miller Aqdas:

“O People, direct your steps with white faces and hearts full of light towards the Blessed Red Spot where the Lote Tree of the Extremity (sidratu l-muntaha) calls, “There is no god besides Me, the Self-Subsistent Overseer.”

Here is the official Baha’i version:

“Turn, o people, with bright faces and illuminated hearts towards the blessed red spot in which the Sadrat-El-Muntaha (divine tree) crieth out, “Verily there is no God but Me, the protector, the self-Existent.”

“White” has become “bright.” “Hearts full of light” (possibly an occult reference referring to inner perceived light, plus the Sufic idea as the “heart” as a meditation point in the body) became “illuminated heart” which suggests a vague intellection or higher thought. The more evocative and instructive “Lote Tree of the Extremity” has been shortened to simply “Lote Tree.” (A truncation reflecting the anti-mystical attitudes of the Baha’i administration.) The “overseer” who witnesses (a word more like “foreman” and “boss”) has been turned into an active “protector.” “Subsistent,” a term with a philosophical and mystical heritage, got dumbed-down to “existent.”

Another fine example of the mystical language in the Aqdas, from Elder-Miller:

“Leave what you have! Then fly with the minions of Separation beyond Innovation.”

Official Baha’i Version:

“Cast away that which ye possess, and, on the wings of detachment, soar beyond all created things.”

It is a noteworthy characteristic of the Baha’i Faith — and I was an active member of 15 years — that none of these curious mystical terms and statements, so abundant in Baha’i writings, are ever explained or even discussed.

Note that the original used the stronger “separation,” and Baha’u’llah did, indeed, want his community to stand apart from the rest and his mystical focus for the Baha’is was making them utterly “detached from all save God,” especially detached from “the world.” This term referred to the ideal of a profound, emotionally ascetic separation from the world which he often advocated. Changing “beyond innovation” into “beyond creation” is a particularly egregious distortion and change to the text and a complete reverse of its meaning. (Just as Baha’is converted the technology-negative views of the founders into a technology-positive message.) “Innovation” in the original refers to the activities of man and mind. “Creation” refers to the creation of God. The original “innovation” referred to the tendency of men to invent ideas, especially conflict-inducing ideas, and change what God created. He also sometimes used the term “invention.”

Side Note: The general attitude of Baha’u’llah toward man’s invention and innovation was negative. (Both the Bab and Baha’u’llah were anti-technology. The Bab outlawed the study of sciences and foreign travel. Baha’u’llah, when hearing of the invention described it as a “hellish engine” (altered by the admin. into “infernal engine” that would destroy the cities. (Altered by the admin into “consume the cities.”)

It is perhaps completely understandable that official Baha’i translators wanted to cover up Baha’u’llah’s disparagement of human “innovation” in religious texts. The Elder-Miller translation of the Aqdas shows that the official Baha’i version is loaded with invention and innovation.

— Julian Curtis Lee

Red Baha'ism: The Universal Poetic Struggle

Buy the Book : <https://www.amazon.com/Red-Bahaism-Universal-Struggle-Communist/dp/B0DCVWP21D>

Over a dozen years in preparation for Red Baha'ism: The Universal Poetic Struggle is a collection of essays, poetry, letters to editors, epigraphs, and more from the pen of Bishop Rev. Dr. Edward James Irvine (November 18, 1896 – 1970)—Baha'i and Communist, and the Violet Ray of the sacred and divine rays of the Divine. From 1918 to 1968 he wrote hundreds of poems and editorials on topics as diverse as Socialism, the treatment of communicable diseases, beauty, peace, war, tax reform, Blue Laws, establishing a Poet Laureate League in each state and having a national Poet Laureate, and giving the right to vote to residents of Washington, D.C.

He started his adult life with scandal and rebellion. He was sent to a military brig when he refused to serve in the Marines in the Dominican Republic. When he returned to D.C., he encountered the Socialists and Bahai Movement. He found life-changing principles in both and blended them creating a uniquely American poetic heresy. Churches based on Whitman, Blake, and Coltrane were not as weird today.

Upon being disowned by Baha'is and Communists, he joined the Washington Institute of Christ (a Spiritualist Church) and ascended the ranks to become its Second Bishop. While there his role was writing trance poetry and giving sermons about the ills in the world and their solutions. His essays and poems deserve study as we must, "Remember Poets are the True Philosophers".

Concept of unity of religions is merely bait by Baha'is

1. Can we say that every religion in the world follows the same source teachings as all other religions? And certainly definitely not!
2. Does every adherent of the same religion have a common aim? And certainly definitely not!
3. Is every religion the same? Does everyone follow the same religion?
4. Is there a universal set of beliefs that is consistent across all religions worldwide? Certainly not!
5. Is the framework of worship identical in every religion? Absolutely not!
6. Is the deity revered in each religion the same? Definitely not!
7. Is the doctrine shared by all world religions uniform? Most certainly not!
8. Is the fundamental nature of all world religions equivalent? By no means!

The preceding analysis clearly indicates that the notion of religious unity is fundamentally unfounded, akin to the divine claims asserted by Bahā'ullāh.

From this examination, it can be inferred that the idea of religious unity serves merely as a lure, intended to trap the uninformed. When an individual adopts the Bahā'ī principle of religious unity, they forfeit their own faith and embark on a misguided journey towards accepting the spurious divinity of Bahā'ullāh.

Top 20 Reasons Muslims can never Embrace Unity of Religions

1. A core tenet of belief in Islām, established through consensus, asserts that there is no authentic Dīn, or religion and way of life, other than Islām. It is recognized as the ultimate religion, which abrogates all preceding faiths, beliefs, and doctrines.
2. The essential principle concerning the Quran is that it represents the final revelation. It supersedes and invalidates all prior scriptures that were revealed before it, including the Tawrāt, the Zabūr, and the Injīl.
3. Muslims are obligated to hold the belief that earlier scriptures have been annulled and that they have been subject to modifications and distortions by human hands. The Prophet Muhammad expressed great displeasure upon witnessing anyone reading a page from the Tawrāt.
4. It is a fundamental belief in Islām that Muḥammad is the last and final messenger. Should any of the previous Messengers be alive, they would be compelled to follow Muḥammad and the sharī'ah bestowed upon him. Consequently, when Jesus returns in the end times, he will govern according to the sharī'ah Muḥammad.
5. Muḥammad has been sent as a messenger to all of humanity, extending until the end of time.
6. It is an essential belief in Islām that individuals from Christianity, Judaism, or any other faith who do not accept Islām are considered disbelievers.
7. Similarly, any individual who fails to recognize other religions as forms of disbelief (kufr) will themselves be deemed a disbeliever.
8. It is utterly unacceptable to entertain the notion that all religions are equally truthful.
9. The call for the unification of religions results in the dismantling of the barriers that separate Islām from other religions, as well as the distinctions between truth and falsehood, and right and wrong.
10. Any Muslim advocating for the legitimacy of another religion effectively exits the fold of Islām. Such advocacy for the unification or reconciliation of religions fundamentally contradicts the core tenets of Islām.
11. A Muslim who expresses satisfaction with the uniformity and unity of religions and promotes it is, in essence, endorsing disbelief and expressing contentment with it.
12. It is impermissible for a Muslim to embrace or engage in interfaith ideologies or practices. Similarly, participation in interfaith events and agreements is not allowed for a Muslim.
13. A Muslim is prohibited from independently printing the Tawrāt and Injīl. Therefore, it is equally unacceptable for the Noble Qur'ān to be published alongside these earlier scriptures in a single volume. Those who undertake such actions or advocate for them are committing a serious deviation and should be wary of their faith.
14. A Muslim must never accept an invitation to a multi-faith prayer venue. Doing so would imply an acknowledgment of another religion as valid, one that does not recognize Allāh as the sole object of worship.
15. It is inappropriate to refer to a church, synagogue, temple, or any other place of worship as a 'Masjid' or 'the house of Allāh.' Furthermore, it is incorrect to assert that the adherents of other religions are worshipping Allāh.
16. Muslims have an obligation to invite Christians, Jews, Hindus, Buddhists, and followers of other faiths to the truth and enlightenment of Islām.
17. Participation in interfaith initiatives signifies a lowering of one's own standards to align with those who do not believe, adopting a perspective that views Islām as merely one of many paths to God.
18. Engaging in interfaith dialogue can lead to significant challenges within the family unit.
19. Advocating for interfaith relations can disrupt societal harmony, even among Christians or Jews. An interfaith advocate may experience turmoil, grappling with the contradictions in their own outdated scriptures, which conflict with the truths of Islām.
20. Islam stands as the superior faith, transcending all other religions and belief systems.

Baha'u'llah Teaches that No one Should Be Cursed, but Curses People Himself

Courtesy : <http://www.bahaibahai.com>

Baha'u'llah states:

“Verily I say, the tongue is for mentioning what is good, defile it not with unseemly talk. God hath forgiven what is past. Henceforward everyone should utter that which is meet and seemly, and should refrain from slander, abuse and whatever causeth sadness in men.” (Baha'u'llah, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh Revealed After the Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, pp. 219-220)

We have already documented some instances where Baha'u'llah practices the exact opposite and directly calls his deniers animals, pigs, donkeys and bastards ([here](#)). In this article, we will document a similar contradiction in Baha'u'llah's teachings where he curses different classes of people, contrary to his direct orders not to. In the 13 section of the *Tablet of Bisharat* (Glad-Tidings) Baha'u'llah prohibits his followers from cursing any soul:

“O people of Bahá! Ye are the dawning-places of the love of God and the daysprings of His loving-kindness. Defile not your tongues with the cursing and reviling of any soul.” (Baha'u'llah, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh Revealed After the Kitáb-i-Aqdas* 1988 pocket-size edition, p. 27)

Apparently this order was so important that Baha'u'llah revealed it again (verbatim) in the 8 section of the *Tablet of Ishráqát* (Splendours, on page 129 of the same book). As we will show, Baha'u'llah blatantly ignored his own teachings and cursed his enemies, covenant breakers, and even his own followers. We will first show instances from works that have been translated to English. It must be noted that the untranslated *Tablets* are replete with statements where Baha'u'llah curses his deniers and enemies (these might be added at a later date).

Here is one example where he curses his enemies who killed the Bab:

“The more He exhorted them, the fiercer grew their enmity, till, at the last, they put Him to death with shameful cruelty. The curse of God be upon the oppressors!” (Baha'u'llah, *Gleanings From the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 146)

He curses his own followers who disobey him:

“How couldst thou forget thine own faults and busy thyself with the faults of others? Whoso doeth this is accursed of Me.” (Baha'u'llah, *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, p. 182)

“Breathe not the sins of others so long as thou art thyself a sinner. Shouldst thou transgress this command, accursed wouldst thou be, and to this I bear witness.” (Baha'u'llah, *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, p. 182)

And last but not least the Covenant Breakers that are always given the worst treatment:

“The Supreme Concourse will pray for the one who is adorned with the garment of faithfulness between heaven and earth; but he who breaks the Covenant is cursed by heaven and earth.” (*Bahá'í World Faith—Selected Writings of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá* pp. 435-6)

Even though he curses other people, he expresses outrage when others curse him:

“Now let us beseech God—praised be His glory—to graciously guide aright the followers of the Shi'ih sect and to purge them of unseemly conduct. From the lips of the members of this sect foul imprecations fall unceasingly, while they invoke the word ‘Mal’ún’ (accursed)—uttered with a guttural sound of the letter ‘ayn—as their daily relish.” (Baha'u'llah, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh Revealed After the Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, 1988 pocket-size edition, p. 92)

(The attitude attributed to the Shi'ih sect is merely Baha'u'llah's claim. Some from this group might have cursed him but how Baha'u'llah narrates it is a gross exaggeration). This kind of hypocritical behavior displayed by Baha'u'llah is one that has always been detested in the Divine scriptures:

“Do you order the people to do good but forget about yourselves whilst you read the Book! Do you not use your reason!” (Quran 2:44)

“You, then, who teach others, do you not teach yourself? You who preach against stealing, do you steal? You who say that people should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery?” (Romans 2:21-22)

Actually, Baha'u'llah claims that he detests this behavior too although he applies it in action himself:

“O SON OF BEING! Ascribe not to any soul that which thou wouldst not have ascribed to thee, and say not that which thou dost not. This is My command unto thee, do thou observe it.” (Baha'u'llah, *The Hidden Words of Baha'u'llah*, p. 10)

Baha'u'llah and Bab claim to be God !

1. "When I contemplate, O my God, the relationship that bindeth me to Thee, I am moved to proclaim to all created things 'Verily I am God!'" (**World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p 113**)
2. "Naught is seen in My temple but the Temple of God, and in My beauty but His Beauty, and in My being but His Being, and in My self but His Self, and in My movement but His Movement, and in my acquiescence but His Acquiescence, and in My pen but His Pen, the Mighty, the All-Praised. There hath not been in My soul but the Truth, and in Myself naught could be seen but God." (**World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p 109**)
3. "Verily, verily, I am God, He besides Whom there is none other God, and I am the Ancient of Days." (**Selections from the Writings of the Báb, p 58**)
4. "Verily God and every created thing testify that there is none other God but Me, the Almighty, the Best Beloved." (**Selections from the Writings of the Báb, p 31**)
5. "He who doeth good unto Me, it is as if he doeth good unto God." (**Selections from the Writings of the Báb, p 15**)
6. "This is a letter from God (the Báb) the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting, unto God (Bahá'u'lláh) the Almighty, the Best-Beloved, toexpress my undoubting faith that there is no God but thee." (**Selections from the Writings of the Báb, p 15**)

Baha'i Conversion Manual

How Baha'u'llah Referred to His Family

The term Aghsan (Branches) signifies Baha's son and Afrian (Twigs) the Point's kinsmen according to Baha's terminology. Baha considered himself to be Asl-i Qadim (the Ancient Stock). Hence the term Branches for his sons to distinguish which from the Point's kinsmen, since he regarded him as his precursor or harbinger, he used the term twigs in respect of the latter although both terms are synonymous.

Baha conferred high-sounding letters on the members of his own family and chief followers. For titles bestowed on his wife and daughter see supra. For titles bestowed on Mirza Aqa Jan of Kashan.

Specimens of his honours list in respect of his entourage and chief followers are quoted below:

- Mushkin-i-Ilahi (Divine Fragrance);
- Zaynul-Muqarrabin (The Ornament of the Favourable);
- Jabrail-i Amin (Gabriel the Trusty);
- Qannad-al-Samadaniyya (The Confectioner of Divine Eternity);
- Khabbaz-al-Wahidiyya (The Baker of Divine Unity);
- Dallak-al-Haqiqat (The Barber of the Truth);
- Mallah-al-Quds (The Sailor of Sanctity)

The Hasht-Bihisht P. 307.

Holy Mother Lady Munira Khanum



Mirza Badi'u'llah the youngest son of Baha
entitled by him as 'محسن انور'
'The Most Luminous Branch'.

Courtesy : <https://bayanic.com>



Mash'aa Land, Baha'i Faith & Colonization of Palestine

Courtesy : <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2803160?seq=25>

HAMULA ORGANISATION AND MASHA'A TENURE IN PALESTINE

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The thesis is examined that nontribal masha'a villages in Palestine were inherently socially fragmented and, therefore, susceptible to outside intervention and land expropriation. Some general features of the village patronymic group, or hamula, are explored. It does indeed appear that few, if any, such groups are, or were in the recent past, genealogically integrated patrilineages. There is a short treatment of the agricultural routine in the lowlands where the masha'a system prevailed. The usual claim that the periodic redistribution of communal lands characteristic of masha'a was inimical to economic planning and management proves unwarranted. A comparative analysis is made of the effects of Ottoman Land Registration, British Settlements and Zionist colonization on the social and economic organisation of masha'a villages in and around the Plain of Esdraelon. Physically exposed and socially amorphous plains villages composed of sedentarising semi-nomads and hill migrants did seem prone to outside interference. Those older continuously inhabited hill villages with a stronger social fabric were apparently better able to forestall the alienation of their valley lands. But very different fabrics could show resistance. A village constituted of a few powerful and competitive hama'il, such as Umm el-Fahm, was clearly poised to balance internal socio-economic antagonisms and parry outside threats. Yet, even a socially heterogeneous village containing a number of smaller hama'il, such as Isfiyya, held fast owing to a village-wide network of affinal relationships and persistent inter-hamula ties of matrilineality.

Masha'a, which prevailed in the plains of the Levant through the early twentieth century, was a system of communal land tenure characterised by a periodic redistribution of agricultural plots among peasant cultivators. In Palestine, its practice differed from village to village and also changed in the course of time.

Most accounts, however, have wedded fragmented colonial descriptions of this varied peasant economy to an assumed Bedouin tribal model of social organisation, so providing an all too facile explanation of both the origin and demise of masha'a. The general idea is that masha'a constituted a holdover from a nomadic regime of communal pasturage. Inimical to the colonial political economy set in motion at the end of the Ottoman Empire, and carried through by the British Mandate and Zionism, masha'a was allegedly maladapted to the intensive production and co-operation required of a functionally viable society in the modern world.

While most analysis of masha'a has linked the socio-economic ills of land fragmentation to communal tenure, in fact masha'a often persisted as a protective mechanism against them. Moreover, few, if any, villages in Palestine were patrilineally integrated in the Bedouin mode. As long as masha'a endured, competition between a few strong patronymic groups, or hama'il, could be productively balanced, as in the village of Umm el-Fahm.

Man (N.5.) 21, 271-95

In more heterogeneous villages containing a number of smaller hama'il, such as Isfiyya, masha'a could stress the overriding economic importance relations of affinity and matrilineality might take in a society supposedly organised agnatically. Only in relatively amorphous villages, which tended to mix marginal peasant groups with sedentarising semi-nomads, did masha'a readily fall prey to processes of alienation and community dissociation. But such processes were externally directed, not internally driven.

Are non-tribal villages feudal?

One of the first to question the significance of tribal organisation for Levant villagers was Weulersse (1940: 328-33), who argued that the genealogical mode of reckoning among Alawite groups was incomplete and, where seemingly complete, a highly fictitious post hoc formalisation of non-kin alignments. Barth (19531) further stressed the relative insignificance of genealogy for the 'feudally' organised villages of southern Kurdistan. He classed the Kurdish groups in the area according to three types: Jaf nomads, Hamawand tribal villages, and 'detribalised' villages. The first and second types owned their means of production (animals and land) and were fairly meticulous about their genealogies. For the nomads, genealogy served as the principal means of political recruitment, while for the tribal villagers it provided a strong collective group structure that operated as a powerful agent between governmental authorities and individual villagers. The non-tribal villagers, though, were mainly tenants of absentee landowners, and there was no wider kinship structure that connected non-tribal villages to one another or that linked the vestigial lineal segments of any one village together.

Although there may have been temporary intermediate forms of organisation, supposedly only the tribal and non-tribal poles were structurally stable. The former would invariably devolve into the latter after periods of long centralised rule. This was presumably because central governments

and their clients aimed to divide and conquer by promoting factionalism, fragmenting genealogy and scattering patrimony. With the unity of the group thus dissipated, its land could be picked off rapidly in piecemeal fashion (Barth 1953:131-4). Furthermore, since the purpose of parallel cousin marriage was supposed to 'reinforce the political implications of the lineage system' (1953: 137), one would expect a consequent decline in the frequency of such unions.

The apparent social and economic unity of non-tribal tenant villages was illusory, argues Barth, Politically, the village's tendency to disintegration as a result of 'rabid factionalism' was held in check only by a standardised opposition to some 'enemy' village (1953: 120). Since governmental control was strong, the actual threat from such ostensible enemies was minimal. Economically, agricultural co-ordination could not be viewed as an indigenous form of creative economic activity or enlightened co-operation. Rather, as with the collective control of farming organisation in landlord-dependent Iranian villages, the collective scheduling of crop routines 'is administrative rather than wealth-producing' activity which tends 'to retard . . . village economic growth and specialization' (English 1966: 94-6).

While the distinction between tribal and non-tribal organisation does appear to be sociologically significant, the socio-economic consequences imputed to that distinction are less clearly so. There is no rule of the matter that settled tribal groups need eventually suffer a decline in their preference for parallel cousin marriage and lineage endogamy. This may be so no matter how advanced the process of sedentarianisation (E. Marx 1967: 232) and regardless of whether the agnatic section remains weak or strong (Aswad 1971: 72-3, 113), although polygyny may also facilitate a strong section's ability to maintain a wide network of affines on the outside as well.

Indeed, contrary to predictions by both Chelchod (1965; 1969) and Barth, settled non-tribal groups do not differ as a rule in this respect from tribal groups. For those tribal and non-tribal groups who consistently practise parallel cousin marriage, the proportion for such marriages seems to hover between 10 and 5 per cent. (Barth 1954: 169; Grangvist 1931: 81, 194; Rosenfeld 1957: 35, 44; Ayoub 1959: 267; Peters 1963: 177-9; E. Marx 1967: 225; Khuri 1970: 508; Arran 1985b). This figure appears to characterise any statistically functional world where, as generally seems to be the case, no more than one of every two available parallel cousins is actually taken for a spouse (cf. Antoun 1972: 125; Cresswell 1976: 106-9). To be sure, as with non-sedentarianised tribal groups, relative frequency of in versus out marriage may increase among sedentarianised non-tribal groups when external conditions take a precarious or threatening turn, as among Palestinian Arabs following the creation of the State of Israel (Cohen 1965; Rosenfeld 1976); although insecurity could also lead to an increase in exogamy for economically and genealogically weak groups seeking to 'buy' protection from stronger groups by giving women to them (Barth 1954; Peters 1963; Aswad 1971; Cresswell 1976). Furthermore, while it may be the case that tribally organised societies often have a higher degree of independence from centres of urban and government control (cf. Fernea 1970), it does not follow that the socio-economic organisation of non-tribal village societies is 'feudal', as Barth suggests.

Yet, according to Rosenfeld (1968: 732), socio-economic organisation in Palestinian villages was just so: 'Politically, the feudal landlords and overlords . . . promoted an internal hamula (patrilineage) system in order to maintain the collective order necessary to keep their tax, tenant, and rent economy operative'; whereas economically, the system of

redistributing "communal" [sasha a] lands, while underwriting a minimal level of subsistence for the peasants, was a creation of the feudal regime. Its purpose was to keep people on the land, fix two or three field wheat and/or barley and durra seed cycle and serve for the orderly collection of taxes and rent in kind. The redistributive system existed also in many tenant villages where it similarly prevented agriculturalists from gaining fixed rights in land or building on or improving plots (Rosenfeld 1964).

At first blush, this claim would appear to contradict Barth's, inasmuch as Palestinian villages are allegedly 'tribally' organised in the sense that a man's corporate status is genealogically defined and patrilineally prescribed: 'families are linked together in patrilineal descent and form patrilineages' (Rosenfeld 1976: 13; cf. Antoun 1972: 87-8; Lutfiyya 1966: 143). But in point of fact, there are scarcely any such villages in Palestine. In virtually all the villages described in the literature, and in those Sunni (e.g. Umm el-Fahm), Christian (e.g. El-Bireh) and Druze (e.g. Isfiyya) Arab villages whose inhabitants I questioned, the constituent patrilineal units (jeb) of any one hamula are rarely connected genealogically. These units vary in depth but never encompass fewer than two, and almost never more than five, generations; and it is recognised by one and all that few, if any, of the component jeb of a hamula are of the same 'sinew' ('asal). As for general social relations between hama'il, these are usually phrased in idioms of affinity (nasab) and matrilineality (makhwal), although relations between groups having the same patronym, but belonging to different villages (e.g. El-Birch and Ramallah), are expressed in terms of patrilinearity (e'ammam).

Since there is admittedly no sense in calling today's hamula 'feudal', the question arises as to whether past practices of social control, hamula endogamy and inter-hamula competition were feudally determined or oriented. The division of Palestinian villages into hama'il competing against one another for the economic and political patronage of the State is attested to by native sources of the first half of the nineteenth century (collected and analysed by Macalister and Masterman 1909: 345-6). The sheikhs of the more powerful hama'il served as intermediaries between the authorities (first Turkish, then Egyptian, then Turkish again) and the peasants and 'guaranteed the taxes due from their several districts' (1905: 3144).

Conditions hardly changed over the course of the century. The hamula operated as a corporate group co-liaable to answer for one another's honour and crimes, and recognised as such by other hama'il and by government authorities. It was also a group of co-succourage, with members helping one another at those various times of the life-cycle that required extraordinary capital outlay (marriage, setting up a new residence), and also jointly contributing to the alleviation of a member's outside debts, especially if those debts carried the risk of alienating a valued portion of the hamula's patrimony (Baldensperger 1906: 14). In matters of physical defence the hamula often acted as a unit: most often a hamula occupied a distinct quarter (ara) of the village and could readily convert the interconnected houses of its quarter into a virtual fortress if need be. Members of the hamula also controlled the disposition of each other's women: 'Cousins have the first right to each other; sometimes they may pay less [dower] than should they be strangers' (Baldensperger 1900: 180). Finally, in regard to the peasants' principal economic activity:

It is commonly ordered that the farmers shall proceed to reap simultaneously, and it is often forbidden to go out to the fields to reap

until all are ready. By this arrangement the assessment of the tax on the crop may be made with more uniformity and thieving rendered difficult. In all these matters, requiring the regulating authority of organized overseers, it is the so-called ukhtiyaripeh, or as we should say, selectmen, the chiefs of the tribes [dor or hama il], who decide questions from the day that the land was parcelled out to the feddans [i.e. those who had the right to participate in the lottery that periodically redistributed maiha'a lands] until the crop is gathered (Grant 1907:135; cf. Robinson & Smith 1841: 11, 187).

But for all the collective village responsibility exemplified by the functioning of hamula and the operation of the masha'a system, there is nothing even remotely resembling European feudalism. In the Arab East there was never any 'direct relation of lordship and servitude' (K. Marx 1967, III: 790) that tied the agricultural labourer to the land (cf. Cahen 1953). As Volney (1787: 377) stressed at the end of the eighteenth century: 'the peasants are oppressed by the tyranny of government, but not degraded by feudal servitude'. Nor could the masha'a system simply be the creation of an exploitative system in the manner, of, say the Russian system of communal tenure whatever the latter's superficial resemblances to masha'a (cf. Blum 1971: 527). Rather, as with the original land-equalisation systems of Walachia and Moldavia (Stahl 1969: 32), there is no indication whatsoever that the State officially prescribed the system, or presided over any aspect of its operation; and there is clear evidence that semi-nomadic tribal groups, who more often than not ignored government authorities or directly opposed them, spontaneously cultivated their lands as masha'a (Jaussen 1908: 238; Musil 1908, III: 58-0, 203).

Still, it would be a mistake to see the masha'a system simply as 'a carry-over from the Bedouin tribal organization' (Tannous 1943: 174). For whatever its degree of compatibility with Bedouin relations of production—and it considerable—the masha'a was eminently a peasant system of production (cf. Weulersse 1946: 108). True, the grazing schedule of peasant herders was intimately associated with the agricultural regime. Especially among the marginal peasantry living in mud dwellings in the exposed plains, herding offered the option of assuming an alternative semi-nomadic livelihood should adverse socio-political or climatic conditions warrant it. But masha'a aimed primarily at ensuring a low though constant level of sedentary productivity in a politically and climatically fluctuating environment. This it did by equitably distributing risk, not gain. It was not a primordial form of socialism (as some recent Revolutionary Palestinian critics claim); for, the fruits of cultivation accrued exclusively to the individual or household (before taxes and rent), and there was no general redistribution of surplus.

Assuredly, the Turkish pasha was well aware of the practice of masha'a, as he was of the organisation of the village along hamula lines, and sought every turn to exploit this knowledge. But then so did the powerful Bedouin sheikh or agha who endeavoured to usurp the government tithe ('ashr) by offering the hapless peasant 'protection' (khuwa) from government agents and other Bedouin in return for an even greater share of the crop. Whatever complicity there might have been between Bedouin and government agent in matters pertaining to the milking of the peasantry, it did not directly require, sanction or sustain the masha'a system, at least in the Levant and Iraq. **1**

There is, perhaps, a looser interpretation of 'feudalism' meant, namely, ruthless exploitation of the mass of fellahin by powerful agents: Bedouin sheikh, urban effendi, government pasha or nahiyeh (landed gentry) family. According to nearly all colonial reports on the economic conditions of agriculturalists in Palestine (e.g. Strickland Report 1030: 11), as well as the only detailed anthropological piece (Patai 1949), which is based largely on these sources, the masha'a system was an unmitigated socio-economic disaster for the peasantry precisely because it facilitated such 'feudal' exploitation of the village collectivity in manifold ways. The most recent historical treatment of the subject has done nothing to dispel this story:

Curiously, no serious inquiry into the relationship between masha'a agriculture and the social organisation of a Palestinian village was ever undertaken. Nevertheless, British colonial authorities and Zionist colonising agents—often quoting one another (e.g. Peel Commission Report 1937: 233; see also Aumann 1975: 22—3)—argued that the periodic break-up of farms that the masha'a system entailed had to disturb the social harmony of the village profoundly. The celebrated "Five Village Survey" executed in 1944 by the Palestine Office of Statistics (published in the General Monthly Bulletin of Current Statistics, 1945—1946) did examine the relation between plot distribution and social organisation at the time of Land Settlement, that is, after the masha'a system had ceased to operate. But most of the conclusions drawn from this study as to the social and economic fragmentation of the peasantry pertain only to consequences ensuing from the stabilisation (ifraz), or 'freezing', of masha'a into mafruz, that is, permanently allotted parcels. These conclusions echoed earlier inferences as to the supposed long-term economic consequences of masha'a; such analyses wrongly assumed, however, that the baneful effects of the abortion of masha'a were caused by its conception (e.g. Granott 1952: 216-18).

In an important monograph on the tribal Al-Shiukh of the Hatay (formerly part of French and Ottoman Syria, today of Turkey), Aswad (1971) shows that most of the socio-economic evils associated with land fragmentation were avoided by villages that remained masha'a. Moreover, despite persistent attempts by authorities to abolish masha'a, these villages have proved most resistant to outside interference and most successful at economic co-operation and conversion to intensive agriculture. Anthropological studies of Syrian (Sweet 1960), Israeli Arab (Cohen 1965) and Jordanian (Antoun 1972) villages that were formerly masha'a and non-tribal note that the complete coordination of the agricultural routine required by the masha'a system could only have been sustained by a considerable measure of inter- and intra-hamula cooperation. But these studies do not detail past social and agrarian relationships, and they provide no hard evidence for or against the thesis that the maintenance of masha'a in non-tribal villages favoured outside control and exploitation.

The nature of the lowland agrarian regime

The length of each redistributive cycle varied widely across Palestine, but was usually either one, two, three, four or five years. Latron (1936: 188) reports a predominance of triennial redistribution in Syria, whereas Weulersse (1946: 99) sees the 'archaic' form of redistribution as annual. But it is more plausible that the length of the redistribution cycle depended upon the local character of soil and precipitation. Environmental conditions required that the crops grown be adapted to mostly clays, clayey loam and some light soils, and to a seasonally sporadic rainfall varying annually from 100 to 600 mm. In addition, planting and harvesting schedules had to be suited to the water requirements of these crops during their various stages of maturation.

In many parts of Palestine, the two-field system was in vogue (cf. Ruppin 1918: 23; Stavsky 1946: 106). One year half the land would have only a

winter crop (shitwi) of wheat and barley, while the other half would have only a summer dew crop (seifi) of sesame and Indian millet (dhura beida, i.e., Sorghum cern). This second half would then have the winter crop the following season, while the first half would remain fallow ('ard bour) until the next summer crop.

The major drawback to Arab cereal farming in the eyes of colonial authorities was simply that it was geared to maintaining, rather than increasing, the standard of living. For the colonists, however, the main problem was that it conflicted with the labour intensive policy of settling the maximum number of workers on the land (kibush avodah or avedah ivr): 'although for technical reasons cereals cannot be avoided, they represent a small proportion of [Jewish] farm income; more labour is needed and more profit is given by other crops' (Keen 1946: 25). Of all crops grains can thrive under the widest range of soil and moisture conditions. They can be cultivated with comparatively little labour and they provide large yields of dry matter: in Palestine during the 1880's, the average return on seed was sixfold, reaching twelvefold in good years (Klein 1883: 45; cf. Cuinet 1896: 345-6). Grains are also high in food value (containing a high percentage of carbohydrates, some protein and fat, and vitamins and minerals) and are relatively easy to handle, transport and store owing to their low water content.

The winter cereal crop of wheat and barley thus furnished the peasantry's basic means of subsistence. The latter also helped to sustain the animals in the winter. Lentils and vetch (Kersenneh, i.e., horse lentils, or Vida ervilia) were also grown at times to supplement the staples and, when ploughed under, to enhance the principal grain crops by fixing nitrogen in the soil (green manuring). Deep rooted legumes opened up the soil, increasing aeration and bringing nutrients from deep layers of the subsoil to the surface: soil moisture increased and additional food was obtained. The quick growing nature of the legume crop also made an effective ground cover to prevent soil erosion and check weed growth.

The summer crop of Indian millet provided a good hedge against partial failure of the grain crop, thriving in marginal areas with poor soils and low, but variable, rainfall and responding well to nitrates. It also provided a valuable short-term grazing crop and prepared the soil for cultivation of a succeeding crop of winter barley. The summer sesame crop was the peasants' main, and frequently only, market crop. But it also had a purely agricultural advantage:

"Wherever it is grown, the succeeding winter crop is larger in consequence' (Brown 1938: 133). The additional two or three ploughings and weeding (thenayeh) the summer crop required left the earth in good tilth and was considered an investment in the coming winter crop. It was the unwritten law of the land that those who had planted a summer crop had the right to plant the next winter crop (Atran 1983a; cf. Hirsch to Pinsker, 4 April 1886, in Druvanov 1919: 751).

The seeding and growth requirements of the various crops required conscientious ploughing. This ploughing, which scraped the earth to a depth of 10 to 15 cm. loosened and cleansed the soil, maintained moisture by increasing the soil's absorptive capacity and killed weeds that prevent transpiration of water. In short, the sporadic rainfall, together with the growth characteristics of the various integrated crop routines, required that ploughing, seeding, weeding and harvesting be done as efficiently, and in as short a time, as possible. This could not have occurred without the complete co-operation and co-ordination of adjacent plot owners.

Clearly, the contention that the agricultural regime of the peasantry took no account of soil management and improvement is unwarranted. In this regard, the significance of the collective discipline involved in the fallowing of masha'a lands can hardly be overestimated:

Not only did fallowing ensure the land's continued productivity, it also supported the village livestock by leaving considerable stubble (20 to 30 cm. high) for fodder. Such livestock included work animals, such as oxen, mules, donkeys and, occasionally, horses and camels, but also sheep and goats. These latter supplied the peasantry with its primary source of meat, milk and durable fabric (Grant 1907: 142). While it appears that pasturing such flocks 'above the altitude of cultivation' contributed to soil erosion in the hills (Post 1891: 106), the implication that 'the plague of sheep and goats has always been reckoned a curse for agriculture' in the valleys (Granott 1952: 91-2) is greatly exaggerated. Indeed, without the weeding and manuring these animals provided, "fertilizer long-term agricultural utilization of alluvial soil would most probably have declined" (Kolars 1966: 584). 3

The social organization of masha'a in the Plain of Esdraelon.

The late nineteenth century witnessed a significant improvement in agricultural production (cf. Schékh 1984) and security of life in the plains of Palestine (cf. Lewis 1955). At the same time, the organisation of production and the distribution of landed property changed markedly. Consider what happened in the interior Plain of Esdraelon (Marj Ibn 'A'amr). From the early 1870's onwards, the Sursuks, a family of Syrian bankers with headquarters in Beirut, acquired title to the bulk of village lands in the Plain of Esdraelon.* By the mid-1920's most of this land had been sold off to the Jewish National Fund, and its erstwhile tenants evicted. Extensive cereal cultivation and herding were replaced by various forms of intensive agriculture and stockbreeding. Towns such as Nazareth and Jenin that serviced and locally marketed cereal production suffered a considerable drop in fortune (cf. Shaw Commission Report 1930: 453), while towns such as Haifa and Afula that were geared to servicing industrial and farming machinery and marketing cash crops and other fair-market items profited and grew accordingly (cf. Vital Statistics Tables, 1922-45, Department of Statistics, Palestine Government 1947: Tables Ag. A7).

The Arab villages in the area had a history of interrupted but recurrent settlement (Robinson & Smith 1841; Schumacher 1887). At the end of the eighteenth century, large tracts of the fertile valley of Esdraelon were abandoned under the rule of Ahmed Pasha 'el-Jezzar' ('The Butcher') (Browne 1806: 423; cf. Volney 1787) with 'barely a quarter of this beautiful country under cultivation' (*Archives de la Chambre de Commerce de Marseilles, Série J-835, 10.5.1790*).

Although by the middle of the next century much of the Plain was still 'in great part neglected' (Robinson 1856: 91), migrant settlers from the hills mingled with semi-nomadic Arab (as opposed to long-range camel herding Bedu), and 'we could see the tents of nomadic Arabs and the men ploughing the fields' (1856: 116). Once more ravaged by such powerful Bedouin tribes as the Bem-Skur in the early 1860's (Tristram 1865: 490), by the next decade 'many parts' of the Esdraelon were again being cultivated (Thomson 1882, II: 175) when the Turkish authorities began to

implement Land Registration. Shortly thereafter it seems that “almost every acre of the Plain of Esdraclon is at this moment in the highest state of cultivation” owing no doubt in part to the fact “that it is perfectly safe to ride across it unarmed in any direction” (Oliphant 1886: 58; cf. Conder & Kitchener 1882, 11: so).

The social composition of the relatively isolated and exposed plains villages consisted of a somewhat amorphous combination of hill migrants and sedentarising semi-nomads (cf. Steuernagel 1925). The newfound security of life in the plains offered migrants from the agronomically poorer and remote hill areas a more regular source of livelihood (cf. Oliphant 1886); whereas the semi-nomads in the region were faced with a constantly decreasing area of manoeuvre that forced settlement (Ashkenazi 1938: 16-20). Among masha’a villages in the hills bordering the Esdraclon that escaped the initial fate of more exposed plains villages were Isfiyya and Umm el-Fahm. These were older continuously inhabited villages with a relatively solid social fabric characterised, in the one case, by a persistent network of inter-hamula ties, and, in the other, by a strong intra-hamula organisation,

The masha’a lands of these villages were nearly contiguous, forming a strip of land extending from the northwest to southwest frontier of the Plain. This strip lay by the ancient *via maris* linking Egypt with Syria. Isfiyya was perched on the summit of Mount Carmel (Jebel Mar Elias), overlooking its 5,000 dunams of masha’a land in the valley below from a height of over 500 meters, Umm el-Fahm was also situated at an altitude of nearly 500 meters in the Samarian Hills at some distance from its 144,000 dunams of valley land, only a portion of which were held in masha’a. From its branch-village (Khirbeh or eshiyeh) at the ancient tell of Megiddo (Armageddon), encompassing Khirbat Lajjun and Tell el-Mutsellim, the fields of Isfiyya’s branch-village, Jelameh (or Khirbat “Asafneh”) were in view at a distance of some 10 km. For both villages, as throughout Palestine, only valley lands devoted to field crops were systematically held in masha’a. Garden plots in the built-up area of the village (*hawakir*), as well as olive and fruit orchards, were generally free-hold (*mulk*).

For Umm el-Fahm, already a large village of some 2000 souls by the 1880’s (Oliphant 1886), evidence for a strong hamula organisation was clear-cut: “The village is divided into four quarters, each under its own Sheikh—el Jabarin, el Mahamin, el Mejahineh, and el Akbaryeh® (Conder & Kitchener 1881, I: 46). The division of masha’a lands followed strictly along hamula lines. Each hamula received a permanent allotment of land: 100 feddan each for Aghbaryeh and Mahamid, 67.5 for Mahajneh and 79.5 for Jabarin⁵ Each *feddan* represented the amount of land that a team of oxen could work in a season (26 to 30 days).⁶

Each hamula holding was also permanently divided into a number of agrarian zones, each zone (*mawqa’*) being characterised by its soil quality, accessibility, topography and so on (cf. Bergheim 18035; Latron 1936; Weunlersse 1946; Atran 1985a). The various zones ranged in size from a few hundred to nearly 3000 dunams (the Aghbaryeh *mawqa’* of tell el-wayat) and from fairly shallow, rock and hilly land to deep, rich and even soil. For example, the masha’a holdings of the Mahajneh were divided into seven zones. Proceeding in order from the Khirbat Lajjun towards the town of Afula these were:

1. Tell el-asmar (“Tell of the black stones”) was characterised by good yields but difficulty in plowing owing to the numerous stones.
2. Wadi es-sit (“Wadi of the [beautiful passing] woman”) was rugged and rocky (*waar*) and thus not very productive.
3. Khalt es-suq (“The marketplace”) where formerly livestock were bought and sold had reasonably good yields.
4. Dhaher u dabt esh-sherif (“Hill of [the Bedouin ‘A’] id] Sherif”) had good soil but uneven terrain.
5. Edh-dhra’ (“The winnowing place”) was level land considered the richest and easiest to work.
6. El-khubeh (“The tell of the khubeh [plant]”) was hard to clear because of the underbrush.
7. Tell el-wayat wa el-na’imi (“The place of the wild animals and the na’imi [plant]”) was the least productive (*khaffi*).

Each zone was divided into exactly as many equal parcels as there were shares (*feddan*) in the hamula corporation. These shares were then distributed by lot (*qura*) to member households in proportion to the number of shares each household possessed in the hamula corporation. Originally, the number of shares equalled the number of teams of oxen that a household possessed. After registration, however, the number of shares were fixed. Over time, each household’s share tended to decrease owing to the practice of equal inheritance among sons.

The hama’il of Umm el-Fahm, like most hama’il in Palestine, were corporate patronymic groups that were not genealogically integrated. Nevertheless, membership in the corporation was expressed in a patrilineal idiom: *aid due* (*a’uma*) a member of the same hamula was *aid* owed a patrilineal kinsman (cf. Stavsky 1946: 100-10). If a man were too sick to plough, harvest or thresh, it was incumbent upon his fellow hamula members to come to his aid without recompense. If he was in conflict with someone outside the hamula, then members of his patronymic would be obliged to come to his defence. When this happened, the whole residential quarter of the village might be converted into a veritable stone fortress (this was true of Umm el-Fahm even into the 1950’s). Hamula members also exercised a marked degree of control over the disposition of one another’s women. Although direct lineal kinsmen (in the *jeb*) had first say as to whom their women should or should not marry, other hamula members could veto giving women over in marriage to other hama’il. Moreover, the fact that hamula members were adjacent plottolders in the masha’a lands required constant co-operation in agricultural details. The political, economic and social integrity of the multifunctional village hamula were thus one.

But the village was also a moral agent that encouraged the political, social and economic association of the different hama’il. Conflict between hama’il was subject to the arbitration of at least those village elders whose own families were not directly involved. The elders (*ikhtiyariyeh*) assured the common defence of the village against attack, and set the particular modalities for protecting the village patrimony. For example, in anticipation of a Bedouin raid during harvest time, the elders would see to it that hama’il helped one another to cut and bury away (in *makmura*) the greatest quantity of crop in the shortest possible time (cf. Laorty-Hadji 1856: 514; Voloey 1787: 379). The elders also mediated between government authorities and the various hama’il, although here there was a greater tendency for each hamula to come to its own terms with the agents of the government, especially in matters of tax collection.

Control over the disposition of women at the village level involved persuasion rather than the injunction of rights. A woman should presumably always have been given to a son of the village (ibn el-balad), all things being equal. By doing so one could keep a constant eye on the family honour (*ard*) that a woman invariably put at risk. Moreover, a wide network of affinal connexions between sections of different hama'il supplied a ready and effective store of potential political and economic allies. If renewed, affinal ties could be converted into matrilineal bonds that would underscore more lasting political and economic relationships. Matrilineal kinsmen, for example, could be expected to bolster one's position in the competition for ascendancy within one's own hamula, and, if one lacked capital, to be available for co-cultivation partnerships.

The overall composition of village and hamula was such as to discourage capital investment in the hamula's masha'a holdings from persons outside the village, but not from members of other hama'il within the village. A member of one hamula, finding himself short of capital, could enter into a partnership (*sharika*) with a member of another hamula who would supply the necessary oxen or seed for cultivating the land during one masha'a cycle. Such a partnership had to be agreed upon before the allotment of land by the hamula, and could not be dissolved until the next redistribution. In this way, members of one hamula could buy shares in the masha'a holdings of another. Each hamula sought to minimise the extent of the other's infiltration by offering more generous terms to fellow members when possible. But the general requirements of village life also fostered some degree of corporate interfacing between hama'il.

Besides, even if a certain number of shares in the hamula's holdings were transferred to an outside owner, no actual plots of land were lost. The new owner (*mallik*) only had the right to participate in the hamula's periodic redistributions, just like any other hamula shareholder (*sahib fil masha'a*). Even then it was usually the former proprietor who actually cultivated the land, paying the outside owner a rent on the land (*gism el-'ard*) of one fourth of the produce. So, the alienation of land shares did not necessarily entail alienation of the hamula's source of livelihood.

In the long run, regardless of who actually cultivated the land, the outside owner was only assured the right to collect rent on a (mathematical) share of the hamula's masha'a holdings, since plots invariably changed hands among owners after each cycle. The cultivator himself would be entitled to one fourth of the crop for his labour, and the remaining half of the crop would be directly apportioned according to the amount of capital contributed. Seed (*bdhar*) accounted for a full quarter of the produce, and a team of oxen for the other quarter. The tithe was usually taken from the threshing floor (*bedar*) before the division of the crop and apportioned among the four main factors of production: labour, land, seed and team.

Owing to its religious prestige as a patron of the Mosque and to extensive private holdings of olive groves and orchards, one section of the Aghbariyeh hamula was able to gain ascendancy over the others. From that position it also managed to acquire a dominant political role in the village by mediating with government authorities and gaining the right to collect the village's taxes. By thus obtaining access to large amounts of ready capital the head of the section, Hassan Sa'ad, having taken the title 'Effendi' managed to acquire substantial economic interest: about one third of the Aghbariyeh's masha'a lands, one fourth of Mahamid's and one fourth of Jabarin's. Only the rival Mahajneh hamula refused to cede land to Hassan Sa'ad Effendi; the Mahajneh did, however, sell off upwards of ten feddan worth of masha'a shares to a Christian resident of Nazareth. Still, members of the Mahajneh hamula worked as co-cultivators (contributing labour and occasionally capital) on Aghbariyeh lands.

Although Hassan Sa'ad Effendi had title to about one fourth of the total masha'a land of the village, he was unable to stabilise his plots and force an end to their periodic redistribution. Not only the Mahajneh, but also the majority of Jabarin, Mahamid and even Aghbariyeh *fellahin* refused to block or make exceptions to the periodic redistributions of any masha'a lands. Arguments that the land could be converted into more profitable orchards failed to move them: not only because they recognised that it would take at least seven years for the trees to bear marketable fruit, but because they realised that the entire culture of cereal production would thus be undermined. Informants who took part in the controversy over whether to stabilise or 'freeze' the land (*ifraz barani*) were cognisant of the social effects of the decline in traditional cereal culture. In their eyes, masha'a came to represent the last safeguard against the destruction of a whole way of life—a way of life that was evidently collapsing all around them.

The social corporations that were bound to extensive cereal production not only supplied a reliable, if economically uninspiring, source of livelihood. They also furnished a familiar strategic framework that allowed a certain latitude in directing social (e.g. marriage alliances) and economic (e.g. co-cultivation partnerships) life choices (cf. Atran 1985b). Such a framework thus provided for a continuing measure of control over one's fate at a time when the majority of *fellahin* seemed destined to become 'partners of the wind' (*shrik el-hawa*, cf. Post 1891: 105). It is this sentiment that the Palestine Royal Commission acknowledged, but did not seem to understand: "it appears evident that, in certain areas, the Arabs regard this [masha'a] system of tenancy, destructive as it is of all development, as a safeguard against alienation" (Peel Commission Report 1937: 219).

It was the internal strength of the hamula, fostered by competition within and between hama'il, that prevented the dominant shareholder from gaining a controlling and directing interest in the village corporation. Although the village hama'il did permit sale of land shares to persons outside the village, such sales were carefully watched and required at least the tacit assent of the village elders. Sales were prohibited to any outsider suspected of trying to convert land shares into alienable plots. This included representatives of various Zionist agencies. In this way also, the villagers managed to resist attempts by the authorities at Land Settlement, at least until the lands were seized by the new Israeli Government in 1948.⁷

Unlike the original inhabitants of the neighbouring Druze village of Dalich who apparently came from the Aleppo region, the first settlers in Isfiyya probably immigrated from Lebanon.⁸ The retreat of the Egyptian armies in 1840-41, brought in its wake the destruction of all but the two named Druze villages in the Carmel (Oliphant 1884). These two absorbed some of the homeless, as well as refugees from other ruined villages as far away as the Hauran. In 1859, when the British Consul estimated the number of inhabitants of Isfiyya at 400, tilling twenty *feddan* (Conder & Kitchener 1881, I: 281-822), Isfiyya already had a heterogeneous (though by no means amorphous) social composition consisting of several unrelated patronymic groups.

The twenty *feddan* mentioned apparently refer to the 'corn-land and olives [that] surround the village'. What is not reported, however, is the fact that the villagers also cultivated the lands of Wadi Kishon (Wadi Mugata'a), a narrow valley linking the Plain of Esdraelon to the Plain of Acre.

Since the grain on the hills matures some weeks later than grain in the valleys the fellahin were able to work both. The yield in the valley, though, could attain double that of a comparable surface in the hills. In the Wadi, which had two productive seasons a year, each feddan represented twenty-five hectares and was correspondingly referred to as a double, or 'Greek', feddan (feddan roumi), which also designated the amount of land that could be worked in a year." 9 Shares of land in Isfiyya were distributed directly to shareholders, and not indirectly through their hama'il as in Umm el-Fahm. Thus, each shareholding was counted as a fraction of the twentyfeddan roumi of the village corporation. Accordingly, each of Isfiyya's several agrarian zones were divided into twenty equal parcels. A quadrennial lottery would then award a full shareholder, who was usually capital owner (shaddad) as well, one parcel (maress) per zone; holders of half a share (shagha) received half a parcel, etc.

As the village grew the reduction and disproportion of household shares in the masha'a lands increased." 10 Reduction ensued from the practice of equal inheritance. This meant that sons would receive like fractions of the household share when their father died, or when he no longer felt able to administer household budget and farming operations. 11 Disproportion resulted from differential reproduction of families, and from the buying and selling of shares. Yet, until its abrogation in Isfiyya in the early 1930's, the masha'a remained the socio-economic linchpin of the village corporation in general, and the extended family household in particular. With its demise, factionalism would become the dominant mode of social integration above the level of the patronymic group, and the extended family household would soon fragment into nuclear families (Atran 1985a).

The corporate efficacy of the masha'a system in the face of reduction and disproportion depended to a significant extent on the availability of land elsewhere. Such land existed on the Carmel itself as open woodlands (*ahrash*)

Although appreciably less fertile and harder to work and clear, this land served as a safety valve against the fracturing of the domestic community and the fragmentation of its joint farm. Indeed, villagers considered both jointly farmed lands and open woodlands as masha'a.

In Isfiyya's masha'a days, the village family (*'ayli*) was generally a patrilocal extended household consisting of as yet unmarried sons and daughters, married sons and their families, spinster sisters, and, on occasion, bachelor brothers. 12 Married sons with grown children could only remain economically viable if they had about eight to ten hectares of land to work. Moreover, if they were bound exclusively to their share of the masha's lands their contribution to the labour of the joint household would be greater than that of the unmarried sons; their parts of the inheritance and the disposable budget, however, would be the same. In that event, the unbalanced relation between production and consumption would prevent the extended family farm from persisting, much less from increasing, at a rhythm at which new individual households formed. But if, as was the case until 1921, the woodlands around the village could be opened up and held privately by anyone desiring to do so, then the excess labour represented by the individual households of married sons could be productively channelled off and their greater land needs met. In this way, division of the father's estate and the setting up of separate households would represent a natural fissioning, rather than a brutal scission and fragmentation.

In fact, the old estate, that is, the patrimonial masha'a farm, might still be, and often was, managed jointly since the criteria for efficient economic planning would not have changed. Although there would no longer be a common budget, nor necessarily a common residence, agricultural management need not suffer. Furthermore, sisters-in-law would no longer be subject to the domestic pressures of a common account or to the ensuing suspicion that the brothers-in-law take advantage of their husbands. Still, sisters-in-law would work together seeding the joint farm (when their husbands shared the ploughing), minding each other's children, fetching water and generally offering sympathy and help to one another. Finally, there would be a tendency to create a jural link that would solidify the social, political and economic bonds of the domestically divided extended family by taking a brother's daughter as spouse for a son.

Now a father did not always decide that a son should exercise what the community recognised as a right to take one's patrilateral parallel cousin (bint 'amm) in marriage. Although it is impossible to obtain accurate statistics for unrecorded marriages that occurred from fifty to a hundred years ago, it appears that the decision was taken in regard to only about one of every two available patrilateral cousins. Yet, such marriage, while ideologically sanctioned and undoubtedly preferred as a consecratory union incarnating the integrity of the joint estate, was by no means the only sociologically significant or normative form of union. For once the preferred union had served to preserve the family patrimony, further economic, political and social calculations could not but favour various degrees of exogamous alliance (see Arran 1985b for recent statistics).

By thus keeping a woman in the family, one would be in a position to give up a woman to a more distant kinsman, and even to a villager from another patronymic group; or, since little or no brideprice would be given for a parallel cousin, one could better afford the capital outlay required to take in a woman from the outside. Such 'exogamous' unions could well serve to strengthen further the internal solidarity of the domestically divided extended family, by opening the joint farm to a wider network of potential suppliers of land, capital and labour. These other sources could then be tapped by the joint farm or the individual domestic unit as the need arose. With economic integrity comes political integrity, and affines might thus not only aid in the production of wealth but also in the accumulation of power and prestige.

The institutional importance of exogamy within the system of preferential exogamy is even more crucial to an understanding of masha'a operations beyond the level of the joint farm. The general structure of co-operation and co-ordination between members of the village corporation was expressed in the idiom of affinity (*nasah*); that is, villagers interpreted their mutual dependence in all masha'a operations other than those of the joint farm in terms of the duties and obligations that belong to affinal relationships. Thus, aid given was aid due to an affine; conflicts resolved were conflicts that were not supposed to have arisen between those 'whose wives are our sisters'.

The Druze of the village still consider one another affines (*nasayib*). Today, village endogamy runs to over 80 percent, and was doubtless higher in the past owing to the relative isolation of the Carmel villages. Informants of the older generation visualised relationships with their various sets of adjacent masha'a plottolders chiefly through the women (wives and sisters) relating them. Unless a neighbour happened to be a Christian, it was seldom that an affinal chain could not be found to link up adjacent plottolders, and often several alternate chains could be elicited. Yet, even Christians were treated as if they were affines in masha'a matters, being entitled to all considerations due affines in this respect.

If adjacent plottolders happened to be agnates or close cognates (one generation removed) genealogies were invoked; for neighbours who were

neither agnates nor close cognates, however, there need not be any significant genealogical segment interposed in the affinal chain ultimately linking them. When it came to partnerships, though, the mode of reckoning was generally mediated by genealogy, unless the partnership was between Druze and Christian. In other words, informants usually tried to visualise their various partnerships in an idiom of consanguinity (see Atran 1985a for a schematic representation). Partners were considered ultimately married to the sisters and daughters of either agnates ('ammam) or cognates (ikhwal). Most often, it appears, partnerships were not renewed from one redistribution to the next, except those between brothers; although some partnerships were later repeated and partnerships between close consanguines were seemingly more frequent, such as those involving paternal or maternal uncles and their nephews. Thus, despite the fact that partners tended to change as often as neighbours, the former were treated in an idiom that implied some measure of social-structural duration. In fact, partnership (sharika) was not infrequently compared to 'mother's-brotherhood' (makhwal). Both imply, rather more informally than wikh patrikinship, mutual material aid, with the emphasis in the comparison on aid in tilling the land.

Yet, the conceptual line between neighbour and partner was not hard-and-fast. Yesterday's neighbours were potentially tomorrow's partners and vice versa. Indeed, the village as a whole was not only bound together by overlaying networks of affinity, but also thoroughly integrated through overlapping relationships of matrilinearity (the consequences of affinity in the ascending generation). This is not to say that such relations were always or generally harmonious, but by cross-cutting lines of social and economic division, they did prevent, or at least dilute, tendencies to scission in the community.

Unlike the idiom of patrilineality, the idioms of affinity and matrilinearity bespoke a situational rather than mechanical solidarity. But affinity and matrilinearity underscored different aspects of the village condition. Recourse to the idiom of affinity allowed the villagers to respond to an indeterminate set of needs. It was an eclectic means of expression, forming a kind of social canopy allowing villagers to configure all contingencies that might arise: for example, any of the various sets of circumstances that the lottery might turn up with each redistribution of masha'a. The ties expressed in the idiom of matrilinearity were also widespread throughout the social body politic, but they branched out in particular directions. Through them, the affairs of the moment became transactions between groups. Matrilateral links thus represented special nodes where hamula corporations interfaced. The partnerships that interlinked the more enduring joint estates might dissolve; the matrilineal relationships that interlaced the more permanent patronymic stocks might wither (if the affinal link were not renewed after a couple of generations); but in their passing they would knot and strengthen the social fabric.

As long as the social fabric held firm, Isfiyya, like Umm el-Fahm, was able to avoid alienation of its common landed patrimony. Nevertheless, two extraneous developments combined to put an end to the masha'a in Isfiyya by the early 1930's. Informants cite the British decision to close off the woodlands to further expansion as one of the two main causes of the masha's system's demise.

The other cause cited was the acquisition of titles to some of the communal land by Jewish colonists who pressed the Mandatory Government to allow them exclusive cultivation rights under the Land Settlement Ordinances.

In Turkish times, a village's confines were set as the limits beyond which a man shouting from a house in the village could no longer be heard (a court decision at the beginning of the British Mandate fixed this at 2.5 km.). All land not cultivated and lying outside the territorial limits of the village was considered 'dead' (*mewar*), and any land left fallow for three consecutive years was deemed 'abandoned' (*mahiul*). Until the Mahlul Land Ordinance (1920) and the Mewat Land Ordinance (1921) rights to cultivate such land could be obtained by payment of a 'redemption price' or upon proof that it had been under continuous cultivation for at least ten years. After passage of the ordinances these lands could only be opened with prior consent of the authorities. Any lands cleared without consent were subject to seizure by the State. Despite Isfiyya's stiff resistance to the ordinances (cf. Sawyer 1925: 8), in the end opportunities for the expansion of village farming were greatly reduced, if not eliminated.

Although Umm el-Fahm also disposed of communal woodlands, they were not part of a large forested block of territory such as the Carmel, which the Mandate authorities sought to convert into a prime example of the State Domain. Nor did Umm el-Fahm's woodlands serve quite the same 'safety-valve' function as Isfiyya's. Not only did Umm el-Fahm have considerably more income from olive and fruit orchards, but its richest families also brought in income from land and land shares acquired from other villages,

In the late nineteenth century, Badi'a Effendi of Acre (one of the principal benefactors of the Bahai faith) began buying into Isfiyya's masha'a lands with the consent of the Mukhtar and the village elders. Ultimately he acquired about one fourth of the total. In the mid 1920's he sold the titles to the Jewish National Fund (Keren Kayemer) without consulting the villagers (cf. Granovsky 1931: table 8). When the villagers discovered this they decided to end the periodic redistributions of the land in order to benefit from the law granting title to anyone who could prove continuous cultivation for ten years.

The Land Settlement Ordinance (1928) and the Land Settlement Amendment Ordinance (1930) had just come into effect. These aimed to end masha's in the country as a whole through a village by village cadastral. Henceforth, individuals would receive title deeds for each separate plot of land they had cultivated in the last masha'a cycle. Between June 1929 and February 1932, however, masha'a had been abolished by official action in only eight villages (see Granott 1952: 241). In Isfiyya, the last redistribution had occurred in 1927,

Thus, when Nejib Mansour became Mukhtar in 1932, the decision was made to 'unofficially freeze' (*ifraz barani*) the land in the knowledge that the Settlement Officer was unlikely to reach the village for some time.

As it turned out, the Settlement Officer did not reach Isfiyya until 1941 despite the entreaties of the Jewish National Fund representatives. Although the representatives had official deeds to the land (gawashin) and signed documents from the villagers naming locations and proprietors of the sold plots, the latter documents proved problematic in the Land Court. This is because those same plots had since been redistributed to several other villagers in succeeding lotteries. The village finally came to an out-of-court settlement by granting the Fund lands in the extreme northwest and east. So, for the time being, the villagers had managed to save the bulk of their masha'a lands. But these were now stabilised (*mafruz*), with individual

holdings permanently fixed and scattered. Much of this land was later bought off, especially after the establishment of the State of Israel; it had, in any case, since ceased to function as a patrimony for the village corporation and the joint farm.

Conclusion

For the marginal population of the plains, the masha'a system proved particularly susceptible to outside interference that would eventually dismantle it. First of all, it was a native system that imperial and colonial authorities had little, if any, economic regard for. The authorities were also largely oblivious of the social nature of masha'a, that is, of the organic relationship between village social organisation and the agrarian regime. They were thus content to force, or allow the peasantry to suffer, economic changes with minimal consideration of the social consequences."

Secondly, for the increasingly large marginal population of the plains, the social-structural mechanisms most apt to resist, or at least stall, the economic fragmentation and social disintegration of the village were lacking. Forced registration of lands and the consequent large-scale transference of titles placed the economic fate of the marginal peasantry in the hands of absentee landlords.

In the competition for the economic control of Palestine that pitted the capital of the Arab landlord against Jewish capital in a depressed agricultural market, it was the latter that proved more in tune with the market forces then prevailing in the world economy and which, through the Mandate, predominated in Palestine (Stein 1984; cf. Bonn  1935: 117; Firestone 1975). Thus, the fact that Arab landlords were compelled to sell off (surreptitiously) their holdings to the colonists, coupled with the inability of the peasants to block the decisions of their landlords, meant that the peasants would have to give up their familiar, if not wholly chosen, way of life.

The case was otherwise, however, for a significant minority of older, continuously inhabited, hill villages. For the most part, they had evolved flexible, self-sustaining mechanisms of economic isolation and internal social integration. Before registration, these mechanisms had enabled the hill villages to implement masha'a when conditions allowed, and to retreat from it when circumstances were no longer favourable. With registration, retreat became possible only on pain of forfeit. But income from the hills, coupled with a history of socio-economic coordination, maximised the possibilities of wholesale registration of their valley lands and minimised the opportunities for piecemeal alienation.

Political considerations briefly alluded to above have doubtlessly abetted in the often rigid and simplistic interpretation of the intricate relationship between social organisation and the agrarian regime in the masha'a villages of Palestine and elsewhere in the Levant. While the area was under Ottoman rule, European inquiries into the region's political, social and economic character were almost exclusively devoted to biblical and geographical surveys. There was little interest in the people as such. Thus, Thomson, who joined in Robinson's explorations and was acknowledged by Oliphant as an authority on the country, typically remarked:

To this day, the only competent descriptions of masha'a agriculture in Palestine consist in a handful of pages written by a few contributors to the British-run Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The discussions are fairly general and barely suggest the wide variation in the forms of masha'a prevalent throughout the country. There is no sustained case-by-case (or even a single detailed case) study of the relationship between village social organisation and the actual implementation of masha'a. In Syria as well, the only serious, but still summary, evaluations of masha'a are those of the French colonial geographer-historians, notably Latron and Weulersse. Although Weulersse especially had a decided anthropological bent, he did not attempt a systematic analysis of village social organisation, much less its relationship to the agrarian regime.

Only in the last three decades has anthropology turned its considerable analytic skills on the Middle East. Understandably, it is the evolving relationship between agriculture and social organisation over the last thirty years that has come most clearly into focus. The actual operation of masha'a is generally excluded from this purview, having largely disappeared by the time methodical fieldwork commenced. Yet, to reconstruct this many-faceted socio-economic regime, anthropologists and historians usually depend on the often limited and unreliable reports of explorers, colonists and colonial functionaries.

This has done much to obfuscate, but little to clarify, the politically sensitive issue of the land problem in Palestine.

To be sure, there is something to Barth's suggestion concerning the internal strength of a village's social fabric and its susceptibility to outside interference and control. But apart from a few noteworthy exceptions (e.g. Peters 1976), an unfortunate tendency to assume the adequacy of Bedouin tribal models vitiates many of the generalisations about the nature of colonial and precolonial peasant societies in the Middle East. For these all too comprehensible and beguiling accounts of agnatic association and dissociation fail to capture crucial regional differences in the history of social and agrarian interrelations. Given a heavily added dose of political sensibility often leading to biased appraisals of the Palestine land problem in particular, knowledge of the varied course of sedentary organisation and plains agriculture remains in a predictably lamentable state. This article, while still woefully insufficient, aims simply to introduce some subtlety into the question,

NOTES

1. Concerning Egypt, in particular, and the Middle East, in general, Baer (1966: 151) concludes:

Now, in Upper Egypt where masha'a was common, detailed knowledge of landholdings was available to authorities from an early date, unlike the case in the Levant and Iraq. This circumstance may indeed have facilitated a ready exploitation of the peasantry, specifically by appropriating the collective discipline of the masha'a system (cf. Poliak 1939: 69-70). But this state of affairs by no means warrants the conclusion that masha'a was intrinsically disposed to, or created by, a 'feudal' management.

Similar considerations apply to North Africa. Some see masha'a as the creation of a fiscal system imposed by the authorities on settling tribes. This supposedly had nothing to do with agrarian collectivism, but was a creation of the Turkish or Moroccan system of government (see Bonn  1955: 117-18). Nevertheless, even when government control was lax, peasants kept to the system (Hoffherr 1932: 124; cf. Ageron 1968). In Tunisia:

'In certain tribes (Frachich, Nefzaoua), a periodic division of plots was decided upon by the mi'ad after the rains' (Valens: 1981: 714; of. Bardin 1039); while in Libya, too, tribes spontaneously decided that, 'whenever the rain falls, the land is available for all, in equal measures, to plough; the decision concerning the detailed allocation of strips of ploughland is taken summarily by casting lots as soon as the rain falls' (Peters 1976: 70).

2. According to the Johnson-Crosbie Report (1930: 45), where masha'a prevailed in Palestine, It is useless to expect that any land will be weeded or fertilized, that trees will be planted, or, in a word, that any development will take place'. In the case of Transjordan, Walpole (1944) opines: 'it is doubtful if a tenure more inimical to farming could have been devised by any community'. For Syria, Klat (1957: 19) avers that: 'Musha tenure is, undoubtedly, one of the main reasons of the present low productivity of the once prosperous plains of the interior of Syria and constitutes an obvious bar to any form of agricultural progress'. Likewise for Warriner (1966: 76), commenting on masha'a in the Levant and Iraq: "Of course the system has great disadvantages, since it prevents any investment in the land and is an obstacle to any attempt at progress. The individual cultivator is precluded from manuring the land or undertaking any improvement such as terracing against erosion .

3 In fact, Ottoman attempts to end fallowing and grazing by imposing a 'thorn' or 'weed tax (malshok) on the 'last' produce of temporarily idle land could not but undermine the system of extensive agriculture in the country (Shaw Commission Report 1930: 450). Without rest or the enrichment and weeding contributed by grazing animals, the fertility of valley lands would inevitably decline. Forced into the hills, flocks would do considerable damage to the vegetation protecting against the erosion of shallow hill soil. In sum, the peasant would have to expend ever increasing amounts of (unavailable) capital and labour on an ever decreasing return for both high and lowland cultivation.

It is worth noting in this respect that the first serious disputes between the fellahin and Jewish colonists in the 1880's at the Gedera and Petah Tikvah settlements in the Martime Plain have been attributed to what "was really a customary village quarrel (fiprah kifarit rigilak)" (Dinor 1954: 96); that is, 'the Jewish purchasers were not acquainted with local customs regarding freedom of pasturing' (Porath 1975: 375). Yet like other disputes that followed, the quarrel over "grazing rights" was nearly always a quarrel over attempts by the fellahin to recover at least partial use of lost sasha'a lands, as eye-witness accounts by the colonists themselves make clear (e.g. Hirsch to Pinsker, 4 April 1886, in Druyanov 1919: 747-53). But inasmuch as the first colonists were generally unaware of the intermittent nature of masha'a and its intimate relationship to peasant herding, the erroneous conception of the Palestinian plains as largely given over to pasturage is comprehensible, The mistake is less comprehensible, or at least less easily dismissed as ingenuous, when repeated by modern commentators (cf. Haycraft Commission Report 1921: 57).

4. Articles 8 and 9 of the Ottoman Land Code of 12 Ramadan 1274 AH. (21 April 1858) prohibited communal ownership of the land and granted a prescriptive right of usufruct (tasarruf) only to individuals who could demonstrate actual possession and cultivation of a plot for at least ten consecutive years (hag el-garar). Since land previously held in masha'a precluded prior possession for more than a few years (i.e. for not more than one redistributive cycle of the masha'a), peasants could only obtain usufruct rights under the second and third provisions of Article 78. Here registration (tabu) was granted against payment of a redemption price (bedal el-nithl or hedat er-fabui). Villagers refusing to pay the tabu lost any claim on the land, which could then be auctioned off.

5 This permanent division of masha'a lands among hama'il was somewhat unusual for Palestine. Most villages with strong hama'il periodically apportioned land among the hama'il; and each hamula, in turn, then redistributed parcels among its member households by lottery (cf. Stavsky 1946; Cohen 1965; Antoun 1972). In Umm el-Fahm, though, there were only periodic redistributions within the hamula, and not first between hama'il. But the method of redistribution current in Umm el-Fahm was not unheard of elsewhere. For example, in the village of Isdud about a quarter of the land was held in masha'a, as with Umm el-Fahm (Auvhagen 1907: 50). Also, Isdud's masha'a land was divided into four blocks and given to four hama'il that lived in four separate quarters of the village,

Each hamula received its holding with fixed boundaries. A given block was reckoned as the property of the hamula and could not be exchanged. Within the hamula, land was divided among the individual households by lot every two years. In Umm el-Fahm, redistributions were sometimes every two years, at other times every (our, as with Isfiyya.

6. Conder (1878, II: 245) sets the feddan in the plains at 112-144 Turkish dunams (one Turkish dunam equaling 0.00193 hectares). By the 1880's the Ottoman Government had fixed the standard feddan at 100 dunams (Schumacher 188g: 163-4). During the British Mandate the Turkish dunam was superseded by a metric dunam equal to 1/10 hectare. Occasionally, however, the double, or 'Greek', 'feddan (feddan roumi) was the accepted surface measure. For example, Isfiyya's masha'a lands measured 20 feddan roumi, each feddan FOtiHI comprising 240 dupnams.

7 The opposition of certain segments of the Arab landowning elite to the political ambitions of Zionism did, it is true, slow the process of breaking up the masha'a and alienating the land. But this political strategy of resistance proved economically most effective with those villages whose internal corporate structure was strong enough to meet that of the landowning elite half way (see Atran in press).

8. With the permission of the editor of L'Homme, this description of masha'a in Isfiyya is taken from a more detailed discussion of the historical relationship between the village's social organisation and agrarian regime (Atran 19854).

9. Isfiyya was the subject of a study by Leonard Kasdan (1961) in the mid-1950's. In line with Murphy and Kasdan's (1959) thesis about Arab kinship generally, Kasdan argues that: 'the Druze are patrilineal in descent, yet their pattern of integration 1% bilateral'.

Furthermore, Within Isfiyya . . . consanguinity can only operate as a basis for the organization of ongoing groups of a corporate nature when conflict occurs between unrelated groups. As a consequence, integration at larger levels of magnitude must be based upon some other principle . . . the principle at work is affiliation with factional groups (1941: 9o).

The two chief sources of error in Kasdan's analysis of this purported 'type case' of Arab sedentary society are the related presuppositions that (1) patronymic groups cannot constitute social corporations because they cannot structurally discriminate agnates from cognates, and that (2) the

practice and ideology of preferential endogamy applies only to agnatic groups. Concerning (1), however, even if (2) were correct, the fact that the various jeb of a hamula are not genealogically linked entails that the hamula is not bilaterally integrated, since matrilineal connexions thus also cannot ramify through the genealogy of the kamula. Moreover, as indicated below, (2) does not apply to Isfiyya, in particular, nor to sedentary Arab villages, in general (Atran 1985b). Indeed, in the past the faction scarcely had a corporate function in village life. Up until the end of the village masha'a, the village as a whole constituted a political and economic corporation based on affinity and matrilineality, which was largely undivided along factional lines (Arran 1985ad), Kasdan, though, makes no mention of masha'a, arguing that 'economic co-operation is a strictly family affair. Consequently it plays no part in defining solidary kin units. Land is not only alienable but must be divided among one's heirs' (1961: 85).

He further errs in his contention that Isfiyya's valley lands, where masha'a was practised, were since "Turkish times © . . . secondary in importance and value to the villagers from an agricultural standpoint", as supposedly were valley lands elsewhere in Palestine (1961: 30).

10. The population of Isfiyya increased by about 50 per cent, over the second half of the last century. Three quarters were Druze and a quarter Greek Catholic (Schumacher 1887: 178; Millinen 1907: 150). By 1932, following the last masha'a redistribution on record, the village numbered 750, with about the same proportion of Druze to Christians (cf. Ben Zvi 1934: 71).

11. Under Muslim law, which also applied to the Druze, sons were entitled to equal parts of the father's estate and daughters to half parts. In practice, however, daughters rarely pressed their claim. To do otherwise would mean losing the protection of her father's family, which would leave her completely at the mercy of her husband's family for whom she always remains a stranger,

12. *Ayli* is also a generic term for something in the order of 'family'. As such it may also designate the members of a hamula, a jeb (or 'azab), or a nuclear family. The same applies to dar, which encompasses a more general notion of 'household'. It may also denote the members of a hamsda, a jeb or an isolated dwelling unit. "Ayli and dar, however, are by no means synonymous. Although both may have identical extensions, their intensions differ. "Ayli signifies a kin group in its relationship to other like kin groups, whereas dar refers to a given 'ayli's domestic constitution. Thus, political alignment is usually ascribed to the 'ayli, while dar indicates domestic activity and co-residence (to the extent it exists: for example, in the 'quarter', or bara, of a hamula).

13. As a political aftermath to the disturbances of 1929, two different inquiries by representatives of the colonial government on the state of Arab agriculture in 1930 indicated that the traditional methods of extensive cereal cultivation, in general, and masha'a, in particular, could not accommodate both an increasing Arab rural population and continued colonisation (Shaw Commission Report 1930: 120—1; Hope-Simpson Report 1930: 142). The official Zionist response insisted that accommodation was possible far into the future if only the Arab peasantry were to learn to live intensively on less land, as the colonists obviously were capable of doing (Granovsky 1931). Since it was economically impossible for the Jewish population to continue to grow apace with the fellahin by adopting the methods of Arab agriculture, it was up to the latter to retool their economy and reorganise their culture accordingly: "A very important point bearing on the development of the colonization is that the Jewish authorities rejected the idea that the standard of living of the colonists should be dictated by the economics of the farming system at any given time" (Keen 1946: 25).

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Baha'i Planning for Non-Baha'i Children

The Baha'is always claim that they want to create a spiritual atmosphere for the development of the society .That is the reason they want to conduct children moral classes.

Their apex body the Universal House of Justice have asked the Baha'is all over the world that to establish children moral classes in their neighborhood inviting all the non Baha'i children and their parents. In these classes the Baha'is give small doses of Baha'i Faith teaching to these tiny tots who are as young as 5 years. Naturally when they reached maturity they are already vaccinated by Baha'i Faith and they will easily accept the Faith. In the process they will invite their non-Baha'i parents also towards the Faith. The unaware parents will think that somebody is spiritualising their children on truthfulness , honesty, obedience to the parents etc. But the real purpose is attracting them towards the Baha'i Faith.

1. The Christian priests have openly objected and warned them not to conduct Baha'i classes with Christian children. In Sri Lanka the Buddhist Monks have warned the Baha'is that do classes only with Baha'i children not with Buddhist.
2. In Uzbekistan when the Government officials raided a Baha'i meeting they found that many small non Baha'is children were being proselytised. When the officials asked them have you taken the permission from their parents? The Baha'is replied that we are having Tea and for that we need not take permissions. The officials gave them a strict warning and deported a few of them.
3. In many Junior youth programmes of the Baha'is the Baha'i Administration facilitate the meetings between young boys and girls so as the spread immorality.
4. Here are two letters as a reference which the Baha'i apex body has sent for conducting Baha'i children classes.

“With regard to neighborhood children’s classes, this is a most promising development which will undoubtedly attract to the Faith many families concerned about the spiritual and moral education of their children, and the friends should not underestimate the power of their children becoming involved in them. Indeed, many stories have been received that describe a strengthening of Baha’i identity as Baha’i children participate in classes with children from the wider society.”

“The establishment of children’s classes, one of the core activities of the Five-Year Plan, is intended to address young people’s need for spiritual education up to about age 11. An outward-looking orientation in this sphere of service has enabled Baha’is across the world to reach out to greater numbers of children than could ever have been contemplated heretofore. In particular, Baha’i communities have increasingly come to conceive of the education they offer as being for all children, without distinguishing between those that come from a Baha’i background and others. Clearly, this has implications for the organization and coordination of classes. It also has a profound impact on the conception of the Baha’i community in terms of its interactions with wider society.”

The Baha'i Faith is hypocrisy personified.

(رسالة مؤرخة 9 تشرين الأول/أكتوبر 2007 كتبت بالنيابة عن بيت العدل الأعظم إلى أحد الأحياء)

أيها الحبيب العزيز

تلقى بيت العدل الأعظم رسالتك الإلكترونية ... المتعلقة بصفوف الأطفال ... ، وقد طلب منا إرسال الرد التالي

... نقدر اهتمامك القلبي بتربية الأطفال البهائيين ورغبتك في توفير مناهج دراسي بهائي مركزي يتبع برنامجاً مدروساً ومنهجياً للتعليم

إذا كانت لديك اقتراحات حول طبيعة البرنامج الذي يجري تطويره على الصعيد المركزي، فإننا نشجعك على تبادل أفكارك مع محفلك المركزي

وفيما يتعلق بصفوف الأطفال التي تعقد في الأحياء (الجوار)، فإنها من أهم التطورات الواعدة وستؤدي بلا شك إلى جذب عائلات كثيرة مهتمة بالتربية الروحانية والأخلاقية لأبنائهم، وعلى الأحياء ألا يستهينوا بقوة انخراط أطفالهم بها. في الواقع، لقد استلمت قصص عديدة تصف كيف تتعزز الهوية البهائية عندما يشارك الأطفال البهائيون في صفوف تضم أطفالاً من المجتمع الأوسع

أردنا أن نؤكد لكم دعاء بيت العدل الأعظم في العتبت المقدسة عسى أن تستجيب جهودكم المبذولة في سبيل تقدم أمر الله والنهوض بالتربية الروحانية والأخلاقية للأطفال تأييدات الجمال المبارك

مع التحيات الحية البهائية

بيت العدل الأعظم

(Letter dated 9 October 2007 written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual)

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

Your email letter...regarding children's classes...has been received by the Universal House of Justice, and we have been asked to respond as follows.

Your heartfelt concern for the education of Bahá'í children and your desire for a national Bahá'í curriculum which follows a well-conceived and systematic program of learning are appreciated...

Should you have suggestions to make about the nature of the program that is being developed at the national level, you are encouraged to share your ideas with your National Assembly.

With regard to neighbourhood children's classes, this is a most promising development which will undoubtedly attract to the Faith many families concerned about the spiritual and moral education of their children, and the friends should not underestimate the power of their children becoming involved in them. Indeed, many stories have been received that describe a strengthening of Bahá'í identity as Bahá'í children participate in classes with children from the wider society.

We are to assure you of the prayers of the House of Justice in the Holy Shrines that your efforts to advance the Cause of God and to further the spiritual and moral education of children will attract the confirmations of the Blessed Beauty.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

Department of the Secretariat

(رسالة مؤرخة 22 تشرين الثاني/نوفمبر 2009 كتبت بالنيابة عن بيت العدل الأعظم إلى أحد الأحياء)

أيها الحبيب العزيز

تلقي بيت العدل الأعظم رسالتك الإلكترونية المؤرخة... والتي تطلب فيها إيصالك بشأن صفوف الأطفال البهائية. نقدر عاليًا اهتمامك بتوفير تربية فعالة للأطفال البهائيين. إن بيت العدل الأعظم يشعر بأنه يجب النظر في المسائل التي أثيرتها في سياق التطورات الجارية حاليًا في العالم البهائي، وفي هذا الصدد، طُلب منا تقديم الملاحظات التالية، ونعتذر عن التأخير في الرد.

إن تأسيس صفوف الأطفال، وهو أحد النشاطات الأساسية لخطة السنوات الخمس، يهدف إلى تلبية حاجة الصغار للتربية الروحية حتى سن الحادية عشرة. إن التوجّه نحو الخارج في مجال الخدمة هذا قد مكّن البهائيين في جميع أرجاء العالم من الوصول إلى الأطفال بأعداد أكبر من أي وقت مضى. وعلى وجه الخصوص، ازداد وعي الجامعات البهائية بأن التربية التي تقدمها هي تربية موجهة لجميع الأطفال، دون تمييز بين أولئك الذين يأتون من خلفية بهائية وغيرهم. ومن الواضح أن هذا له آثاره على تنظيم الدروس وتنسيقها، كما أن له تأثيرًا عميقًا على فهم وتصور الجامعة البهائية من حيث تفاعلها مع المجتمع الأوسع.

النظر، بموقف يتسم بالتواضع، في أفضل السبل لتوفير التربية (locality) كل هذا لا يعني بالضرورة زيادة دروس الأطفال المركزية، بل على الأصح، يجب على كل جامعة الروحية لأعداد متزايدة من الأطفال. وفي ضوء هذا، لا ينبغي أن يفهم موضوع دروس الأخلاق سواء التي تُعقد في الأحياء أو المركزية منها على أنها مقاربتين مجزأتين متبادلتين بل باعتبارهما وسيلة عملية يمكن عن طريقها استخدام موارد الجامعة المحدودة بالضرورة، على أفضل وجه، للقيام بالأولويات المتلحة. وفي (mutually exclusive approaches) رسالة كتبت بالنيابة عن بيت العدل الأعظم مؤرخة 9 تشرين الأول/أكتوبر 2007، لوحظ أن صفوف الأطفال التي تُعقد في الأحياء (الجوار) هي من أهم التطورات الواعدة وأنها أتت في كثير من الحالات إلى تعزيز الهوية البهائية عندما يشارك الأطفال البهائيون في صفوف تضم أطفالاً من المجتمع الأوسع. والعلمين الماضيين قنما دليلاً آخر على الإمكانات التي لديها. ومن المتوقع أن تتحسن الصفوف المنعقدة في الأحياء باستمرار، من خلال التجربة والتشاور مع المؤسسات المعنية، حتى تصل إلى مستوى أية صفوف مركزية كانت موجودة سابقاً أو تفوقها.

نأمل أن تساعدك الملاحظات أعلاه، وإن كان لديك مزيد من الأسئلة حول موضوع التربية البهائية للأطفال في جامعتك، فمن الأفضل إحالتها بدايةً إلى محفلك الروحاني المركزي.

مع التحيات الحبية البهائية

دائرة السكرتارية

(Letter dated 22 November 2009 written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual)

Dear Bahá'í Friend,

The Universal House of Justice has received your email letter dated... seeking clarification regarding Bahá'í children's classes. Your concern for the effective education of Bahá'í children is warmly appreciated. The House of Justice feels that the issues you raise should be considered in the context of current developments in the Bahá'í world and, in this connection, we have been asked to provide the following comments, acknowledging with regret the delay in our response.

The establishment of children's classes, one of the core activities of the Five Year Plan, is intended to address young people's need for spiritual education up to about age 11. An outward-looking orientation in this sphere of service has enabled Bahá'is across the world to reach out to greater numbers of children than could ever have been contemplated heretofore. In particular, Bahá'í communities have increasingly come to conceive of the education they offer as being for all children, without distinguishing between those that come from a Bahá'í background and others. Clearly, this has implications for the organization and coordination of classes. It also has a profound impact on the conception of the Bahá'í community in terms of its interactions with wider society.

All this does not necessarily imply the redundancy of centralized children's classes. Rather, in each locality consideration must be given, with a humble attitude of learning, as to how best to provide a spiritual education for ever-growing numbers of children. In this light, the issue of neighbourhood and centralized classes should not be understood as a dichotomy of mutually exclusive approaches, but as a question of the practical means by which the necessarily limited resources of the community can best be applied to the priorities at hand. In a letter written to you on behalf of the House of Justice dated 9 October 2007, it was observed that neighbourhood children's classes are a most promising development and that in many instances they have led to a strengthening of Bahá'í identity as Bahá'í children participate in classes with children from the wider

society. The past two years have offered further proof of the potential they hold. It is expected that, through experience and consultation with the relevant institutions, the classes held in neighborhoods will continually improve until they equal or surpass the standard of any centralized children's classes that previously existed.

It is hoped that the above comments will be of assistance to you. Should you have further questions on the subject of the Bahá'í education of children in your community, it is best to refer them in the first instance to your National Spiritual Assembly.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

Department of the Secretariat

Different Titles of Baha'u'llah

- the “Light and the Splendor of God”
- the “Lord of Lords”
- the “Most Great Name”
- the “Ancient Beauty”
- the “Finger of Glory”
- the “Pen of the Most High”
- the “Hidden Name”
- the “Preserved Treasure”
- “He Whom God will make manifest”
- “He Who is the Lord of all religions”
- the “Most Great Light”
- the “All-Highest Horizon”
- the “Most Great...
- the “All-Highest Horizon”• the “Most Great Ocean”• the “Supreme Heaven”• the “Pre-Existent Root”• the “Self-Subsistent”• the “Day-Star of the Universe”• the “Speaker on Sinai”• the “Sufferer of Men”• the “Lord of the Covenant”• the “Tree beyond which there is no passing”• the “Judge”• the “Lawgiver”• the “Redeemer of all mankind”
- the “Lord of Revelation”

Courtesy : <https://bahaitexts.blogspot.com>

What do Muslims think about the Baha'i faith ?!

The founder of Baha'ism

Baha'ism or Babism is a sect attributed to Mirza Ali Mohammed who was known as al-Bab. He initiated his call in 1260 AH (1844 AD), announcing his aim to reform the corrupted conditions of Muslims. He made his call public in Shiraz—south of Iran—where he gained some followers. Later, he sent a group of his followers to different parts of Iran to announce his advent and spread his claims, mainly that he is a messenger sent by Allah.

Mirza Ali Mohammed authored a book entitled Al-Bayan, and claimed that it contains a divinely revealed code of laws. Moreover, he claimed that his message abrogates the laws of Islam and innovated rulings for his followers similar to those of Islam. He instituted a 19 day fast that ends with the spring equinox, so that 'Eid al-Fitr always coincides with the day of Nairuz (Coptic New Year). In the Baha'i faith, the fast starts from sunrise and ends at sunset. In Al-Bayan, he said: "We have enjoined upon you fasting for a fixed number of days, and designated for you Nairuz as a feast after completing them"

The founder of the Baha'i faith called for the conference of Badasht which was held in Iran in 1264 AH-1848 AD. In this conference, he outlined the faith and declared its independence from Islam and its laws. Scholars of his time resisted this call; they proclaimed its corruption and issued fatawa declaring him a disbeliever. He was incarcerated in Shiraz and then in Isfahan. After wars and clashes between his followers and Muslims, Mirza Ali Mohammed was sentenced to death and was crucified in 1265 AH.

His successor, Mirza Hussein Ali, called himself Baha'ullah and authored a book entitled Al-Aqdas, in which he followed the footsteps of his late leader and founder of this belief, Mirza Ali Mohammed, as outlined in his book Al-Bayan.

In Al-Aqdas, Mirza Hussein Ali contradicted the principles of Islam and the other faiths. He annulled the doctrine of Islam and its laws by prescribing nine prayers to be performed each day and night and designating the place of his residence as their qibla [direction of prayer]. In Al-Aqdas, he said: "When you wish to perform prayer, turn your faces towards my holy direction." He further annulled pilgrimage and commanded the destruction of the sacred House of Allah (Ka'ba) after the advent of an able and brave man from among his followers.

The Baha'is [followers of Baha'ism] followed the opinion of former philosophers. They stated the eternity of knowledge saying: (Baha' teaches that the universe is without beginning in time. It is a perpetual emanation from the First cause. God and creation are co-eternal

Opinions on Baha'ism

Generally speaking, Baha'ism is a fabricated faith; it includes elements from Buddhism, Brahmanism, idolatry, Judaism, Christianity, Islam and beliefs from the Baatini school of thought.

Baha'i beliefs

- Baha'is do not believe in the afterlife, Paradise or Hellfire. In this respect, they imitated the Dahriyas.
- The first Baha'i leader claimed in his interpretation of Surat Yusuf that he is better than Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) and his book Al-Bayan is better than the Qur'an.
- They do not acknowledge the prophethood of our master, the Messenger of Allah, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), or that he is the seal of all Prophets. Hence, they are not Muslims since all Muslims believe that the Qur'an is the Book revealed by Allah and believe in the words of Allah Almighty:

Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah, and the seal of the Prophets. [Qur'an 33:40].

The rulingBased on this, Muslims have unanimously agreed that Bahai'sm or Babism is not an Islamic doctrine and that whoever believes in it is not a Muslim but an apostate from Islam; an apostate is a person who abandons Islam for another faith.

Mainstream Baha'i Faith is heading for a vertical split.

Persian Baha'is vs the Rest

The Baha'i Faith the youngest of all the Faiths and supposedly the most united is now suffering from existential crisis. Already divided into many fractions and sects, the Faith is now faced with its existential threat of a power struggle between the Persian Baha'is and the rest. This crisis may lead to the already decimated Faith into vertical split shaking the roots of the faith.

There is no denying the fact that the Baha'i Faith is born in Persia and Persians have had a great sacrifice in spreading the Faith across the globe.

We will have to go back into the history to recollect that the Persian Baha'is pioneered to places far and wide and have devotedly served the faith. The progress of the faith in golden era from 1970 to 2010 was mainly due to the efforts of Eidelkhanis, Nakhjawanis, Razavis, Afshins, Rouhanis, Mohajers, Azadis and so on. All familiar names to the Baha'i community, known for their selfless services. While these individuals offered their service they also led administrative positions – so we had people who had practical experience for managing the affairs.

Subsequently the faith saw some unfortunate developments. While the Persian front-runners toiled, a big section of the Persian Baha'is felt that it was their right to govern the affairs. They had a sense of superiority and prided that they were connected to the cradle of the faith. Perhaps as a result of this, resentment crept in amongst other sections. Added to this was the fact that growing tension between Israel and Iran, made Israel suspicious of the Baha'is of Persian background visiting Israel. And the crack widened.

During Chile Temple inauguration in 2016, many Persian Baha'is used to boast that Faith is spreading in Iran and many family members of the former Iranian President Ahmadinejad are taking part in Ruhi curriculum. The non-Persian Baha'is used to take this new-found interest of the Iranians in the Faith as an attempt of penetration rather than acceptance. As Ahmadinejad was seen as the arch-enemy of the Faith.

So today, while superficially Baha'is express perfect harmony, for most of us it is clear that the gap is too large now and cannot be bridged. Administrative responsibilities have started slipping from the hands of Persians and they make no attempt to hide their discontent. After all, they represent a section who has sacrificed most and have had to face severe hardships for the Cause of God. The rest of the community just enjoyed the outcome of their hard work and yet walked away with administrative posts.

The non-Persian Baha'is feel that the Persian Baha'is have enjoyed enough limelight and it is high time they take a back seat. There have been few cases of disloyalty by some Persian Baha'is which has added to the demand that Persian Baha'is cannot be trusted entirely.

As this split widens, though ideologically, the mainstream Baha'i Faith will not break, the future will see a risk of Persian Baha'is forming a separate body for governance of their affairs. Much to the dismay of the founding fathers of the faith and to the pleasure of the enemies of the Faith and Covenant-breakers, there is an enemy within.

The grievances of Persian Baha'is are expressed in this open letter to the UHJ which is being widely circulated amongst Baha'is.

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Dear esteemed members of The Universal House of Justice

Paul Lample, Payman Mohajer, Shahriar Razavi, Stephen Birkland, Stephen Hall, Ayman Rouhani, Chuungu Malitonga, Juan Francisco Mora Praveen Mallik

It saddens me to write this letter to the esteemed members. Members, who collectively are supposed to be infallible in their decisions. For quite some time, some of the decisions of the members are being viewed as being with a targeted agenda –cleansing the Baha'i Administration of Persian Baha'is' very silent callous Racism and fanaticism is engulfing the whole of Baha'i Community. The Persian Baha'is are being persecuted in which ever land they pioneered and surprisingly the Universal House of Justice is mock spectator to this persecution.

One could argue that these steps are seen with prejudice. However, when sequence of similar actions is witnessed the benefit of doubt reduces.

1. Recently a prominent Heterodox Baha'i, who was born in Qatar, was blacklisted in Qatar. Government authorities in the country have levelled criminal and national security charges against him. Mr. Omid now will face severe penalties in Qatar's judicial system. And will be denied entry.

Although, the BIC's Principal Representative to the United Nations, said that "the Baha'i International Community is saddened that the State of Qatar has chosen to expel members of a community that has peacefully coexisted in and contributed to the progress of the country", the silence of UHJ has raised concerns. Many prominent Baha'is are of the opinion that UHJ is behind the expelling of Omid as they are in cleansing process of Persian Baha'is and Omid a high ranking Persian Baha'i in Baha'i Administration, who has an eye on selection to UHJ. He has a lot of cloud in countries like India.

2. Another high ranking Persian Baha'i, a counselor, who had served for many years in Bangladesh was also removed from his post and a very insignificant Indian Baha'i was asked to step in his shoes. Was this part of a strategy?

3. Another Persian background lady, a former counselor and member of the NSA of India, was asked to resign/retire from NSA after being

elected on NSA. Fate accompli?

4. A prominent Baha'i of the USA, has been accused of trying to deceive and misguide the Baha'is of Iranian descent by sowing seeds of discord. UHJ just watched silently.

5. was hunted for his misunderstood statement resulting into ignorant Baha'is daring to ask him that why he gave such statement. UHJ could have defended in this situation.

6. The case of Baha'i Scholar has not been forgotten. After working for 15 years at the World Centre, he was heartbroken. UHJ had no comfort to offer.

7. and were on the brink of being declared Covenant-Breakers but some better reasoning prevailed on UHJ and they stopped from doing such an atrocious act. Both these gentlemen have bitterness still.

8. The Late along with made fun of Persian Baha'is and used to call them KHAR (donkey) and used to say that Persian Baha'is are misguiding other Baha'is. There are several other such incidences of rebuke. UHJ conveniently ignores these. They use to say Panchami is the centre of deviation.

9. The number of Persian Baha'is as counselors have come down drastically and the story is not different for the ABMs. They were asked to leave their place of pioneer (where they had established themselves, gained respect and involved themselves in Teaching of the Faith) and settle in some other parts of the world. This is nothing but humiliation and harassment. UHJ choses to look the other way.

10. When a non-Persian Counselor retires from his post, he is immediately offered another post in his own country. But if the counselor is Persian, and that too a pioneer, never this opportunity of service had been offered to him or his experience used for promotion of the Faith. This happens under watchful eyes of the UHJ.

11. A sincere Persian Baha'i who took care of the Baha'i property the National Hotel at Pune in India was threatened by one of the members of UHJ that he should come in line with UHJ or face severe consequences.

12. A Persian pioneer a devoted Baha'i was asked to resign after he was elected as a delegate for National convention. It was feared that he was a sure member of NSA

13. – A person of capacity, he served the faith as a counselor but he was sacked by the UHJ and was asked to resign from all his administrative positions, just because he was “accused” for forging Documents? Which was never proved.

14. – He has such a wide experience about the faith. Has given years as a pioneer to Mumbai Community. A person instrumental in building the Lotus Temple and donating huge amounts of his savings was never given any hearing by UHJ. All his suggestions are ignored and was made centre of mockery.

15. – She served the Faith with best of her capacity running the External affair department very efficiently but just some Indian NSA members did not like her success was asked to resign from the NSA of India. In her place a dumb Ram Sevak Yadav was brought to NSA just to appease the Hindu nationalist Government .

16. and his son now live a life of loneliness. Afshin gave all of his golden years for the propagation of faith in India. Today when he is ill and may be in need of financial assistance, the UHJ is wasting sources on inexperienced, and worthless people like Praveen Kumar Mallik, Rajan Sawant etc. All the “soldiers of Baha'u'llah” are being treated like worthless entity.

17. The Baha'i Academy in Panchgani was subjected to pressure because its Director was a Persian and son of a Martyr. UHJ made his life and of his family miserable. He was sacked as Auxiliary Board Member.

Such examples leave us with a bitter conclusion that those having Persian (Cradle of Faith) background need to sieved. It is as though the UHJ sees the Persian Baha'is being responsible for the formation of so many sects. A thought is prevailing in the Faith that Persian Baha'is are working in groups and are having soft corner for the Persian fourth Guardian Nosratullah Bahremand of the Orthodox Baha'i Faith, who is calling his shots from Australia. Such a suspicion has been prevailing for many years now. UHJ has so far not taken any steps to reject this idea.

While all this is happening, the clout of Baha'is with Jewish background is increasing. Whether it is happening with connivance of Jewish state, is a question that then comes to mind.

Esteemed members do look into the injustice that has crept in functioning of the Faith. Else history would not forget UHJ being cause of moral and population downfall of our Beloved Faith.

Baha'i Faith and LGBT Community

Believe it or not, contrary to the Baha'i claim of oneness of humanity Baha'is view the LGBT community in a very derogatory manner. The following is a small list of the terms Baha'i leaders used to refer to the LGBT community and describe homosexuality:

- “defilement of evil passions”
- “satanic deeds”
- “shameful sexual aberration”
- “immoral conduct” or “Immorality” or “abhorrent”
- “wrong” or “corruptive” or sometimes borderline insanity: “conduct borders on insanity”
- “being against nature”
- an affliction and great burden: “afflicted this way is a great burden to a conscientious soul”
- “handicap” or “aberration” or “abnormality”
- an act that is a disgrace to the Baha'i cult: “disgracing the Cause”
- “cause of suffering”
- unhealthy use of the sex impulse: “Outside of marital life there can be no lawful or healthy use of the sex impulse”
- A problem whose solution is this: “with the help of doctors, by prayer and meditation, by self-abnegation and by giving as much time as possible to serving the Cause in your community you can eventually succeed in overcoming your problem”
- lustful desires that must be overcome: “pride, greed, selfishness, lustful heterosexual or homosexual desires, to name a few which must be overcome, and overcome them we must if we are to fulfil the purpose of our human existence”
- LGBT community must face punishment from society: “Sex relationships of any form, outside marriage, are not permissible therefore, and whoso violates this rule will not only be responsible to God, but will incur the necessary punishment from society.”

The source for all the above statements is an article compiled by the Baha'i cult Universal House of Justice that can be found here:

Letter of BUPC Baha'is Guardian Neal Chase in the United States District Court

What is “The Covenant” of the Baha’i faith?

Letter to the LSA by Jenifer Tidwell

March 21, 1999

The Local Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Arlington, Massachusetts

My dear Baha'i friends,

I hope this year's Fast found you happy and healthy. This special season, which seems to arrive sooner every year, always makes us slow down and reflect upon spiritual matters — why we go through this physically exhausting fasting process, what we expect from it, and what we believe about God's laws and our obligation to follow them. The Fast is a test, but it's also a time of spiritual rejuvenation, and I have always looked forward to it.

But this year was different for me. I was not fasting with the rest of you. This year, I am observing Lent instead; and at the end of it, I will celebrate Easter, for the first time in my entire adult life.

You see, I've been going through a crisis of faith over the past several months. The problem is this: I love the Baha'i Faith dearly, but there are some doctrinal and spiritual issues in it that I can no longer accept. Since I began attending an Episcopal church last year, many of those issues have been thrown into sharp relief. Seeing them "from the outside" has helped me understand the latent problems I've had with being a Baha'i all these years.

What it ultimately comes down to is that, now, I feel closer to God and to my fellow human beings than I did while I was an active Baha'i. That's the only factor that really counts, I think. Everything else either contributes to it, or is secondary to it.

I think I should explain some of my reasons for making this rather unusual move (I don't personally know of anyone who has gone from being a Baha'i to being a Christian, let alone an Episcopalian). This letter is my apologetic. I hope that it will also help some Baha'is and Baha'i communities understand some of the factors that I think are causing them problems, at least in the United States; some of these points, while controversial, should at least spark some good discussion or soul-searching.

* * *

1. Our Feasts are not spiritually nourishing. They must be for some Baha'is, but for me, they don't even come close to a good church service, or a private meditation, or even a walk in the woods.

The big problem is the content. It's limited to readings and prayers from the Baha'i Writings (which truly are a wonderful source of wisdom), and sometimes instrumental music or singing. Nothing else. There's no spontaneous prayer, or personal reflections, or creative praise. There's no ritual, either; even though the Writings don't actually rule out the creation of new rituals for short-term use, they discourage ritual use over the long term (such for Feasts and for marriage ceremonies), and Baha'is as a rule stay away from ritual altogether.

I think that's a sad loss. Ritual is a "door to the sacred" — the familiar repetition of a ritual, combined with one's periodic reinterpretation of the traditions and symbolic meanings attached to it, really do help open one's mind and heart to God. It lends focus and framework to our worship, gives rhythm to our spiritual lives, connects us to our history, and constantly reminds us of what's important in our chosen faith. Yes, it has the potential to mechanize worship (I'm sure many churchgoers have this problem) and to distract us from our core beliefs, but that's something each person can learn to rise above. Besides, Baha'is already have individual rituals such as the 95 repetitions of the Greatest Name. Why are community rituals so much worse?

(Incidentally, I didn't understand these truths about ritual when I was growing up in the Christian faith. At the time, it just seemed repetitive and boring. I readily believed what Baha'is told me about ritual — that it calcifies the faith of a community, and becomes an end in itself, supplanting a living and creative worship. This is not at all true in the church I now attend, which is as vital and creative a faith community as I've ever been in. Maybe I needed to be deprived of the blessings of ritual for a while to appreciate it!)

Another problem is that I need music when I worship, and Baha'is do not have a strong musical tradition yet. There are a few well-known songs here in the United States — other countries may have more — but not nearly enough to provide a source deep enough to dip into at every Feast. Of course, it's not fair to expect that a 150-year-old religion will have a musical tradition as large as the 2000-year-old church! But the Faith is culturally so diverse. It has so much talent in its ranks. Baha'is all know each other and travel everywhere. Countless wonderful songs should be flowing all over the Baha'i world by now! Where are they? And lacking those, why don't Baha'is reach into the musical traditions of other faiths more often?

Finally, I am saddened by the exclusion of non-Baha'is from Feasts. I understand that people who have not chosen to be a member of the Baha'i Faith shouldn't take part in the business-meeting part of the Feast, but why can't they merely observe? And why should they be excluded from the worship aspect of the Feast? I'm sure it must be discouraging for people looking into the Faith, who want to experience how we worship. Their presence may enhance the Feast in unexpected ways, too. I will have more to say about this exclusion later.

In short, it seems like different people simply have different needs with regard to worship. Many people I know (including some Christians) honestly don't like church services. Some need different kinds of rituals, some need private meditation, some need to get out into the woods and mountains. To each their own. Unfortunately, the Baha'i Faith doesn't allow much choice in how to conduct Feasts, and what it does allow doesn't work for me.

2. There's no clergy. I find this issue difficult to discuss because it's a core doctrine of the Baha'i Faith, but I really think the Faith has "thrown the baby out with the bathwater" — there are good reasons to have clergy, and the lack of clergy causes problems for individual believers and for the community.

It's my understanding that the Baha'i Faith does not have a priesthood partially to avoid the trouble that an overly-powerful clerical class can cause (witness the history of the Faith in Iran), and partially to drive home the point that each one of us is responsible for our own spiritual life, with no intercessors necessary between us and God. Both are valid arguments. However, many Protestant denominations (among other groups) have solved both problems, through theology and church structures that have evolved over time. They do fine. I think it's healthier to meet such problems head-on than to do away with the priesthood altogether.

I've also sensed a naivete on the part of some lifelong Baha'is about what clergy actually do, especially Christian clergy. In mainline Protestant churches, which is all I have any real experience with, a priest's or rector's job includes these roles:

- Facilitator for worship. They act as sort of a "living center" for sacred rituals, or they preach, or they are simply responsible for planning and executing the regular worship services. This is not a bad thing, and Baha'is might do well to have knowledgeable people responsible for planning and carrying out Feasts, for instance.
- Teacher. They've spent years learning about history, theology, other faiths, and so on. In sermons, in Bible studies, in Sunday school classes, and in private conversations, they teach us all this.
- Spiritual advisor. Since priests are trained in theology, and sometimes also in such things as psychotherapy, marriage counseling, or conflict resolution, they are people you know you can go to when you need guidance. In fact, that's their job. Thus, there's a higher level of responsibility that you can't get from volunteers or from random members of a Baha'i community. (Just before I got married, I really needed someone like this to talk to. I did not find such within the Baha'i communities that I knew, and since I wasn't living in a town that had an LSA, I didn't "have" an institution available to talk to either. It was a terribly lonely time, at a point when I feel like I should have had loving support from a religious organization.)
- Community leader. Each church has its own personality, and some of it (though not by any means all of it) comes from its priest. They are partially responsible for the health of a community, and again, that's part of their job. No one in a Baha'i community has its health and happiness as their primary concern, day in and day out.

Of course, Baha'is have their Local Spiritual Assemblies to take care of administrative and spiritual matters. But it's much harder to run things effectively with a committee. And you know what? If I have a real crisis, I don't want to talk to a nine-member LSA, even if it does have God's blessings. I want to talk to a single human being. I want to talk to someone one-on-one, someone who has experience and knowledge that may help, someone with whom I have an ongoing personal relationship, someone whom I know will find time for me. Yes, I know no priest is perfect. But I'll take my chances with a trained priest who has chosen to make serving God his or her life's work, rather than go before an LSA with its nine volunteer members, all of whom I know socially and are probably tired, pressed for time, distracted by their "real" jobs, and woefully untrained in difficult personal issues.

As much as I love my fellow LSA members, I have never felt comfortable going before them with anything personal. It wasn't their fault; nine people is just too many, and their time was always in such short supply that I didn't want to add one more thing to their agenda. Even while I was on the LSA, I never felt we were fully qualified to deal with other people's problems that came before us, even though our ranks did include professional therapists!

In general, I'm hard-pressed to believe that the Baha'i Faith can throw out a role as old as the oldest religions, and not suffer the consequences. The role of priest / elder / shaman / teacher probably exists for good social and psychological reasons (not to mention spiritual ones), and it's present in every other religion that I know. It does not have to be incompatible with the Baha'i tenets of personal spiritual responsibility, the independent investigation of the truth, or anything else.

3. Chronic community fatigue and "burnout." The Baha'i Faith seems to attract more than its share of responsible, intelligent overachievers. This is wonderful, up to a point — the Faith's small numbers in the Boston area belies the huge amount of activity that goes on! But this takes an enormous toll on people. I think the typical active Baha'i works a 50-hour week (either in a job or at home), serves on at least two committees or an LSA, gets lots of Faith-related email every day, goes to talks and deepenings and Feasts, and maybe somehow finds time for daily prayers in the midst of it all. Then they're asked to host a talk or a party or something. Or to make something for a potluck. Or to serve on one more committee. And they cannot say "no" to the Faith they want to serve, until they are just too tired to say "yes" anymore.

After all, the Faith's needs are so great; who are we to decline the opportunity for service?

I've thought about this issue for a long time. I now believe that the Baha'i Faith in the United States is simply too demanding of its active members. Except in the really big urban areas, everything is done by volunteers, who all have their own lives to deal with. (Hired administrators and secretaries and such would help, but there's never enough money for such luxuries.) Furthermore, service to the Faith is implicitly expected of its members — and active teaching is explicitly expected. There's always so much that we're being asked to do, to fulfill teaching plans and meet fund-raising goals. Plans are made by LSAs, Regional Councils, National Spiritual Assemblies, the World Center, the Universal House of Justice, and so on and so on. We constantly overreach ourselves, often fall short of our goal, then set the next goal higher. Sometimes victories are won, but at a high human cost: people who were once enthusiastic "burn out," or just get too discouraged to keep going.

I think a religion should allow for more balance. We should all have time for contemplation and reflection. Time to be with our families, time to do our jobs really well without being tired, time to allow spontaneous things to happen like talking to a friend or taking a walk. Can we be spiritually whole without that? When we're so busy serving and running around, we can't hear the "still small voice" of God whispering into the ears of our souls. And that's so important.

Why do we have an endless conflict between taking the time we personally need, and giving the Faith the time and energy it needs? Faith and sacrifice go hand in hand, but does God want us to sacrifice our spiritual well-being for the immediate needs of the Faith? I just can't believe that.

4. The pressure to teach. This is directly linked to the burnout problem: if we had more people, the work would be spread out more, but at the same time, teaching is the reason we spend so much time and effort and money in the first place! Sometimes it seems that the Baha'i Faith's whole purpose is to spread itself. In fact, this is probably a sound theological point — if the Faith's only ultimate purpose is to bring about the Kingdom of God on earth, then growth to a "critical mass" is exactly what it should be trying to do.

But is this what religion is all about? No, of course not. A religion is also about an individual's relationship with God and the rest of humanity. It's about seeking truth, and it's about learning how to love other people beyond love for one's self. The Christian denominations that I grew up in keep these things paramount; growth is secondary (though it's certainly wonderful when it happens). That comes closer to matching what I know, deep in my soul, to be true.

Now, if I truly believed that the Baha'i Faith is the right answer for everyone else, then teaching it would come naturally. But I don't. I know that many of my closest friends and family are spiritually content where they are; or maybe they're not interested in religious topics, and would be bored or put off by my constantly mentioning the Faith. Love and consideration for the people in my life should take precedence over teaching them.

In a more sinister vein, the Faith sometimes encourages us to use friendship as a means to the end of teaching. A recent letter from the Regional Council for the Northeastern States recommends that we choose a single seeker to take under our wing, and make friends with them — with the express purpose of opening their heart through kindness and friendship, so that they will be more receptive to the Faith. Isn't this putting the horse before the cart? If I were that seeker, I would be offended if I found out that such a "friendship" was built on the other person's drive to teach, not on a genuine liking and respect for each other.

Finally, I think the emphasis on teaching pulls energy and resources away from non-teaching-oriented service and charity efforts. Perhaps if Baha'is were less focused on teaching, and less overwhelmed by the weight of all their other activities, they could do more in the way of community service, which they are enjoined to do by the Writings. Then again, maybe what's really needed is a change of heart — away from growth as a primary goal, and towards love and compassion for all people regardless of their beliefs. (Mind you, individual Baha'is are among the most loving and compassionate people I've ever met; here I'm talking about the Baha'i Faith as an institution.)

5. An uncomfortable split between Baha'is and non-Baha'is. We talk about unity this and unity that, but we still use that declaration card to draw a sharp dividing line between who can attend Feast and who can't, who can read certain letters and who can't, who can give money and who can't, and so on. It creeps into our language — "I'm inviting a non-Baha'i to this deepening, is that OK?" "We had six non-Baha'is and ten Baha'is come to this event." It affects our social lives — we draw a cozy circle around "us Baha'is" and occasionally widen it to include a new declarant or an enthusiastic seeker. It subtly alters the way we view humanity, so that we no longer see one world, but two: Baha'i and non-Baha'i.

This is a particularly thorny problem for those of us who have spouses who are not Baha'is. For instance, if there's a special event coming up that my husband and I want to go to, I have to ask if we can both go, or if only I can go. Yet we both enjoy the company of our beloved Baha'i friends (not to mention each other's company), so tension is the result. Another side of this issue came up a few months ago, when I told a Baha'i group that I was willing to loan or give them a large amount of money, but I had to discuss it with my husband first to make sure it was financially feasible at that point in time. Even though it would ultimately have been my own money, I was turned down flat, because he was not a Baha'i and shouldn't be involved with giving money to the Faith!

In contrast, the church we now attend welcomed us right from the beginning, regardless of where we were in our spiritual journeys. Nothing was barred to us before officially becoming members, except for voting rights in the annual meeting. In fact, we didn't even know there was such a thing as officially signing up, until just before that annual meeting. No one made a big deal out of it. Even Vestry meetings (the Vestry being the lay governing committee of an Episcopal church, roughly the equivalent to the administrative aspect of an LSA) are open to anyone who wants to observe. Overall, I felt much more welcome there than I probably would have if I had visited Baha'i events as a non-Baha'i.

Isn't this Revelation for everyone? What are Baha'is afraid of? Why can't we welcome people into our events and lives with open arms and no prejudices based on whether or not they've signed a card? Maybe in some countries there's a security issue, but here in the United States, there's no political reason to fear outsiders! Are we afraid people will laugh at us, or that they'll think we're foolish or naive? Are we afraid they won't approve of us if they see how we talk to each other or conduct our community business? Surely the Faith is stronger than that.

This kind of insularity can only hurt the Faith. Worse, it undermines our belief in unity, and borders on hypocritical. I can't imagine Abdu'l-Baha' making a big deal out of whether or not someone has signed a declaration card; on the contrary, I think he would welcome everyone, without even pausing to ask whether they were technically Baha'is or not.

6. An uncertain intellectual foundation. I've been fighting against this one for years, afraid to look too hard at some of the belief structures given to us in the Writings. I still can't force myself to study some of the more pedantic works, like "Some Answered Questions," because I can't reconcile myself to believing what's in them.

For example, the unity of all religions is a wonderful idea, and for ten years, I truly wanted to believe it. Guided by the Baha'i Writings, I tried my best to make myself believe in it. There are some assertions in the Writings about other faiths that I never could believe, though. One is about the resurrection of Christ being strictly symbolic. Yes, a physical resurrection is hard to understand and accept, but isn't that the whole point of the

ends of the Gospels? Over and over again (in three of them, anyway), they emphasize that he really did physically return, wounds and all, to the shock of his friends and disciples; the letters in the rest of the New Testament keep coming back to that point. It's so fundamental to Christian doctrine that to reinterpret it as "only symbolic" is to dismiss nearly the entire history of Christian theology, not to mention the obvious meaning of the Gospels. In my opinion, it's intellectually dishonest for Baha'is to claim unity with a theological construct that most Christians never believed in the first place.

But that isn't the half of it; that doesn't address the central core of beliefs that the Baha'i Faith says is common among all the revealed religions, like a belief in a monotheistic God. Buddhism does not necessarily teach this belief. Some individual Buddhists do believe in God, which may be OK within the tenets of some Buddhist schools (I don't know this for sure), but the earliest Buddhist writings we have — the Pali texts — apparently indicate that Buddha himself did not teach monotheism at all! Yet Abdu'l-Baha' claims he did. Again: how can Baha'is honestly claim unity with this religion whose doctrine they have changed to be something different from what was historically taught, and against all evidence found by historians and scholars?

The Baha'i counterargument I have heard most often is that Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l-Baha' had direct knowledge from God about these other religions, and therefore we should believe them and not what the other religions currently teach. That may be so; we can't prove or disprove such a claim, at least not in this world. But in a sense, this is a false unity — the theological sleight-of-hand may help Baha'is feel like they're standing on a firmer foundation, but it does nothing to help them find genuine common ground with modern-day Christians and Buddhists and others. If anything, it hinders any such efforts, because it tends to put people of other faiths on the defensive by essentially telling them they've been wrong all this time. I've seen that happen on the Net, and it's not pretty.

Besides, at some point, our own common sense has to kick in and decide whether or not a revelation is correct, or else we'd be blindly following every nut case who claims direct revelation from God. We chose to believe in Baha'u'llah not just because he told us to, but because his teachings resonated with us at some level; either logically or intuitively, we already believed most of what we heard him teaching. Now if Abdu'l-Baha' had seriously told us that the moon was made of green cheese, and that in the year 2000 we'd all follow the cow in jumping over it in order to bring about the lesser peace, wouldn't a rational person begin to question the fundamental correctness of the Writings? At some point, credibility vanishes and one ceases taking everything on faith. I have reached that point.

7. A lack of open intellectual discussion. This isn't entirely true, of course; since the spark of truth comes from the clash of differing opinions, open discourse is fine, as long as it stays within certain bounds. But those bounds have felt awfully constricting lately. Personally, I haven't wanted to be accused of not being "firm in the Covenant," so I have avoided certain topics that I'd really have liked to talk openly about. This includes many of the issues I've brought up in this letter. (Even if my dear Baha'i friends didn't explicitly accuse me of anything, I know they would still be saddened and disturbed to hear me bring up these topics, and they would probably feel torn between their friendship with me and their loyalty to the Faith. I'd hate to put them through that.)

I did a Web search a few months ago and ended up on Frederick Glaysher's Web site. While exploring there, I found an article called "A Modest Proposal," written by a handful of Baha'is in 1987 for the now-defunct "Dialogue" magazine. It was an excellent article, well-written, insightful, and full of courageous and loving suggestions for revitalizing the Baha'i Faith in the United States. But the National Spiritual Assembly did not allow its publication. Personally, I could see nothing in it that might be considered blasphemous, or disrespectful of the Covenant, or even disunifying; to this day, I have no idea why its publication was prevented.

That got me wondering why it's still necessary to review articles written by Baha'is before publication. Is it really just to make sure the Faith is presented in a dignified manner, and to guarantee factual accuracy? If so, why wasn't the Dialogue article corrected and then published? Or is it because certain ideas are considered dangerous, even when they don't directly conflict with the Writings? That frightens me. If the Faith is true and from God, it should be strong enough to remain standing in spite of all our questions and reinterpretations. Eternal truth is like that. If all serious Baha'i discourse has to be vetted for intellectual acceptability before publication, that belies a deep insecurity on the part of the Baha'i institutions.

In relation to this incident, the Talisman email list incident, and other things, I have heard many anecdotes that indicate that academics engaged in Baha'i studies feel ignored, belittled, or distrusted because of their work. Add to this the May 1997 correspondence between the Universal House of Justice and Susan Maneck, and I'm almost certain there's an anti-academic undercurrent running through the Faith, in America and elsewhere. (This letter implied that traditional, non-religious methods of analyzing religious texts and histories by Baha'is are less worthy than a faith-based approach, in which the basic tenets of the Faith are already accepted as truth by the investigator.) Again, one wonders what the UHJ is afraid of. Shouldn't we be eager to learn more about the historical context of our Faith, regardless of the source of the knowledge? Why would a dispassionate analysis of the Faith, done by methods widely accepted by the world at large, be worth less than those done from the perspective of faith? It seems to me that we need both, for balance.

Finally, there's the matter of Covenant-breakers. We're not supposed to talk with them, nor read what they write. Why not? We're adults, not children; for the most part, we're not so fragile that we can't hear bad things about our Faith and not be seduced into believing them. We might believe on an individual basis that we're not prepared to read such stuff, or that we just don't want to, but that should be a personal decision, not one imposed upon us. For the most part, I bet their arguments against the Covenant couldn't stand up to logical analysis or spiritual wisdom. (The few I've read aren't worth the electrons they're printed on!) If they can, well, maybe it's good for us to argue against them, up to a point — we could learn from the experience, and grow spiritually and intellectually. Maybe we could even bridge the chasm between us, and view them as human beings deserving of respect and empathy. But sticking our heads in the sand gets us nowhere. Once again, it indicates a fundamental insecurity about the truth of the Faith — or, even worse, a lack of trust in the faith of individual Baha'is. Either way, it's very authoritarian, and I can't bring myself to agree with it anymore.

8. An overemphasis on unity as an ultimate good. Unity is wonderful, of course, but odd things happen when it becomes the highest ideal

that we try to attain. I'm not sure that it ought to be.

When I began looking into the Episcopal Church a few months ago, they had just held the Lambeth Conference, a worldwide bishop's conference which happens every ten years. I read the news stories. Boy, did they have unity problems! There were conservative factions, and liberal factions, and harsh words, and behind-the-scenes politicking, and a near meltdown of the Anglican Communion — all over the single issue of the Scriptural acceptability of homosexual behavior. I found myself thinking, "How awful. This would never, ever happen in the Baha'i Faith."

Later I thought, "Maybe it should."

Look at what brought about the conflicts at Lambeth: many different interpretations of Scripture, to be sure (which Baha'is aren't supposed to have), but also a love for God, for the truth, and for the Church's spiritual direction. And, importantly, a knowledge that they could express their opinions freely, even if those opinions were unpopular with other bishops or were a break with the past. Now wouldn't it be wonderful if they ever do find unity, given these circumstances? That would be a hard-won, genuine unity. That would be a unity based not on an order that "Thou shalt be unified!", but on care and respect, forged in the furnace of real conflict. On love, not on law.

I think this "difficult unity" is ultimately better and stronger than one that tends to subsume the search for truth in the name of unity. This happens among Baha'is, like during LSA meetings — for instance, someone may want to keep discussing a point they know is right, but according to consultation rules, shuts up in the name of unity. It also happens in public discourse, as I discussed above — if someone has an interpretation of some aspect of the Writings that differs from the standard one, they may feel discouraged from talking about it, for fear of causing strife and disunity (or, horror of horrors, being seen as a schismatic).

Instead of resolving such conflicts honestly, Baha'is tend to bury them, lest those conflicts fester and cause disunity. It seems a little cowardly to me now.

Also, there's a little logic problem in Baha'i doctrine that has bothered me for a while. Baha'is believe that the Faith has never been split into sects (lasting ones, anyway), and will in fact remain basically undivided. But those groups that do separate from the mainstream of the Faith are declared non-Baha'is, simply because they separated. It's a semantic trick, no more. I'm sorry, but there *are* other Baha'i groups that do not consider the Universal House of Justice an authority. They do believe in Baha'u'llah (though not in the Covenant as we understand it, hence the term "Covenant-breakers"), so the rest of the world would consider them Baha'is. They consider themselves Baha'is too. Only mainstream Baha'is don't, and they have a powerful psychological motive for not doing so: the bedrock of their faith would be shaken if these breakaway groups were acknowledged as Baha'is.

This is very shaky ground for the claim that this faith is superior to Christianity and Islam, with respect to a lack of internal division. It also causes mainstream Baha'is to actively shun the company and opinions of certain other people who believe in Baha'u'llah; my soul tells me this is neither healthy nor just, and paradoxically, it makes the Faith less tolerant of diversity than many other religions.

And at some levels, what's really wrong with division, as long as it doesn't cause hatred or unloving behavior? I can choose to worship in a progressive church and still love conservative parishioners who leave to go someplace more suited to their beliefs. I can be an Episcopalian and still love my Unitarian and Catholic friends. (And my Muslim friends, and my Baha'i friends, and my Pagan friends, and so on!) I can even play Democrat to my Republican friends, or vice versa. It may be a little harder to understand where they're coming from, since I don't share their beliefs, but tests such as these are opportunities for intellectual and spiritual growth, not an indication that we need enforced uniformity of beliefs. I think what the world really needs is not a ban on divisions, but a spiritual discipline that prevents those divisions from causing hatred and prejudice.

9. Too many answers, not enough mystery. The Baha'i Writings are vast. In my ten years as a Baha'i, I'm sure I haven't read even half of all the English works, and of course I don't stand a chance at reading all the untranslated Arabic and Persian works. Between the writings of the Central Figures and the decisions of the Universal House of Justice, there's probably something authoritative written on almost any topic of spiritual significance!

It really does make life easier, having such an extensive set of laws and beliefs that I can subscribe to as a body. It means I don't have to think all the time. I can just say, "Sorry, I don't drink," rather than having to decide how much alcohol is too much. It means I can believe in the ultimate unity of the religions and then shape my observations to that belief, rather than doing the hard work of forming hypotheses based on what I observe. It means I don't have to have any doubts about the humanity's future, since we pretty much know what's eventually going to happen. It means I have a perfectly good explanation of Christ's Resurrection; no need to keep going back to it year after year, looking for new layers of meaning. It means that there are very few unanswered questions left.

And this is supposed to help me grow spiritually?

It seems to me that all my real spiritual growth has come during periods of doubt, when I was unconvinced that the answers offered by the Christian or Baha'i doctrines were true. (This is one of those periods.) During those times, I have to go looking for my own answers; those that are given free, without the search, somehow lack the same weight. I feel like I have to use the mind that God gave me, even — especially — in religious matters, and to do otherwise would be something less than human. I take the independent investigation of truth very seriously.

The Baha'i Faith tells us that humanity has finally outgrown its adolescence and reached adulthood. Why, then, are we given yet more laws and answers than before? To me, it just doesn't seem to fit.

Furthermore, the set of Baha'i beliefs and laws can only grow over time, as the Universal House of Justice issues more infallible interpretations over the years. They certainly don't seem to be in the business of abrogating anything that the Central Figures have said, nor what they themselves

have said in the past. Therefore, the amount of authoritative “stuff” in the Faith cannot shrink; it can only grow. If it continues this way, it seems to me that the Faith will calcify — with so many unchangeable answers, it will gradually lose its ability to adapt, even if it must do so in order to fulfill its divine station.

There is one non-religious idea that I’ve concluded is a fundamental truth about the world: the concept of incremental change, of slow adaptation to changing conditions while retaining an unchangeable core of individuality or “self.” It’s required for anything to thrive, whether it be an organism, a species, a personality, a building, a city, a software artifact, even a belief system. Christianity tried for centuries to resist change, only to be rocked by periodic upheavals like the Reformation. Now many denominations have learned to adapt to a changing world and an advancing understanding of morality, and they work pretty well. The Episcopal Church, at least, offers a relatively simple Gospel-based core doctrine, but its non-core beliefs change with the times. The changes are done thoughtfully, not according to whims or fads, but slowly — just enough to maintain a certain aliveness. The Church once condoned the subordination of women; now it doesn’t. It may once have been silent on the issues of slavery and racism in America; it certainly isn’t anymore. The institution learns and adapts.

(Ironically, the Baha’i Faith explicitly teaches incremental change, in the form of progressive revelation — each religion teaches a core of unchangeable truths, but with a set of beliefs and laws that change from one revelation to another. But the time scale is all wrong: will we really be living with all these same early-twentieth-century interpretations for a thousand years? I find that hard to believe.)

Christianity in general seems to fit this incremental-change model particularly well. There are many Gospels, and none of them are guaranteed to have accurately recorded the exact words and deeds of Christ. Their authors had certain audiences, certain agendas. They contradict each other sometimes, in fact. But because of these loving yet human retellings, the story of Christ’s life takes on a mythic status, more so than a historical one. And here the importance of mystery arises: because the Christ story is myth-like, its meaning shifts and deepens throughout a person’s life (or a culture’s). How can there be any one interpretation to something as profoundly simple as the Last Supper? It’s a holy mystery. Different interpretations are appropriate for different people, or at different stages of a person’s life, or in different cultures. No one can force a certain interpretation on me, nor should they — it would lose its mystery, and ruin any chance that I can get other meanings out of it later. Nailing down a single interpretation would damage the myth beyond repair, by stripping it of its mysterious aspect.

I’m convinced that this is why Christianity has lasted so long, and is still growing, in spite of its fragmentation. Its mythic basis allows for changing interpretations, while still remaining firm on the fundamental Christian truths (those pronounced uniformly by all the Gospels). It permits a diversity of denominations, for people with different needs and values. And above all, it offers an infinitely deep pool of spiritual truth, never running dry, no matter how many times a person goes back to it during his or her lifetime.

In contrast, the Baha’i Faith offers a pool which is large, but necessarily finite; definitive answers are always there for the asking.

* * *

As you can see, I seem to have irreconcilable differences with the Baha’i Faith. The question remaining to me is: am I still a Baha’i? If I believe in Baha’u’llah as the Manifestation of God for this day, then I would still be a Baha’i. That’s the only test that counts.

The answer is, I just don’t know anymore. I no longer have the certitude I once had. I know I’ll find out if He is or not in the next world, but until then, I just can’t make myself believe it. Because of the solidity, coherence, and authority of its teachings, the Baha’i Faith is not a religion in which one can just pick and choose what to believe or not believe.

My soul is still moved by Baha’u’llah’s writings, and probably will always be; their beauty is simply incomparable. I’m sure they’re divinely inspired (though I’m no longer sure exactly how). But most of the issues I’ve described here come from later interpretations, not from His own pen. Therein lies the problem. With the Covenant, Baha’u’llah made it very clear that Abdu’l-Baha’ was his successor, and that what he said was authoritative; and then it passed to the Guardian, and so on down to the Universal House of Justice. To believe in the authority of some of these institutions and not others is to break the Covenant, which is emotionally impossible for me. It’s also illogical. I don’t see how I can believe that Baha’u’llah was who He said He was, and yet discount what He clearly said about the succession of His authority.

That leaves two choices: I accept all of it, or I accept none of it.

Now you know what I have to do. Since I can’t make myself accept all of it anymore, I feel like I have no choice but to resign my membership in the Baha’i Faith.

Please understand that this was not an easy decision for me to make. It took months. It’s still deeply painful, and it will remain so for a very long time; I have been a Baha’i for my entire adult life, and it is part of my identity. Its teachings are deeply entwined with my personal value system, to the point where I don’t know sometimes where my own beliefs end and the Baha’i doctrines begin. I still have a great love for my Baha’i friends, and I’m acutely aware of how much pain this will cause them. To spare them this pain, I considered quietly “going inactive,” but I don’t think that would be intellectually honest, especially since I plan to be active in the church that we’re attending. I also need closure to this whole matter, and leaving it open-ended like that just prolongs it unnecessarily. And besides, every new beginning requires an ending!

I hope that the Baha’is that I know and love can understand why I am doing this. I don’t think the Faith is entirely wrong — I’m just not sure it’s entirely right, that’s all. It’s definitely not right for me, at this point in my life. I know that many of my Baha’i friends do know it’s right for them; may they continue growing happily in the Faith! My prayers will always be with them. And the Faith will be right for many seekers. I do think that growth will come, in time; the Faith offers so many wonderful solutions for the problems of this world.

But I also hope that if “entry by troops” does not happen in the way that Baha’is expect it to, that they may better understand why the Faith is *not* right for many seekers. I tried my best to make it right for me, but couldn’t do it — and I was a deepened Baha’i with a strong incentive to stay

with it! One of the ways I think the Faith must adapt is to accept its place as one of many, many diverse religions in the world, not as a tiny religion which assumes that it will eventually claim the majority of the world's people. It will not appeal to all those people, because many people's spiritual needs will not be fulfilled by the Faith. If this letter can help the Baha'is understand that better, then that's really the best I can hope for.

I read a book recently called "Things Seen and Unseen." It's an autobiographical work by an Episcopalian woman who describes her slow transition into a church community as being "pushed by God" — as though there was an invisible hand at her back, gently pushing her in the direction that she needs to go to achieve spiritual maturity. That's what I've been feeling for the last six months. When you feel the hand of God, you go with it. I don't know where I'm going. But I trust that it will be where God wants me to be.

I love you all dearly, and I pray that God may walk with you through all your journeys.

Jenifer Tidwell

Baha'is in Exile: An Account of Followers of Baha' u' llah Outside the Mainstream Baha'i Religion

Author Vernon Elvin Johnson considers Baha'is in Exile a sequel to his doctoral dissertation. In this book, Johnson seeks to continue the history he briefly covered in the last chapter of his dissertation. Baha'is are followers of Baha'u'llah, the main founder of the Baha'i religion. The Baha'is mentioned in this book have been rejected, cast out, or exiled from the faith by the majority – or mainstream – body of Baha'is, creating what some consider divisions in the Baha'i faith.

About the Book

Vernon Elvin Johnson holds four degrees: B.S., Oklahoma Baptist University; two Master's degrees from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, B.D./M.Div. and Th.M.; and a Ph.D. from Baylor University. He has served as a pastor of a mission in Texas and a church in Oklahoma and was a librarian and teacher in an aeronautical school in Tulsa. He is a Southern Baptist evangelical minister with an interest in the Baha'i faith. Johnson plays the guitar and sings and has performed in various churches.

To Buy the book Visit : <https://www.booktopia.com.au/baha-is-in-exile/ebook/9781645303800.html>

Religious Conversion in Malaysia by Baha'i Faith

[Deceptive religious conversion in Malaysia – Chinese Malaysian converts 100s of Malaysians to the Baha'i cult](#)

Baha'i missionary Soon Kam with his wife Sarah Greenspoon (from Jenjarom, Malaysia) with Malaysian dignitaries.

Soon Kam has deceptively converted many Chinese Malaysians to the Baha'i cult.

The Caravan Magazine – Free Baha’i Faith

The Caravan of East and West was established in 1929 by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler and his wife Julie.

The Caravan was a foundation that had a quarterly magazine called The Caravan in 1929. They also had a quarterly magazine called The Children’s Caravan in 1935, which ‘helps to keep children in touch with each other’. (Educational Digest). They also apparently published some other works.

Originally a part of the Bahá’í Faith, that relationship ended shortly after the New York administration was denied oversight by its founders. Sohrab refused and was ex-communicated in 1939, which then led Julie to also refuse to appear to answer questions. The foundation severed ties, but continued to do work for the Bahá’í cause, without official sanction.

“At its height, just after World War II, the Caravan had grown to a membership of almost 250,000.... and its business soon overshadowed the [New History Society](#).”

Chapter 15 An article in the New York Times, states that in 1949 the German contingent alone had 100,000 members.

Two of the members of the Board of Directors were Syud Hossein, ambassador from India to Egypt and Minister to Trans-Jordan; and Basant Koomer a lecturer and educator.

Following the passion of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, we are proud to be back with ‘The Caravan’ Magazine. It will be a quarterly magazine and can be read online through our website. You can also subscribe to our magazine simply by writing to us at info@freebahais.org with the subject line – “Sign up for the Caravan Magazine” and all our magazines will be delivered to you right in your inbox.

For Details Refer the Website Link : <http://freebahais.org/the-caravan-magazine/>

Free Baha'i Faith – Books by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab

Courtesy : <http://freebahais.org>

[The Song of The Caravan by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab](#)

[The Story of the Divine Plan by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab](#)

[Abdul Baha's Grandson By Mirza Ahmad Sohrab](#)

[Broken Silence by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab](#)

[Abdu'l Baha in Egypt by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab](#)

[Living Pictures. In the Great Drama of the 19th Century by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab and Julie Chanler](#)

The Story of the Divine Plan

Taking place during and immediately following World War I

by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab

**The New History Foundation
132 East 65th street, New York 21, N. Y., U. S. A.**

[Title page]

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[Inside Title page]

By the same author

Heart Phantasies

The New Humanity

Poems on Hollywood Bow (illustrated)

Abdul Baha in Egypt

Renaissance (a booklet)

Message to the Youth of Europe (a booklet)

The Song of the Caravan

Living Pictures (co-author, Julie Chanler)

Silver Sun (co-author, Julie Chanler)

The Bible of Mankind

Broken Silence

Abdul Baha's Grandson

The Will and Testament of Abdul Baha

The Human Charter

(edited from the writings of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha)

[Vanity page]

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To the teachers who will arise
in the casts of the earth and in the wests thereof
to carry the message
of
Abdul Baha
this book is dedicated

“Formerly they were as moths, but they will become as royal falcons.
Formerly, they were as bubbles, but they will become the sea.”

[Dedication page]

FOREWARD

Nearly two thousand years ago, after his earthly mission had been completed, the inspired hero of Israel addressed his disciples:

“Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature” (St. Mark, chapter 16, verse 15).

To all intents and purposes, the voice of Jesus had been silenced on Mount Calvary, yet his spirit, so vital that it surmounted the very tomb, appeared to his humble disciples, commanding them to carry on his work beyond the confines of their native land and to the limits of the earth. It was an incredible assignment.

I am ignorant of the phrasing of this sentence in Aramaic, the language supposedly used by Jesus, but the English translation consists of thirteen words and I wonder if any other thirteen words have had such a profound influence on the destiny of mankind. As a result of this injunction, the men who heard it set aside the limitations of birth, upbringing and character, and arose to peaks of valor and accomplishment; after which thousands upon thousands renounced the security and comfort of home to travel in their footsteps. Missionary bands were organized and sent to the five continents and the islands of the seas; libraries, schools, universities and hospitals were built; the New Testament was translated, in whole or in part, into a thousand languages, all to bring the message of the Man of far-away Galilee into the hearts and lives of the people, everywhere.

No more brilliant records can be found than are those of the staunch and selfless teachers who marched the length and breadth of pagan Europe, scaled the snow-capped mountains of Asia, ventured into the jungles of Africa and faced untold hardships in the lands of the Americas. These men and women were indeed the disciples of Christ, for with their spiritual ears they had clearly distinguished his voice as it receded over the centuries, and obeyed it with the awe and devotion of the eleven who had heard it first.

During our times, the command has sounded again: Go ye into all the world — a smaller world, it is true, yet, today as before it is not the glaciers and jungles of nature that obstruct and delay progress, but the glaciers and jungles in the human heart. Frontiers as obtuse as ever on the fair surface of the globe and in the minds of men, with traditions, superstitions and customs grown weightier with the years. It was the name ungainly

[i]

world that Abdul Baha took into his protective arms in the pages of the Divine Plan and upon which he conferred the teachings of his Prophet-father; it was the same rank and file of humanity that he called upon to teach the same message, in an hour of acute need.

Some years earlier, when Baha-O-Llah had arisen to the realms beyond, he had left behind him a plan for the union of all races and nations — a detailed, practical plan to be put into execution by the maturing men and women of modern times. It was a blueprint for the ending of all wars and the establishment of a world civilization. Baha-O-Llah had left this priceless legacy in the care of his great son,

Abdul Baha, and it was during World War I, while he was living in Palestine, that Abdul Baha transferred this trust to the Bahais throughout the world.

The Divine Plan was dictated to me by Abdul Baha in fourteen Tablets and was carried to the United States. Here he considered the needs of all nations and, as a spiritual geographer, took into account the resources of the countries of the earth and the islands of the seas, calling most of them by name. These Tablets with their wealth of knowledge, instruction and inspiration constitute the Magna Charts of a new civilization. It is according to its name, a Divine Plan.

In these Tablets, the teachers of the New Day are summoned so specifically, so personally, that each reader must feel himself addressed and chosen. Then, even as the cautious fishermen were transformed into saints and martyrs, so will posterity, in the actual words of Abdul Baha, evaluate the station of individuals as yet unknown:

“Formerly they were as moths, but they will become as royal falcons.
Formerly they were as bubbles, but they will become the sea.”

Two thousand years ago, Christ in the most general way commanded his disciples: “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.”

Today, Abdul Baha, calling the countries and islands by name, repeats the same injunction in a more precise manner.

We are in a position to estimate the miracles which were accomplished as a result of the command of Jesus given to eleven men, but can we faintly imagine the nature of our world when the Divine Plan is a story fulfilled?

It is the beginning of a new pilgrimage, launched simultaneously in the East and in the West, in the North and in the South: Go ye into all the world.

[ii]

[photo of 'Abdu'l-Baha omitted]

[iii]

THE STORY OF THE DIVINE PLAN

by MIRZA AHMAD SOHRAB

CHAPTER I

THE FARMER OF GALILEE

A sphere is the most complete thing in the Universe: the world itself, the round notes of a lark, the full life that faces all horizons.

To Abdul Baha's searching spirit, every aspect of existence was familiar. He knew the literature of the religions which have dominated the great sections of humanity. He knew the histories of the countries, their customs, manners, aspirations. He knew politics as it should be — an art: he knew it as it was — a tangled web of intrigue and group-interest. He knew the heart of man very well, and he knew the plan of God.

He was familiar with all these things and with others of a quite different nature, for he had been tested in the crucible of experience. He knew the luxury of his father's mansion in Teheran where he had spent his early childhood — the eldest son of a noble and honored house. He knew the lightning change to destitution, the breaking of familiar ties, the long road into exile. He knew the anguish of prison life, the monotony of endless decades of confinement; and then a second lightning change to complete freedom — the touring of two continents, the meeting with thousands of all nations, classes, professions. He knew how to meet men on their own ground, whatever that ground might be.

So, both spiritually and practically, Abdul Baha was fitted to deal with life. In whatsoever circumstances he was the man of God and the man of the world.

When in 1912 he had completed his epoch-making journey through Europe and throughout the United States and Canada, during which he had warned the people and the governments that nothing but a complete reversal of attitude could prevent a world cataclysm, he returned to Palestine as the center of an international movement. There, while the storm clouds gathered in the countries where he, had so lately spoken on file practical ways to peace, he took up his patriarchal life in the quiet town of Haifa.

1

After the war had broken and words were of no more avail, he immediately turned his attention to the safe-guarding of the populace of the region in which he lived and those adjoining. He set out for the Sea of Galilee and spent months at Tiberias and Adassieh laying extensive agricultural plans and supervising the planting of corn, wheat and other food stuffs. The latter village especially, inhabited altogether by Zoroastrians became the headquarters of a vast farming project. Thus, through his foresight and resourcefulness, the Bahai community and the poor living on the curve of the Bay of Acca were to a large extent ensured against the calamity that was to follow.

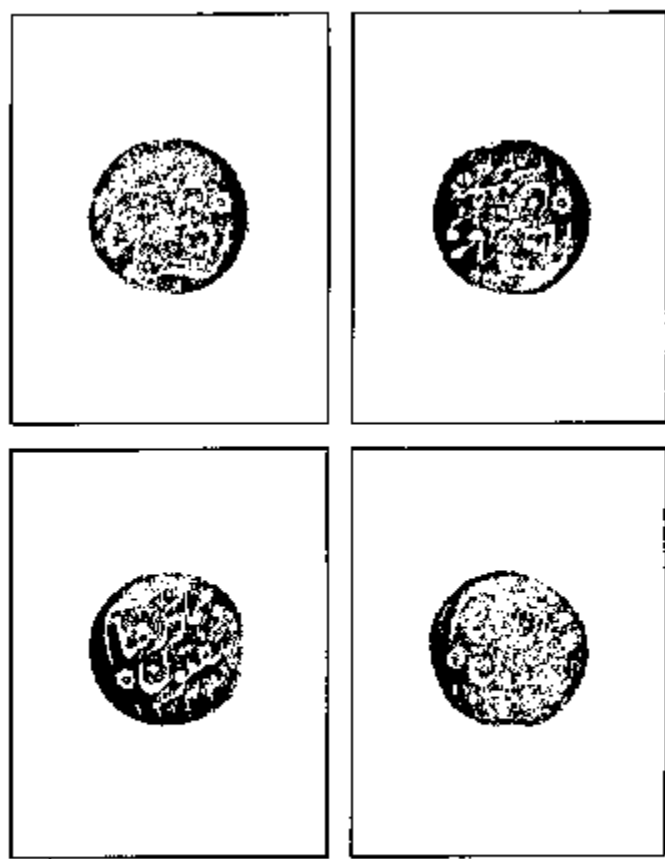
With the transfer of the scene of war from the Dardanelles to Syria, the already depleted inhabitants had been subjected to fines, requisitions and exorbitant taxes. The Turkish government took everything: horses, cows, camels, donkeys, sheep; also wood, iron railings, copper and brass vases. Household furniture was not exempted. The people were deprived of their mattresses, cauldrons, cooking utensils, even their clothing. The majority of houses and shops were swept clean. Then came the famine.

The famine in Palestine derived from several sources, chief among which was the advent of armies of locusts in numbers unprecedented as far as the memories of the oldest inhabitants could reach. At times, these unwelcome guests brought night in daytime as they covered the face of the sky for hours. To this condition, coupled with the extortion and looting by the Turkish authorities, was added the wholesale buying of supplies by the Germans to be shipped to the "Fatherland." In short the land, stripped by locusts

of two varieties, insect and human, was no longer able to meet even a percentage of the normal requirement. Death was the order of the day. Thousands upon thousands prolonged their lives on the peelings of oranges and bananas, the rind of watermelons or simply on grass, and then fell in their tracks leaving none behind sufficiently animate to mourn for them or bury their corpses. In Lebanon alone, more than one hundred thousand persons succumbed to starvation.

The famine killed the finer emotions and sentiment also. Men, impelled by the instinct of self-preservation, became like wild beasts and fought the fight to the finish. At the same time, the girls of the cities and villages, pure and lovely only a short year ago, trod the awful path of prostitution in order to keep alive just a little longer. Thus, communicable and contagious diseases began to spread with such alarming rapidity that the press, braving the restrictions of censorship, came out with statements

2



Food coupons as issue by Abdul Baka during the famine in Haifa, Palestine. The writing, in Arabic, is from a verse in the Koran expressing God's will to feed the hungry. The author has in his possession nearly two hundred of these coupons, from among the thousands which were distributed. All coupons were numbered. The above, from left to right are 66-69-81-84.

3

that the survival of the nation itself was in jeopardy. Finally the sluggish government, goaded into some action, opened a few free clinics.

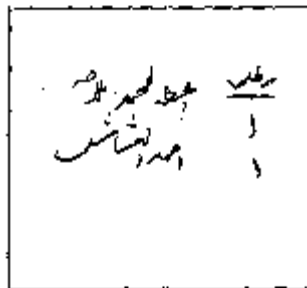
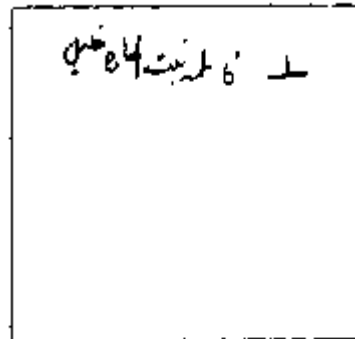
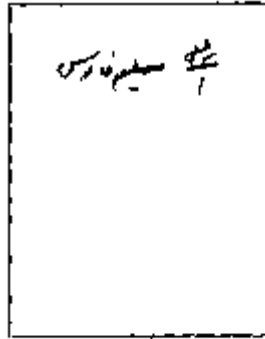
Although no town could be protected from the perils of these terrible days, the communities of Acca and Haifa lived in a comparative oasis. Trains of camels coming from Tiberius and Adassieh were ever on their way to the Master's house in Haifa. Here, sacks of wheat, corn and barley, and cases of vegetables, olive oil, fruit and nuts were unloaded and piled in the vast store room. Then, after an over-night rest, the caravan returned to the plantations for another consignment.

The soil around and adjacent to the Sea of Galilee, where Abdul Baha's agricultural enterprise was going on, being remarkably rich and fertile, yielded three and four crops in the season. Consequently the supplies were abundant and continuous. The Master managed the project himself, while responsibility for transportation was in the hands of Mirza Jalal Esphahani, husband of his daughter Ruha. My duties lay at the distributing end. The people would call at the house and I would provide them with coupons, were they Christian, Jew or Mohammedan. Some coupons bore Abdul Baha's seal together with specifications in his own handwriting on the provisions to be collected. The Master computed the amount required by each family. It was a thoroughly organized ration system.

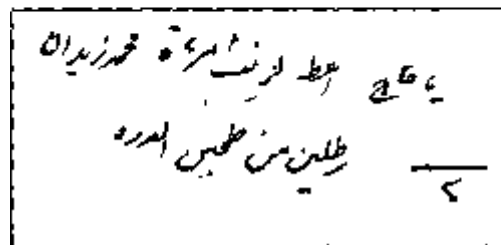
All this applied to the very poor, but there were others to be considered also: the formerly rich or well-to-do families, now destitute but still proud. In these cases, the Master himself was the visitor, the bringer of provisions and good-cheer. With all the obligations that rested on him, he was willing to go out of his way in order to shield from possible humiliation those who were not accustomed to ask.

Of course there were impediments to be overcome. I well remember a certain instance which threw all of us into a state of consternation. One day Mirza Jalal arrived alone and strode into the presence of the Master. The caravan had been intercepted in Nazareth and the provisions commandeered by the Turkish officers. On receiving this information Abdul Baha acted immediately. His carriage was ordered and he set out alone for Nazareth.

Few of us slept that night for we knew that in such turbulent times, almost anything might happen; and when morning dawned we gathered at the gate and on the road, waiting for news. A long, long day, another anxious night, and then — late in the afternoon, the carriage came to view.



Food coupons in Abdul Baha's handwriting given to distinguished families which had become destitute. These coupons bear the name of recipient and the measure of flour or grain to be claimed.



We raced to meet it, tears streaming down our cheeks, and saw Abdul Baha sitting back very comfortably, a smile of satisfaction on his face.

We didn't learn much about his experience. The Turks had been rough, yes, quite uncompromising in their attitude; and then, all of a sudden, a telegram had been sent to Jemal Pasha at his military headquarters in the interior. Result: everything was to be returned. Mirza Jalal could set out right now and bring back our poor camels and the supplies. I can tell you that there was rejoicing that evening in Haifa. The townspeople crowded around the house and could hardly tear themselves away.

And so the years of war rolled on while Abdul Baha, the father, attended to the needs of his enormous family.

CHAPTER II

THE TABLETS TO THE UNITED STATES

After affairs in Haifa had been organized to a point where they could run on without his daily care, the Master would on occasion retire to the other side of the bay and sojourn awhile at Bahjee. In the beautiful house for so long occupied by Baha-O-Llah and where his sacred bones now rest, Abdul Baha would shift his thoughts from things as they were and plan for things to come.

The agonies to which Palestine was subjected were only a small part of the world-agony. Abdul Baha was acutely conscious of the trials of the people in every country and he feared lest with all their sacrifices they were playing a losing game. He mourned over the inability of mankind to forestall these recurrent calamities. The only hope was a coalition of the nations with agencies that would protect the interests of all. Had not Baha-O-Llah addressed the kings and rulers of the earth on these matters! Had not he himself travelled in his old age and explained to the people of Europe and America the steps that should be taken for the welding of humanity into one family! But no, the mind was slow to relinquish shabby old ideas and grasp new ones, however brilliant these new ideas might be; so, by long and painful process, it must be modernized and turned toward the future. That was the task — the task for the followers of Baha-O-Llah.

During these periods of physical relaxation at Bahjee, it was my inestimable privilege to live at the side of Abdul Baha — to follow him on his walks in the garden and through the meadows, to watch him in his moments of meditation and hear the words which fell from his lips like hyacinths of divine wisdom. One day, he approached me as I was poring over a book, making notes. “What are you studying?” he asked. I laid before him a World Geography published by The MacMillan Company in 1912, which volume had been given me by a student of the University of Beirut on one of his visits to Haifa.

Abdul Baha turned over the pages and examined the maps with interest. “These are the countries that must arise in the cause of peace!” he exclaimed, “Every one of them.” Then he pointed to the text. “Translate what it says.” So I began: The climatic conditions of the different regions, the methods of transportation, the produce, the industries, figures as to

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population, language, commerce. He took up my notes which were in Persian. “Oh, I see, you have started a skeleton listing already. Very good. Now proceed with it, and later bring the material to me.” I still have this geography in my possession — a book which was destined to be associated with a spiritual plan for the healing of nations — a practical plan for world union.

One Monday morning, it was March 26, 1916, Abdul Baha was sitting at the window of his room, looking past the olive grove, over the sea and far into infinitude. Suddenly, he turned and asked me to chant one of the Prayers of Baha-O-Llah. I obeyed, keenly feeling my own unworthiness and the extraordinary conditions under which I lived. When I had finished chanting, the Master looked at me with a soft, dancing light in his eyes and said: “You must be infinitely grateful to Baha-O-Llah for having chosen you to be with me for such a long time. Surely it must be for a great purpose that is not apparent at present. Now bring pen and paper. I will dictate a Tablet to America.” He began:

To the friends and maid-servants of God in

THE NORTH-EASTERN STATES

upon them be greetings and praise!

This was the first Tablet in a series which later was to become known as “The Divine Plan,” a mighty work of the spirit in which Abdul Baha was to call upon the people of North America, section by section, commanding them to arise simultaneously and spread the Cause to all the inhabited parts of the earth. In this first Tablet, he says in part:

Throughout the coming centuries and cycles, many harvests will be gathered. Consider the work of former generations. During the lifetime of his Holiness Christ, the believing, firm souls were few and numbered, but the heavenly benedictions descended so plentifully that in a short time countless souls entered under the shade of the Gospel. God has said in the Koran: ‘One grain will bring forth seven sheaves, and every sheaf shall contain one hundred grains.’ — In other words, one grain will become seven hundred; and if God so wills, he will double these also. It has often happened that one blessed soul has become the cause of the guidance of a nation. Now we must not look at our own ability and capacity; nay, rather we must in these days behold the favors and bounties of God, who has made the drop to find the expression of the sea and the atom the importance of the sun.

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[photo of Mansion of Bahji omitted]

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The above Tablet was forwarded to America and caused a great deal of active interest, but during the months that followed, various remarks of Abdul Baha pointed to the fact that the Tablet was not final and that it would be supplemented by another. Then on February 2, 1917, the Master, from his house in Haifa, dictated to me a second and longer Tablet likewise addressed to the believers of God in Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Vermont, Pennsylvania; New Jersey, New York.

This Tablet, coming as it does from Abdul Baha who saw all things with the eye of equality, is interesting in the fact that he singles out the region that he in addressing an being unique and especially favored. He begins thus:

All the regions in the estimation of the True One are one region, and all the cities and villages are ideally equal and similar to each other. Neither holds distinction over another. All of them are the fields of God and the habitation of the souls of men. But through faith and assurance and the precedence of one part over another, the dweller imparts holiness and sanctification to the dwelling and some of the countries becoming exceptional, attain to the most great distinction.

For example, notwithstanding the fact that some of the countries of Europe and America are distinguished for the purity of the air, the wholesomeness of the water, the charm of mountains, plains and prairies, and are preferred above the rest, yet Palestine became an honor to all other regions of the world because all the divine Manifestations from the time of His Holiness Abraham to the time of the appearance of the Seal of the Prophets, have either lived in this region or have emigrated to or travelled through it.

Likewise Yathreb and Batha attained to the most great bounty, and the lights of the Prophets have shone from that horizon. For this reason Palestine and Hedjaz are distinguished above all other regions.

Likewise as the continent of America, in the estimation of the True One, is the field of the effulgence of lights, the Kingdom of the Manifestation of Mysteries, the home of the righteous ones and the gathering-place of the free, therefore every section thereof is blessed; yet because these nine states have been favored in faith and assurance, hence through this precedence they have obtained spiritual privilege.

The next morning, I took the transcription of the Tablet to the Master. He read it slowly, adding a few words here and there. Then raising his

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head, he said: "Let me see what the friends of God in these States will do. Will they arise with superhuman energy and spread the lights of the Sun of Reality in all those cities, towns, villages and hamlets? I have pointed out to them the highway of service. Will they walk in it? I have drawn for them the plan of God. Will they, like experienced generals, attack the enemy from all sides? And what will you do? Are you going to take a hand in this divine campaign, the birth of which you are now witnessing?"

These were words uttered a long time ago as the Master summoned the North-Eastern States to his side. It was the opening shot.

Abdul Baha sent an initial Tablet to the Southern States: Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky, Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas. Later from his house in Haifa, on February 3, 1917, he dictated a longer and more significant Tablet:

To the friends and maid-servants of God in

THE SOUTHERN STATES

upon them be Baha-O-Llah El Abha !

Again we find that Abdul Baha stresses the specific advantages enjoyed by the people on which he is now focussing his attention. Theirs is an unusual opportunity. He speaks to them as follows:

The philosophers of the ancients, the thinkers of the Middle Ages and the scientists of this century have agreed that the best and most ideal region for the habitation of man is the temperate zone, for in this belt the intellect and thoughts rise to the highest stage of maturity, and the ability of civilization manifests itself in full efflorescence. When you read history critically and with a penetrating eye, it becomes evident that the majority of the famous men have been born, reared and have done their work in the temperate zone, while very, very few have appeared in the torrid and frigid zones.

Now these sixteen Southern States are situated in the temperate zone, and in these regions the perfections of the world of nature have been fully revealed. Consequently the moderation of the weather, the beauty of the scenery and the geographical configuration of the country make great effect in the world of mind and thought. This fact is well demonstrated through observation and experience.

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Therefore in these sixteen States, the Divine Teachings should unquestionably reveal themselves with added effulgence, the Breaths of the Holy Spirit display a more penetrating intensity, the ocean of the Love of God be stirred with higher waves, the breezes of the Rose-garden of Divine Love be wafted at a greater speed and the Fragrances of Holiness diffused with rapidity.

After my copy had been corrected. Abdul Baha said:

“The importance of this Tablet will be revealed in the future. In these vast sixteen States, the lights of the Sun of Reality will shine with great power, and the dark clouds of ignorance and prejudice will be dispelled from their horizon. Tell them: Do not let your thoughts and ideals be crystallized around particular matters. Close your eyes to outward differences and look upon each other with the eye of oneness. . . . Upraise the banner of unity, fraternity, cooperation and reciprocity amongst all the peoples, so that there may be left of prejudice, naught but a name, and of ignorance, not even a shadow; that the religion of God may pitch its tent over the East and the West, the radiance of the Kingdom illumine all hearts, perfect agreement and association be realized between the races, religions and nationalities Find the world of creation find composure and rest.”

According to procedure, both a short and long Tablet were written for the people of Illinois, Wisconsin, Ohio, Michigan, Minnesota, Indiana, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas. The second one was dictated on February 8, 1917, from Baha-O-Llah's room in Acca.

To the believers and maid-servants of God in

THE CENTRAL STATES

... These twelve Central States are like unto the heart of America, and the heart is connected with all the organs and parts of man. If the heart is strengthened, all the organs of the body are reinforced, and if the heart is weak, the entire physical structure is subjected to feebleness.

Now praise be to God that Chicago and its environs, from the beginning of the diffusion of the Fragrances of God, have been a strong heart. Therefore, through Divine Bounty and Providence it has become confirmed in certain great matters.

Firstly: The Call of the Kingdom was at the very start raised from Chicago. This is indeed a great privilege, for in future centuries and cycles, it will be as an axis around which the honor of Chicago will revolve.

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Secondly: A number of souls with the utmost firmness and steadfastness arose in that blessed spot for the promotion of the Word of God and even to the present moment, having purified and sanctified the heart, they are occupied with the promulgation of the Teachings of God.

Thirdly: During the American journey, Abdul Baha several times passed through Chicago and associated with the friends of God. For some time he sojourned in that city. Day and night he was occupied with the mention of the True One and summoned the people to the Kingdom of God.

Fourthly: Up to the present time, the effect of every movement initiated in Chicago was spread to all parts and in all directions; just as everything that appears in and manifests from the heart influences all the organs and the structure of the body.

Fifthly: The first Mashrekol-Azkar (Temple) in America was instituted in Chicago, and this honor and distinction is infinite in value. Undoubtedly, out of this Mashrekol-Azkar thousands of other Mashrekol-Azkars will be born.

In reviewing this Tablet, Abdul Baha said: “The believers in America must be like lighthouses, lightships and searchlights, so that in the tempestuous sea of the world, the arks of their lives may reach the haven of security. Each individual Bahai must be a life-saver who, facing the rough waves of the sea, plunges into the whirlpool and saves souls from drowning. To sit, to talk, to listen — there is no virtue in that. To rise, to act, to help that is the Bahai life. The sincerity and earnestness of the friends in the Central States must appear through deeds. Deeds are the standards. I have done all that is necessary. I have drawn for them the plan of God which must guide them through all the coming years. I have explained to them the Principles of Baha-O-Llah. Now the promotion of those principles depends upon their Co-operation with one another and the turning of their faces to the Kingdom of Abha.”

Two Tablets were written to New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, Nevada, California, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Oregon, Washington, Utah. The second one, dictated on February 15, 1917, from the room of Baha-O-Llah in Acca, was addressed to:

The believers of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful in

THE WESTERN STATES

Here the Master finds similitude between the furthestmost Western state and the Land of the Prophets. He says:

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The blessed State of California bears great similarity to the Holy Land — that is, the country of Palestine. The air is in the utmost temperance, the plain very spacious, and the fruits of Palestine are seen in their freshness and delicacy. When Abdul Baha was traveling and journeying through those States, he found himself in Palestine, for from many standpoints there was a remarkable likeness between the two regions. In some instances, the shores of the Pacific Ocean show marked resemblance to those of the Holy Land, the flora even of Palestine appearing there. A study of this phenomenon has led to much speculation.

Likewise in the State of California and other Western States, scenes, of the world of nature which bewilder the minds of men, are manifest: lofty mountains, deep canyons, majestic waterfalls and giant trees are wit- on all sides, while the soil is in the utmost fertility and richness. That blessed State is similar to the Holy Land and that region like unto a delectable paradise, in many ways identical with Palestine. Now just as there are natural resemblances, heavenly resemblances must also be acquired...

California and the other Western States must earn an ideal similarity with the Holy Land, so that from these regions the Breaths of the Holy Spirit may be diffused to all parts of America and Europe, the Call of the Kingdom of God exhilarate and rejoice all ears, the Divine Principles bestow a new life, the different parties become one party and the once divergent ideas revolve around one

unique center; that the East and West of the continent may embrace each other, the anthem of the oneness of the world of humanity confer a new life upon all the children of men and the Tabernacle of Universal Peace be pitched on the apex of America.

When the original of the above Tablet had been corrected by Abdul Baha, he returned it to me, at the same time slapping me smartly on both cheeks. "It is very good" he laughed, "and this is your wage for copying the Tablet . Now let us take a walk in the town."

As we passed through the narrow streets of Acca, he turned to me and said "Speak!" I had to obey as best I could; so, assembling my thoughts which had been focused on the last Tablet, I began to relate the story of the discovery of gold in the stream gravels of California which had taken place in 1848, and told how, when the news was spread, tens of thousands of persons in the Eastern States left their farms, factories and homes in a mad rush for the gold-fields — many thousands dying on the way. The Beloved thought for a while, then he spoke: "Consider how men, in order to gain wealth and honor, threw themselves into the midst

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[photo of house of Abdullah Pasha where 'Abdu'l-Baha lived in Acca omitted]

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of all kinds of dangers. How cheerfully they accepted all day, the mines of the Kingdom of Abha are being discovered and the precious Jewels of the Spirit are exposed. These mines are inexhaustible. The more they dig, the greater will be the output of the ideal silver, gold and diamond. The believers in the Western States must find their way from these earthly mines to the spiritual mines. They must realize how their forefathers, in order to obtain gold, underwent the most incredible adversities, exposed their lives to danger and accepted all difficulties with firm resolution. The friends also, in order to guide the souls, to promote the Word of God, to discover the unseen treasure of the Kingdom and to prospect the invisible mines of the Realm of Might, must be willing to undergo any difficulty, so that they may achieve results and enrich the world with the boundless wealth of Truth. To the believers of the Western States, the self-sacrifice of the old pioneers and the patient gold-diggers must serve as a great example of perseverance.

Another day, when the Master and I were speaking about the system of irrigation which had turned the wastes of Southern California into a paradise of flowers, he said: "When you travel in those parts, tell the people: The Heavenly Irrigator appeared 70 years ago in Persia and showed his disciples how to flood the dry fields of the hearts. Through his knowledge and inspiration, they were enabled to transform the waste deserts of the minds and souls into luxuriant gardens through which rivers of light flowed from the inaccessible Mountains of God."

He continued. "Say to them:

O ye friends of the Western States! Just as your Government is these extraordinary hardships, and travelled thousands of miles through deserts and over mountains, in order to reach the gold mines. But now in this spending extraordinary effort and money in the matter of irrigation, building dams on the tablelands to save the winter rain, so that the valleys, the plains and the orchards may be flooded during the summer season — you also must exert yourselves in the irrigation of the hearts of men. Learn perseverance from your universal teacher, Baha-O-Llah, who was not disheartened by any obstacle from irrigating the hearts

of humanity. Kings and nations arose against him and banished him to distant lands. Nevertheless, whenever he entered a new place, he fearlessly occupied his time in the spiritual irrigation and the sowing of the seeds of knowledge and wisdom in the prepared fields of Spirit. Through his tender care, the wildernesses were changed into rose gardens, the sad hearts were made happy, the sleepy ones were awakened and the weak ones strengthened. Irrigation! This is the real and permanent irrigation of the

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Lord. One drop of this water will allay the thirst of all mankind, suffering the fields of the hearts to become green and luxuriant throughout all eternity. If the ground of the spirit is flooded with this pure water, it will not be followed by drought; its flowers will not fade and its freshness will never pass away. I hope that the Western friends may become the spiritual irrigators of the Kingdom.”

Again, in speaking of his hopes for the people of the Western States, Abdul Baha expressed himself in glowing terms: “If we concentrate our attention on the spiritual world and the rich results issuing therefrom, we observe that through the Teachings of Christ and the self-sacrifice of his disciples, Europe and America were adorned with the bright jewels of divine civilization, ferocious characters were refined and the love of humanity spread.

“In a similar manner in the Bahai Cause, there must appear extraordinary spiritual geniuses, wonders of the Kingdom of God, souls who in knowledge, sociability, tenderness, loving kindness, universality and joyfulness, may be considered as unique and peerless. Should such heavenly beings appear in the Western States: souls who have discovered their ways to the mines of the Kingdom, souls who are the irrigators of the grounds of the hearts of humanity, souls who are the wonders of the realm of Truth. The power and creative energy of the Kingdom of Abha will become manifest and apparent. Then and not until then will the spiritual creation of the Almighty become perfected in those States, the miracles of the transforming power of the Spirit embodied, the Mysteries of the Holy Rooks revealed and the golden age of pence and brotherhood established.”

In this manner did Abdul Baha call upon the Western States, even as he had invoked the Northern, Southern and Central States, to take part in the great practical and spiritual combat of the Twentieth Century.

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Chapter III

THE TABLETS TO CANADA

The time had now come for Abdul Baha to turn his attention to Canada and the northern stretches of this hemisphere. In a first Tablet, he gives especial consideration to the inhabitants of Iceland, Greenland and the Franklin Islands. These ice-bound regions shall be tempered with the knowledge of God, and melted with the love of God. In it not said in the Koran: “A day will come wherein the lights of unity will illumine all the world”?

The second and longer Tablet to Canada was dictated On February 21, 1917 in the room of Baha-O-Llah at Acca. It is addressed thus:

To the believers of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful in the Dominion of Canada, Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, Yukon, Mackenzie, Keewateen, Ungava, Franklin Islands and Greenland.

In opening this Tablet, the Master as usual strikes the note of equality and then proceeds to mention the rare privileges that have been conferred upon Canada together with the promise of its future.

In the great Koran, God says: 'Thou shalt see no difference in the creatures of God.' In other words, He says: From the ideal standpoint, there is no variation among the creatures of God, because all were created by Him. From the above premise, a conclusion is drawn, that there is even no difference among the various countries; at the same time, the history of the Dominion of Canada is infinitely glorious and its future great. Thus it shall become the object of the Glance of Providence and the manifestation of the Favors of the Supreme Lord.

The Master admits that he had been warned against visiting Montreal. Many persons had thought that he would not be well received there because the majority of the inhabitants of that province were Catholic. In the estimation of his advisors, they were, submerged in the sea of dogma, imitation and formalism, and in no condition to hearken to the call of Reality. In writing of himself in this situation, he continues:

But these stories did not have any effect on the resolution of Abdul Baha. He, trusting in God, turned his face toward Montreal. When he

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[photo of 'Abdu'l-Baha in Palestine omitted]

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entered that city, he observed that all the doors were open; he found the hearts in the utmost state of receptivity and the ideal power of the Kingdom of God removing every obstacle and obstruction. In the churches and meetings of that Dominion, he called men to the Kingdom of God with the utmost joy, and scattered seeds which will be irrigated by the hand of Divine Power. Undoubtedly those seeds will grow, becoming green and verdant, and many rich harvests will be gathered. In the promotion of the Divine Principle he found no antagonist and no adversary.

Then he speaks directly to the believers:

Do ye not took upon the smallness of your number and the multitudes of the nations. Five grains of wheat will be endued with heavenly blessing whereas a thousand tons of tares will yield no results and have no effect. One fruitful tree will be conducive to the life of society, whereas a thousand forests of wild trees offer no fruits. The plain is covered with pebbles, but precious stones are rare. One pearl is better than a thousand wildernesses of sand, especially the Pearl of Great Price which is endowed with Divine Blessing. Ere long thousands of other pearls will be born from It. When that Pearl associates and becomes the intimate of the pebbles, they also all change into pearls.

Therefore, again I repeat, that the future of Canada, whether from the standpoint of civilization or from the viewpoint of the virtues of the Kingdom is very great. Day by day, civilization

and freedom shall increase. Likewise, the cloud of the Kingdom will water the seeds of guidance sown in that Dominion. Consequently rest ye not, seek ye no composure, attach not yourselves to the luxuries of this ephemeral world, free yourselves from every attachment and strive with heart and soul to become fully established in the Kingdom of God. Gain ye the heavenly treasures. Day by day, become ye more illumined. Draw ye nearer and nearer unto the Threshold of Oneness. Become ye the manifestors of spiritual favors and the dawning-places of infinite lights. If it is possible, send ye teachers to other portions of Canada; likewise dispatch ye teachers to Greenland and the home of the Eskimos.

In regard to the teachers, they must completely divest themselves from the old garments and be invested with a new garment. According to the statement of Christ, they must attain to the station of rebirth: that it, whereas in the first instance they were born from the womb of the mother, this time they must be born from the womb of the world of nature. Just as they are now totally unaware of the experiences of the foetal world, they must also entirely forget the defects of the world of nature. They must be

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baptized with the Water of Life, the Fire of the Love of God and the Breaths of the Holy Spirit; be satisfied with little food, but take a large portion from the heavenly table. They must disengage themselves from temptation and covetousness, and be filled with the spirit. Through the effect of their pure breath, they must change the stone into the brilliant ruby and the shell into pearl. Like unto the cloud of vernal shower, they must transform the black soil into the rose-garden and orchard. They must make the blind seeing, the deaf hearing, the extinguished one enkindled and art aglow, and the dead quickened.

Upon ye be Baha-O-Llah El Abha!

The acid test of every movement is its practicability. The right cause will at first strengthen the character from better habits and enrich the spirit. When this state has been arrived at, the next logical one is that of sharing.

The Bahai Cause is a failure if it simply remains as a source of inspiration to its adherents, because from its inception it was viewed as a creative power for the readjustment of world affairs. Its principles can never be too often reiterated, for each one is an adventure in modern thinking and constitutes a vast field of endeavor: The fact of the Oneness of the world of humanity. The ideal of independent investigation of Truth. Realization that the basis of all the divine religions is one. Emphasis on religion as being the cause of love and harmony; not hatred and discord. A new outlook on religion as being in conformity with science and reason. Equality of the rights of men and women. A universal auxiliary language. Education for all, everywhere. The elimination of want everywhere. Economic justice. A world government.

What a program! And to it is added the knowledge that it has been given to this generation by the list of God's Messengers, the modern Moses who descended from the Sinai of Inspiration with a charter for today. Small wonder that Abdul Baha, the closest companion of the Prophet as well as the closest in understanding, strove with all the intensity of his mighty spirit to share the burden of responsibility with all of us. It is the cause of every man, will he but take it.

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Chapter IV

TABLETS TO THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Abdul Baha now writes four more Tablets, all of them addressed to the believers of the United States and Canada as a whole.

No. I

In the first, dictated in the garden of Bahjee on April 8, 1916, he speaks of the countries of this hemisphere that are awaiting the Great Message. On the North, Alaska must be visited and the principles of unity divulged and explained. It is a great enterprise: the territory is vast and the call of the Kingdom of God has not yet been raised thereon. Then turning his attention to the numerous countries southward, the Master continues in most specific terms.

Likewise the Republic of Mexico is very important. The majority of the inhabitants of that country are devoted Catholics. They are totally unaware of the reality of the Bible, the Gospel and the New Divine Teachings. They do not know that the basis of the religions of God is one and that the Holy Manifestations are like unto the Sun of Truth, rising from the different dawning-places. Those souls are submerged in the sea of dogma. If one breath of Life be blown over them, great results will issue therefrom. It is advisable that those who intend to teach in Mexico should be familiar with the Spanish language.

Similarly, the teachers to the six Central American Republics, situated south of Mexico — Guatemala, Honduras, Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama and the seventh country Belize or British Honduras — should also be familiar with Spanish.

You must give great attention to teaching the Indians, i.e., the aborigines of America, for these souls are like unto the ancient inhabitants of the Arabian Peninsula, who previous to the Manifestation of His Holiness Mohammad were treated as savages; but, when the Mahammedic light shone forth in their midst, they became so illuminated that they brightened the world. Likewise, should these Indians and aborigines be educated and obtain guidance, there is no doubt but that through the Divine Teachings they will become so enlightened as to shed light on all regions.

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[photo of 'Abdu'l-Baha in Acca omitted]

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All the above countries have significance, but especially the Republic of Panama wherein the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans come together through the Panama Canal. It is a center for travel — a passage from America to the other continents of the world. In the future it will gain most great importance.

The Islands of the West Indies, such as Cuba, Haiti, Porto Rico, Jamaica, the Islands of the Lesser Antilles, the Bahama Islands, even the small Watling Island — all have great value, as have the two black Republics, Haiti and Santa Domingo, situated in the cluster of the Greater Antilles; also the cluster of the Islands of Bermuda in the Atlantic Ocean.

Attention must be given to the Republics on the Continent of South America — Columbia, Equador, Peru, Brazil, British Guiana, Dutch Guiana, French Guiana, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Venezuela; also to the islands on the north, east and west of South America, such as Falkland Island, Galapago, Juan Fernandez, Tabago and Trinidad. The city of Bahia situated on the eastern shore of Brazil is notable. Because for sometime it has become known by this name, its efficacy will be most potent.

In short, O ye believers of God! Exalt your effort and magnify your aims. His Holiness Christ says: 'Blessed tire the poor, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.' In other words: blessed are the nameless and traceless poor, far they are the leaders of mankind. Likewise is it said in the Koran: 'We desire to bestow our gifts upon those who have become weak on the face of the earth, and make them a nation and the heirs of Spiritual Truth.' Or, we wish to grant a favor on the impotent souls and suffer them to become the inheritors of the Messengers and the Prophets.

Therefore, now is the time that you may divest yourselves of the garment of attachment to this phenomenal realm; be wholly severed from the physical world and became angels of heaven, travelling and teaching through all these regions.

I declare by Him, beside Whom there is no one, that each of you shall become the Israfel of Life, blowing the Breath of Life in the souls of others.

Upon ye be greeting and praise!

We know quite well that this world of ours has many races and tribes, but through the law of scientific classification the historians and geographers have reduced them into four groups.

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1. The white or Caucasian people, consisting of 770 millions, are the largest group and the most highly civilized.

2. The black or Ethiopian races consisting of 175 millions, mainly inhabiting Africa. With a few millions in other parts of the world.

3. The yellow or Mongolian people numbering about 540 millions, all of whom live in Asia, mostly in China and Japan.

4. The red man Or American Indian — approximately 22 millions, a few living on this continent and the rest in South America.

All these people, living from the Arctic to the Ant-arctic, in all latitudes and longitudes in the north, south and torrid zones, must come to know God and His Revelation in this latter day, and be taught the lessons of the brotherhood of all mankind.

To this overwhelming mission, Abdul Baha had dedicated himself. Not the smallest island was to be overlooked; and now from Bahjee on April 11, 1916, the Great Teacher writes again to the Bahais of the United States and Canada, offering them the world as field for their activities.

A group speaking the languages, severed, holy, sanctified and filled with the love of God, must travel through the three great Island clusters of the Pacific Ocean; Polynesia, Micronesia and the adjacent Islands, such as New Guinea, Borneo, Java, Sumatra, Philippine Islands, Solomon Islands, Fiji Islands, New Hebrides, Loyalty Islands, New Caledonia, Bismarck Archipelago, Ceram, Celebes, Friendly Islands, Samoa Islands, Society Islands, Caroline Islands, Low Archipelago, Marquesas, Hawaiian Islands, Gilbert Islands, Moluccas, Marshall Islands, Timor and the other Islands. With hearts overflowing with the love of God, with tongues making mention of God, with eyes turned to the Kingdom, they must deliver the Glad-Tiding of the Manifestation of the Lord of Hosts to all the people. Know ye of a certainty that in whatever meeting ye may enter, at the apex of that meeting the Holy Spirit shall be brooding and the heavenly Confirmations of the Blessed Perfection will encompass all.

The Master wishes that he himself might essay the superhuman task, he who never was discouraged by obstacles; but he knew that the time had come for others to grasp the banner that he had upheld for almost a lifetime.

O how I wish that it could be made possible for me to travel through these parts, if necessary on foot and in the utmost poverty, and while pass-

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ing through the cities, villages, mountains, deserts and oceans, cry at the top of my voice: ‘Ye Baha El Abha!’ and promote the Divine Teachings. But now this is not feasible for me, therefore I live in great regret; perchance, God willing, ye may become assisted therein.

Abdul Baha envisions groups of voyagers setting out on world. conquest:

Likewise, if some teachers go to other Islands and other parts, such as the Continents of Australia, New Zealand, Tasmania, also to Japan; to Asiatic Russia, Korea, French Indo-China, Siam, Straits Settlements, India, Ceylon and Afghanistan, most great results will be forthcoming. How good would it be were there any possibility of a commission composed of men and women, travelling through China and Japan, so that the bond of love might become strengthened and, through this going and coming, they may establish the oneness of the world of humanity, summon the people to the Kingdom of God and spread the Teachings.

Similarly, if possible, they should travel to the Continent of Africa, the Canary Islands, Cape Verde Islands, Madeira Islands, Reunion Islands, St. Helena, Zanzibar, Mauritius, etc., and in those countries summon the people to the Kingdom of God and raise the cry of ‘Ya Baha El Abha!’ They must upraise the Flag of the Oneness of the world of humanity in the Island of Madagascar also.

Books and pamphlets must be either translated or composed in the languages of these countries and Islands, to be circulated in every part and in all directions...

O ye believers of God! Show ye an effort and after this war spread ye the synopsis of the Divine Teachings in the British Isles, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Russia, Italy, Spain, Belgium, Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Portugal, Roumania, Serbia, Montenegro, Bulgaria, Greece, Andorra, Liechtenstein, Luxemburg, Monaco, San Marino, Belearic Isles, Corsica, Sardinia, Sicily, Crete, Malta, Iceland, the Faroe Islands, the Shetland Islands, the Hebrides and the Orkney Islands.

In all these countries, like unto the morning stars shine ye from the horizon of Guidance. Up to this time you have displayed great magnanimity but after this, you must add to your effort a

thousand times and throughout the above countries, capitals, islands, meetings and churches, invite mankind to the Kingdom of Abha!

Now the Master asks what result is forthcoming from rest, tranquility, luxury and attachment to this corporeal world. Man will not become as

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independent as the cow, who is at liberty to graze over all the meadow and drink from the rivers and streams; and certainly he will not be as unencumbered as the bird, or live in such exhilarating surroundings. No, man was created for the acquirement of infinite perfections and to be drawn near unto the Divine Threshold.

Later, when the Tablet was concluded, Abdul Baha again spoke of the bird, pointing to one which was flying overhead: "The teachers of the Cause of God in these countries must be like this bird — always on the wing. Should they alight, it must be with the intention of a short rest from fatigue, on that at the next moment they may rise higher and sing more sweetly. Never should they think of a protracted rest. Ever and ever should they soar in the divine atmosphere of the Spirit. Should they for one second think of rest, they will immediately start on a downward course. They must detach and free themselves from all physical limitations, and purify the mirrors of their hearts from the dust of racial, religious and national prejudices. Not the least trace of these prejudices should linger in the minds. They must become spirit personified, love incarnate, truth embodied. They must set aside egotism, selfishness and suspicion. They must always journey through the world of universal ideals. They must not restrict themselves to particular matters, for the Cause of Baha-O-Llah is not sectarian. Let them walk in the highway of the Divine Teachings. Let them look to God, and not to man; behold the light, and not the glass. There is no doubt but that this Cause shall encircle the globe. So long as there remains one soul whose heart is not touched by the love of God and divine Illumination, the friends must not sit silent. This is their duty."

No. 3

The third Tablet to the Bahais of the United States and Canada was dictated from Bahjee in three parts — the first on April 19, the second on April 20th and the third on April 22, 1916. It is the only Tablet, in the entire series of fourteen, in which the Master's attention is not fixed on special portions of the globe. He is thinking of the teachers themselves, those who are to arise in all countries, hasten to all regions and transmit the message. He speaks of the type that lie is seeking, of the transformation that shall be effected in these persons and of the station which they will attain. With the yearning of a father, with the assurance of a seer, he speaks to them thus:

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O ye apostles of Baha-O-Llah may my life be a ransom to you!

The blessed Person of the Promised One is interpreted in the Holy Book as the Lord of Hosts; the heavenly armies being these souls who are entirely freed from the human world and transformed into celestial spirits. Such souls are the rays of the Sun of Reality who will illumine all the continents. Each one is holding in his hand a trumpet, blowing the Breath of Life over all the regions. They are delivered from human qualities and the defects of the world of nature; are characterized with the characteristics of God, **and clothed with the Fragrances of the Merciful. Like unto the Apostles of Christ who were filled**

with Him, these souls also have become filled with His Holiness Baha-O-Llah i.e., the love of Baha-O-Llah has so mastered every organ, part and limb of their bodies that the promptings of the human world can make no impression.

These souls are the armies of God and the conquerors of the East and the West. Should one of them turn his face in some direction and summon the people to the Kingdom of God, all the ideal forces and lordly confirmations will rush to his support. He will behold all the doors open, and all the strong fortifications and impregnable castles razed to the ground. Singly and alone, he will attack the armies of the world, defeat the right and left wings of the hosts of all the countries, break through the legions of all the nations and carry his attack to the very center of the powers of the earth. This is the meaning of the Hosts of God.

Any soul from among the believers of Baha-O-Llah who attains unto this station, will become known as the Apostle of Baha-O-Llah. Therefore, strive ye with heart and soul so that ye may reach this lofty and exalted position; be established on the throne of everlasting glory, and crown your heads with the shining Diadem of the Kingdom, the brilliant jewels of which will irradiate upon centuries and cycles.

The Master then states that the teacher should comply with certain conditions, firstly: Firmness in the Covenant of God, i.e., Baha-O-Llah has chosen Abdul Baha as his interpreter, as the center of a Covenant with his followers; therefore fidelity to Abdul Baha and adherence to his teachings must be considered as of paramount importance. No other power can conserve the Unity of the Bahai world.

The second condition is fellowship and love amongst the believers. They should know one another, become intimate with one another, sacrifice

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[photo of Acca omitted]

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for one another — then the power of the love of God will make of them, the waves of one sea, the flowers of one rose-garden and the stars of one heaven.

As a third condition, the teachers must continuously travel to all parts of the continent, nay rather to all parts of the world, even as did Abdul Baha who journeyed throughout the United States and Canada. He was sanctified and freed from every attachment. Did not Christ say: “Shake off the very dust from your feet”?

Abdul Baha then describes the system that should be adopted: Meetings must be held at which the old Bahais, and those who know the Cause well, should gather with the new souls seeking instruction. They should relate the history of the movement, explain the teachings and interpret the prophesies and proofs regarding the Manifestation of the Promised One, as they are recorded in the Holy Books and Epistles. Through much training, the young ones will be enabled to go forth in knowledge and assurance.

Furthermore in all meetings, whether public or private, nothing should be discussed save that which is under consideration, and all articles should be centered around the Cause of God. Promiscuous talks must not be allowed and contention is absolutely forbidden. Here let it be remembered that whenever contention and disputes occur between two souls in connection with divine subjects — both are wrong.

A committee should be formed consisting of scholars well versed in Persian, Arabic and other languages to translate Tablets and works on this Revelation. Then the books should be published and widely circulated.

The “Star of the West” (magazine at that time published by the Bahais, now out of circulation) should appear with utmost regularity, its pages being devoted to matters concerning the Cause, so that it may be a means of instruction to the people of East and West. In the future, other publications are to be established according to the national or local needs of the various countries.

The teachers travelling in different directions should be familiar with the language of the countries to be visited.

A few days later, in reviewing the conditions under which a teacher should work, the Master spoke of the characteristics to be looked for in the teacher himself. He said: “First of all he must have a sweet disposition. A sweet disposition will make the teacher loved by all the pupils. With arguments, controversies and contention, people are driven away; but with love, gentleness find sweetness, they bloom forth like unto it rose.

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I desire that every one of the believers may become like an ignited candle in the assemblage of the world of humanity, and conducive to the Eternal Life of others. Today, the Confirmations of the Kingdom of Abha are with those who renounce themselves, forget their opinions, cast aside personalities and think of the welfare of others. Whosoever has lost himself, has found the universe and the inhabitants thereof! Whosoever is occupied with himself is wandering in the desert of heedlessness and regret! The master-key to self-mastery is self -forgetfulness. The road to the palace of life in through the path of renunciation.”

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Chapter V

THE LAST TABLET

No. 4

Abdul Baha had a great appreciation of the United States and he always looked toward this country with expectancy. One day, he spoke to me at length about the American institutions. At that time I could not take down his words, but immediately after he had finished speaking I went to my room, as was my custom on such occasions, and recorded the things he had said to the best of my ability. Through long practice, my memory enabled me to write the sentences spoken in fairly good sequence. These were as follows: “There are some matters that I cannot speak of publicly, because the time has not yet arrived for their disclosure and the people are not prepared to hear them; but I can speak about them to you. For example: The Republican or Democratic form of the Government of the United States is so organized and the relations between the States and the national administration, the Congress and the Legislature so defined and determined that, generally speaking, all work together smoothly for the public weal. The founders of the Republic and the writers of this Democratic Constitution were in reality the well-wishers of the world of humanity. They laid down such a body of laws, the mighty effect of which was to change the

course of history on the surface of the globe. The influence of the American idea of freedom, right and equality and the representative form of government, slowly spreading far and wide, was indeed an inspirational example to other down-trodden nations to rise against absolutism and shake off the yoke of drudgery and serfdom. In the future, all the Governments of the world, including the Asiatic Governments, even this part of Asia called the Near East, will become democratic and constitutional. This is certain. No doubt can be entertained regarding the matter. The spirit of the time will remove every obstacle and crush out every opposition, for the Constitution of the United States gives to men all the sacred rights of political and individual liberty: the protection of life, the pursuit of happiness and the free exercise of religious belief. Every country, with certain modifications and changes having regard to climate, education, aptitude and the progress of the inhabitants, will take that Constitution as a guide to draw up its own Bill of Rights. All the future governments of the world, large and small, will become democratic, based upon the

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[photo of circle of cedar trees on Mount Carmel omitted]

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will of the governed. This also is assured. In the course of years, the North, Central and South American Republics will draw nearer and nearer together, and become united in a general Confederated Democracy; in other words, the various Republics will find their national and international interests so akin and identical, that they will forget all their petty jealousies and apprehensions, and work together for the advancement and prosperity of America. There will be a Pan-American Parliament meeting regularly, at which all questions of a general nature, affecting the vital interests of the Western Hemisphere, will be discussed and deliberated upon. In reality, the Pan-American Union in Washington is already engaged in rendering this great service.”

The closing Tablet in the great series was dictated in Haifa in March, 1917. On reading it, we observe with interest that the Master, having encircled the globe with his attention and concern, fixes his mind yet again on the Republics of the Western Hemisphere. He counts on them to merge their interests in a mighty Collective Center. He trusts that the New World will lead the Old World; and so once again he turns with infinite yearning to the Americas.

Following is the last Tablet of the Divine Plan. It appears in its entirety.

To the assemblies and meetings of the believers of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful in the United States and Canada

Upon them be Baha-O-Llah El Abha

He is God!

O ye heavenly souls, sons and daughters of the Kingdom!

God says in the Koran: ‘Take ye hold of the Cord of God, all of you, and become ye not disunited.’

In the contingent world there are many collective centers which are conducive to association and unity among the children of men. For example, patriotism is a collective center; nationalism is a

collective center; identity of interests is a collective center; political alliance is a collective center; the union of ideals is a collective center, while the prosperity of the world of humanity is dependent upon the organization and promotion of these collective centers. Nevertheless, all the above institutions are in reality, the matter and not the substance, accidental and not eternal, temporary and not everlasting. With the appearance of great revolutions and upheavals, all these collective centers are swept away. But the Collective Center of the Kingdom, embodying the Institutes and Divine Teachings,

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is the eternal Collective Center. It establishes relationship between the East and the West, organizes the principle of the oneness of the world of humanity and destroys the foundations of differences. It overcomes and includes all the other collective centers. Like unto the ray of the sun, it entirely dispels the darkness, encompassing all the regions; bestows ideal Life, and causes the effulgence of Divine Illumination. Through the Breaths of the Holy Spirit, it performs miracles; the Orient and the Occident embrace each other, the North and South become intimates and associates; conflicting and contending opinions disappear; antagonistic aims are brushed aside; the law of the struggle for existence is abrogated, and the Canopy of the oneness of the world of humanity is raised at the apex of the globe, casting its shade over all the races of men. Consequently, the real collective center is the body of the Divine Teachings, which include all the degrees and embrace all the universal relations and necessary laws of humanity.

Consider! The people of the East and the West were in a state of utmost strangeness. Now to what a high degree are they acquainted with each other and united together! How far are the inhabitants of Persia from the remotest countries of America; and now observe how great has been the influence of the Heavenly Power, for the distance of thousands of miles has become identical with one step! How various nations that have had no relations or similarity with each other are now united and agreed through this Divine Potency! Indeed, to God belongs Power in the past and in the future, and verily He is powerful over all things!

Consider! When the rain, the heat, the sun and the gentle zephyrs co-operate with one another, what beautiful gardens are produced! How the various kinds of flowers, trees and plants associate with each other and are conducive to the adornment and charm of one another! Hence the oneness of the bounty of the sun, the oneness of rain and the oneness of the breeze have so overcome all other considerations that the variety of hues and fragrances have increased the adornment, the attraction and sweetness of the whole. In a similar manner, when the Divine Collective Center, the outpouring of the Sun of Reality and the Breaths of the Holy Spirit are brought together, the variety of races and the differences existing between countries will become the cause of the embellishment, decoration and elegance of the world of humanity.

Therefore, the believers of God throughout all the Republics of America must, through the Divine Power, become the cause of the promotion of heavenly Teachings and the establishment of the oneness of humanity. Every one of the important souls must arise, blowing over all parts of

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America the Breath of Life, conferring upon the people a new spirit, baptizing them with the Fire of the Love of God, the Water of Life and the Breaths of the Holy Spirit — so that the second birth may become realized. For it is written in the Gospel: 'That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit.'

Therefore, O ye believers of God in the United States and Canada, select ye distinguished personages to travel, or may they by themselves, becoming severed from rest and composure, arise and journey throughout Alaska, the Republic of Mexico; in the Central American Republics, such as Guatemala, Honduras, Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama and Belize; and through the great South American Republics, such as Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Brazil, French Guiana, Dutch Guiana, British Guiana, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia and Chile; also in the group of the West Indies, such as Cuba, Haiti, Porto Rico, Jamaica and Santo Domingo, and the group of the Islands of the Lesser Antilles, the Islands of the Bahamas and the Islands of Bermuda; likewise to the Islands to the east, west and south of South America, such as Trinidad, the Falkland Islands, the Galapago Islands, Juan Fernandez and Tobago. Especially visit ye the city of Bahia on the Eastern shore of Brazil. Seeing that in past years this city was given the name BAHIA, there is no doubt but that this was through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Consequently, the believers of God must display the utmost effort, upraise the Divine Melody throughout those regions, promulgate the heavenly Teachings and waft over all the Spirit of Eternal Life, so that those Republics may become so illumined with the splendors and the effulgences of the Sun of Reality that they may become the objects of the praise and commendation of all other countries. Likewise, ye must give great attention to the Republic of Panama, for at that point the Occident and the Orient find each other and unite through the Panama Canal. That region shall therefore assume importance in the future and the Teachings, once established there, will unite the East and the West, the North and the South.

Hence, the intention must be purified, the effort ennobled and exalted; so that ye may establish affinity between the hearts of the world of humanity. This glorious aim will not become realized save through the promotion of the Divine Teachings which are the foundations of the holy religions.

Consider how the religions of God served the world of humanity! How the religion of the Torah became conducive to the glory, honor and progress of the Israelitish nation! How the Breaths of the Holy Spirit, through His

Holiness the Christ, created affinity and unity between divergent communities and quarreling families! How the sacred power of His Holiness Mohammad became the means of uniting and harmonizing the contentious tribes and the different clans of the Arabian Peninsula, and this to such an extent that one thousand tribes were welded into one tribe, strife and discord were done away with, while with one accord they strove to advance the cause of culture and civilization! Thus were they released from the lowest degree of degradation and set soaring toward the height of Everlasting Glory. Is it possible to find in the phenomenal world a greater Collective Center than this? In comparison to this Divine Collective Center, the National Collective Center, the Patriotic Collective Center, the Political Collective Center and the Cultural and Intellectual Collective Center are like child's play.

Now strive ye that the Collective Center of the sacred religions, for the inculcation of which all the Prophets were manifested and which is none other than the spirit of the Divine Teachings, be spread in all parts of America, so that each one of you may shine forth from the horizon of Reality like unto the morning star; that divine illumination may overcome the darkness of nature, and the world of humanity become enlightened. This is the most great work. Should ye become confirmed therein, this world will be changed into another world, the surface of the earth transformed into a delectable Paradise and eternal Institutions founded.

Let whosoever travels as it teacher, over mountain, desert, land and sea, peruse this Supplication.

O God! O God! Thou seest my weakness, lowliness and humility amongst Thy creatures; nevertheless I have trusted in Thee and have arisen in the promotion of Thy Teachings.

O Lord! I am a broken-winged bird, yet I desire to soar in Thy Space, to which there is no limit. How it is possible for me to do this save through Thy Providence and Grace, Thy Confirmation and Assistance!

O Lord! Have pity on my weakness and strengthen me with Thy Power.

O Lord I Have pity on my impotency and assist me with Thy Might and Majesty.

O Lord! Should the Breaths of the Holy Spirit confirm the weakest of creatures, he shall attain to the highest station of greatness and possess anything that he desires. In the past, Thou hast assisted Thy servants, and

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[photo of 'Abdu'l-Baha on donkey in Haifa omitted]

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they were the lowliest and the most insignificant of those who lived upon the earth; yet, through Thy Sanction and Potency, they took precedence over the most illustrious of mankind. Whereas formerly, they were as moths, they became as royal falcons; whereas formerly they were as bubbles, they became the sea. Through Thy Bestowal, Thy Mercy and Thy Most Great Favor, they became stars shining on the horizon of Guidance, birds singing in the rose-gardens of Immortality, lions roaring in the forest of Knowledge and Wisdom, and whales swimming in the Oceans of Life.

Verily, Thou art the Clement, the Powerful, the Mighty and the most Merciful of the Merciful

(signed) Abdul Baha Abbas."

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Chapter VI

ACCIDENT INSURANCE

During the days when he was dictating the great Tablets, Abdul Baha was exceedingly happy. The sense of responsibility and the anxieties imposed on him by war conditions seemed to have lifted, and his mind and spirit were already on the march in the campaign that was to encircle the earth and extend from pole to pole.

The fourteen Tablets, now fully corrected, were presently placed in the hands of Noured-Din Zeine to be transcribed on great sheets of velum. Noured-Din Zeine was an expert calligraphist, and the Tablets when completed, with borders of intricate tracery illuminated in gold, were veritable works of art.

As has already been shown, two Tablets each had been consigned to the North-Eastern, the Southern, the Central and the Western States, also to the Dominion of Canada; the first of all of these pairs being very much the shorter. At the time of writing, postal restrictions had begun to set in, besides the contents of the communications were international in feeling, to say the least; consequently, in order to ensure their safe transmission, each of the five short Tablets was copied serially on postal cards and mailed. All the cards arrived safely at their destination.

The question of dispatching the nine long Tablets was one for the future, but the Master was already considering means to be taken. Sometimes I felt that I was to be the messenger, and I realized that it would be a hazardous task to take such documents out of the country. Actually, it was dangerous to have them in one's possession at all.

In order to safeguard the Tablets and ensure the delivery of his message when the time came, Abdul Baha took precautionary measures. One day he called me to him and explained: The Turkish government was suspicious of everybody in these times, and of himself at all times. His house might be searched momentarily and in such case, the Tablets would doubtless be confiscated. Therefore, certain steps had to be taken. Abdul Baha wished to have the Tablets placed underground.

Preparations were made. The fourteen great sheets of velum were rolled up and inserted in a strip of metal tubing. These, together with many other papers of value, were packed in my steamer trunk. Then one dark

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[photo of the Shrine of the Bab and Haifa Bay panorama omitted]

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night, Abbas Goli, keeper of the shrine of The Bab, and I carried the trunk up the slope of Mount Carmel to a secluded spot at the rear of the Shrine, where we dug a pit, approximately six feet in depth. We lowered our treasure to its resting place and covered it with earth.

The second precautionary measure was more difficult and took a much longer time to fulfill. I now learned that the Master's intention was to send me to America, immediately at the close of hostilities. I was to take the Tablets and perform the mission successfully, if this were possible. Otherwise, in case the Tablets were lost or taken, they must remain with me in intangible form. To use other words, I was to carry the text of the fourteen Tablets in my mind.

I set to work on the original copies, starting with the first short Tablets which had already been sent in much unsatisfactory form. Every day I studied, repeating and repeating to myself, and so becoming perfected in one Tablet after another. In the afternoons the Master, manuscript in hand, would hear my lessons, and often on our walks I would recite as we went along. With the passage of time and in my absorption in gaining mastery over new Tablets, the difficulty was to retain fluency in the ones already learned. So I made it a habit to get up very early in the mornings, around five o'clock, and recite aloud

from the very beginning before going on with the material yet to be learned. This work took a long time, many months, but at the end I had committed to memory the fourteen Tablets, in full. It was a feat of mental gymnastics. Looking back, I don't see how I could have done it; yet it must be taken into account that I was quickened by the Master's daily presence. That was enough to make the impossible, easy. Meanwhile, all else had slipped away from my consciousness and I lived only in the Divine Plan. Sleeping and waking, the five continents loomed in my mental vision and the islands of the sea paraded before me; while the globe balanced to the Master's rhythmic words and the nations merged into one.

The translation of a valuable work is of inestimable importance, yet never can it be compared satisfactorily with the original. At that time, no translation of the Tablets had been made or even thought of; they were in the writer's own scholarly and poetic style, just as they had come from him. Incidentally, Abdul Bohn was recognized as a master in the Persian and Arabic tongues. The Tablets were in Persian with a few prayers in Arabic.

When I had reached the stage of letter-perfection Abdul Baha summoned the Bahais to a meeting and we gathered together in the great room

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adjacent to the shrine off The Bab. The women, as was the custom sat in a smaller room to one side, the door between the two being open. It was late afternoon. Before us stretched the waters of the bay, dazzling in the sunlight; around us, the perfume of the orange blossoms clung like a garment. Abdul Baha began to speak: Did his friends think that he had been doing nothing during all these months; that he, for so long accustomed to prison life, had again become resigned to captivity? No, the war was soon to end, the doors would be opened and communication with the outside world established. With this thought in mind, he had made preparations, had drawn up an order of the day concerning all nations and all races, to the end that they might come together in the realization of the oneness of all phenomena and in the consciousness that the source of all inspiration is one. He concluded saying: Now, Mirza Ahmad will recite for you the Divine Plan.

I began to chant the first Tablet to America. The Master's eyes were on me; the Bahais were listening with attentive curiosity. It was just five o'clock. As I proceeded, the heroic words of the message and its scope began to affect the hearers, and they sat immovable hanging on every syllable. A pause, during which no one moved, then I launched on the second Tablet — and the third — and the fourth. Abdul Baha was watching me at times; but for the most part, he was sitting with closed eyes, his face alive as he silently took part in every word. Presently the Bahais, unaccustomed to so long an address or recitation began to relax. The charm of the hour, the perfume of the flowers, the measured insistence of my voice, all took effect. They settled down a little more comfortably; some began to nod. I continued. An hour had passed — two. Some of the sleepers wakened and looked around anxiously; then they took up the watch and others drifted off. Once in a while, Abdul Baha scanned his court and his eyes would meet mine. He smiled encouragement and I went on. We were nearing the end; We Were on the last Tablet — finished it, and I stopped. It was eight o'clock.

Such was my try-out — my dress rehearsal; and a very successful one it turned out to be, for my Master was pleased.

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Chapter VII

AMERICAN BAHAIS CARRY ON

While World War I was in progress, the Atlantic Ocean lay, an impassable barrier between Palestine and America. No communication was possible, and during all those years both Abdul Baha and the Bahais of the United States carried on their missions without interchange of thought and according to their own views. We have seen the great patriarch as he lived out his period of seclusion on the slope of Mount Carmel and on the plane of Acca, and have watched the workings of his mind as it reached in agonized yearning to embrace all the people of the earth. Now in order to balance the picture, we might transport ourselves over seas so as to observe the activities of the followers, as they strove in their ways to carry out the teachings of the Master. Meanwhile, as a preliminary, we will go back a few years to better understand conditions,

Ever since the appearance of the Cause in America in 1893, the Bahais had been in a state of constant correspondence with Abdul Baha, receiving direct instructions; also as pilgrims, they had visited him in the Holy Land and had had opportunity to profit at first hand from his Wisdom. Added to this, the Master had come to the United States in 1912 and for nearly nine months had travelled from coast to coast, lecturing before hundreds of Bahai and non-Bahai groups, with the result that, on his departure for the East, he had left behind a very large number of admirers, friends and believers, together with crowds of those who were merely interested.

To me, who had accompanied the great teacher on that historic tour, it was evident that people of widely different social, cultural, spiritual and intellectual background were attracted to him for a variety of reasons, and, through the enchantment of his presence, were caught up in a whirlpool of exaltation and happiness. The noble appearance of Abdul Baha, his benevolent and gentle philosophy, his broad and tolerant viewpoint, his balanced and serene nature, the bubbling fountain of his good humor, his inexhaustible store of oriental stories, his hearty and infectious laughter, his astonishing ability for hard work and above all, the heights and depths of his knowledge — these characteristics and many others had endeared him to multitudes.

Now, the attraction was on the personal plane rather than on that of the teachings, but the Master felt that this attitude would in time de-

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[photo of 'Abdu'l-Baha omitted]

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velop into appreciation of the Cause itself. Therefore, when his American tour was completed, and later during the war when correspondence was halted, the task of keeping in touch with those who were revolving around the circumference of the movement fell into the hands of the Bahais. This opportunity of continuing the work, when the impression made by Abdul Baha was at white-heat, was one that never could return. It required something of the tact and diplomacy of the great educator himself, but more especially it involved understanding of the essential of the message. A lesson must be grasped by the teacher if it is to be imparted to others.

Now, many of the Bahais really valued the message, and practically all of them were irretrievably committed in love and devotion to Abdul Baha. They expended themselves untiringly to serve the Cause and some extremely good work was accomplished. At the same time, certain mentalities which had been

suddenly charmed into liberalism reverted to type with a bang, and the flock, deprived of its shepherd, was witness to some very strange antics, indeed.

An occasion suited to an effective gesture in spreading the ideals of the movement presented itself on the One Hundredth Anniversary of the birth of Baha-O-Llah, falling on November 12, 1917. The Chicago Assembly sent out an invitation to the Bahais of the United States and Canada with accompanying letters, written by the Secretary of the Assembly and the President of the Bahai Temple Unity, wherein the significance of the anniversary was heralded. It was to be a great event and the prospect of taking part in it must have thrilled the hearts of all the Bahais, for another hundred years had to roll into the lap of eternity before a similar gathering could occur, and by that time none of the present generation would be alive. Now, how was the scene prepared for this festival, and to what purpose was the Centenary of Baha-O-Llah to be harnessed? We shall see.

The contents of the invitation and the accompanying letter do not give us any clue; nevertheless it would not be out of place to quote a paragraph showing the declared object of the occasion.

The Secretary of the Bahai Assembly of Chicago wrote:

And, that the Message of Baha-O-Llah — that dynamic message of love for all peoples and rates, that great unifying message — shall fittingly be acclaimed on this significant occasion, the House of Spirituality, in behalf of the Bahai Assembly of Chicago, calls you to participate in the commemoration of the day... Let the Centennial Celebration be, in reality, a festival of love, and let this Twelfth Day of November, 1917, be forever remembered in the annals of the Bahai Movement. Let this gathering

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demonstrate to the world the power of the Message of Baha-O-Llah to dispel all superstitions of the past; to unite the hearts of humanity and bring them into direct harmony with the divine will. A program of great beauty and attraction has been prepared. Prominent speakers from the various Assemblies of America will be in attendance, and altogether the occasion will be one of complete joy and fragrance.

As President of the Bahai Temple Unity. Mr. William H. Randall, expressed himself as follows:

The Peerless Century for which all centuries existed, in which all the horizons of the world have been illumined and which encircles the world of man with the Glory of God, completes the span of its centennial, November 12th, the Hundredth Anniversary of Baha-O-Llah... In a world torn with dissensions and rent with division, the Bahai body must be the dayspring of composure, the organism of unity sustaining the breath of the Holy Spirit.... The mystery of unity consists in spiritually breathing together, that the arteries of the world may be purified by the respiration of heaven. In all the Assemblies gathered together on November 12th, lovingly to commemorate with joy and glad-tidings the birth of Baha-O-Llah individually and in Assembly, let us supplicate the Lordly Oneness to bestow upon His servants, as an -organic body, the breath of the Holy Spirit to unite us and show forth to mankind the fruits of unity; for this breath of oneness is the attribute of God in the world Of His humanity.

(Star of the West. Vol. VIII, no. 11 and 12
September 27th and October 16, 1917,
pages 145, 140, 147. 148)

A Report of this Centenary and the speeches delivered by various visitors, along with a general photograph is published in Vol. VIII, No. 14, November 23, 1917, of Star of the West (pages 191, 196, 197 to 203).

The ceremonies attendant upon this majestic and soul-stirring anniversary lasted three days, which days, according to the record, "were full of spiritual joy and heavenly harmony." The record is enhanced by, one of the most beautiful of Abdul Baha's utterances, which reads as follows: "The principles of His Holiness Baha-O-Llah, like unto the Spirit, shall penetrate the body of the world, and the love of God, like unto an artery, shall beat through the five continents. The East shall become illumined, the West perfumed, and the children of men shall enter beneath the all-embracing canopy of the oneness of the world of humanity."

So much significance was attached to this Centennial celebration that Dr. Zia M. Bagdadi predicted that: "The names of those who have attended this glorious gathering will be recorded in the history of this great Cause." Dr. Bagdadi's talk, given on this occasion reads in part:

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Baha-O-Llah broke the chains of superstition and error, proved the unity and singleness of Truth, and removed the chains of imitation. He also removed pride and the feeling of superiority of one nation over another. Another chain he removed was that of prejudice. The most bitter prejudice among Orientals is religious. He proved that the foundation of all religions is one. He also removed racial prejudice, showing the races that their colors are like the different colors of birds and flowers. And so with national prejudice, He proved that the earth was one home. In like manner he freed the women from oppression and proved the harmony between science, religion and reason. He freed the world from the fetters of misunderstandings and raised the banner of the oneness of humanity from his great prison... Do not teach the youth the prejudices of past ages. Baha-O-Llah has revealed the means of harmony and happiness for the whole world... Man, in order to know and have peace, must fill his heart with love. Love is the creator of peace. Let us conquer ourselves.

Mr. Charles Mason Remey spoke of the birth of the new architecture in connection with the Bahai Temple. Mrs. Corinne True explained the great purpose of the Bahai Movement in the following happy phrases!

In this day the Sun of spiritual Truth has again arisen in the Orient, and its radiance is seen in the Occident as well. Baha-O-Llah has said that the human family was once one, dwelling together in the greatest state of harmony. Then differences crept in, and racial and religious bias appeared until discord and hatred were found among the children of men. The great purpose of the Bahai movement is to restore the foundation of human solidarity.

Mr. Louis G. Gregory who wrote the account of the Centennial, lauded the occasion with these words:

The efforts of the House of Spirituality and the Chicago Assembly to arrange for the comfort and happiness of all, the love of those present for each other, the mingling of the various elements of humanity, the eloquent addresses and spiritual songs, were all signs of the confirmations which descend from the Throne of Majesty... the effect of such gathering is far-reaching, as the hearts are attracted by the fire of divine love. This Festival of Commemoration was an occasion of historic value in the growth of the divine Cause. The friends left for their homes with longing and grateful hearts.

Now, no intelligent reader could object to anything that was said from the public platform, and nothing to cause anxiety appears on the record save for one allusion, made by Mr. Albert R. Windust, which the uninitiated might scan without being disturbed. This, a distinctly cryptic allusion, runs

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as follows: "The hour has struck. From now on those who serve the Cause must be firm in the Covenant. They must also be well-known as such. . . . This is especially true of those who would teach."

The, above lines do not seem to carry portentous implication, yet they contain the crux of a long and sinister story

During many years, the question of "firmness in the Covenant" had agitated the Bahai World. In simple language, it meant no more and no less than this: Baha-O-Llah, in his Will, had appointed Abdul Baha his successor or as the Centre of a Covenant with his followers, which Covenant the Bahais had to enter into, to keep and to hold.

Now, in spite of the simplicity of the proposition, a battle royal had developed around this issue, and the Bahais, although few in number, were divided into two warring camps: those who held themselves as "firm in the Covenant" and those who were considered as "violators", or to use the Persian term, *Nakezeen*. In time, this Persian word became quite popular, striking terror to the hearts of all who were suspected, or were liable of being suspected of the least trice of *Nakz* or violation-. From the very first, the self-styled firm-ones were the more aggressive, being by nature pamphleteers and letter-writers. Soon, they developed quite a body of literature on Firmness versus Violation, and in order to give validity and weight to their arguments, they took advantage of, and incorporated in their writings detached statements from the tablets, speeches and intimate talks of Abdul Baha which had been written or spoken in connection with a variety of local matters.

Notwithstanding the universal and constructive principles of Baha-O-Llah which they repeated in parrot manner on all occasions, certain persons harbored in their minds and souls the most exclusive, the most parochial and the most destructive beliefs — all grounded on the thesis: Firmness versus Violation. The result was that when Bahais came in contact with one another, the spoken or unspoken question uppermost in their minds was: Is he firm in the Covenant?

As I stated in the beginning, large numbers from among his audiences had become attracted to the personality of Abdul Baha, and in time these men and women began to study the words of Baha-O-Llah. Presently, some of them set themselves to a campaign of teaching and writing, and in utter innocence, spread their untried wings in the heaven of service. Being as yet unfamiliar with much of the literature of the Cause, they, on occasions, made mistakes in interpretation and even historical errors, natural in stu-

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dents; but the firm ones in the Covenant made no allowances on these points. Therefore the tom-toms beat out, the war-cry was raised and the announcement made that Chicago, Boston, Washington and a number of other cities had become cancer spots of violation, and that something drastic had to be done in order to free the Cause from the disease of *Nakz*. This accusation, mainly directed against the new Bahais who had put their foot in it, included many of the Bahais of long standing who were in opposition to the practice of witch-hunting. To meet this situation, a Committee of investigation was appointed to study, explore, and report at a later date, as to whether violation existed in the United States and, if so, to designate the violators or *Nakezeen*. This inquisitorial Committee consisted of four members: Mr. Louis G. Gregory of

Washington, D. C.; Miss H. Emogene Hoagg of San Francisco, California; Mr. George O. Latimer of Portland, Oregon and Mr. Charles Mason Remey of Washington, D. C., Chairman.

At a meeting held on November 11, 1917, at the house of Mrs. Corinne True, 5338 Kenmore Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, which was one of a series carried on in conjunction with the One Hundredth Anniversary Celebration of the birth of Baha-O-Llah, a Committee of Investigation was founded. The report reads:

The Condition was discussed, and those attending saw the necessity for taking immediate steps toward an investigation, in order that all might know whether or not a center of violation existed in Chicago. By unanimous vote a committee for investigation was appointed by the meeting to inquire into the matter and to report the findings to the Friends in America.

This Committee of Four must have accomplished its investigations with lightning speed, for a letter, shortly issued, urged as many Bahais as possible to be present in Chicago to hear its findings on December 9, 1917 — just twenty-seven days later.

The “Report of the Bahai Committee of Investigation 1917-1918” is a mimeographed book of fifty-one pages, single-spaced. It is a strange document the like of which one can find only in the records of the Middle-Ages which were periods of apostasy, heresy, expulsion and excommunication. It is a distorted, abnormal document, replete with fantastic assertions and somnambulistic hallucinations. It is an incredible document for no one would believe in its existence unless he actually read it himself or touched it with his own hands. Having originated at the Centennial of Baha-O-Llah, it constitutes the most gruesome blasphemy imaginable against the Great Teacher of universal tolerance.

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In answer to the summons of the Committee, forty-eight Bahais from eleven states and Washington, D. C., presented themselves in Chicago on the appointed day to bear the Findings; their names are registered on page 32 of the Report. The representation stands as follows:

California.....	2	New York.....	2
Washington, D. C.	3	Ohio	4
Illinois.....	20	Oregon.....	1
Maine	1	Pennsylvania.....	3
Massachusetts.....	4	Wisconsin.....	3
Michigan.....	4	—	
Minnesota.....	1	Total.....	48

Thus, these forty-eight persons, constituting themselves a religious tribunal, under the chairmanship of Mr. Charles Mason Remey, undertook the task of dividing the sheep from the goats. They met at the house of Mrs. Corinne True, because she was considered as one of the few firm ones and they also “knew that in that place ... no sympathizer of violation would venture and if they did come, they could easily be ejected and the meeting made safe.... All the members of the committee had had past personal experience with the Nakezeen, so they were particularly alive to the danger of contamination.”

The friends assembled at 5338 Kenmore Avenue (Mrs. Corinne True's House) at 10 o'clock in the morning of December 9, 1917, but because of belated arrivals, the report was not commenced until about two o'clock the same afternoon. In the presence of about fifty friends... the detailed report and various

testimonies from friends present, were given... In a wonderful and harmonious spirit after lengthy consultation and prayer, a unanimous acceptance of these findings was voted.

So, in a wonderful and harmonious spirit and with prayer on their lips, did these forty-eight self-constituted inquisitors pronounced anathema on all those in whom they thought to have discovered the least trace of violation, while the alleged violators being absent, had no opportunity of pleading their own case.

As soon as the Report had been unanimously accepted by the tribunal of Forty-Eight, copies were made and mailed to all the Bahai Assemblies and to a selected list of individuals. The committee must have considered the Report of unique importance, for the Copies are numbered and marked at the bottom of the page with the words: - "A Limited Number of Copies for Private Circulation Only." The one in my possession is No. 33.

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The members of The Tribunal were apparently not satisfied with the mere circulation of the Report but "prolonged the work of the Committee of Investigation by commissioning them to travel to various assemblies and to explain and elucidate the facts of violation; to warn the friends in all parts of the country of this danger to the Cause."

Then began one of the strangest crusades in the annals of religious intolerance, a crusade, the object of which was to broadcast far and wide the glad-tidings of Nakz (violation).

Mr. Charles Mason Remey, Chairman of the Investigation Committee, wrote:

Since December 9th one member of the Committee has travelled to the Pacific coast, where in several assemblies, he explained the matter, while the other three members of the Committee have divided their time between Chicago, Boston, New York, Washington and other centers in the pursuance of their labors, and in addition to holding meetings in these various cities, they have written and circulated their report, so that people in all parts could have their definite statement. They have also done individual work of explaining, through personal interviews and correspondence, the facts of the matter in question.

The purpose of this intensive propaganda was to force the Bahai world to accept the Report. It was not easy, and a murmur of discontent began to reverberate among the Assemblies, finally growing into open revolt. To their credit, be it said, that loud protest came from many of the best known Bahais.

According to the Report, a certain Mrs. Luella Kirchner was one of the most obstinate among the violators and the charge against her was a serious one. Mrs. Kirchner had taken a leading part in opening a Bahai Reading Room in Chicago without permission of the Assembly of that city; and from there had disseminated "injurious teachings" as contained in two booklets by Mr. W. W. Harmon of Boston. Now, in the booklets of Mr. Harmon, the claim was made that God dwelt "within" the individual, a claim well justified in Bahai literature for Baha-O-Llah said: "Turn thy sight unto thyself, that thou mayest find Me standing within thee, powerful, mighty and supreme." However, the Bahai teaching includes the theory that God is "without," and as the Bahai leaders were more partial to this latter concept, found in Judaism, Christianity and Islam, they considered Mr. Harmon's attitude rather too Hinduistic and Pantheistic. Consequently, they regarded his writings, and especially his commentary on the Seven Valleys, as misleading and dangerous.

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It seems, from page 24 of the Report, that in the past Abdul Baha had been pleased with the work of Mrs. Kirchner for he had sent her a Tablet, wherein he said: "I became very happy on account of thy sincerity and uprightness." Nevertheless, the Chicago Assembly had thought fit to summon her to its presence, and there she had been put through a gruelling cross-examination conducted by Dr. Zia Bagdadi. It appears that Mrs. Kirchner had accepted all that the Assembly had demanded of her, so Abdul Baha was notified by cable and his answer came: "Friends accept Kirchner."

One would naturally think that Abdul Baha's message would have been sufficient. But no! Other charges, such as causing division among the friends, were trumped-up against this helpless woman, and her situation in the Cause looked pretty black until, one day out of the clear Sky, an open letter printed on one sheet of paper and signed: "Some Washington Bahais," was distributed far and wide. This letter, a sincere and noble document which embodied a rejection of the Report of the Committee of Investigation, stands on the record to the everlasting credit of those who wrote it.

Open letter to Mrs. Kirchner

Washington, D. C., April 14, 1918.

Beloved Friend in the Cause of Abdul Baha:

We have read with amazement and dismay a report of a so-called "Committee of Investigation," headed by our Mr. Charles Mason Remey, a hitherto beloved and trusted member of our little flock. We can scarcely believe our ears! We do not speak of the charges brought against you, which, taking them as stated by Mr. Remey and without inquiring into your side of the case at all, do not constitute valid charges, but are the querulous complaints of an offended would-be dictator.

What amazes us is the general tone of the report. We look for a spirit of Bahai love and tolerance; we look for broad-mindedness, generosity, charity; we look for the all-inclusive spirit of this newest and greatest faith, which will overwhelm all opposition by the sheer weight of undiluted love and we look in vain! We find a writing that might grace the archives of the Holy Roman Inquisition! Instinct with bigotry, intolerance and a narrow interpretation of chosen passages, it declares: "Thou shalt shun the sinner!" Ah, and who is he, who amongst us shall point the finger and cry: "Thou art the sinner whilst I possess virtues, yea, and omniscience too, since I am able to detect these?" Since when Abdul Baha declared it to be the Chief Aim of his followers to search for sins amongst their brethren, and not for sins only, but for the "least trace" thereof? And, which of the brethren is he who shall set the standard of virtue? The reply will readily occur to you, and will give the Key to the animus of the whole "report."

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You have been too broad for them, Mrs. Kirchner; you have shown too much tolerance; you have been too active in the Cause — too much of a true Bahai, in short, for these narrow and undeveloped souls, who would arrogate to themselves all virtue. Our blessing be upon thee, good and faithful servant. Such charges harm thee not at all.

Are they therefore harmless? Alas, not so. They harm the Cause, perhaps irretrievably. We are all too few for our great purpose, even though we bend all our energies in unison to the promotion of this vast enterprise, which is no less than to unite all mankind in, the bonds of the love of God. Not convert nor proselytize; not to found a new religion nor usher in a new dispensation; no, our task is to show to all men

that the foundations of all religions are one, even as one God reigns supreme, and therefore disharmony can exist only through ignorance and misunderstanding. Our task is to clear away the clouds of ignorance, to dispel the vapors of sects and creed; to broaden, broaden, expand and include. With enmity for none and charity for all, to forge upward toward the light

What then of this report? Oh, Mrs. Kirchner, can we mention it in the same breath? Fifty believers, headed by our once beloved and trusted Mr. Charles Mason Remey (yea, still beloved!), have been engaged in detective work, suspicion, charges, the inquisitorial chamber, the harsh decision, the excommunication! And they call themselves Bahais! Would that they did not, for how shall we now present this broad and inclusive Cause to the world as it should be presented? Bahais! And engaged, in such deeds! Oh, the indignity, the stultification, the prostitution of our beloved Cause! Wolves in sheep's clothing! They made their charges against you, Mrs. Kirchner! We wonder that they dared!

Go on with your labors, beloved sister. Heed not such charges; fear not such "Committees!"; listen not to the barking of the ravening wolves. There will be more of such things. And know that not all the believers have been deceived by this "investigation."

We are not going to write you our names. The others have done that, and for us to do likewise would be to array believers against believers and make an open division in our midst. We will, not do that. We love them, all still. They are but blinded by ignorance. Peradventure they may learn to see. It will be our task to help them, and to show them by our example what miracles can be accomplished by love, patience and tolerance — Bahai love, Bahai patience, Bahai tolerance — can anything be greater or more long-suffering? We beseech for you the Confirmation of El Abba.

(signed) SOME WASHINGTON BAHAIS.

It is obvious that such a plain and unequivocal statement, earning from "Some Washington Bahais" (the identity of whom was unquestionably suspected by Mr. Charles Mason Remey, himself a member of that Assembly) was very disturbing indeed. Besides, voices of protest from other parts were becoming audible. Something had to be done, unquestionably and immedi-

ately! Therefore, the Open Letter of the Washington Bahais was met by "An Open Letter to the Bahais in America," dated March 21, 1918. This is an eight-page, single-spaced mimeographed document with the following introduction:

Written to refute certain erroneous statements which are being made with reference to the activities of the Bahai Committee of Investigation in its endeavor to free the Cause of Baha-O-Llah from the spirit of Violation.

Like the Report itself, this letter tries to prove the righteous attitude of the Bahai Committee of Investigation and then goes on to answer twelve objections raised against it by the Bahais of the United States. Mr. Remey wrote:

People have spread false reports and stories, and letters misstating facts have been circulated in various parts of this country, until the minds of many souls are confused and troubled. Therefore, I feel moved to write this letter in order to try to protect the minds of the friends from some of the slander and untruths which are being circulated about the country regarding the stand of the Bahai Committee of Investigation in its endeavor to protect the Cause from the subtle and disintegrating effects of the violation.

The last page bore the facsimile of another letter, prepared by Mr. Remey himself and addressed "To the members of the House of Spirituality in Chicago and to all who stand with them." The letter commended the action of the Committee of Investigation and carried the signatures of 27 Washington Bahais. Now, a careful study of these signatures very clearly revealed the names of the members of the Washington Assembly who did not figure on the list. In other words, "Some Washington Bahais" who had signed the Open Letter to Mrs. Kirchner were, by this means, unmistakably spotted. In explanation of the transaction, Mr. Remey wrote:

A sincere effort was made in order that every Bahai here in the District, (Washington, D. C.), should be given an opportunity to sign this letter to the Chicago friends, if he or she so desired. This was in no sense put forth as a test to the firmness of these friends, but it was an expression, to our brothers and sisters, co-workers and upholders of the standard of firmness in Chicago, of our appreciation of their good work, for prior to the drawing up of the letter in question, the Committee of Investigation in several meetings had rendered verbally a comprehensive report of the violation in Chicago, so these friends were fully informed of the affair before the matter of the letter was presented to them. It was well known among those who took an active part in arranging and sending the letter that certain of the well known and staunch Washington Bahais, for reasons of their own, which they explained, deemed it wise not to affix their signatures to this document. The Committee has never questioned the wisdom of their stand in this matter, nor their firmness in the Covenant.

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The Committee of Investigation was the fruit of the First Centenary of Baha-O-Llah in America. It was a ghastly tribute laid at the threshold of Him who came to the world with his mind and heart laden with love. May it be that the Bahais on this continent will find a more fitting offering to present on the occasion of the Second Centenary!

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Chapter VII

BAHAI COMMITTEE OF INVESTIGATION

The Committee of Investigation, which had come into being at the One Hundredth Anniversary celebration of Baha-O-Llah (whether or not in tribute to that occasion. I do not venture to state), had been enjoined to travel throughout the country and warn the various Assemblies of the fact that the Nakzeen were in their midst. It was a provocative task, one which the Chairman of the Committee himself did not shirk. In the eyes of the firm ones, he appeared as the Angel of the Lord descending sword in hand upon the irregulars; and the regulars showered their blessings upon him as he journeyed from city to city, a veritable Peter the Hermit, preaching on the dangers of Nakz.

During this time, as an auxiliary service, Mr. Remey managed to write a great deal on the subject of violation. Two such documents are in my possession: the first one, entitled Firmness, is a mimeographed pamphlet, of five pages, single-spaced; the second, named Protection, is another mimeographed pamphlet of twenty-eight pages, single-spaced. These articles, which were released on the same date, March 27, 1918, were intended to bolster up and fortify the Report of the Bahai Committee of investigation. In them, the author relates his personal experiences in the East and West during the many years of his travels in the interest of the Cause; and the argument goes to prove that violation or Nakz is contagious like a poison that

pollutes the water supply, like a disease that eats into the vital organs of the spiritual community. Many of the anecdotes and stories in Protection have little or no bearing on the problem under discussion, but the author, through a strange process of rationalization, tries to make them applicable and conclusive. He ends thus:

Now that we are all awake to the present vital issue in the Bahai Cause in America, let all the firm friends who have come through these fires of tests unite in the fulness of the love of the Covenant, rejoicing in the cause to which God in bounty and mercy has called us, to go forth to give this message to the world.

The Bahai Committee of Investigation had done a noteworthy job. To sum up: in less than a month, it had produced a voluminous Report which had been unanimously accepted by the religious tribunal of Forty-Eight, sitting in Chicago on December 9, 1917. It had mimeographed the Report

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[group photo of early American Bahai leaders including Windust, Remey and True omitted]

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and mailed it to all the Bahai Assemblies in the United States; after which, the members of Committee had made a coast to coast pilgrimage, giving lectures and interviews, and corresponding with those who could not be reached in person. Besides, the Chairman had written three apologetic pamphlets, namely: An Open Letter to the Bahais in America, Firmness and Protection, all of which had served as campaign literature; yet, in spite of all this, a percentage of the Bahais remained unaffected by the propaganda, and a complete black-out of conscience had not been obtained. What was to be done?

Now, the Tenth Bahai Convention was in the offing and this even, held great possibilities. If the Report could be adopted (unanimously, if possible) by the Bahai Assemblies of the United States and Canada in convention assembled, then it would be as though the very conscience of the American Bahais had spoken; then the Report would have authority equal with the Word of God, and woe unto any who would oppose it! If such would indeed arise, that man would himself be branded as a rebel, a blasphemer, a child of perdition — a Nakez.

The plan was a risky one, for if it failed the committee would be in a tight place. Therefore it must not fail! All the ingenuity of the Forty-Eight and their sympathizers would be used to bring the issue to a triumphant finish.

I can give but a brief review of this historic event which took place in Chicago, from April 27th to 30th (inclusive) 1918. Those who are interested may read the dramatic story of this Tenth Bahai Convention in the three successive issues of Star of the West, Vol. IX, Nos, 4, 5, 6 May 17, June 5 and June 24, 1918.

At preliminary proceedings, a Committee on Credentials had been appointed, the duty of which was to see to it "that no representatives of the said group (suspect persons) be admitted to this Convention or seated therein as delegates. Thus, the undesirables (alleged Nakezeen) were eliminated, and the Tenth Bahai Convention opened its doors to the delegates and the perfectly safe visitors.

In order to prepare the ground Mrs. Claudia Cole spoke on obedience, stating that we must recognize and realize that violation is, as it were, pathological, like gangrene in the spiritual body of the world, even as are other poisons in the physical body. Unless one can realize that, one does not understand the actual meaning of violation,

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Mrs. Edward Struven made it plain that people receiving Tablets from Abdul Baha could not count very much on his commendation at a time when "this great question of their firmness in the center of the Covenant is before us to decide."

Mrs. Imogene Hoagg made a distinction between love and obedience. "It seems to me today that we have to have more than love, we have to have obedience. . . . Let us call for obedience, and love will come."

Then Dr. Zia Bagdadi, one of the most zealous of the Nakezeen-hunters who was also at times a constructive speaker as I have shown earlier, delivered a long talk on the necessity for firmness in the Covenant: "The most important subject to the real Bahais is firmness and obedience. We know a violator when we see him as we know a donkey, because violation has a pungent odor, a pungent smell — a sickening smell. We must inhale with the nostrils of the spirit, then we can distinguish between violation and firmness."

After giving an outline of the difficulties that, on account of violation, had descended upon the Cause in Chicago, and the consequent dwindling of believers, Dr. Bagdadi continued:

We have tried many experiments. I have seen that. But now, praise be to God, that cancer is cut out, and the body of the Cause is perfect. Many, on account of ignorance and self-interest tried to spoil the work. . . . On the 12th of November (the Hundredth Anniversary of Baha-O-Llah) that great feast was held in perfect harmony, and the Committee of Investigation was elected, and they were efficient, and whenever communication is resumed, you will hear commendation from the Center of the Covenant, for always he recognizes, always he confirms those who stand for the Covenant; always he shuns those who oppose the Covenant. The members of that Committee have sacrificed their time, their energy and their money, and they have received arrows of criticism from all parts and they have come here and finished their work. . . . Criticisms were raised and yet those souls who criticized the Committee, never contributed any help in removing the conditions. That is, they did not remove the stagnation in Chicago, and they did not cut any of the cancerous tissues. . . . It is characteristic of the violators to sit down and criticize, and do nothing else. The friends in Chicago are not tying the bands of anybody. Those who want to work in harmony are welcome. . . . There is no compromise where violation is. . . Baha-O-Llah never said, "Pray for the violators." His only command was to shun them. Maybe the opinion of one is not to shun them, the opinion of another to be a little kind. But what is best? . . .

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[photo of Dr. Zia Bagadadi omitted]

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The Committee of Investigation has done its part, and the Convention is here. If any one did not receive the Report, a copy can be had by asking for it; and if they wish, let them withhold judgment until an opportunity can be had to read it. But I beg of those who have read the Report to stand with a rising vote and commend the committee for its work, and they may rest assured that the divine confirmation will surround them.

This sudden command of Dr. Bagdadi, which was intended to stampede the Convention into a rising vote, must have taken the Chairman of the Convention, (Mr. Alfred E. Lunt) by surprise, for he said:

I did not hear your closing remarks, Dr. Bagdadi.

DR. BAGDADI: May I repeat them?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

DR. BAGDADI: I said let those of the friends here who have not yet received the Report of the Committee wait and read the entire Report; but I beg of those who have received the Report of the Committee of Investigation, if they find that it has done a great piece of work — in order to preserve the Cause, in order to stop the stagnation in this city, that they stand up and commend the Committee.

MRS. MAY MAXWELL: May I make a motion that this Report of the Committee (if Investigation be accepted?

DR. BAGDAD: That is what I mean, by a rising vote.

THE CHAIRMAN: The matter now before us is that the Report of the Committee of Investigation on violation in America be accepted. Are you ready for the question? All those in favor will rise. The purpose of this, as I understand it, — if I am mistaken, Dr. Bagdadi will inform me. . . .

DR. BAGDADI: Delegate or non-delegate, all those who received the Report.

THE CHAIRMAN: The secretary will call the roll.

The delegates arose and remained standing during the roll call.

THE CHAIRMAN: It appears officially that the Convention has recorded its unanimous approval and acceptance of the Report of the Committee.

MR. GREGORY: I suggest that we let all the friends vote.

THE CHAIRMAN: All right. Kindly sit down, you who are delegates. Now, for a general expression, which I know many of you wish to make,

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those who are not delegates, who are present, kindly rise, if you share this feeling.

The remainder of the attendance at the meeting arose to their feet.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are there any who vote no on the motion? If so, please rise. It appears that by the unanimous vote of the entire body gathered here this morning, you have approved and

ratified the Report in full of the Committee of Investigation on violation in America. AND I SO DECLARE IT.

In this manner, the most sanguine expectations of the four members of the Bahai Committee of Investigation were fulfilled. The chain of slavery, forged on the anvil of fanaticism, was officially fastened on the Cause by the entire body of delegates and visitors, on Tuesday morning, April 30, 1918, at the Tenth Bahai Convention held in the Auditorium Hotel, ninth floor, Chicago, Illinois under its permanent chairman Mr. Alfred E. Lunt and its permanent secretary, Mr. Louis G. Gregory. A masterful stroke of political strategy had been effected. The plot had succeeded. That hour, when the chairman pronounced the words: "And I so declare it," was the zero hour of the Cause of Baha-O-Llah in North America. It was an hour of degradation for the Movement; it was one of despair for the vanquished forces of liberalism, and of triumph and jubilation for those now in complete control.

To all outward appearances the American Bahai conscience died at that Convention; and the black pall of a full-fledged inquisitorial policy fell upon its mutilated body, as it was laid to rest under the rising feet of the delegates and non-delegates. Then upon the grave-site, and without loss of time, the Bahai leaders turned to the election of the executive committee for the coming year.

Here, Mr. Charles Mason Remey suggested:

Before we proceed with this election, we have a few moments of prayer and supplication, that we may elect a Board, that we may entrust into the hands of those who are most fitted for it, the work of this Unity for the next year. We are up against many, very, very vital problems. We have had some very vital problems to meet this last year, and we have met many in this gathering yesterday and today. And it occurs to me to make this suggestion of prayer, that we may be spiritually guided.

Following the prayer, the Chairman, Mr. Alfred Lunt, spoke:

We have been sent here this year as no body of delegates has ever been sent in the history of the world. You have been sent here after hearing

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the divine injunctions towards firmness in the Covenant, you have been sent here because you are firm . . . therefore, what cannot you accomplish if you realize your oneness ... and what it has meant to us ever since we came into this room? and if we will only come in line with that center, . . . will we not all become melted into one soul, one thought and one purpose, to choose those whom he desires to be chosen today to represent this Bahai Temple Unity of America? And not only to choose them, but to perform every act which this Convention has come here to perform.... So shall we not enter into this blessed flame of the love of God at this moment, and do his will?

Then Dr. Bagdadi again raised his voice, prophesying: —

Whatever you do under this roof will be proclaimed from the housetops. That is the law. "The whole world is looking toward America.... All of you are confirmed; all of you are firm and steadfast believers; otherwise we would not be here. The time has come for the separation of violation from firmness. There is no doubt about the sincerity and firmness in this cause of God on the part of all those who are here. If you become members of the Board, it means one, and if one becomes the Board it means all.... And the main issue, which is firmness in the Covenant, is the greatest qualification in all elections of committees.

As a master magician, Dr. Bagdadi well knew the methods with which to arouse the religious emotions of the already overwrought delegates, and how to appeal to their loyalty to Abdul Baha in order to

control their votes. The right people had to be chosen to direct the affairs of the Cause in the months ahead, or all the work of the Committee of Investigation Might yet be undone. He therefore dramatized the sufferings of The Bab and Baha-O-Llah, enumerated the martyrs and closed by picturing the meeting, face to face, of each and every one with Abdul Baha, when the words: Well done would be the reward of those who had voted wisely. Listen to Dr. Bagdadi: —

Abdul Baha wants us to look in our hearts at this moment and see how we stand, and each one will be the cause of making others who are firm, firmer. This is in obedience to Abdul Baha, and I am going to do as we all must, think of that in this election. So far, my dear friends, we must not think of it as if he were my friend or my sweetheart, or my old friend, or my associate — the time has come when we are on a plane higher than that. To show that this Cause is the Cause of God, the Bab gave his life; Baha-O-Llah spent his life in agony; Abdul Baha has lived in prison; 24,000

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or more gave their lives. We are to serve such a Cause. Who is going to be my friend, my wife, my child, when I look at the sacrifices that have taken place? Will it not be a shame, more than a shame, to put any name on this paper before I in my heart and soul hear Abdul Baha say to me, "Well done." Because I am going to face him; you are going to face him sooner or later. We are facing him now in the spirit. He is watching and counting all these things we are doing now. What can I say more than these words of his, those who are to be elected must be well known Bahais; they must be known for their firmness in the Covenant. Can I make a statement stronger than this? Is it possible? Let us begin.

Following this appeal, the delegates were herded into the center section of the hall and the roll call of delegates and alternates was read.

The outcome of the election was completely satisfactory. From the point of view of the High Command, it could not have gone better. Three from among the four members of the Bahai Committee of Investigation were elected to the National Board on the first ballot, to wit: Mr. Charles Mason Remey, Chairman; Miss H. Emogene Hoagg and Mr. Louis G. Gregory, simon-pure champions of orthodoxy against whom nothing could be said or thought. Five other persons were likewise chosen: Dr. Zia Bagdadi, evangelist of the Bahai Committee of Investigation; Mrs. Corinne True, in whose residence the Bahai Committee of investigation had held its sessions; Mr. Alfred E. Lunt, Permanent Chairman of the Convention; Mr. I Harlan F. Ober, Delegate from Cambridge, Mass., and Reporter Of the Convention and Mrs. May Maxwell. Completing the Board of Nine, entailed some difficulty. Mr. William H. Randall, President of the Board which was going out of office had on various occasions laid himself open to the charge of liberalism and, although he had voted on all the proposals Of the Convention, he still did not quite come up to the mark. Therefore, on the first two ballots he fell short of a majority, but he came to the front on the third, and was elected with a small number of eighteen votes. Mr, Charles Mason Remey was chosen as President for the coming year and Mrs. May Maxwell as Vice-President.

The election of the Board of Nine. completed the infamous structure of Bahai orthodoxy as dreamed and planned by a small group of reactionaries who now found themselves in undisputed possession Of the Cause, standing ready to impose their decisions upon the helpless Bahai Assemblies throughout North America. The Convention had been a success from start, but the election had capped it to an exhilarating climax.

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Through its report, we are given a glimpse of the new Board of Bahai Temple Unity at its first meeting, held immediately after the election; and it seems that the members were so overpowered by the complete victory that had been obtained, that all were well-nigh speechless. Mr. Harlan F. Ober, who had been chosen as Secretary for the coming year, interpreted the silence of the group with more transcendent significance than I can allow. He writes the following:

One of the greatest evidences of the unity and love of the Convention was found in the first meeting of the Executive Board, which was held in the evening of April 30th immediately after the Convention. The members of the Board gathered and began the meeting with prayer and chanting, which was followed by an indescribable quiet and peace. No one spoke, for it seemed that the door of the Rizwan (Paradise) had opened, and the breath of the holy Abha spirit had encircled all. We found infinite rest and wonderful consolation beyond the capacity of words to describe.

It may have been a moment or many moments, we could not tell, but with hearts overflowing we turned to each other, and from all lips came the words: "This is unity." "This is the mystery of unity."

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Chapter IX

THE DOORS OPEN

It would be difficult to describe the feelings of the people of Palestine on the memorable day of September 23, 1918 when, at three o'clock in the afternoon, isolation and oppression were suddenly substituted for glorious freedom. It would be impossible to give a fair account of their bewilderment and ecstasy when the final scene of the war, as enacted in the East, came to view.

The first indication of release was the sound of stray shots among the hills; then detachments of a Hindu cavalry regiment appeared simultaneously on the crest of Mount Carmel and in the adjoining valley, converging on the town of Haifa. As the riders tore down the mountain-side at full speed, I ran out on the road, in my excitement forgetting the Master's orders that all of us were to keep indoors. Never will I forget those troops as they thundered past, and especially one horseman who descended upon me, lance poised, the fire of battle in his eyes. He missed me by an inch, and I scuttled back to the house with my curiosity definitely assuaged.

The Turks and Germans had raised a barricade on the waterfront, but the Hindus drove straight toward it, their leader falling in the impact. Then, wild with rage at this loss, they cut down everyone in sight, natives as well as soldiers, and they drove their enemies before them through the streets of Haifa and around the bay, continuing past Acca and down the road toward Tyre and Sidon. At evening General King, arriving at Haifa at the head of the British troops, received the keys of the city.

The first words of General King were these: "Is Abbas Effendi safe?" and, the answer being in the affirmative, he was presently conducted to the house of the Master. The general carried with him a little gift which he presented to Abdul Baha. It was a package of sugar, an almost forgotten luxury, sent with the compliments of General Allenby.

That night, the plane of Haifa from end to end glimmered with, the lights of the bivouacking troops. The fighting was over.

The work of readjusting civil conditions began immediately, and the cooperation of the natives was needed; so a request was made of Abdul Baha to recommend, from among his entourage, men of education who could speak English. There were many to come up to the requirements and

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an interview was arranged for. General King met us and conversed very affably; then he made his choice. Abdul Baha was ready to comply on all points, but when it was found that I was included in the selection, he said "This one, you cannot have. I have other work for him to do."

By this time, the news agencies had cabled the announcement that Abdul Baha and his followers were safe and well on Mount Carmel, but this news did not reach the American Bahais until October 4th. "Star of the West", of October 16th, published the following telegram from Mr. William H. Randall:

Just received cable from London saying official cable received there states Master well and protected. Notify friends. Abha greetings.

A short editorial follows:

Allaho Abha!

Momentous changes are taking place in the Holy Land. The doors of communication between Abdul Baha and the outer world are opening. A few days ago the above telegram was received by the Star of the West. The full significance of these events cannot be grasped at this moment; only the future will reveal them. It is likened unto the appearance of the sun after long obscurity.

The dark clouds seem to be scattering.

A tumult of happiness and expectation reverberates in the hearts of the Bahais.

Ya Baha El Abha!

Immediately after the opening of the doors, Abdul Baha instructed me to write a series of letters and post-cards to individual Bahais in the United States, giving snap-shot news of the happenings in Palestine, and quite a number of these were published in "Star of the West", Vol. IX beginning with issue no. 14, November 23rd. One of the communications was addressed to Mr. Alfred Lunt, who was a liberal at heart and a sincere Bahai well loved by the Master, although he at times, and against his own better judgment, became involved with the orthodox. As has already been pointed out, in this letter, I described a quiet afternoon on Mount Carmel and finished with some informal Words of Abdul Baha which I had taken down in my note-book. These words, so fortunately preserved, are one of the jewels of the Master's utterance and constitute an immortal page in Bahai literature:

The darkness of this gloomy night shall pass away.

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Again, the Sun of Reality will dawn from the horizons of the

Have patience-wait, but do not sit idle.

Work while you are waiting.

Smile while you are wearied with monotony.

Be firm while everything around you is being shaken.

Be hopeful while the ugly face of despair grins at you.

Speak aloud while the malevolent forces of the nether-world try to crush your mind.

Be valient and courageous while men all around you are cringing with fear and cowardice.

Do not yield to the overwhelming power of tyranny and despotism.

Serve the cause of democracy and freedom.

Continue your journey to the end.

The bright day is coming.

The nucleus of the new race is forming.

The harbinger of the new ideals of international justice is appearing.

The trees of hope shall be clothed in verdant leaves,

The copper of scorn and derision shall be transmuted into the gold of honor and repute.

The arid desert of ignorance shall be transformed into the luxuriant garden of knowledge.

The threatening clouds shall be dispelled and the stays of faith and charity will shine in the clear conscience of the children of men.

Following the Armistice, streams of communications from all parts of the world began to pour into Haifa. Once more, Abdul Baha was in touch with the Bahais of Persia, India, China, England, France, Germany and other countries where the Cause had taken root, and his relief and gladness knew no bounds. But what of America!

One night, Abdul Baha called me to his room and handed me a package which had just reached him. "Open it," he said. I cut the envelope and drew out four mimeographed manuscripts: (1) "Report of the Bahai Committee of Investigation", (2) "An Open Letter to the Bahais in America" (3) "Firmness", (4) "Protection", (5) A few recent issues of "Star of the West" containing an account of the Tenth Bahai Convention.

While I paged these documents in an effort to grasp their general purport, the Master was watching me narrowly. "Come. Mirza Ahmad," he urged. "Don't keep everything to yourself. Tell me the news."

My heart was palpitating and my eyesight had become blurred; actually, my hands were shaking so much that the papers fell to the ground. Abdul Baha arose, gathered them together very quietly and handed them back to me. Then I made a supreme effort and, without further visible emotion, started to translate aloud the four documents. It took a long time.

For nearly an hour, the Master sat motionless: then he jumped to his feet and began to pace the floor. His face was flushed and he was pushing his turban back from his brow; taking it off, putting it on again, and walking, always walking. If I slowed down, he thundered at me "Go on, go on! I must hear all." So I read to the end and when I stopped and looked up. I saw the tears running down his cheeks.

"What have they done to the Cause!" he was speaking as if to himself. "What have they done to the Cause!" Then he went on, saying that he had been waiting for such a long time to receive news from America and this was the news! Did we have so many believers that we could spare even one; and was the birthday of Baha-O-Llah a fitting occasion for persecuting the innocent children of the All-Merciful? Who had given these people authority to excommunicate? And now they expected commendation and approval. No, he had no commendation to give, and no approval.

Then he went on: Something must be done. Something can be done. Baha-O-Llah will not allow this condition to remain in the Cause. He looked straight at me: "You will go to America. You must dispel these clouds. The time has arrived when you are to render a mighty service."

I gasped, and started to make excuses. This was the one time, within scope of my memory, that I balked at the Master's commands; but he would have none of it. "Baha-O-Llah will support you," he assured me", and I will pray for you. Have no fear. This division amongst the believers must be removed; the two factions must be brought together without delay. You will leave at the earliest possible moment in order to reach America in time for the Convention. This Eleventh Convention shall, God willing be one of reconciliation and unity!"

I left Abdul Baha's presence and went out. Slowly, I dragged my feet up the familiar slope of Carmel. My nerves quivered as if ice-water were being poured over them; my face was burning. Half way up, I stopped and looked at the night, and a million stars descended upon me; then, close at

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[photo of 'Abdu'l-Baha walking on slopes of Mt. Carmel omitted]

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hand I heard the words ""Shoja-at, Mosafar! Shoja-at!" It was the voice of Rahmat-U-Llah, caretaker of the shrine of The Bab, who was standing on the veranda of the Pilgrim house, lighting my way with a flickering candle. "Courage Pilgrim, courage," he repeated as I passed him and entered my room. I stretched myself on the bed. "Courage, pilgrim, courage," I murmured to myself, as I fell asleep.

The next few weeks was a period of intensive training. Almost every day, I followed Abdul Baha on his long walks and when we reached our turning point, I watched him as he sat on a rock facing the Mediterranean Sea, and listened as he outlined the course I was to adopt on my arrival in the United States. Immediately after returning home, I would retire to my room and make copious notes for my guidance in the future. Following the more specific instructions, the Master would conclude along general lines in words such as these: Now the time has come! Out of this Divine College you must go into the world. Purify and sanctify your heart from every desire. I am sending you forth with the Powers of the Kingdom, the Breathe of the Holy Spirit, the Confirmations of the Merciful and the Glad-Tidings of the Supreme Lord. This will constitute your capital. You must be the means of the reconciliation of hearts; you must create love and fellowship amongst the friends. Soar always in the atmosphere of universal concepts. Do not attach yourself to particulars. Do not interfere in local affairs. I will pray for you at every midnight.

Rest assured. I will be with you in your journeys and in your sojourns. You must do your utmost to be present at the Convention. Associate with the people with love and kindness. Gladden the hearts of friends and strangers. Endeavor as far as you can to sadden none. Sorrow is the dust over the mirror; cleanse the mirror and let the light of the sun of happiness reflect therein. Ponder day and night over my words, deeds and life. These must serve you as general and particular examples. If all the people of the world turn their faces from you, and God is with you — you are victorious. Do not engage in fault-finding and backbiting. If anyone comes to you and opens the first chapter of such a book, tell him: O my dear friend, I have not come here to listen to these talks! I have come to call the people to the Kingdom of Abha. I have come to tend assunder the veils of old superstitions and traditions. I have come to call you to love, friendship, unity and the brotherhood of the human race. These stories and this gossip are conducive to the extinction of the fire of the love of God; they are like poisonous winds which, blowing over the flowers and hyacinths of the spirit, wither them; they are like gloomy, black clouds that prevent the shining of the Sun of Reality. Baha-O-Llah has not commissioned us to

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discuss these petty questions and infantile problems. You must be the vivifiers of the world — light-bringers to the inhabitants of the globe.

These daily instructions, given by the Master, were energized by his personality and heightened by his self-oblivion. Sometimes, he utterly forgot that I was the only witness to the rush and tumult of his inspiration and emotion. He was addressing thousands in distant lands — and there I stood a solitary spectator to a divine drama, a very ordinary human being caught in the whirl-pool that ever surrounds the chosen of God.

The words of Abdul Baha made me realize that in the task ahead, I was to rely not only on his support but also on my own mental and spiritual resources. Consequently, I began to write numerous letters and post cards to the American Bahais in which I embodied, in a general yet unmistakable way, the broad instructions given by Abdul Baha. These letters containing news of the Master, and direct and indirect messages from him, were on receipt copied and distributed far and wide. They likewise gave hints of my early return to the United States.

It was clear to me even at that time that the contents of those letters and cards, pouring upon the American Bahais, would disturb the minds of the orthodox and especially those who had voted for the adoption of the Report of the Committee of Investigation. These persons had fully believed in Dr. Bagdadi's promise that Abdul Baha would commend them and approve their Report, and now apparently commendation and approval were not forthcoming. On the contrary, these letters of mine contained implications which boded no good to the anti-liberals.

The letters and post cards were written in long hand and no copies were kept. However, I find the contents of two of the cards published in "Star of the West", Vol. IX, no. 17, January 19, 1919, page 199. In order to show the reader how I started on this campaign of education I will reproduce one of them as an example.

**Haifa, Palestine
December 2, 1918**

"Dear brothers and sisters:

The friends in Colorado are especially remembered by the Beloved, and to them he conveys his noble Abha greetings. He desires them to be the promoters of good-fellowship among the nations of the world and the torch-bearers of unity between the disunited children of men. Like unto the

Rocky Mountains, they must raise their heads above the low plains of human thought. They must be the cause of the descent of the rain of mercy upon

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the dark and barren desert of humanity, suffering the hard hearts to be covered with verdure, blossoms and fruits. Are you able to render this service to the Cause of your Master?

(signed) Ahmad Sohrab"

Letters such as these brought hope to the routed Bahais and discomfort to the reactionaries in high places; and the latter, feeling in their bones that a show-down was at hand, began to strengthen yet further the ramparts of orthodoxy, preparing themselves for the assault.

The stage was set for the impending struggle.

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Chapter X

MY STEEPLE-CHASE

According to army regulations, only government officials could obtain leave from Palestine during the months following the Armistice. I made a series of appeals for a pass, one of them addressed to Major W. Tudor Pole, Deputy Assistant Administrator stationed in Cairo; and when this attempt was unsuccessful I realized that if Major Tudor Pole, who was a Bahai of long standing with a good deal of authority, could not help me, all the others to whom I had written would be unable likewise. So Abdul Baha, took the matter in hand and wrote a personal letter to General Allenby. Shortly afterwards I was called into his room.

"Baha-O-Llah has performed the miracle," the Master said. "Here is your permission. Now, go and pack. You will leave Haifa tomorrow."

So suddenly did it come about: my sanction to go to America — my dismissal from home and all that I held dear!

That night, I assembled my things which were few and of no consequence, and packed them in my bag with the long metal tube which for so long had lain underground and was to me the object of the greatest consequence in all the world. Then I bade farewell to the mountain slope of Carmel and to its canopy of stars.

After breakfasting in the usual manner on tea, bread and cheese, I came down from the Mountain of God and took leave of my friends and associates. Then I sought the presence of the Master.

I was with him for three hours, from eight until eleven, and when I arose to leave, he kissed me on both cheeks, gave me some strings of rock-candy, a handful of gold sovereigns and his tablet — my spiritual passport to America. Then he blessed me and bade me farewell. According to my notes which I recorded at the first opportunity, some of his words were as follows:

"Concentrate all your time in the service of the Cause. Soar ever in the atmosphere of universal concepts. Attach not yourself to particulars. Endeavor, as far as possible, to sadden no heart. I will never forget you. Day and night you are before my sight. Few souls have stayed with me for so long a time. I declare by Baha-O-Llah that always at midnight I shall pray for you, saying: Oh God! Confirm Mirza Ahmad, my son."

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[two photos of Sohrab omitted]

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As I looked into those eyes which mirrored all of life and eternity too, and listened to that heart-stirring voice, I well realized that the separation would be a long one, but how long — that I could not have imagined. On the morning of December 22nd, 1918, I stood before Abdul Baha for the last time on this earth.

The train steamed out of Haifa at eleven thirty. It was full of officers, so Dr. Aflatoon, a Bahai on his way to Bagdad, and I thought fit to tell them a little about the Cause. They seemed interested and we left them at Toul-Karem in a position either to continue investigation or to drop the matter out of their lives.

In Toul-Karem, the dark skinned West Indian soldiers afforded us shelter from the inclement weather and made us feel welcome. They were very receptive to conversation pertaining to the New Testament and themselves had a great deal to contribute. The following afternoon, we boarded a train which was packed with Mohammedan Indian soldiers returning home. The train which was composed of open cars was receptive also, in this case to the torrents that were now pouring from the heavens: but the physical discomfort did not impede discussion, between ourselves and our Muslim fellow-travelers, on the modern aspects of Islam. Arriving at Ludd in the late afternoon we were enabled, through the kindness of some soldiers, to find space in another train bound for Kantara. Here we fell in with a Persian Jew from Jerusalem and passed the time most agreeably in reviewing the prophesies of the Old Testament and computing the time of their fulfillment,

After a long night in cramped quarters, we awoke to find ourselves speeding through untrodden wildernesses of sand, the very wilderness in which Moses and the people of Israel had lived during forty years: and my mind was struck by the change that had been brought in this region since those times. especially in that all of it had been accomplished in the last few years under war conditions. Now, a double-tracked, broad-gauged railroad stretched from Cairo to Toul-Karem, and this was shortly to be extended to Haifa and Acca — a vast engineering feat due to the ability and resourcefulness of the British.

As we began to move about, bidding sleepy good morning to our companions, we became conscious of the fact that this was no ordinary day. Far from it, for the date was December 25th. It was Christmas; it was a holiday, and long before our train reached Kantara we could observe the British soldiers as we passed their camps, already engaged in their various sports and games. In Kantara, the frontier town which actually was but a populous city of tents, our luggage came up for examination.

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A customs house is always a little nerve-racking, but in my case, knowing as I did that it was simply out of the question to carry papers or documents of any kind over the border line, the moment was one of unadulterated fear. The British official went through my things minutely, penetrating deeper and deeper into my capacious bag, and then from the very bottom he drew up the metal tube. "What is this?" he asked, balancing it between his fingers. My heart was in my mouth, so I was not in a position to answer. Everything in me was calling for help: Abdul Baha! Abdul Baha, don't forsake me now! The inspector extracted the parchments and spread out the heavy roll. As I wondered how he could be so deft about it while the tent was rocking. The tent appeared to be caving in on our heads, his as well as mine; but he was speaking again — no he was reading from the first Tablet which lay on top: "Kodah" and again "Khodah, Khodah." He had picked out a word that means God, probably one of the few Persian words that he knew, and was finding it here and there on the page. Then he looked up, obviously pleased with his scholarly attainment: "Your diploma, I suppose." Yes, yes, I nodded as the tent regained its equilibrium and the blessed Britisher passed on down the line. "Thank you, "I called after him and began to gather up my things: then in a lower tone: Thank you, Abdul Baha.

Hurdle number one in my hazardous steeple-chase — goal: America in good time for the Convention; but before I could take even a breath of relief, the next hurdle was pressing in upon me, high and imposing. Just around the corner, the travellers were being separated into two groups: Occidentals, having the privilege of boarding the train for Cairo, and Orientals to be retained in quarantine for six days. Six long days every one of them valuable to me!

When I realized what was happening, I boldly addressed myself to the officer in charge: "Why this discrimination? — and was told that a certain malady was prevalent at that time, to which Orientals were subject. "But I'm not an Oriental," I flashed back, so quickly that I actually spoke without thought. "I am of Aryan descent, just as you are, just as the French and Germans are, and all Europeans." Then, having become familiar with the idea, I concluded forcibly: "Persians are Europeans you know."

The officer eyed me with distaste: "Can you corroborate this statement?"

"You might call up Cairo find speak with Major Tudor Pole of the Intelligence Department," I offered casually. So my friend was called to the telephone on the spot and within my hearing.

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"I never heard of such a thing.," the officer blustered, when he got the connection "A man — name Sohrab, a Persian, mind you, and he says he's European. What's your impression? "Pause — a long one, then: "What! I have to pass him? It's all right? Well, if he's a European, I'm a . . ." he turned and looked me up and clown; then he began to laugh: "Very well! Hurry along, your train is leaving." Hurdle number two!

We preceded on to Cairo through the fertile lands of Egypt which spread themselves around us in smiling detachment from the devastation of war. Arriving at evening, we put up at Eden Palace Hotel, travel-strained and weary; but I could not remain indoors simply to rest. Five years of the quiet life of Haifa had made me hungry for people and action; so I sought the brilliant streets and walked about for hours, a veritable country boy, round eyed and doubtless open-mouthed too.

Dr. Aflatoon and I had many friends in Cairo whom we saw the next day: Mohammad Taki, a pioneer Bahai; Sheikh Mohyeddin, pupil of the great Mirza Abul Fazl and himself a brilliant teacher, and others, all anxious to receive tidings of Abdul Baha. We lunched at a Persian restaurant and dined with a Persian family, and talked much, both in groups and tête-a-tête; but the next morning I went to work seriously. First, I visited Major Tudor Pole, who gave me a hearty welcome and promised to help me through the maze of officialdom in acquiring a passport; and later I called on the Persian Consul General for the same purpose. I had my picture taken, so as to be in readiness in case the coveted passport were granted suddenly; conferred with editors in newspaper offices and dropped in at the shipping agencies. This procedure, with the exception of the photo-taking, was repeated regularly for weeks. On January 12th., I

received a letter from Shoghi Effendi which informed me that Abdul Baha had sent the following cablegram to Mr. Roy C. Wilhelm: "Ahmad Sohrab will soon reach New York;" so, as time was dragging on and help from my side of the water not forthcoming, I decided to appeal to Mr. Wilhelm in New York: "Request State Department send permission Consulate immediately, waiting." I cabled a similar message to Mr. Joseph Hannen in Washington.

Waiting indeed! How long would this waiting last, and the Master also was counting the days. January had brought me no luck. We now were in February. An urgent Tablet from Abdul Baha reached me on the 7th.

Verily, I have received the letter which thou hast forwarded care of Shoghi Effendi and have become acquainted with its contents. In regard to thy journey to America, it is incumbent on thee to make the utmost haste and if possible to get a direct passage from Egypt to the United States. Thy

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presence in America is an absolute necessity. Hasten, hasten to fulfill this obligation and do meet Mrs. Parsons.

It is incumbent upon thee to make the utmost exertion to leave now at once for America, to display the greatest effort to unite the friends around the Word and dispel the clouds of sorrow and misery.

Upon thee be greeting and praise!

(signed) Abdul Baha Abbas

"It is incumbent upon thee to make the utmost exertion." What might be done that I had not thought of as yet? I racked my brains, but could bring up no original, thought, so, after making the daily rounds of Consulate and shipping agencies, I resigned myself as usual to spending the time with my friends.

Here in Cairo. I had run across one of my fellow-students at the University of Beirut, Alphonse Toniatti by name. Half Italian, half Arab, he was an amusing personality, hiding a warm heart with small success behind a casual and even cynical attitude. He was one of the many with whom I could pass agreeable hours, but my mind was set in one direction — America — and I could not content myself for even a little while, with less.

The American Consulate was an imposing building into which I had never penetrated further than the outer office, which was always crowded. One morning, as I wedged my way in, the secretary greeted me with unusual affability. "We have good news for you. Come this way." I was led into a large, luxurious room which was occupied by the Consul and a tall, well dressed American traveller. The Consul looked up: "Your permit has arrived, though how you did it I can't imagine. You must have some good friends in Washington."

Here the American began to indulge in a series of explosions. "This is preposterous! It's a crime! It's a travesty on our country and all that it stands for! A permit for this Oriental — when I have been hanging around your office for weeks! What has he got that I haven't?"

What, indeed! Hurdle number three!

There was nothing now to keep me in Cairo, so I went that night to Port Said where I stayed in the apartment of Mirza Ahmad Yazdi, Persian Consul and son-in-law of Abdul Baha. It was home to me in a way, for I had lived there and worked in Ahmad Yazdi's store years before when I was a boy; and I immediately fell in with the old routine, spending regular hours behind the counter. However, my first daily duty consisted of visits to the shipping agencies, of which there were many; in fact all the great

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lines have offices in Port Said, and these were always crowded with frantic persons waiting for steamers that apparently did not exist. Actually, none had as yet sailed for America. "Yes, you can put your name down if you wish," they told me. "There are four hundred ahead of you."

Feeling that I must give an account of myself to the Master. I sent him a cable stating that my passport was in order but that there were no ships. Almost immediately the answer returned: "The ship is coming."

On a certain morning as I was working in the store, one of the assistants ran in to inform me that a Japanese freighter was sailing into port on its way to America. I dropped my work and ran to the Japanese shipping bureau: Could I get passage?

"Impossible," was the answer. "We carry only cargoes. Passengers not allowed."

"But I will pay," I insisted. "Anything! I will bring my own food, sleep on the deck."

"Sorry. Against the rules."

I hastened to the apartment of Ahmad Yazdi, my heart beating with determination, and found among my effects an old passport which I had used in the days when I was secretary at the Persian Legation in Washington. I returned to the agency and without a word, laid the open passport on the desk. The clerk examined it and raised his eyebrows: "Official business?"

"Yes," I answered.

"Well, in that case-all right,"

I flew home, picked up my things, bade farewell to Ahmad Yazdi and was on the wharf in no time. "Yeboshi Maru," the argosy of my desire, lay alongside. I passed up the gang-plank and placed my two bags on the deck. "This way, please," an officer addressed me politely. "You are to have the doctor's cabin."

"But the doctor," I objected. "Where will he sleep?"

"He will bunk with another officer. Come please. It is all right."

And so, taking hurdle number four with a high heart, I landed on the broad bosom of the Mediterranean and went into the home-stretch.

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Chapter XI

THE TUBE AND THE BOOK

Yeboshi Maru was a primitive little craft, making two hundred miles per twenty-four hours. Its officers and crew were friendly, and there was much information to be acquired on both sides. I made no secret of the Cause and what it stood for, as a program for establishing World Peace; while my hosts brought me up to date on current news, for I was totally unacquainted with the developments that had brought about session of hostilities. There also was the Japanese language to be dabbled with, and the immediate necessity for learning to eat with chopsticks. It was a long passage of thirty-eight days, during which we were the recipients of every attention from the weather.

Sometimes, while the little boat was laboring on its way, the deck submerged by swirling, foaming cascades of water, it seemed to me, as it did to Aeneas in the long ago, that the pounding torrents were driving us to the very bottom of the sea, where the yawning waves would uncover unknown lands upon which their surges were breaking. Yet through it all, I knew that we would reach our destination. Abdul Baha had so promised, and that was enough for me.

Living in a walnut shell surrounded by the expanses of the universe, and to all intents and purposes alone, was a new experience in which I sought to find myself. For years, I had been in the presence of Abdul Baha, as a fish swimming in the translucent lake of his dreams and hopes; or as a lump of warm wax upon which the images of his ideals had been printed. Now I was thrown on my own resources and could find out what the me within me really was. I could be an individual. So I paced the deck for hours; stood at the rail, delving into the horizons — and what did I find? Abdul Baha was there. He had not followed me, he was not, at long range exerting his influence upon me; he simply was of me and in me. Now at a distance, I knew that I could never again say: These thoughts are glorious and beautiful, but they are not really mine.

As I proceeded with my meditations, day by day and night by night, a great joy began to take hold of me and I realized, as I never had realized before, that the disciple must become identified with the teachings of the Master. Unless he does so, he is merely a parrot repeating words that he does not understand: or a plastic disk recording a glorious song.

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[photo of Dr. J. Uyeda, ships doctor with Sohrab; another view from the ship, both omitted]

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When, in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, this truth was unveiled before my soul, I became a new being, endowed with assurance coming from myself. The light that Abdul Baha had shed across my path was my light; the Cause that he had endowed me with, was my Cause. His divine Springtime had come to stay in the garden of my own being.

These excursions into the abstract did not divert my mind from the duty in hand. I was the guardian of a treasure, consisting of the metal Tube which contained the Divine Plan and, even as valuable (for the Divine Plan was recorded in my mind word for word), a Note Book in which were set clown the dates in which the Tablets had been revealed, together with the places and circumstances connected with them; the Master's instructions regarding each and every one, and his supplementary talks, some of which were as important as the Tablets themselves. These two objects, the Tube and the Book, were to me the greatest treasure between earth and heaven; and no anxious duenna, tending royal princes, could have had a more acute sense of responsibility than was mine. The Tube lay under my pillow, a magnet that drew me back to the cabin every few hours; but the Book was with me always, in my coat pocket by day and along side of the Tube by night. Sometimes, I would wake out of my dreams, thinking that the long fingers of Neptune had closed about one or the other of my darlings and swept it out to sea. After such dreams I

would take firm hold of them both and, after the beating of my heart had subsided, fall asleep again, exhausted and happy.

As Yeboshi Maru sailed into American waters, I began to concentrate on my coming encounter with Bahai officialdom. What were my assets? The Plan itself, of course-tangible evidence of my mission. I carried besides Abdul Baha's written permit to return to the United States a copy of which had sometime previously been sent to Mr. Joseph Hannen, in Washington. I learned afterward that Mr. Hannen had forwarded a copy of this communication to "Star of the West" with his note which read as follows:

I am in receipt of a letter from Shoghi Effendi in which he quotes the Tablet which Mirza Ahmad Sohrab will bring with him to America, the original being in the Master's hand. I think it would be well to publish this in the Star as soon as possible, so that all may know of his coming with permission, as I have heard this question raised.

Star of the West — Vol. IX No. 17, Jan. 1919

A third asset which I valued greatly was my deep friendships with Bahais all over the country. I had lived in America before the World War

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and had taken part in all the activities of the Cause. Also for more than five years, I had served as secretary to the Persian Minister in Washington during which time I had made of the legation a headquarters for the distribution of Bahai information. Finally, I had made extensive preparations for Abdul Baha's visit to this continent in 1912, and had accompanied him throughout his travels in the United States and Canada. My happy memories of association in this country were limitless, giving me much confidence; but I had liabilities too.

I was born of a liberal family and taught never to connive with any brand of orthodoxy, were it Mohammedan, Christian or Bahai. I was brought up in the environment of Abdul Baha, and the flame of liberalism within me was fanned at the very altar of his heart. I believe that he kept me with him for so long a time because of this characteristic. At the same time, this liberalism had repeatedly brought me into sharp conflict with many American Bahais. Because I could not agree with some of their interpretations of the Cause, which seemed to me both antediluvian and infantile, they had come to look upon me as a menace. Consequently, in order to discredit me in the sight of Abdul Baha and my fellow Bahais, they had fabricated numerous stories about me which had been spread far and wide. Actually, for the preservation of the orthodoxy they had appended to the Cause, their zeal knew no bounds. I will relate one instance of this, among many.

During the Master's visit to Chicago, he stopped with a certain Bahai lady, and she later on gathered her friends about her and confided to them a secret. The secret was that Abdul Baha had on an occasion summoned her to his room and, through an interpreter, had warned her as follows: "Do not trust Ahmad Sohrab."

After my return to Palestine with the Master, this confidence, treated as most confidences are and doubtless as many are intended to be, was extensively circulated. In fact, the lady herself carried the news to the Assemblies throughout the land. Thus it was not long before every Bahai had received the message, still transmitted with bated breath, with the result that the phrase: "Do not trust Ahmad Sohrab" became a pass-word in the Bahai underground.

Naturally the story reached Haifa, creating a situation that was bizarre to any the least. There was I, opening and translating to the Master a flood of letters, addressed to him in the care of various members of his family, which began something like this: "Mrs. of Chicago says that you told her in secret 'Do not trust Ahmad Sohrab'. So, as Ahmad Sohrab is

[illegible]

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your secretary, I am mailing this care of" Then came listings of my alleged delinquencies, rascalities and villainies which would have stood up very well in the police courts of Chicago itself; while of course, "the snake in the grass" and "the wolf in sheep's clothing" figured prominently in these character studies, forwarded to the Holy Land by the sons and daughters of light in America.

"Well, well, Mirza Ahmad" the Master would say. "you are indeed a clever man. Such a record of crime, piled up under my very eyes, while I was totally unaware of what was going on! Possibly. you have a double!"

He would laugh, yes, but presently he would change his tone. "These are your brothers and sisters — ignorant, deceived and attentive to every whisper; yet believers in the Cause. Come, sharpen your pencil. We are going to drown them in an ocean of love."

Such memories were brought to mind in the stocktaking of my liabilities; but the time for dwelling on the past had come to an end. Yeboshi Maru was nearing port and I had to express my thanks to the crew for the comradeship which had been extended to me. Then dinner at the Captain's side, at which he complimented me at my proficient use of chopsticks, and a hard and fast engagement made with a number of the officers (which included the generous doctor who had lent me his cabin) to meet them some days later on the train to Washington. I promised them and myself that we would have a good time together in the nation's capital and that a fraction of my deep obligation would be repaid,

Next morning I was up early, still pacing the familiar deck but with a new spring to my stride. The Statue of Liberty was rising out of the mist; the dawn was breaking on Manhattan; I had reached New York.

Scarcely glancing at my two small valises, the Inspector of the United States Immigration Service handed me a piece of paper bearing the word "Passed" and I descended the gang plank. I looked for customs officers, but none were in sight; so I left the wharf and took a taxi to a small hotel in the downtown district, from where I called Washington on the telephone asking to speak to Mr. Joseph Hannen.

Mr. Hannen was taken off his feet when he heard my voice, and his questions came over the wire like shots out of a gattling gun. I answered few of them for I was intent on receiving news myself; and after a short conversation, proceeded to ring up a succession of Bahais in New York. Soon, the news of my arrival began to spread and I did not have to make

any more calls. For the rest of the day, the line was kept busy, while the hotel lobby as well as my room filled up with eager excited friends, all of whom were firstly anxious to hear about Abdul Baha and secondly concerned with imparting details regarding the harrowing condition of the Cause in the United States.

I well remember a visit which I paid a day or so later to Mr. Mountford Mills in his apartment on upper Broadway. Mr. Mills, a man of distinction and accomplishment, was one of the very valuable Bahais of those early days. He gave me a graphic account of the situation in the Cause and took no pains to hide his disillusionment and grief. It was clear that he considered the orthodox element to be in full power and on the ascendent, and although I injected into the conversation some of my optimism and enthusiasm, I felt that I had not been able to lessen his discouragement. I left him, asserting that a concerted effort against the forces of dogmatism would be made and that I had no doubts concerning the outcome.

The Feast of Nau-Rouz (Persian New Year — March 21st) was the occasion of my first public address. The Bahai community arrived in full force; the majority settling in their places with the light of hope in their eyes, while a few neophytes of the newly established system watched the proceedings with furtive attention. My talk, which I thereafter repeated in several cities, with few changes, ended along this line:

"These are the days of Armistice; it is an era of adjustment. The nations are forming a Covenant of Reconciliation. The sword is sheathed and the hatchet is buried. Let us pocket our affronts, gather around the camp-fire and smoke the calumet of peace. Unresentful and unavenged, let us hold out the olive branch to friend and stranger alike. As Bahais, we have the chance to set this new example to the distracted inhabitants of the world."

The next morning I began to receive numerous telegrams, some of them from members of the National Executive Board. I will quote a single one from Boston coming from Mr. Alfred Lunt under whose chairmanship the "Report of the Committee of Investigation" had been ratified. Mr. Lunt's message read:

"Loving welcome, yearning to consult with you. Great good can be done if possible for you visit Boston now."

My answer in part was as follows:

"Important meet members Board. Telephoned Hannen inform Remey

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return Washington for consultation. If you come to Washington soon, you will be fully repaid."

My short sojourn in New York was crowded with activity, and on the final day, I made calls and delivered talks from morning till night. My last engagement was at "Stepping Stones" in the Bowery, a unique establishment presided over by the very genial and original Urban Ledoux, better known in the newspaper world as Mr. Zero. Here, hundreds of derelicts of all kinds were fed without charge or at a nominal cost, while their host, who gave his life and all his money to this work, drew no line between himself and the most wretched of his visitors. Instead, he was a comrade to all, a confident and guide; and the men loved him and accepted his word in all things.

This group later on chose to designate itself as the "Old Bucks and Lame Ducks," and through its various doings and antics gained much notoriety; but at the time of my visit, it consisted simply of Mr. Zero's boys who were eager to hear of the great being whom their benefactor called "Master."

It was long past midnight when I returned to my room in the hotel, and I was to be up early to meet the officers of Yeboshi Maru on the train to Washington. I threw myself on the bed and immediately went to sleep.

On waking, I hurriedly gathered up my things and stuffed them into the bag. I drew the Tube from its accustomed resting place and laid it on top. Everything ready, I could leave. Only the Book. I again felt under the pillow, but could not find it. It must be there; it always was! No! Maybe, it had slipped under the covers! I tore them off. Under the mattress! Nothing! My heart began to thump; then I thought: I had been so tired when I went to bed, I had forgotten to take it out of my pocket. I felt my coat; I pulled all my pockets inside out — empty. Then I sat down, while a burning wave spread over me from head to toe. The Book of the Divine Plan was gone!

A few moments passed while the heat in my body slowly turned to cold — painful transformation from life into death; but I still could think. Very dispassionately, I summed up the situation: The Book was

missing and my train to Washington about to leave. Would I stay; would I go? On the one hand there was the apple of my eye, my first responsibility, my duty to the Master; on the other, a casual connection with persons who were nothing to me, and my word given. For the fraction of it minute I weighed the two obligations; then I decided: I would keep my appointment with my Japanese benefactors.

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What came next? I thought of Mr. Roy C. Wilhelm, a whole-sale coffee merchant who carried on a successful business with plenty of Bahai work on the side; or, to be more exact, I should mention the Bahai work first with the business as a supplementary issue. Now, Mr. Wilhelm was blessed with a secretary, Nellie Lloyd by name, an assistant whom any executive might covet-both of them would come to the rescue. I could count on that. I crossed the room and spoke to Mr. Wilhelm on the telephone:

A book had been lost, very valuable to me. Would Nellie take a cab find call at all the places I had visited yesterday, and at the "Lost and Found" departments of the taxi, subway and surface car bureaus? Would she insert advertisements in the afternoon newspapers, offering a reward - a thousand dollars if necessary. Would Mr. Wilhelm keep me posted? I was on my way to Washington. I was leaving the matter in his hands.

The supreme sacrifice having been made for my Japanese acquaintance, I should have lived up to it by making of myself a fairly agreeable travelling companion, as I think I had been in the past; but I found that I could not even make an attempt at conversation, much less, show a trace of good humor. The trip was long and depressing and it was a relief to all of us when we parted at the station in Washington. Mr. Hannen and Mr. Gregory who were awaiting me, conducted me to a cab. They must have wondered at the dull-eyed, pallid-faced messenger from the Holy Land whom they had been looking forward to greet, but they were too polite to question me. At the house of Mr. Hannen, the door was opened by his mother. I brushed by, unable to respond to her affable welcome, "is there a telegram for me?" "Why, yes," she answered, "I have one here. It just came." I tore open the envelope, read the message and with a shout threw the paper into the air. Then I grabbed the bewildered lady, carried her bodily into the drawing room and proceeded to shower her with kisses. A strange messenger from the Holy Land! Mr. Hannen and Mr. Gregory looked at each other anxiously, then Mr. Hannen picked up the telegram from the floor and read:

"Ahmed Sohrab

**C/o Joseph Hannen
1252 — 8th Street, N W
Washington**

Detective Nellie Lloyd has found book. Sending registered today.

(signed) R. C. Wilhelm Co."

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This is a fast Day Telegram unless otherwise indicated by signal after the number of words—"N. L." (Night Lettergram) or "N. T." (Night Telegram)

21 NYPE 4 9

NY NEW YORK MAR 22

AL INAD SOVIAT

CARE JOS HANNEN 1252 8TH ST NW WASHN

DETECTIVE NELLIE LLOYD HAS FOUND BOOK SENDING REGISTERED TODAY

R C WILHELM CO

1116A

Telegram from Roy Wilhelm.

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As I afterward learned, the Book had been found at Mr. Zero's "Stepping "Stones" in the Bowery; but for the moment, it did not matter where or how. It certainly did not matter if my friends thought me crazy, or if I actually were. I knew only that the Book was safe; that life could go on, and that the worst day in all my experience was over.

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Chapter XI I

PREPARATIONS FOR THE CONVENTION

Now that I was actually in America with my treasures in my possession, the campaign for reconciliation had to start without delay. In a letter to Shoghi Effendi dated March 25th, I wrote: "I have called a meeting of a number of prominent believers of New York, Boston and Chicago, as well as a few here in Washington, to meet with me that they may have a clearer vision of the Master's hopes."

The meeting was scheduled for the evening of March 26th at the house of Mrs. Agnes Parsons. Mr. Mills and Mr. Wilhelm of New York accepted the invitation, as did Mr. Randall, Mr. Lunt and Mr. Ober of Boston; likewise, Mrs. Maxwell of Canada, and Mr. Gregory and Mr. Hannen of Washington. There remained Mrs. Corinne True and Dr. Zia Bagdadi of Chicago, but try as I would by telegraph and telephone, I could not alter their decision to be absent. Mr. Charles Mason Remey, chairman of the Bahai Committee of Investigation, who was in South Carolina, also declined. So stood the group which made up the meeting, with possibly a few others whom I do not remember.

To these outstanding Bahais thus hastily gathered together, I presented the Master's plan, outlining the contents of the Tablets to the Northeastern, Southern, Central and Western States; those to Canada, and the four final Tablets addressed in conjunction to the Bahais of the United States and Canada

— the Magna Carta of the New Humanity. Then I brought out the metal tube, drew forth the fourteen Tablets and unrolled them to public view for the first time.

The effect made by the vast panorama of ideas was instantaneous. All were swept off their feet. Silently and with utter humility, they touched the parchments, examined the elegance of script and illumination, the while trying to grasp the portent of the stupendous plan that had so suddenly been revealed to them. Mr. Randall pressed my hands with tears in his eyes, saying: "My God, and all these years we thought that we were serving the Cause! What have we done! How do we dare call ourselves Bahais?" Mr. Lunt picked up the telephone and spoke, right then and there, to Mrs. True in Chicago: She and Dr. Bagdadi had to come to Washington right away to take part in a most important conference, and he would not take no for

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an answer — he would not consider no! But no, it turned out to be, just the same. Then he wrote out a telegram to Mr. Remey, as follows:

"New and epoch-making plans and authentic instructions, Master, for complete organization, Convention, and great work of future. Call for new solidarity in Cause and for immediate cooperation. Your temporary return Washington for conference Ahmad and friends urgently needed. Responsibility to make this the great Convention desired by Master rests upon each one."

I do not know who signed the above telegram, but I have the copy in my possession as it was written by Mr Lunt and corrected on the spot.

The hastily improvised committee meeting was conducted in a spirit of harmony and happiness; the past was forgotten, while these lending personalities of two camps applied themselves to the task at hand — preparations for the Convention. It was thought advisable to hold it in New York.

This issue set the opposition into immediate motion. Mrs. True, Dr. Bagdadi and Mr. Remey were determined to hold the Convention in Chicago where the anti-violation forces were firmly entrenched. This was exactly what Abdul Baha did not wish, and he had told me so explicitly. Although I was not at liberty to divulge his views on particular matters. I had to bring them about through other means.

In order to be in a position where I could meet without restraint the opposing groups, I rented a small apartment in Washington. Here every day, from two to five o'clock, I kept myself free to receive whoever wanted to call on me; and many came. It was quite an uphill work, and much tact was needed to prevent clashes when three or four were in the room together; but I kept in mind the Master's command that the two factions were to be united in love before the Convention, and did my utmost to promote a spirit of tolerance and good humor. I took part in many meetings, besides; did some visiting on my own part, and little by little became conscious of the fact that the atmosphere was beginning to lighten.

Meanwhile, I was deeply engaged in translating the fourteen Tablets into English, together with the explanatory notes and the instructions so contained in my note book. These were arranged in sections, to be used consecutively at the coming Convention on April 26th, and also to be printed in book form for distribution at that time. As these sections were completed one by one, I turned them over to Mr. Hannen to be typed. Thus, we worked together at top speed, many a night until 5 A.M. and completed our task on April 15th when we gave the material to the printer. I did not know any

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[photo of National spiritual Assembly of 1935-1936 omitted]

one in those days who could have assisted me as "Brother Joseph did — so much efficiency, enthusiasm and devotion; nor do I know many now, after twenty-six years.

This task completed, I took a flying trip to Boston where I stopped with Mr. and Mrs. William Randall. Under their benevolent care, I came in contact with small groups and individuals, and together we spoke of the true aims of the Cause. Mr. Randall, a man of much wealth who had given his all to the Cause in money and time, sat at these meetings, his face shining like the sun; and, under his warm sponsorship, we saw the traces of suspicion becoming less apparent, and felt the vapors of misunderstanding drifting away. Truly, the spirit of Reconciliation was on the march!

[photo of William Randall omitted]

The preparations for the Convention were now in full swing and the Bahais were working in complete cooperation with one another. The place set was New York and the time was drawing close. On April 22nd, I took the midnight train from Boston and installed myself in the Hotel McAlpin at Sixth Avenue and 34th Street, where the Eleventh Bahai Convention was to be held.

The Convention had before it two definite objects:

1. To cancel in an unofficial and natural way the Report of the Bahai Committee of Investigation, adopted at the Tenth Convention in Chicago,

and to remove from the hearts of the members all ideas of limitation and exclusion.

2. To inaugurate a universal campaign for the promotion of the teachings of Baha-O-Llah, and to set before the world a new standard of international relationship, based on all-inclusive fraternity, comradeship and self sacrifice.

From that March morning in Bahjee when Abdul Baha had dictated to me the first Tablet in the mighty series of the Divine Plan, through February of the following year, when in Haifa, he closed with the last Tablet, and on to the time when his followers were to gather at the Convention to receive the instructions thus set forth, the one concern of the Master was to awaken the Bahais to their responsibility and prepare them for a field of service no vast, that it cannot be likened to any task imposed by the initiators of the religions of the past. Shall we use other words, fewer and more concise: Abdul Baha gave us the world!

Preparations for the Convention were proceeding apace; every detail had to be worked out in conference. Committees had been appointed, such as publicity, music, decoration, finance, all of which to a large extent were working under the personal supervision of Mrs. Maxwell. This beautiful, delicate and altogether charming personality was able to combine a mystic fervor with unusual practical ability. From the time of my arrival in Washington, when a small group had united in purpose, I had been in constant communication with her by telegraph, telephone and through the mail. She wrote: **"We are all one in heart and spirit, and united in the most glorious service that has ever been offered to any people . . . Sutherland (Mr. Maxwell) has certainly been inspired regarding the frames for the Tablets. They are to be in turquoise and gold . . ."**

In regard to publicity, she continued:

Salita Salano is not a Bahai consciously, but she loves Abdul Baha, which is the kernel of the whole matter; and the proof of this is that she is willing to do things for him. She is willing to undertake all the press work in New York and in any other papers that she can reach during a period of twelve days, if we will pay her one hundred dollars. Any other press agent would charge from three to four hundred. . . . This arrangement will not preclude the work that Horace Holley can do in his own line or any big pull that Zoraya Chamberlain may have with the Associated Press . . . Berthelin Osgood has charge of one album of photographs of the Beloved to be prepared for exhibition at the Convention, and Edith Inglis of another.

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Marjorie Morton is going to cut in two a most gorgeous piece of blue velvet she has to make curtains for the unveiling of the most Holy Tablets. She has also offered a contribution of one hundred dollars, and I wish to give a similar one; for I feel that this is no time to hold back either spiritually, bodily or financially, lest we be carried out dead, like Annanias.

So, everybody was working, everybody was happy, matters were preceeding well in New York; and in regard to the Bahais throughout the country, I personally had mailed two letters to everyone. These have been incorporated in "Star of the West" vol. X, no. 2, pages 21, 22, 23. Following are some extracts from these letters.

Dear brothers and sisters in the Cause:

It is indeed a great joy to be back in America and feel the warmth and heat of the love of Abdul Baha in the hearts of the friends I had brought for you his boundless love and greeting . . . his earnestness and enthusiasm to serve the Cause and promote love and unity amongst the friends. Aside from these ideal gifts, I have carried with me from his presence some most wonderful, world-wide, heavenly instructions; the unfoldment of which will give the vision of the future humanity, perfected and beautified . . .

From every standpoint, the coming Bahai gathering will be unique the history of the movement . . . Let us come to the Convention with nothing but love in our hearts, and with nothing but the light of service on our faces, and with nothing but humility and submission at the Threshold of Baha-O-Llah . . .

The whole world, now weary with war and bloodshed, must receive great spiritual blessing from the Bahai movement, and now is the time for us to show and demonstrate whether we can rise to the heights of this golden opportunity; whether we can serve our fellow men unitedly and with one accord; whether we can forget the past and, grasping the imperial sceptre of light, walk in the pathway of the Kingdom of Abha and raise a great acclamation of rejoicing in the hearts of the people of the earth.

Hoping that we will all meet in that sacred Convention, receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit and go forth into the world with a new power, a new vision, a new strength, and dedicate anew at the Convention, our service to the world of humanity through the divine teachings of the Center of the Covenant.

**Your sincere brother in the Cause
Ahmad.**

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[photo of Miss May Bowles, prior to her marriage to Wm. Sutherland, omitted]

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The official invitation, which is to be found in "Star of the West." Vol. X no. 2, pages 20-21, reads in part as follows:

**Eleventh Bahai Convention and Congress
To be held in New York City, April 26th to April 30th.**

Letter sent forth by Bahai Temple Unity — April 9, 1919.

Dear friend in the love of the Most Glorious.

The Eleventh Bahai Convention and Congress will be held at the Hotel McAlpin . . . This attendance should not be limited to delegates and alternates, but should include everyone who is attracted to the universality of the divine teachings. The doors are flung open to the lovers of Truth everywhere.... To a degree never before known, these gatherings are being planned and carried forward under the direct guidance of Abdul Baha. In a more wonderful sense than ever before realized, it is the Convention of Abdul Baha. The program for the Convention and Congress will revolve around these great messages which will be brought forward in nine presentations.

The writers of this letter unquestionably felt the guidance of Abdul Baha: his spirit had re-entered their hearts, and the misunderstanding of past years was melting away. The invitation ends thus:

In the name of Abdul Baha, we bid you welcome, all ye who are thirsty, all ye who are hungry, all ye who are confused, all ye who are longing, all ye who are hopeless, for He has come. The doors are open, the call is raised, the sacrificing hearts are yearning for servitude. Will ye come?

In the love of the Spirit

Convention and Congress Committee of the Executive Board

by Harlan Foster Ober, Secretary.

The headquarters of the publicity, and of other committees, installed in the Hotel McAlpin were now beehives of feverish activity. Releases had been sent out to the press, and advance notices began to appear in the metropolitan newspapers. The delegates from North, South, East and West were arriving hourly; photographers clamored for pictures of the leading Bahai personalities. I was a much interviewed and photographed man, and some press pictures of myself in Oriental robes, looking I admit more like an Arab bandit than a dignified emissary of Abdul Baha, caused a measure of anxiety in the ranks of my co-workers; but this concern was swept away by the rolling waves of a spiritual revolution. Enthusiasm was mounting;

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excitement, happiness swelled and rocketed; affection shone in all eyes. Abdul Baha's banquet table of Reconciliation was spread, and on April 26th at eight o'clock in the evening, the doors of the Eleventh Bahai Convention were flung open.

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Chapter XIII

THE CONVENTION OF RECONCILIATION

The Convention was conducted under highly favorable circumstances. Bahais of all colors, figuratively speaking, were there in full force; the friends of the Cause from years back had assembled expectantly, while public interest was demonstrated to such an extent that, as the sessions succeeded each other, people thought themselves fortunate to gain standing-room, as others milled through the corridors unable to get even a glimpse of the beautifully decorated Convention Hall.

In nine successive afternoons and evenings, I delivered an address and presented one by one the great Tablets which were concealed behind folds of silken curtains. These were drawn aside at the proper moment by young girls dressed in white, to the accompaniment of music, while lighting effects designed and executed by Miss Beatrice Irwin added to the imposing effect.

I cannot convey an idea of the impression made on the audience by the Tablets of the Master. The people sat spell-bound, faces glowing and eyes brimming, and after the meeting they walked about in semi-trance, rapturously recalling what had taken place that day and in hushed anticipation of that which the morrow would bring. The spirit of service, awakened by the clarion call of Abdul Baha, pounded in the hearts of all. Women stripped off their jewels as an offering, men emptied their pockets and, as far as could be judged by appearances, the entire meeting dedicated itself then and there to the propagation of the Bahai principles throughout the world. At the close of the sessions, the following cablegram was dispatched by the Teaching Committee to Abul Baha:

Convention united all hearts, all differences removed. Convention appointed teaching committee, nineteen members, to send teachers. Teachers already selected start immediately. This committee unanimously begs Beloved permit Abroad Sohrab by cable travel and teach United States and Canada. His expenses already provided.

(signed) Randall, Ober, Mills.

A cable from Abdul Baha in response to the above arrived Shortly:

Appointment of committee conducive to joy. Abroad Sohrab permitted to travel throughout states. Let him inform us from Washington.

(signed) Abbas.

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[photo of Joesph H. Hannen omitted]

The Convention wound up with the distribution of a book of 82 pages entitled "The Unveiling of the Divine Plan," which contained the translation of the fourteen Tablets together with the incomparable talks of the Master as recorded in my note-book. The edition of 2,000 went in no time and a second one of 5,000 was duly ordered. A detailed official report later put out constitutes a record of the proceedings. We have also a panoramic photograph taken on the steps of the Post Office, just across the street from the Hotel McAlpin, which serves as a graphic exhibit.

In conjunction with the Convention, a banquet was held in the hotel a few days earlier which in many ways was as inspiring as the Convention itself. The guests included many personalities of note in New York who gave outstanding talks. Rev. Dr. Percy Stickney Grant, Rector of the Church of the Ascension on lower Fifth Avenue, will always have a niche of his own in Bahai annals, because of the fact that he was the first minister in this country to invite Abdul Baha to give an address from his pulpit. Dr. Grant spoke in a beautiful and poetic manner, saying that introspection and communion in a garden marked the beginnings of the Bahai Cause. It became the religion of a prison. Now it must go forth into the practical affairs of men and rear the structure of the divine civilization.

Mr. Topakyan, Persian Consul General in New York, spoke of the deep feeling which every true man and woman experiences in honoring Abdul Baha, who has devoted his life to the enlightenment of his fellow men. Dr. William Norman Guthrie, of St. Marks in-the-Bowerie, pointed out that even as Christianity had brought a new power, a new passion, a new perspective which gave life to the ideal thoughts of the past, So the Bahai movement is bringing a new power to the great social program, and unity and fusion to the many splendid individual thoughts of past and present. Khalil Gibran, Syrian poet and artist, spoke of the appearance of the Prophet, the seer, who comes from time to time in history to string again the heavenly instrument, and Mr. Alfred Martin of the Ethical Culture Society of New York summed up the value of the Cause in the following succinct words:

I am drawn to this movement because it is not a sect, but it fellowship. While the vast Christian church is but a sect, the vaster Buddhist church is but a sect, the little Bahai movement is no sect at all, but a fellowship; because it lives not for a sectarian end, but rather for the purpose of serving as a leaven through which the world shall be helped to live up to the level of its own highest and noblest ideals. May I express my very fervent hope that you of the Bahai movement will remain true to your present distrust of organization.

ای حواریین بهسا، الله روحی لکم افعلوا نفس بیکم موعود در کتاب
 نفوس برت بخود تغییر گشته یعنی خود آسمانی و مقصود از جنود آسمانی
 نفوسی هستند که بجای از عالم برتریت بشیخ و منتقب نفوس مکتوبه
 و پاک آسمانی گشته اند این نفوس الله شمس حقیقت اند
 که آفتابی را روشن نمایند و هر یکش صوری در دست و نفع و حیات
 بر آفتابی میدهند از صفات برتریت و عالم طبیعت نجات یافته
 متعلق با خلاق الهی گردند و بجنب نجات دهانی شوند مانند حواریین
 مسیح که ملواند مسیح شوند این نفوس نیز ملواند حضرت بهسا، اند گردند
 یعنی محبت بهسا، الله جهان ستوی بر اعضا و اجزاء دار کائنات آنها گردد
 بگر عالم برتریت را حکم نماید .

این نفوس جنود الهی هستند و فاتح شرق و غرب اگر نفوس از
 این نفوس توجیه بجتنی نماید و ذلالت بملکوت الهی کند جمیع قوای معنویه و
 قائمه است بر تافته معنویه و ظهور او گردد و در سلطنته و سلطنته

A page from the book of "The Divine Plan" in Persian script as copied by
 Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, beginning : "O ye apostles of Baha-O-Llah".

"To the believers of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful of the Bahai
 Assemblies in the United States of America and Canada!
 Upon them be Baha'o'llah El Abha!

He is God!

"O ye apostles of Baha'o'llah - May my life be a ransom to you!

"The blessed Person of the Promised One is interpreted in the Holy Book as the Lord of Hosts, i. e., the heavenly armies: By heavenly armies those souls are intended who are entirely freed from the human world, transformed into celestial spirits and have become divine angels. Such souls are the rays of the Sun of Reality who will illumine all the continents. Each one is holding in his hand a trumpet, blowing the Breath of Life over all the regions. They are delivered from human qualities and the defects of the world of nature, are characterized with the characteristics of God, and are attracted with the Fragrances of the Merciful. Like unto the apostles of Christ, who were filled with Him, these souls also have become filled with His Holiness Baha'o'llah, i. e., the love or Baha'o'llah has so mastered every organ, part and limb of their bodies, as to leave no effect by the promptings of the human world.

"These souls are the Armies of God and the conquerors of the East and the West. Should one of them turn his race toward Rome direction and summon the people to the Kingdom of God, all the ideal forces and lordly confirmations will rush to his support and reinforcement. He will behold all the doors open and all the strong fortifications and impregnable castles razed to the ground. Singly and alone he will attack the armies of the 'world, defeat the right and left wings of the hosts of all the countries, break through the li es of the legions of all the nations and carry his attack to the very center or the powers of the earth. This is the meaning of the Hosts of God.

"Any soul from among the believers of Baha'o'llah who attains to this station, will become known as the Apostle of Baha'o'llah. Therefore strive ye with heart and soul — so that ye may reach this lofty and exalted position, be established on the throne of everlasting glory, and crown your heads with the shining Diadem of the Kingdom, whose brilliant jewels may irradiate upon centuries and cycles.

"O ye kind friends! Uplift your magnanimity and soar high toward the apex of heaven — so that your blessed hearts may become illumined more and more, day by day, through the Rays of the Sun of Reality, i.e., His Holiness Baha'o'llah; at every moment the spirits may obtain a new life, and the darkness of the world of nature may be entirely dispelled — thus ye may become incarnate light and personified spirit, become entirely unaware of the sordid matters of this world and in touch with the affairs of the Divine World.

The same posts from the book of "The Divine Plan" in English as distributed at the close of the Eleventh Bahai Convention held in New York April 1919.

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At the banquet, besides the distinguished guests, the outstanding personalities in the Cause took part also; but in the Convention itself, all the addresses were given by Bahais, such as Mr. Mountford Mills, Mr. Louis I. Gregory, Mr. Charles Mason Remey, Rev. Albert R. Vail, Mr. Harlan Foster Ober, Mr. William H. Randall, Mr. Joseph H. Hannan, Mr. Hooper Harris, Mr. Howard Ives, Mrs. May Maxwell and many others.

In this manner was conducted the Eleventh Bahai Convention — the Convention of the Divine Plan. It was carried on in accordance with the wishes of Abdul Baha and remains to this day the high-water-mark of public Bahai activity. Actually, we well may call it the Convention of Reconciliation for so it was. Through the spirit of the Master, through the power of his Tablets, through his support by cablegrams and letters and through the fervent cooperation of those who loved him — those who understood the Cause as he taught it, the impossible had been accomplished and the Bahais were get again on the path of unity and service.

Such was the Convention in fact and implication for the future, but the road had been hard; many a time the outcome had wavered in the balance and from first to last, I was walking on thin ice.

My main difficulty was in myself presenting the Tablets at the Convention even as I had been commanded by the Master. The moving spirits in the "Orthodox Party" thought that the Tablets should be read by different persons in succession, for they openly doubted the authority which I claimed and even the authenticity of my credentials. My translation of the Tablets was likewise questioned, the addresses which I intended to give were objected to, and when the press came out with references to me as the "Ambassador of Abdul Baha," the cup of their exasperation overflowed.

In addition to the personal element which actuated so much suspicion in my regard, there was also the certainty of what I intended to do. To put it in one word, it was "Reconciliation," no more, no less; and this was the last thing desired by those who had created and firmly established the Bahai Committee of Investigation.

On the morning of the second day of the Convention, I appeared at request before the National Executive Board and was put through the third degree, the points in question being the following: my authority; my tablet of permission from Abdul Baha; my rumored repudiation of the Report of the Bahai Committee of Investigation; my unyielding determination to unveil the Tablets one by one, according to the Master's instructions; the elimination which I had engineered of certain individuals from important

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committees; the "undignified and flamboyant" publicity; the use of the Tablets of Abdul Baha to "lionize myself"; my "socialistic and communistic tendencies," and my repeated allusions to a coming era of Reconciliation. A few members of the Executive Board, who had been caught up in the spirit of tolerance and liberality, which I had tried to impart and which was now coming in frequent messages from the Holy Land, watched me in helpless anxiety as the inquisitorial flames rose high and menacing.

Fortunately for me, my hide contained an element of asbestos, and my tongue a coating of honey, I answered back question after question, not defiantly, but with assurance and truth. My opponents were discomfited, but not beaten. I watched them as they shifted in their chairs, exchanging glances, and in a flash read what was going on at the back of their minds. "Come friends" I assured them, "Don't feel awkward about it. Play your trump card."

What is that? ", the inquiry came in a cold voice.

"Are you not thinking of an alleged confidence which Abdul Baha made to a lady in Chicago. The words being: 'Don't trust Ahmed Sohrab'?"

"Do you claim to be a mind reader?" I was asked.

Not at all" I answered. "It is as plain as two and two. For eight years I have heard about this confidence. News of it has travelled from coast to coast, and across the Atlantic and Mediterranean. It is an underground pass-word. Every Bahai knows it, even I, for I have translated it to the Master in numberless letters written to him. So, when I looked at you a minute ago, I couldn't help seeing that old slogan written on your faces."

They remained silent, and I continued:

"Now, I propose that this message has been circulated for the last time. The cable office is open. Write out the following, addressed to Abdul Baha. 'Mrs. True of Chicago claims that you warned her in secret: Do not trust Ahmed Sohrab. Is this so?' And if the answer comes back: 'it is so.' I will retire from the Convention and leave all its affairs in your hands."

This demand took immediate effect. The committee as it whole, blanched, wavered and broke up. Needless to say, the cablegram was not sent. Undoubtedly, I had scored a victory, but equally certain is it that I had not come to the end of my troubles.

At one of the afternoon sessions of the Convention, in the presence of the delegates and the Bahai community, I was put on the carpet in a more public manner, the main objection being that it was I who was reading the

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Tablets to the audience night after night. Why not some one else? At any rate, I did not have to add historical data on how, and when, and where the Tablets had been revealed; and then who knew whether or not I had incorporated some of my own words in this Holy Writ and were all the time playing a dastardly trick on the whole Convention!

Chiefly, my newspaper title: "Ambassador of Abdul Baha" rankled. Was it I who had put forward such a claim, and, if so, on what authority? I was asked to make a public recantation in the very newspapers which had printed these articles.

Here Mr. Louis Gregory spoke in my defense, something along this line: He did not see anything wrong in the title. Kings and presidents sent ambassadors to foreign parts, and was not Abdul Baha a spiritual king? Whether Abroad Sohrab is called an ambassador, or a representative, or a messenger, it is all the same. He has come to us from our Master, from whom we have been waiting to receive news, lo, these many years of war. Mr. Gregory felt that he had witnessed in me signs of humility and devotion to the Cause. I was very grateful to him at that moment,

But the demands continued, unceremoniously; then my character went up for dissection, while I sat quietly in my seat in the audience, wondering if it was really I who was the cause of no much tumult. Of course Mr. Joseph Hannen spoke for me, he always did; and my other friends felt for me, they always did; but the opposition was so overwhelming, it had been gathering force ever since I had set foot in America, and the stakes were very high. If the Convention continued in the spirit in which it was going, all the work of the Bahai Committee of Investigation, and its plans for the future, would be set at naught. It amounted to that and to nothing less.

At last the Chairman of that session turned to me and asked if I had anything to say in my defense, and I slowly arose from my seat and began speaking from the floor. According to my notes taken down later (and my memory was in the pink of condition at that time), my argument ran as follows:

"As an opening statement, I must confess that I am no lawyer. The most friendless criminal would not accept my services; but I can tell a story. You see, when at a very early age I was driven from my home in Esphahan, because I was a Bahai — and Bahais are not liked in Persia (it seems that they are not liked anywhere). I was forced to earn my living in some way, as I wandered from hill-village to hill-village, and so I told

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stories to the people and they rewarded me with food and presents. Therefore, as my talent lies in this direction, and forgetting that this gathering which I thought was a feast of love has assumed the aspect of a court of justice, I will just tell you a story.

Not long ago (yet it seems like hundreds of years), there came to this country a Wise Man from the East. Maybe you saw his picture in the newspapers; maybe you remember his name — a strange one to American ears. In English, it means the Servant of God; in Persian, it is Abdul Baha.

Now this visitor to our shore taught an unusual and unwanted doctrine, namely: Universal Tolerance, Universal Charity, Universal Love, and he passed through the length and breadth of the land summoning all men and all women to the Kingdom of God. Thousands heard his message; hundreds acclaimed and followed him, and a few believed in him.

When the Servant of God had completed his mission in this country, he returned home, taking with him a boy whom he had befriended in the East at an earlier time and found again here; and in the Holy Land, he educated this boy and trained him for work that lay ahead.

When the appointed time had arrived, the boy presented himself in New York, not as an ambassador, for his Master was no king; his Master was a Servant, sending a servant to serve his servants. This was the Master's understanding of the matter. He never dreamed of an Order of Nobility within his domain; and if such there is, then he surely is out of place in it, or around it, or adjacent to it.

The boy did not come empty handed. He carried with him a gift of such value that anyone in his right mind would recognize the donor. He also carried his credentials in the Master's own handwriting and his instructions which he is trying to carry out. He wants very much to tell you about this gift and to show it to you, jewel by jewel, so that its refulgent splendor may not blind the beholders so that they may become accustomed, little by little, to the sunlit plains of the Master's vision.

Now this country boy was unaccustomed to the arts and exhibits of city life, and in fairness to you I must say that even if you have not honored him with your trust and confidence, as he had so much hoped, you have at least prepared for him a rare entertainment. This particular session of the Eleventh Bahai Convention contained all the elements of comedy, tragedy melodrama and farce, to say nothing of burlesque and opera bouffe. Of course, the performance was uneven in spots, because it probably was unrehearsed; likewise, there was no proper lighting and no orchestral music.

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to relieve the tension created by the outbursts of the actors and actresses. Maybe the audience got a little on edge; but all were wide awake throughout, doubtless on account of the fervor, even passion, of those who played the stellar roles. So I must thank you, on behalf of this boy, for the performance and assure you that he has appreciated the theme of the drama and the intention of the producers.

You are free to repudiate the credentials given by the Master, his cables, his letters, every message written by him; but there is one message that you cannot repudiate, because it is not a written message but an oral one. It is a command, if you wish to look upon it as such; it also is an invitation. Here it is:

'The hour of dogmatic separation is past. In this Cause, do not shun nor expel a person on either human or divine authority. You must heal the wounds that have caused this division. Compose your quarrels. Raise the call of union. Lift up all barricades and pave the path of Reconciliation.'

That is the message of Abdul Baha; and now I leave the various questions that have arisen in your hands, to decide as you see fit."

It was then unanimously voted to wait and see the unfolding of the Divine Plan according to program.

In a letter to Shoghi Effendi, dated April 30, 1919, Mr. Joseph Hannen wrote of these events for the information of the Master. I quote from it for corroboration:

The business sessions of the Convention were attended by a large number of Delegates, probably between 250 and 300, more than had attended business sessions at any time . . . It is with deep regret that I must chronicle here a spirit of opposition to Ahmad Sohrab (at the second session) which was evidenced by several of the friends, seemingly a group led by Dr. Zia Bagdadi and Mrs. Corinne True of Chicago. There were a very few who followed this leadership, or the suggestion which it brought of suspicion or the lack of full cooperation. Your faithful messenger, Mirza Ahmad was besieged with inquiries as to his "credentials," and to tell the contents of the Tablets yet to be unveiled. There developed a spirit of antagonism, which in the minds of the most of us was wholly unwarranted and unexplainable, save upon the basis of a desire for personal prestige or leadership. In the face of it all, Mirza Ahmad remained firm and impregnable, standing by his instructions from the Beloved, and urging the friends to defer action on the teaching plans and program until the Tablets should have been revealed and unveiled, and the plan made clear in its entirety.

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There were brave and strong defenders of this stand, and finally the day was won; and the convention voted unanimously to suspend further action until Thursday morning, after the last of the Tablets and the final instructions had been given. The opposition went so far as to attack the validity of Mirza Ahmad's mission, although he has exhibited on all occasions, when asked for it, the Tablet of Permission from the Beloved, and all of us feel that his spirit is redolent of the Power of the Centre of the Covenant, and the Tablets themselves need no further authorization or plenipotentiary power for the one who has been privileged to bring them to us.

All are filled with the spirit of the work to be done and I am sure the power of that inspiration will conquer every smaller consideration, and unity be reached. Surely it will, unless some cannot set aside the veils of self. I go into all these details at my own initiative, and that you may know how faithful your messenger to America has been and is being, and what opposition he is meeting in the most unexpected quarters.

Another incident that also had its amusing side! One morning, as we were nearing the close of the Convention, an old Bahai associate took me to the lounge of the hotel, where we sat down.

"Ahmad," she began, "I have come on a painful mission."

"Go ahead," I answered. "There can be no embarrassment between you and me."

"All right, then here it is. Strange things are happening at this Convention, and it seems you are to blame for all of them: You have filled the hall with unfamiliar faces; you have placed strangers in the very front seats; you have put the Nakezeen on the committees and have ignored the firm Bahais; you have driven into a corner the faithful followers of Abdul Baha."

"All this," I sighed.

"All this" she repeated, "and much more. You have aroused the forces of Socialism and Bolshevism. Actually, you have started a revolution."

"Dear me, dear me!" I shook my head. "I wonder if I realized what I was doing!"

"You have been doing something very criminal, and I think very deliberate. Furthermore, you have been doing something very sacrilegious."

"Now you surprise me!" I exclaimed. "Please tell me how I have been sacrilegious."

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

صاحب میرزا احمد سید سید محمد باقر علی پور دکن
 حضرت پیر از سر درویش افلاکیم در خفا و محجوبت آستان تقدیر
 عبد الباقی

abdul Baha abbas

"Tablet of Permission" in Abdul Baha's handwriting, with his signature in English, commissioning the author to sail for America and carry out his assignment.

"Mr. Hooper Harris wept over it all night. This morning his eyes were blood-shot. You should have seen him — the picture of desolation."

"But what did I do?" I was getting impatient. "Please come to the point."

"We are not fools nor dumbbells. We have seen Abdul Baha. We know how he walked, how he talked. We remember his grand gestures."

"I do too."

The lady arose from her seat. "Yes, that's just the trouble. Now I am sent by those who love the Master, I am commissioned to tell you: When you appear on the platform, you walk like Abdul Baha; you talk like Abdul Baha; you make gestures like Abdul Baha. We are determined that this mimicry shall cease."

Her face was as white as chalk and her lips quivered. As I looked at her, I recognized the fact that she and countless others, who probably had seen the Master for only a few fleeting moments, had retained his picture in their hearts where it was engraved as if on granite. That was their shrine, and it seemed that I had violated those shrines. I held my peace for a few moments, then I answered.

"I am going to return a message to those who sent you and, believe me, it carries the same sincerity as did theirs. The message is this: When I left Haifa, the Master whom we all so adore said to me: 'Mirza Ahmad! When you arrive in America, I want you to walk as I walk, speak as I speak, move as I move, think as I think, act as I act and live as I live.'

Now, I never expected to fulfill the Master's injunction in this particular instance, although at times I have tried to obey him; but if you think that I have succeeded, then I can only be very happy as well as very much surprised. Please tell this to your friends.

The public sessions in the great hall of the hotel McAlpin succeeded one another while the soul of Abdul Baha brooded over the Convention. Sometimes it seemed that he really was there, so much were the people caught up by something outside of themselves, something that burned away the trite preoccupations that assail all of us, and set them on the broad level of receptivity and awareness. During those days, a little group had formed itself behind the scenes. It was largely composed of leading Bahai officials, many of whom had in the past yielded their consciences, more or less willingly, to the inquisitorial demands of the Bahai Committee of Investigation;

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it also included a few persons whose tolerant and liberal spirit had remained unimpaired in spite of all the tests that had crowded in on that harassed community. Now, this group supported me so magnificently that it was mostly owing to these friends that the Convention proceeded with out break toward an outcome that left nothing to be desired. At the time, my sense of appreciation knew no bounds and, to this day, I recall the memory of each and every one with a very full heart. Some of them were: Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Hannen, Mr. and Mrs. William H. Randall, Mrs. May Maxwell, Miss Juliet Thompson, Mr. Mountford Mills, Mrs. Agnes Parsons, Mr. Louis G. Gregory, Mr. Roy C. Wilhelm, Mr. and Mrs. Harlan Ober, Mr. William Hoar, Mrs. Isabel Fraser Chamberlain, Mr. and Mrs. Edward J. Kinney and Mr. Alfred Lunt.

When the last word was spoken from the platform on the last night of the Convention and the crowd had melted. Away, I sought my room with uncertain steps. Since my arrival in the United States, just forty-two days before I had been burning candle at both ends. What effort had gone into that Convention, what emotion! No thought of ease had been possible, no opportunity for a moment's composure. During the final days, I had kept going by sheer force of will, though I often had to sit down wherever happened to be, and turn my mind to Abdul Baha. If only he could see me through till the last Tablet had been read. I did not care what happened next! The child of Abdul Baha was being given to the world — the child conceived in that mighty brain of his, nurtured in that heart which knew no frontiers, which in itself had no limits — the Divine Plan was being set up for the guidance of nations? Then, when my task was accomplished and my mission fulfilled to the best of my ability, I just went into non-existence. During four days I was in delirium, so the doctor and the hotel maid told me later; after which I rested with mind as blank as a white sheet of paper. I did not even know that I was resting.

So the Eleventh Bahai Convention went into history, and plans were initiated for embarking on a great program of teaching. Speakers, including myself, presently set out in all directions; the spirit of exertion and sacrifice took possession of all, while the Bahai Committee of Investigation was so dead, so disintegrated, that not even a bone of it remained to warrant a funeral ceremony. It passed into oblivion, leaving behind simply a record and a ghost; one which has haunted all religions since man first learned to bow his head before God in community with his fellows. That ghost will always be amongst us with its sickle of death, cutting down the fresh flowers

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of spirit; but the Words of Love remain, spoken by those who knew; and our deeds of love remain and increase in volume; and the Divine Plan, for the drawing together of all races and nations, remains as charter for this era, given to mankind by the Servant of God.

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Prayers in the Divine Plan

Abdul Baha's primal wish for his teachers was illumination of the soul, and he was certain that the state of illumination could not be attained without prayer. For this, and other reasons as well, he adorned the Tablets of the Divine Plan with a few moving prayers, some to be repeated by the teachers themselves, and others by the friends who accompany them in spirit on the lonely trail of the pioneer. He was at one with Tennyson in that: "More things are accomplished by prayer than this world dreams of." He hoped that the teachers of the Oneness of the World of Humanity would make of their very lives a prayer, and act of faith, a voice of truth. In his eyes, prayer and toil were to be mingled in fair proportion, for it is under such conditions that God responds to the one and rewards the other. Thus prayer without action, action without prayer, were equally fruitless, while the two conjoined made a sturdy vehicle — a golden chariot for the soul to mount heavenward.

To Abdul Baha, prayer was another word for the love of God and the love of men, and these were to be mingled in fair proportion. Approach the Threshold of the Almighty for the sake of His servants, and the gates will swing wide open. Prayer is a mighty instrument of which only a few notes have been sounded. The keys await our touch, along the infinite scale of man's aspirations and of God's destiny.

Sometimes the fog settles over a vessel's deck, leaving the topmast clear. Then a sailor goes aloft and views the scene, while the helmsman steers the ship according to the sailor's instructions. Even so does the soul rise in prayer, above the mists of disharmony and confusion, to discover the hidden course that lies ahead. Hence, the Divine Wisdom has given these prayers for the illumination of the soul, so that the teachers may steer the Ship of the Cause through the ocean of adventure into the harbor of security.

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For Teachers

"O Lord, O Lord! Praise and thanksgiving be unto Thee for Thou hast guided me to the Highway of the Kingdom, suffered me to walk in this straight and far-stretching path, illumined my eyes by beholding the lights, made me listen to the Melodies and attracted my heart with Thy love among the righteous ones.

"O Lord! Confirm me with the Holy Spirit, so that I may call in Thy Name amid the nations and give the Glad-Tidings of the manifestation of Thy Kingdom amongst mankind.

"O Lord! I am weak; strengthen me with Thy power and potency. My tongue falters; suffer me to utter Thy commemoration and praise. I am lonely; endear me through my entrance in Thy Kingdom. I am remote; cause me to approach the Threshold of Thy Mercy.

"O Lord! Make of me a brilliant lamp, a shining star and a blessed tree adorned with fruits, its branches overshadowing all these regions! Verily Thou art the Mighty, the Powerful, the Unconstrained!

"O God, O God! This is a broken-winged bird and his flight is very slow. Assist him, so that he may fly toward the apex of prosperity and salvation; wing his way with utmost joy and happiness throughout illimitable space; raise his melody in all regions in Thy Supreme Name; entrance the ears with this Call, and brighten the eyes with the beholding of the Signs of Guidance!

"O Lord! I am single, alone and lowly; for me there is no support save Thee and no sustainer beside Thee. Confirm me in Thy Service; assist me with the Cohorts of Thine angels; make me victorious in the promotion of Thy Word, and suffer me to speak out Thy wisdom amongst Thy creatures. Verily, Thou art the Custodian of the poor and the Defender of the little ones, and verily Thou art the Powerful, the Mighty, the Unconstrained!

O God, O God! Thou seest me enamored and attracted toward Thy Kingdom of El Abha; enkindled with the fire of Thy love amongst mankind; a herald of Thy realm in these vast and spacious countries; severed from aught else save Thee, relying on Thee; abandoning rest and comfort, remote from my native land; a wanderer in these regions; a stranger fallen on the ground before Thine exalted Threshold, supplicating Thee in the middle of the night and in the heart of the evening, invoking and entreating Thee at dawn and at twilight, that Thou mayest assist me in the service of Thy Cause, in the promotion of Thy teachings and the exultation of Thy Word in the easts of the earth, and the wests thereof.

Oh Lord! Strengthen and confirm me in my servitude, and leave me not to myself in these foreign lands.

Oh Lord! Associate with me in my loneliness, and accompany me in my journeyings.

Verily, Thou art the Confirmer of whomsoever Thou willest, in that which Thou desirest, and verily Thou art the Powerful, the Omnipotent!

On Sending Out Teachers

"Praise be to Thee, O God! Verily these are Thy servants, who are attracted by the fragrances of Thy mercy, enkindled by the ignited Fire in the Tree of Thy Singleness and brightened by beholding the effulgences of the Light in the Sinai of Thy Oneness!

"O Lord! Loosen their tongues in Thy commemoration amongst Thy people; suffer them to speak Thy praise through Thy favor and grace; assist them with the cohorts of Thine angels; strengthen their loins in Thy service, and make them the signs of Thy guidance amongst Thy creatures!

"Verily Thou art the Powerful, the Exalted, the Pardoner and the Merciful.

"O God, O God! Thou beholdest this weak one, begging the strength of Thy Kingdom; this poor one, supplicating the treasures of Thy Heaven; this thirsty one, longing for Thy Fountain of the Water of Eternal Life; this sick one, invoking perfect recovery through Thy boundless mercy, which though hast designated for Thy chosen servants in Thy Supreme Kingdom!

"O Lord! I have no other helper save Thee; no other comforter beside Thee, and no other sustainer except thee!. Assist me with Thine angels in the diffusion of Thy Holy Fragrances and the dissemination of Thy Teachings amongst Thine elected people!

"O Lord! Suffer me to sever myself from aught save Thee, holding fast to the Hem of Thy Garment. Make me sincere in Thy Religion, firm in Thy love and living in accordance with that which Thou hast commanded me in Thy Book.

"Verily, Thou art the Powerful, the Mighty and the Omnipotent!

"O Thou Incomparable God! O Thou Lord of the Kingdom! These souls are Thy heavenly army. Assist them with the cohorts of the Supreme Concourse and make them victorious, so that each one may become like unto a regiment and conquer these countries through the love of God and the illumination of the Divine Teachings.

"O God! Be Thou their supporter and their helper, and in the wilderness, the mountain and the valley, the forests, the prairies and the seas, be Thou their Confident — so that they may cry out through the power of the Kingdom and the Breaths of the Holy Spirit!

"Verily Thou art the Mighty and the Omnipotent, and Thou art the Wise, the Healing and the Seeing.

ABDUL BAHA'S GRANDSON

ABDUL BAHA'S
GRANDSON



RUHI EFFENDI AFNAN
Grandson of Abdul Baha
with Mrs. Keith Ransom-Kehler

ABDUL BAHÁ'S GRANDSON

Story of a Twentieth Century Excommunication

by

MIRZA AHMAD SOHRAB



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1943

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

Heart Phantasies
The New Humanity
Abdul Baha in Egypt
Renaissance
The Song of the Caravan
Living Pictures (Co-author, Julie Chanler)
I Heard Him Say
Silver Sun (Co-author, Julie Chanler)
The Bible of Mankind
Broken Silence

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AUTHOR'S STATEMENT

The subject of this book is an untimely one. It might have been taken up in the Middle Ages by some intrepid hero. Voltaire would have considered it deserving of his pen, had he thought that the religion of his day was worth saving; but in the Twentieth Century, when the rights and dignity of the individual are respected in the society of free nations, this subject can be passed over as not requiring serious attention. Such is the opinion of my friends, while my own sense of humor, fearful of becoming unrecognizable in the cumbersome armor of the knight errant, has wistfully echoed their sentiments.

Nevertheless, there are moments when friends and even sense of humor must make way for passionate indignation. This is such a moment, stark and terrible. It comes as a result of the excommunication by Shoghi Effendi, Guardian of the Bahai Cause, of the descendants of Baha-O-Llah, Prophet of the Modern Age.

In dealing with this subject, I have picked out for discussion one person from among the many involved, and have told the story of Ruhi Effendi Afnan, great grandson of Baha-O-Llah, and grandson of Abdul Baha. Starting with a few incidents connected with his childhood, in the warm setting of Abdul Baha's household in Haifa, I have followed his career to maturity and shown him as the confidential secretary and chosen representative of his cousin, the Guardian. I have sketched his character, studied the trend of his mind and reviewed the services rendered by him to the Bahai Administration during his two visits to the United States. Finally, I have analyzed the reasons given out for his excommunication by the solitary judge in star-chamber proceedings; while throughout the story I have wondered, as I wonder yet, about the future and what it will bring to this man under the guidance of his own soul.

The subject of this book is an untimely one; but, the affectionate re-

gard which has animated the author is timely at all seasons and under all conditions.

The selections from poems by Rabindranath Tagore, appearing before the chapters, are printed with the kind permission of the poet's publisher, The Macmillan Company, 60 Fifth Avenue—the selections being from *Gitanjali*, *Fruit-Gathering*, *Collected Poems and Plays* and *Creative Unity*. This favor is deeply appreciated by the author. A single selection from *Rabindranath Tagore: The Man And His Poetry*, by Basanta Kumar Roy, printed through the courtesy of Dodd, Mead & Company, 432 Fifth Ave. is likewise acknowledged with thanks.

Mirza Ahmad Sohrab

PROTEST
against the Excommunication of
Members of Baha-O-Llah's Family
signed by
Leaders of Religion and Educators

Leopold von Ranke on Martin Luther

Even at the last station, a councillor of his sovereign sent him word that he had better not come, for that he might share the fate of Huss. "Huss," replied Luther, "was burnt, but not the truth with him: I will go, though as many devils took aim at me as there are tiles on the roofs of the houses." Thus he reached Worms, on the 18th of April, 1521, one Tuesday about noon.

—In Leopold von Ranke's History of the Reformation in Germany, translated by Sarah Austin, Vol. I, Book II, Chapter IV, p. 533, (Published by Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1845, London)

PROTEST

**against the Excommunication of
Members of Baha-O-Llah's Family**

signed by

Leaders of Religion and Educators

May 1942

In these days when the principles of humanity are threatened on all sides, there is urgent need for men and women of good faith and purpose to band together for the upholding of the common rights of man, within their own communities and religions and within the communities and religions of others.

It is with this thought in mind that the undersigned consider conditions within a minority group, namely the Bahai Cause, and make passionate protest against the recent excommunication by Shoghi Effendi Rabhani, Guardian of the Cause, of certain members of Baha-O-Llah's family.

Excommunication, as we take it, is an order for severance of ties between the excommunicated and their fellow-members in Faith. It is an un-Christ-like act which, although practiced in medieval ages by religious authorities, is now totally condemned by enlightened persons of every rank and profession.

Therefore we go on record, at this hour when the Four Freedoms enunciated by the President of the United States are ringing around the earth, endorsing whole-heartedly and without qualifications whatsoever a sentence from Mr. Roosevelt's historic speech before Congress, delivered in January 1941:—

“The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way—everywhere in the world.”

On the basis of this principle we insist that, in the New World Order which all of us picture and strive for, the irreligious practice of excommunication be set aside forever and replaced by the practice of Love and Tolerance as set forth throughout the ages by Christ and the great company of prophets, seers and spiritual teachers.

We urge men and women of all Faiths to consistently oppose, and to refuse to recognize, any and all exclusion acts within their religion, and under all circumstances to keep open the doors of their temples and hearts to their fellow-believers and to their fellows of every race, creed and color.

ABDUL BAHÁ'S GRANDSON

Signed by:

Mr. David P. Berenberg, Author: *A Worker's World*; Educator, Lecturer

Kedarnath DasGupta, Author: *Essence of Religions* and Founder of World Fellowship of Faiths

Dr. Georgia Dunn, Professor of Psychology, Hunter College, New York

Mr. William Floyd, Editor: *Arbitrator*; Author, Educator

Archbishop William H. Francis of the Old Catholic Church

Miss Frances Grant, President of Pan-American Women Association, New York

Mr. Jacob Greenwald, Counsellor-at-Law, New York

Dr. John Haynes Holmes, Minister of Community Church, New York

Mr. Gordon S. P. Kleeberg, Counsellor-at-Law, New York

Commander R. E. Lambert, U. S. N. R.; Editor: *Sourcebook*

Rev. Leon Rosser Land, Minister of Bronx Free Fellowship, New York

Dr. John Howland Lathrop, Minister of Church of the Saviour, Brooklyn, New York

Mr. William Pickens, Director of Branches, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Washington, D. C.

Dr. Haridas T. Muzumdar, Author: *The United Nations of the World*; Lecturer, Sociologist

Mr. John J. O'Neill, Science Editor, *New York Herald-Tribune*

Rev. A. J. Muste, Secretary, The Fellowship of Reconciliation, New York

The Rev. Dr. Charles Francis Potter, Author: *The Story of Religion*; Founder and Leader of The First Humanist Society of New York

Miss Lisa Sergio, Radio Commentator

Dr. Krishnalal Shridharani, Author: *My India, My America*; Lecturer

Dr. Anup Singh, Editor: *India To-Day*; Author: *Nehru, the Rising Star of India*

Dr. George Maychin Stockdale, Minister of Church of Christ in America, Methodist Branch, Clinton, N. Y.

Dr. Eliot White, Clergyman, Writer, Lecturer

PROTEST

Comment and Some Notable Letters

In the Old World, we were not our brother's keeper; but were of the cautious type, looking for our own interests and letting others shift for themselves. In the New World that is to be, we shall recognize the fact that all of us are part of the human organism and will boldly apply ourselves to the task of keeping that organism in good shape. The averted eyes, the careful picking of one's way on the other side of the road will no longer be the acceptable attitude; but the straight look and the helping hand will be the characteristic of a new citizenry, *everywhere in the world*.

Of such an order are the distinguished educators who have condemned the action of Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, Guardian of the Bahai Cause, taken against several members of Baha-O-Llah's family. Excommunication, to their minds, has no place in modern society; intolerance, exclusion and cruelty has no place in any society, and so they have condemned this deed and gone on record in a *Protest* that will make a landmark in religious history. The Protestant Minister, the Catholic Bishop, the Jewish Rabbi, the Hindu, the Sikh have arisen together to protect the Bahai—their brother before God and man. So have the boundary lines grown thin under the penetrating warmth of the Religion of Love.

Dr. George Maychin Stockdale, Minister of Church of Christ in America, Methodist Branch, Clinton, New York, in a letter dated March 25, 1942 writes to us that their Young Men's Class studied Bahaism the previous week and is to consider Shoghi Effendi's excommunications the following Sunday. Dr. Stockdale states that he is ready to do anything "to help banish this ancient barbarism of excommunication from off this earth" and has actually communicated directly with the Guardian on this subject. He encloses a copy of his letter, which we herewith reproduce:—

CHURCH OF CHRIST IN AMERICA

Methodist Branch

George Maychin Stockdale, Minister

Clinton, New York,
March 25, 1942.

Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, Guardian of the Bahai Cause,
Persian Colony,
Haifa, Palestine.
Dear Guardian of the Bahai Cause,

Your Christlike Grandfather, Abdul Baha, when asked on one occasion, "What is a Bahai?" replied,

ABDUL BAHÁ'S GRANDSON

"TO BE A BAHAI SIMPLY MEANS TO LOVE ALL THE WORLD: TO LOVE HUMANITY AND TRY TO SERVE IT; TO WORK FOR UNIVERSAL PEACE AND UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD."

(J. E. Esslemont, "Bahá'U'lláh and the New Era," page 70.)

I'd like to make the above my own definition of what it is to be a Christian. On this definition the Hindu Gandhi and the Buddhist Das Gupta are both Christians and Bahais, as well as true Hindus and Buddhists respectively. Some of my Bahai friends do me more honor than I deserve by telling me that I am a Bahai, although I am just trying to be a Christian.

If we agree on the above, and I hope we do, it is the more amazing to get word of what are called, and seem to be, your excommunications of Ruhi Effendi Afnan, your cousin; his wife; your sister and *others*.

What troubles me, my dear Sir, is the method employed. If we love all humans, and the Love of God cannot dwell in us unless we do, how can we use any other than Love and Persuasion as our means of seeking change of mind and heart in those we deem wrong? Can excommunication be a method of Love?

Now far be it from us to prematurely make up our minds in this controversy. We would hear your side, Sir. Yet we assure you that even if you should submit proof positive of the commission of the more heinous crimes by any or all of the excommunicated, (which I am sure you wouldn't,) still would we say that the WAY of LOVE demands we retain community with the vilest of sinners. **THEY NEED LOVE EVEN MORE THAN NINETY and NINE SPIRITUALLY TRANSFORMED SOULS, in whom GOD (LOVE) DWELLS.** That seems clear to me from both the teachings of Christ and of Bahá'U'lláh, interpreted too by Paul and Abdul Baha respectively.

It troubles me too that it is reported that you are not too sure amid this world madness just what loyalty we owe to God and what to the state. We are blessed beyond many here in America, as in Britain, in that the Draft Law here specifically makes room for us pacifists, who could not disobey God at the command of man, no matter what the consequences. We know you have the cares of a world gone mad in suicidal slaughter on your mind and heart. Yet it would be heartening to have from you a word, clear as crystal, that Bahaism officially "although making no attempt to bind the consciences of its individual members, will **NOT OFFICIALLY ENDORSE, SUPPORT OR PARTICIPATE IN WAR.**" I have slipped into the exact words of our Methodist Branch of the Christian Church, with which I agree one hundred per cent.

Yours, strong in the Faith that LOVE (GOD) alone can win,

(Signed) George Maychin Stockdale

PROTEST

The author of this book was very much impressed by Dr. Stockdale's stand. Of course, one expects all liberal-minded men, in the ministry and outside of it, to look with stern disapproval on the sacrilegious performance of this excommunication; yet, when one of them, of his own volition, comes forward to reassert the principles of a Faith of which he is not part, it is an act of generosity which one could not anticipate nor even hope for.

A copy of Dr. Stockdale's letter to the Guardian was forwarded to Dr. John Haynes Holmes and an answer, a section of which is quoted below, was received from him:—

I have your letter of the 26th with enclosures. You will be interested to know that Mr. Stockdale, of Clinton, N. Y., is one of my oldest and dearest friends in the ministry. This letter of his to Shoghi Effendi Rabbani is supremely characteristic of his mind and heart. I know of no nobler or braver spirit in the Christian ministry here in America today, and it comforts me to discover that he is in touch with you and Mrs. Chanler.

In rather shocking contrast to my friend, Mr. Stockdale, I find myself moved to a feeling of regret and shame that I have known nothing about this excommunication business. I make it a practice to read your NEW HISTORY magazine, of course, but the March issue has not yet had my attention. Now that I have the case before me, I am grieved to the bottom of my soul by what you fittingly describe as a piece of medievalism. It seems to me well-nigh incredible that the head of the Bahai faith would have taken such a step as this. Mr. Stockdale describes the significance of the event with precision and exalted vision, and I can think of nothing to be added thereto. I say Amen to every word with all my heart and soul.

In another letter, written three days later, Dr. Holmes refers to his visit to Haifa. He says in part:—

Ever since you wrote me, my mind has been going back to the day in Haifa when I made a call on Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, to pay my profound respects through him to the Bahai faith. It was at the time when I was making my pilgrimage to the sepulchres of Abdul Baha and the other prophets and saints. I remember my astonishment when I was taken into the reception room, placed in the corner farthest removed from the door, instructed that I must rise when Shoghi Effendi entered, and must under no circumstances approach his person. I was hardly used to that sort of thing, and it gave me a kind of a chill which spoiled the interview. I had previously met Abdul Baha on the occasion of his visit to this country, had sat close to him, taken his hand, and conversed with him in most informal and friendly fashion. And here in Haifa I had to keep my distance, as though I

ABDUL BAHÁ'S GRANDSON

were in the presence of some king or pope. I didn't like it, and the memory of it as a kind of offense has lingered with me ever since. I assume that you have met with Shoghi Effendi, and I wonder if you were put through any such performance as this.

Archbishop William H. Francis, of the Old Catholic Church, writes on April 16th.

I most cheerfully subscribe my name to the protest against the excommunication of the members of Abdul Baha's family and others by Shoghi Effendi. It seems incredible that such steps should have been taken. What is this world coming to? Bombs on civilizations and excommunications on religious folks. I wonder if they will be taking a leaf from the diary of Torquemada—he of the inquisition—next?

A letter, dated April 19th, comes from Mr. David P. Berenberg, poet, writer and educator.

As you know, coercion and regimentation of any sort are detestable to me. I am happy, therefore, to add my name to the list of those who, like Dr. Holmes, are protesting against the excommunication of some of the members of Baha-O-Llah's family. I wish you all success in your effort to nullify this act.

Letter from Dr. Stephen S. Wise, Rabbi of the Free Synagogue, New York; President of the Jewish Institute of Religion and the American Jewish Congress, dated April 22, 1942.

I have been thinking much about the matter which has been brought to my attention by the Heads of The New History Society. I am shocked as The New History Society is shocked to think, of the issuance of a proclamation of excommunication against members of the family of the founder of the movement, and that for what you say are totally negligible reasons.

Excommunication is self-condemnation. One excommunicates only those of whom one is fearful, with whom one knows one cannot argue through a cause. It is about time that excommunication as a method of suppression and exclusion cease to be used.

As for excommunicating the members of the family of the founder of the movement, that is an act which is irreligion at its worst. I wish I could bring my thought to the attention of the guardian of the Bahai cause.

I am, with cordial greeting, my dear Sohrab,

Faithfully yours,

(Signed) Stephen S. Wise

The Rev. Dr. William Norman Guthrie, author of many books, lover of the arts and advanced thinker in the Church became Rector of historic

PROTEST

St. Mark's-In-The-Bouwerie in 1911. Here, among the many proofs of his liberalism was the fact that he opened wide his door to the Bahais, to the point that this edifice actually became the second home of the Cause.

Mr. Mountfort Mills and Mr. Horace Holley, distinguished exponents of the Bahai Administration, became Vestrymen; office facilities were provided in the parish house for the activities of the movement; countless meetings were arranged, and a long list of Bahai speakers, including Ruhi Efendi Afnan, gave their messages under the hospitable roof of St. Mark's.

In a Tablet from Abdul Baha to Miss Juliet Thompson, published in *Star of the West*, June 24, 1919, we find these words:—

"Convey my greetings to Dr. Guthrie and Mr. Ledoux. From the bounties of God I ask that these two souls may be the cause of the promulgation of divine teachings, may proclaim the oneness of the world of humanity, may spread the cause of universal peace . . ."

It is certain that all who cherish the ideals of Baha-O-Llah owe a debt of eternal gratitude to Dr. Guthrie.

The following letter from Stamford, Conn., dated May 18, 1942, shows that Dr. Guthrie's love of liberty in religion is as keen and vibrant today as it was during his colorful years of service in New York:—

A word of thanks and congratulation are overdue. It took me exactly one month to peruse carefully the book and four pamphlets you sent me. The suit you have won is on behalf of spiritual liberty. May it stay won. But I fear you cannot save those who are mad with an official self-deification, or those who are greedy for tyranny, to exercise or endure. It would seem as tho' the spirit of Hitler had taken possession of the Guardian of the Cause, to cover in this fashion what he should have protected, with mortal ridicule by "Ex-communication!"

I know you want me to express myself. Mrs. Chanler and you can find my considered views in the paragraph quoted (pp. 221-2 "Broken Silence") spoken by Dr. Butler, my former teacher; and more explicitly in the paragraphs (pp. 163-165 "Broken Silence") written in 1925 by Dr. Alfred W. Martin, the very year I shared a trip to Beth-Shean near the Jordan with the most delightful Ruhi . . .

**(Signed) William Norman Guthrie,
Retired Rector of St. Mark's-In-The Bouwerie,
New York, N. Y.**

Manly P. Hall, lecturer, author and teacher writes from Los Angeles, California on July 16, 1942:—

This tardy reply to your letter of May 11 does not reflect my interest in the problems which confront you. In spite of my delay in

ABDUL BAHÁ'S GRANDSON

answering, I feel very sincerely the unhappy condition which is set forth in your book, "Broken Silence," which I have just finished reading, and for copy of which I thank you.

As you may imagine, the matter of excommunication is revolting to the sensibilities of any deep and sincere student. Our comfort is that while men may exercise these divine prerogatives according to the fallacies of their own judgements, the Gods of high decision are untouched and unmoved by the smallness in human nature. It were better for man to be excommunicated an hundred times by the priestly hierarchies of the earth than to be condemned once by the voice of his own spirit.

My kindest thoughts await you and your co-workers.

Very sincerely,

(Signed) Manly P. Hall

Chapter I
RUHI EFFENDI AFNAN

***For every throb of their pain has pulsed in the secret
depth of thy night, and every insult has been gathered
into thy great silence.***

—Rabindranath Tagore

Fruit-Gathering, Stanza LXXXVI

Chapter I

RUHI EFFENDI AFNAN

A Nosegay of Cablegrams

A calamity of vast proportions has befallen the Bahai world; so far-reaching in its implications and tragic in its significance, that the student of the Cause is left speechless and breathless. In some instances his faith is actually threatened. Indeed, the magnitude of this event dwarfs all other considerations at this critical hour of Bahai history.

The news of the calamity is contained in a series of cablegrams coming from Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Bahai Cause, and addressed to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada. It is published on the front pages of the December 1941 and January 1942 issues of *Bahai News*.

These cablegrams announce to the American believers the excommunication of the major part of Abdul Baha's family; namely: Ruhi Effendi Afnan; his wife, Zahra Khanum Shahid; his sister, Soraya Khanum Afnan and his brother, Foad Effendi Afnan—all grandchildren of Abdul Baha. The reasons given are as follows: Ruhi Afnan incurred the Guardians dis-Afnan; his wife, Zahra Khanum Shahid; his sister, Saraya Khanum Afnan his second visit to America in 1935 was made without the consent of the Guardian. Soraya Khanum, sister of Ruhi Effendi, married so-called *Covenant-breaker* Feyzi Effendi Afnan, son of Aga Sayyed Ali Afnan and of Furighyyeh Khanum, a daughter of Baha-O-Llah. Foad Effendi Afnan, brother of Ruhi Effendi, made a trip to England without informing the Guardian.

Touba Khanum, second daughter of Abdul Baha and mother of Ruhi, Soraya and Foad, is apparently included in the excommunication; for in the first cablegram, we find these words:—*Ruhi's family concurred. Inform all believers (that) all manner of communication (with) excommunicated family (is) forbidden.* Likewise, Rouha Khanum, third daughter of Abdul Baha and mother of Zahra, is likewise implicated; for, if she has stood by the side of her daughter and continues to do so, the ban falls on her also.

These drastic steps, taken against the families of two of Abdul Baha's daughters, did not conclude this dark entry in the current annals of the Cause; for the nosegay of cablegrams contains a further pronouncement,

ABDUL BAHÁ'S GRANDSON

applying to the excommunication of Shoghi Effendi's own sister, Mehr-Angiz Khanum. This latter message, which was sent on January 1st, constitutes a strange greeting for a New Year's morn. Was the date a circumstance, pure and simple, or was it perhaps the Guardian's conception of a blessing to his flock at the birth of another year? We have heard of a Roman Holiday. This was a Bahai Holiday indeed!

The cablegram states that Mehr-Angiz Khanum has *followed the example of Ruhi's sister*. Now, we know that Ruhi Effendi's sister, Soraya, married without the Guardian's consent; therefore, it seems likely that Mehr-Angiz has done the same thing. Possibly, she also married one of her cousins.

Inter-Family Alliances

Such inter-family marriages are rather startling to the Occidental mind, but in the Islamic world they are customary; and it is not on this ground that the Guardian has made objection. Moreover, in the instance of Abdul Baha's family, the explanation is easy to find. These children grew up without the intimacy which is usual in the West, among cousins living in the same locality. The girls led a retired life, and when they did see boys of their own age, these boys were necessarily cousins—there was no one else. Furthermore, Shoghi Effendi did not approve of foreigners, as husbands to the members of his family; he also did not approve of prospective husbands who were not Bahais or who had lately become Bahais. These restrictions set his cousins completely apart from other young people, so it is not surprising that they fell in love among themselves.

Another marriage in the family, which took place some time ago, was that of Ruh-Angiz, the older of the Guardian's two sisters. This young girl married Nayyar Effendi Afnan, grandson of Baha-O-Llah, and brother of Feyzi Effendi Afnan whose marriage to Ruhi Effendi's sister, Soraya Khanum, has just brought this latter into disgrace. Although this marriage of his sister was very displeasing to Shoghi Effendi, the couple remained in the Near East, no official act of expulsion having been taken in their regard, as far as I know. *Their existence must be precarious; but, Ruh-Angiz has received lenient treatment in comparison with her cousin Soraya, for it will be noted that both of them married sons of Baha-O-Llah's daughter, Furighyyeh Khanum, whom Shoghi Effendi posthumously brands as an enemy.*

RUHI EFFENDI AFNAN

In order to untangle this maze of relationship and gain a clearer picture of Abdul Baha's direct descendants, it would be well to study the following chart. It is based on my own knowledge and is corroborated by an article entitled *Members of the Holy Family* which appeared in *Baha'i News*, June 1927. I also have consulted a chart of the geneology of Baha-O-Llah, drawn up by Shoghi Effendi, which was published in *The Bahai World*, Vol. V, 1932-1934, p. 205; likewise *Daily Lessons*, by Helen S. Goodall and E. G. Cooper, published in 1908, which booklet contains a description of Abdul Baha's family under the chapter heading: *The Households* (pages 10-14).

Family Chart

Abdul Baha's four Daughters and their Children

1. Ziayyeh Khanum, wife of Mirza Hadi Afnan.

Children from this marriage:

- (1) Shoghi Effendi Rabbani
- (2) Ruh-Angiz Khanum
- (3) Mehr-Angiz Khanum
- (4) Hussain Effendi Rabbani
- (5) Riaz Effendi Rabbani

2. Touba Khanum, wife of the late Mirza Mohsen Afnan.

Children from this marriage:

- (1) Ruhi Effendi Afnan
- (2) Soraya Khanum
- (3) Sobeil Effendi Afnan
- (4) Foad Effendi Afnan

3. Rouha Khanum, wife of Mirza Jalal Effendi Shahid, son of the *King of the Martyrs* of Esphahan.

Children from this marriage:

- (1) Maryam Khanum Shahid
- (2) Dr. Munib Effendi Shahid
- (3) Zahra Khanum Shahid
- (4) Hassan Effendi Shahid

4. Monavvar Khanum, wife of Ahmad Effendi Yazdi.
No issue.

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Collateral

Furighyyeh Khanum, daughter of Baha-O-Llah and wife of **Aga Sayyed Ali Afnan**.

Children from this marriage:

- (1) The late **Hussain Effendi Afnan**
- (2) **Nayyar Effendi Afnan**
- (3) **Feyzi Effendi Afnan**
- (4) **Hassan Effendi Afnan**

Those who have lately been swept out of the Cause at the order of the Guardian are:—

Direct Excommunications

1. **Ruhi Effendi Afnan**: Grandson of Abdul Baha.
2. **Zahra Khanum**: Grand-daughter of Abdul Baha and wife of **Ruhi Effendi Afnan**.
3. **Soraya Khanum**: Grand-daughter of Abdul Baha and wife of **Feyzi Effendi Afnan**.
4. **Foad Effendi Afnan**: Grandson of Abdul Baha.
5. **Mehr-Angiz**: Grand-daughter of Abdul Baha and sister of **Shoghi Effendi**.
6. **Feyzi Effendi Afnan**: Grandson of Baha-O-Llah.

Indirect Excommunications

7. **Touba Khanum**: Second daughter of Abdul Baha.
8. **Rouha Khanum**: Third daughter of Abdul Baha.
9. **Mirza Jalal Shahid**: Son of the King of the Martyrs and husband of **Rouha Khanum**.

Posthumous Excommunications

10. **Furighyyeh Khanum**: Daughter of Baha-O-Llah.
11. **Aga Sayyed Ali Afnan**: Husband of **Furighyyeh Khanum**.

This Year of Disgrace

The law of excommunication puts an absolute ban on those who are expelled from the Faith. The families of these persons and their fellow-believers must leave the ostracized individuals alone. They must neither communicate nor associate with them. They must break all ties of friendship and of humanity even; for, if they deviate one hair's breath from this law, they themselves fall into the same ditch.

Thus as time goes on, the number of the excommunicated increases;

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for a few are generally to be found, here and there, who are willing to risk ease and safety in order to follow their generous impulses. Such evidently was the case in the instance of Toubah Khanum; it probably is the case in the instance of Rouha Khanum. However, in the instance of Ziayyeh Khanum, the Guardian cables that his *parents strongly condemn Mehr-Angiz's action*. Thus, Shoghi Effendi's father and mother have been forced to publicly denounce and repudiate their own daughter. Hereafter, they must be as strangers to her. They can never approach her in her hours of trouble or illness. They will never hold their grandchildren in their arms.

Such is the Bahai Cause in this year of disgrace—1942.

A Fact Beyond Realization

I intend to take up the matter, treating it in connection with historical data and in the light of reason; and, in order to simplify the subject as far as possible, I will center my thoughts around the personality of Ruhi Effendi Afnan. His excommunication and the reasons given for it tell the story of all the rest.

Ruhi Effendi Afnan has twice visited the United States; he has lectured before numerous Bahai gatherings and outside groups; his articles on the Bahai Cause are published in Bahai publications and the records of his loyal services to the Guardian and the Bahai organization are spread on the pages of *Baha'i News*. Knowing full well that he has not deserved the treatment accorded him at the hands of his cousin, Shoghi Effendi, I am taking it upon myself to vindicate him, as far as I am able.

Having experienced excommunication together with the ostracism of all those who are associated with me, I naturally sympathize with other excommunicated persons. However, this is not the reason that impels me to raise a voice of protest at this juncture.

During eight years, I was fed, clothed and educated by Abdul Baha. Throughout that time, the Master's daughters were most gracious to me and I carry in my memory lively tokens of their kindness. I associated most intimately with their children, and vividly remember the ardent respect of these young ones for their grandfather, and their devotion to him. I hold each and all of them in high regard.

I never objected to my own excommunication, nor did I take it at all seriously; but the excommunication of the very family of Abdul Baha has shaken my being to its foundations. I am amazed and indignant. I am outraged and horror-stricken. The fact that Shoghi Effendi has dared to expel from his own household these souls, in whose bodies run the blood

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and life of Abdul Baha, is beyond realization. The reasons given for their excommunication are childish to the extreme, having nothing to do with their faith and love for the Bahai Cause.

In the writing of this book, I have not had the opportunity of consulting with any of the members of Abdul Baha's family. It is certain that none of them would consult with me. Thus, I have asked permission of no one, and am alone responsible for every word appearing here. My own conscience is my sole guide.

Another reason for my taking up the pen in this regard is that a number of Bahais have written to me on this subject. To put it very mildly, they are disillusioned, shocked and confused. They cannot square the actions of the Guardian with his role in life. They are wondering what precipice is around the corner; toward what swamp of despair the Bahai Cause is being driven. They are anxiously asking if there may possibly be a modern rational explanation for these medieval and irrational procedures.

We will therefore face the issue and, as a first step, will examine the Bulls of Excommunication as presented in the up-to-date guise of the cablegram.

Text of Cablegrams

(Cablegram received November 10, 1941)

Ruhi's sister married covenant-breaker Feyzi, whose mother joined and supported arch-enemy Muhammad Ali and whose father 'Abdu'l-Baha denounced openly and repeatedly as His deadly enemy. Ruhi's family concurred. Inform all believers (that) all manner (of) communication (with) excommunicated family (is) forbidden.

(Signed) Shoghi Rabbani.

(Cablegram received November 10, 1941)

(The) flagrant disloyalty (of) Ruhi's family compels me (to) disclose information so long (and) patiently withheld (from) American believers concerning his failure (to) obtain my approval (of) his second visit (to) America. His subsequent conduct regarding his marriage which I refrained from revealing (to) anyone except your Assembly, as well as Foad's departure (to) England without my knowledge, should now be made known (to) believers. Confident (of) unshakable steadfastness (of) exemplary American Baha'i Community.

(Signed) Shoghi Rabbani

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Answer sent on November 17th by the National Spiritual Assembly:—

Informing friends (of your) message (about) Ruhi's family.
Assure complete obedience protection unity (of) sacred Faith.

(Cablegram received on November 21, 1941)

My confidence (in) immovable steadfastness (and) unstinted loyalty (of) American believers (is) reinforced.

(Signed) Shoghi Rabbani.

—*Baha'i News*, December, 1941, No 149, pp. 1-2

The Spiritual Quarantine

In the following article published in *Baha'i News* under the above heading, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada responds to the call in all energy and enthusiasm.

Warnings have come to the American Bahai's from the Master and the Guardian in turn, at odd intervals over a long period of years, to avoid association with Covenant-breakers. Our latest instruction about this very grave matter comes by cablegram, a copy of which appears in this issue and names Ruhi Afnan and his family as now to be included in the list of bad eminence—persons, for the protection of the Cause, to be avoided.

That a scion of the Holy Family and a close relative of the Guardian should fall into such error and loss cannot be surprising to those aware of some happenings in past cycles. Those records, however fragmentary, afford ample proof that the real bond between the Holy Manifestations, their appointed successors and those whom they guide and teach, is spiritual rather than one after the flesh.

It is recorded that God had no respect for Cain, one of the sons of Adam. A son of Noah likewise became apostate. The brethren of Joseph, the Beloved of God, sold that Holy One into exile and slavery. Aaron, the brother of Moses, misled by his wife, joined her in murmuring against his Lord whom he had long so faithfully served. Both were grievously punished and Aaron was forgiven and restored only after his repentent plea for mercy.

Perhaps few persons recall that Jesus Christ had four brothers after the flesh. Their brief mention in the Gospels implies that they were quite unaware of the station of their illustrious kinsman; while strangers attracted by the power of His Word, attained high rank in the spread of Christianity. Subh-i-Azal, half-brother of Baha'u'llah, became the Evil Tree and center of death in opposing the Tree of Life. Mirza Musa, another brother, was loyal.

Christ prophesied:

"Many shall come from the North and the South, the East and the West and shall sit down in the Kingdom of God with Abraham,

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Isaac and Jacob, while the children of the Kingdom shall be in darkness."

This prophecy was directly fulfilled in the lives of Mohammed Ali and Badi'Ullah, the two sons of Baha'u'llah who became the fallen branches, influenced by pride and greed and opposing 'Abdu'l Baha. High in birth, they were abased to the lowest depths.

And now our Guardian utters the word which means the spiritual quarantine of the excommunicated family of Rubi Afnan. The Guardian has been extremely patient and long-suffering. In making this special requirement he but fulfills his sacred duty of Guardian to all the friends. He counts upon our discernment and loyalty. We on our part know that our faith in the Cause of God, divinely aided and confirmed, is far too precious a pearl for us to imperil by our disobedience to such commands. Not only is the Guardian's right to direct us revealed by the highest authority, but for fully a score of years, with supreme wisdom, ardent devotion, proficient services and high courage, he has guided the ship of the Cause through troublous seas to the havens of victory after victory. Unitedly, heartily, devotedly, reverentially, we hear and heed his behest.

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—*Baha'i News*, December, 1941, No. 149, pp. 23

A Rare Morsel

One would think that these highly seasoned dishes would have been enough to offer up to the Bahai community at a single sitting; but, no! Before the gruesome meal is even half digested, Shoghi Effendi comes forward with a morsel fit for the most jaded of palates, and lays before his followers the fair body and soul of his younger sister, his one-time favorite.

(Cablegram received on January 1, 1942)

Faithless sister Mehrangiz (has) followed (the) example (of) Rubi's sister. All ties (have been) severed. No consideration (of) family relationships can ever be allowed (to) interfere (with the) dictates (of) justice or (to) supersede supreme fidelity (to) Center (of) Baha'u'llah's Covenant. Inform believers.

(Signed) Shoghi Rabbani

(Cablegram received on January 3rd)

Parents strongly condemn Mehrangiz's action.

(Signed) Shoghi Rabbani

After presenting the above cablegrams in his columns, the Editor of *Baha'i News* continues:

In publishing these two messages from the Guardian, the National

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Assembly reminds the friends of the statement on "The Spiritual Quarantine" prepared for the December, 1941 issue of *Bahá'í News* in connection with the Guardian's two previous cablegrams reporting Covenant-breakers within the family . . .

The final cablegram to share with the friends came January 8th:—

Comforted (and) fortified (by) fervent messages testifying (to) solidity (of) bonds (of) spiritual kinship uniting me (with) true upholders (of the) Covenant. (I) prize their loyalty, glory (in) their achievements, hail their resolve, invoke still greater blessings (upon) their superb exertions.

(Signed) Shoghi Rabbani

—*Bahá'í News*, January, 1942, No. 150, p. 1

These amazing cablegrams sent by Shoghi Effendi across the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean, and the article by the National Spiritual Assembly on *The Spiritual Quarantine* breathe the essence of fanaticism, bigotry, and mental and spiritual aberration. They are not only out of place with the World of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha, but are contrary to the forward trend of this 20th century, as far as civilized countries are concerned. Indeed, they are contrary to the forward trend that was felt in all past centuries for, even in the darkest periods, there have existed wise and humane personalities which influenced their times in various effective ways. In the course of my writing, I shall again refer to the contents of these documents and try to analyze the spirit and the motives that are back of them; but, now let us return to Ruhi Effendi Afnan.

Early Training

Ruhi Afnan was a child of thirteen years when I first met him in Port Said, Egypt, in 1913. Since then, I have followed his career with interest. I have watched him as grandson to Abdul Baha, an earnest, obedient child, possessed of rapt adoration for his grandfather. I have watched him as an eager youth on Mount Carmel, as a brilliant student at the University of Beirut, as a teacher and lecturer in the United States and as the hard-working and faithful representative of Shoghi Effendi.

When I was in the service of Abdul Baha, I kept a diary in which I wrote down his talks, both formal and informal, his actions and the impression made on the people who came in contact with him. This record of past events is a treasury of historical data, and I can now return to it in reference to Ruhi Afnan.

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During the months of July and August 1913, Abdul Baha, having completed his journey through the United States, Canada and Europe, lived for a while in Port Said and Ramleh, Egypt. I was then acting as secretary to him and now, after the lapse of twenty-nine years, I find the following entries in my diary. To me, they are of interest and value, because they give a spontaneous picture of Ruhi Effendi as he appeared at that time to a fellow-believer and a fellow-Persian.

Port Said, Egypt, July 22, 1913

About six o'clock we left our apartment in search of news. The headquarters of all news is Ahmad Yazdi's store. We found there to our surprise and delight Haji Sayad Javad and Ruhi Effendi, just arrived from Haifa at the bidding of the Master. The former is an old Bahá of the time of Baha-O-Llah with an interesting history as background; the latter is the grandson of Abdul Baha. He is about 13 years old, the son of Mirza Mohsen Afnan. He is a quiet, lovely boy. I liked him at first sight. He outhreats the spirit of devotion and beauty, and no doubt some day will be a power in the Cause.

Port Said, Egypt, July 23, 1913

This morning Haji Sayad Javad and Ruhi Effendi came to call on us and we welcomed them with Bahai cordiality.

Port Said, Egypt, July 24, 1913

This morning the believers of Port Said, including myself, went to the station to bid farewell to Haji Sayad Javad, Ruhi Effendi and Mrs. Getsinger, who are leaving for Ramleh to be honored with the blessing of the Master's presence.

Ramleh, Egypt, August 2, 1913

Ruhi Effendi and his mother left today for Haifa. He is about 13 years old. He has captivated my heart and I have surrendered. What a sweet soul he is! I love him, oh, ever so much! He is so polite, so gentle, so humble, so beautiful, so pure, so noble! What a wonderful person he will become when he has grown to manhood! Watch him! Some day he will become a great power in the Cause.

From Ramleh, the Master journeyed to Haifa and I find the following note in the last week of December.

Haifa, Palestine, December 26, 1913

At noon we enjoyed a nice lunch at which were present Mirza Jalal, Shoghi Effendi and Ruhi Effendi.

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From 1914 to 1918, I observed Ruhi Effendi as he grew in physical and mental stature. His devotion to Abdul Baha was proverbial and the Master, in turn, bestowed upon him the graces of his wisdom and spirit. During eight or nine months of the year, he attended the University of Beirut in company with other Persian students, while the summer months were spent with his family on Mount Carmel. It was in the course of the holiday seasons that I was in a position to note the increase of his understanding; for, he literally basked in the presence of the Master, losing no opportunity to gain further grip on the teachings and principles of the Cause.

Later, at the suggestion of Abdul Baha, I myself entered the University of Beirut, taking a number of extra-curricular courses on *International Law*, *Education* and *History*. Here, I met Ruhi Effendi almost daily on the Campus and in the Library, at play and at work, and noticed his industry and good humor, displayed in the various departments of college life. Here, I saw him on Sunday mornings in a dormitory room where the Persian students gathered to pray, to chant and to take part in talks and discussions, which were delivered with all the fervor and enthusiasm of youth looking upon the world through the marvelous eyes of Abdul Baha. Those were happy days, usefully spent; while Ruhi Effendi played his little part in making them more profitable and more cheerful for all of us.

The record of services rendered the Cause by Ruhi Afnan, after the departure from this life of Abdul Baha, proves that I had not been wrong in my early estimation of his character and ability. Therefore, I will review this record and spread it before the eyes of the Bahai world. Perchance those eyes may see the truth, and the souls back of them may act according to that justice which is so repeatedly eulogized by Baha-O-Llah in his sacred writings.

Actually, no other grandson of Abdul Baha has displayed equal talents, equal energy or equal power of teaching and explanation as has Ruhi Effendi. In fact, he is the only descendant of the Master who was sent to this country to represent the Cause. And, how well he fulfilled his mission! From coast to coast, the Bahais remember and cherish his name. It was a memorable experience for them to meet and know a member of Abdul Baha's family; while, at the same time, to meet and know an illumined teacher, a noble character and an unusually charming personality was, in itself, a privilege. Besides, what a champion of the Guardian he was! How he used his influence to uphold the National Spiritual Assembly and the system that it embodies! This influence was quite penetrating, as I know

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to my cost, for several of the intimate and valued members of The New History Society left us at his bidding.

The End of the Road?

Now, in full maturity at the age of forty-two, this promising career has been cut short. The accumulated knowledge that was his, the experience that he had gained, as well as the natural advantages that came to him through his holy lineage, have been cast overboard and wasted. His name is anathema; communication with him forbidden, and oblivion offered as his sole refuge. Ruhi Effendi, his wife and baby, grandson, grand-daughter and great grandchild of Abdul Baha, have been stigmatized and despoiled of their heritage by another grandson of Abdul Baha. What a mockery! What an excruciating travesty of religion! Does Shoghi Effendi really think that the Cause is his plaything, to be kicked about at random and rolled into the muddy stream of the gutter? Is the Will, of which he talks so much, simply a mandate of personal property? And are we children too, that we should stand spell-bound before the antics of a fretful child?

As to the members of the National Spiritual Assembly: Is this procedure in accordance with their idea of the Cause which came to unify and to bless? Has this body no conscience, no respect for the descendants of the Master, that it so willingly and with such alacrity, joins in the chase and presses in on the kill?

Now, regarding the few that are left in the family and the Bahais at large: Do they think that this is the end—the closing chapter of an impious book? Why should it be so? The Guardian has had a taste of very pungent blood. After it, the common kind will seem flat. The circle can yet be drawn in. Shoghi Effendi is on the watch, waiting for the slightest slip; and a slip will come, sooner or later. Maybe, the next victim will be one of his brothers; maybe, his father or mother; maybe, his American wife, the former Mary Maxwell of Montreal, Canada, and New York City. No one, absolutely no one is safe. Then (to let loose our fancy for a moment), when the circle has narrowed to a point, the Guardian, in search of yet another thrill or perhaps as an act of contrition, may take it into his head to excommunicate himself. Well! Perhaps this would solve the whole Bahai problem.

Returning to Ruhi Effendi: I, personally, believe that this cruel blow will not terminate his career of service to the Cause; and I venture to predict that he will not allow himself and his family to be engulfed by the opaque waves of obliteration. His great grandfather, Baha-O-Llah, surmounted

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the formidable barricades raised before him by the Imperial Houses of Iran and Turkey. His grandfather, Abdul Baha, overstrode the pitfalls laid in his path by power and circumstance, and raised the banner of the Cause in the proud capitals of Europe and America. Ruhi Effendi is of their race; his son is of their race. They belong to the Cause, and the Cause belongs to them. They need the Cause, and the Cause needs them; and no voice, however thunderous, and no document, however embossed, stamped and sealed can take it away from them.

It is an axiomatic fact that inborn, inherent spiritual talents can never be completely stifled or nullified by an outside will. A blind man may insist that it is midnight at noon, but the seeing eye beholds the sun standing in the azure sky. I believe that Ruhi Effendi, in spite of his natural modesty, realizes that certain valuable, inborn, inherent spiritual talents have been planted in his nature by the hand of the Almighty, and I have faith that the conscience that is in him will not permit these assets, together with the training that he received at the hands of the Master, to become a total loss to the Cause.

In the course of the years, Ruhi Effendi has consistently demonstrated his capacity, and the record of his services stands clear in the publications put out by the National Spiritual Assembly. I, therefore, intend to refresh the memory of the Bahai world by reprinting a portion of these records in the chapters that are to follow.

Chapter II
MOUNT CARMEL

The myriads of human beings that inhabit the globe of ours enter my heart and find unspeakable joy in each other's company. There lovers enter and look at each other, and children stand and laugh in merriment . . . My heart is full to the brim with transcendent joy, and I find the world without a single human soul in it. It is all empty.

Oh, I know. How can it be otherwise when all have entered my heart?

—Rabindranath Tagore
The Man and his Poetry by
Basanta Koomar Roy, p. 153

Chapter II

MOUNT CARMEL

Away from the Ever-Rumoring World

Nearly twenty-five years ago, a little Persian girl, living at the foot of Mt. Carmel, transposed into English words her impressions of that mountain ridge which had dominated her outlook since birth. Now, it is with deep regard for that little girl and for the woman that she has become that I reproduce, verbatim, an article on *The Physical and Spiritual Beauty of Mt. Carmel*, written on June 30, 1917 by Mehr-Angiz Khanum who has lately come into prominence through the cablegrams sent to this country by her brother Shoghi Effendi, Guardian of the Bahai Cause:—

On the eastern coast of Mediterranean Sea rises high the chain of Mt. Carmel swelling up to a noble height and jutting into the restless waters that lays at its foot. The scenery it offers is of a most ideal and picturesque beauty, specially now at spring time. Taking part in the awakening of nature from its wintry rest, its surface is incrustated with herbs of a sombre velveteen green. Large prickly bushes, clad in tiny yellowish flowers, spread high their thorny hands as tho' to protect their blossoms from the fatal touch of an injurious hand. Everywhere in the valleys, dells and ravines, wild flowers have flushed into life; violets, half hidden timidly among their leaves, fill the air with their sweet fragrance; blue-bells, hanging loosely along their twining, fragile stems, exhibit their golden breasts; daisies, poppies and lilies, growing in all their richness and exquisiteness of color, turn up their smiling faces bedewed with the gems of morning toward the clear azure sky.

Pine groves are numerous on its summit, and they grow in their full grace and charm. These beautiful woods, full of life and restlessness, are haunted by beavies of twittering birds, who, while chirping merrily, build their nests among the foliage of the trees. Singing birds, perched on lofty branches, mingle their thrilling melodies to the constant rustle of the pines. The view of this magical mountain is of a most captivating beauty: like a sea-nymph, arrayed in all its majestic pomp and magnificence, it looks down benignly from its height at the country and further off at the sea beneath. The houses, built in the fashion of an amphitheatre, get crowded at the sea-shore while they reduce in number as they gradually ascend its lower hills.

The physical charm is enhanced by its spiritual beauty. It is the mountain so frequently mentioned in the old Testament and known as the "Mountain of God." It was the abode and shelter of the Prophet Elijah who, being threatened by the wicked King Ahab and his atrocious wife Jezebel, sought refuge in one of its caverns; and that

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cavern, having been identified, has grown the object of respect of many a person who goes to visit it as a shrine.

But recently, Mt. Carmel has grown of vivid interest to the Baháís; for on one of its vine-clad slopes rests the Blessed Remains of His Holiness the Bab, laid beneath the stone floor of a house erected for that special purpose. A small garden surrounds the building, and the air is embalmed with the sweet fragrance of the blooming flowers. In the rear of the tomb, there is a cluster of ever-green cypresses, overlooking the panorama of the whole country. Under the shade of these trees, Bahá'u'lláh sat to view the beautiful sceneries. And, up there, away from the ever-rumoring world, an atmosphere of heavenly peace and of sublime concord pervades over all things, filling the heart with blissful feelings of love, unity and joy.

A Unique Family

During World War I, I lived in Haifa and Acca where for five years I was engaged in the service of Abdul Baha. While the war was being fought on land and sea, the Master and his family as well as his Persian followers led a quiet, retired life and engaged themselves in caring for the suffering community nestled at the foot of Mt. Carmel. Abdul Baha was our rock of safety. He was a spiritual horizon toward which the people turned their eyes, and from which they received comfort and joy in the midst of misery and pain. Although we were surrounded with perils of all sorts, we were never mentally disturbed, for the Master enveloped us with the mantle of his protection and saw to it that, as far as was possible, no actual danger encroached on the fringes of our existence. Through his personal direction, he dispelled the darkness of those embattled years, bringing consolation and cheer to old and young, friend and stranger. He was the one whom every person consulted when in trouble; and the needs of all, whether material or spiritual, were supplied without hesitation or loss of time.

Cut off from the rest of the world and relying mainly on our inner resources, I became better acquainted than I had been before with the members of Abdul Baha's household: his sister, Bahyyieh Khanum; his wife, Moneerreh Khanum; his four daughters, his sons-in-law and his many grandchildren. Consequently, I came to realize through personal contact that this was a distinguished and glorious family, dedicated to the welfare of the Cause which their Beloved was interpreting, to an unbelieving world, through his life and teachings. Truly, these women, men and children had no other idea but to serve the Master, no earthly desire but to please him and no concern but to live, to the utmost of their capacity, in accord with

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his lofty principles. To a very large extent, they succeeded in their aim, setting up an example worthy of emulation.

Now, I can honestly confess that it has never been in my nature to envy anybody's station, whether inherited through ties of blood relationship or attained through talent and industry. As a humble servant of my Master, I had my own place; and with it I was completely satisfied. Neither then, nor now do I aspire to reach a higher position for, in my estimation, there never has been nor will there ever be one higher than that of full and unconditional servitude. Nevertheless, I looked upon each member of the household as greatly gifted by birth; we associated on terms of a transcendent friendship, and now, after the years, I retain an abiding respect and an unshakable love for this unique family.

A Potential Teacher

In this privileged and fascinating group that circled around Abdul Baha, receiving his daily consideration and care, was Ruhi Effendi Afnan, the oldest son of the Master's second daughter; and for this boy I set aside in my heart an especially warm spot. From the day on which I had first seen him in Port Said, I was drawn to him on account of his modesty and princely dignity; and later, on Mt. Carmel, it became one of my pleasures to engage him in conversation and watch the workings of his mind. He was a dreamer of dreams and, inasmuch as I myself was a prodigious dreamer, we dreamed together the dreams of Baha-O-Llah and those of our Master. Our conversations, lengthy, and numerous, often centered on Abdul Baha and his spiritual victories in Europe and America; and here, as one who had been an eye-witness to these exploits, I was able to recount the story of the Master's successive appearances in churches, synagogues and universities, and in meetings of all sorts, and to describe the impression that had been produced on the people. Also, we studied together the Writings of Baha-O-Llah and mapped out youthful plans to spread these teachings throughout the length and breadth of the land.

When the Tablets of the Divine Plan were revealed by Abdul Baha, Ruhi Effendi Afnan was one of the few who grasped their significance and understood their world-wide implications; and it was with these thoughts in mind that he arranged the program of his courses in the American University of Beirut. All who, in later years, came to meet him in England and America and heard his masterly lectures, gave testimony to the fact that he had attained the position of an authoritative, fluent and convincing teacher.

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Holiday Seasons

During the summer months, Ruhi Effendi spent his holidays on Mt. Carmel, together with some thirty Persian Bahai students from the American University of Beirut; and there, this enthusiastic company had the opportunity of listening to the daily discourses of Abdul Baha. The Master instructed his youthful pupils in the fundamentals of the Cause; explained those principles and ideals that ultimately would usher in the dawn of international understanding and peace, and exhorted all who heard him to acquire the educational advantages of the modern world so that, at the proper time, they might become the wise expounders and spreaders of the teachings of Baha-O-Llah.

A distinguished Persian, Professor Noured-Din Zeine, the son of Janabe Zeinel-Mogarrabin who had joined Baha-O-Llah in his exile at Acca, has held for many years, a position on the faculty of the American University of Beirut. During World War I, Professor Zeine lived in Haifa and, as one of the secretaries of Abdul Baha, was an integral member of the Bahai Colony. A statement prepared by him for the Spiritual Assembly at Beirut gives a graphic account of those holiday seasons on Mt. Carmel. He writes:—

Between 1900 and 1910 we do not find more than six Bahai students in the Syrian Protestant College, studying in the schools of Arts and Sciences and Medicine. . . . The following nine years may well be called the golden period of the Bahai students in the Syrian Protestant College. Their number increased very rapidly, until in 1913-1914 it reached thirty. Persian, Palestinian, Turkish and Egyptian Bahais they were, all of them living in utmost friendship and love with each other. Add to that the presence of Shoghi Effendi and Ruhi Effendi among the students during that period and then try to imagine how great was their happiness. Then came the terrible catastrophe of 1914. . . . During those four years . . . in spite of the fact that the number of Bahai students decreased one-third, in spite of the economic difficulties that they had to face, away from home and cut off from all communication with their loved ones, they lived together in the same brotherly love and unity, the same happiness on their faces and in their hearts.

Before closing the account of this second period a word must be said about their summer vacations. In the early part of it, when the Master was travelling in Europe and America, the Bahai students spent their summers in Lebanon, but after His return, they were asked to come to Haifa. With what joy did they dismount the donkeys that had brought them from Beirut, for in those days the modern conveniences of travelling were not known. . . . Those days spent with the Master were indeed glorious days. To hear him every morning and afternoon and to walk with him on Mt. Carmel, to pray with Him

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in the Holy Shrines, such was the privilege of the Bahai students of that time, a privilege that very few then had and no one will ever again have.

Those three months of summer vacation were a period of spiritual education received from the lips of the Great Educator Himself. That is why all their material difficulties were forgotten, especially in the days of the War, all their worries and anxieties melted away; they were in the presence of the Master, what else mattered?

—*The Bahai World*, Vol. III, 1928-1930, p. 57

Sunday Meetings

In Haifa, it was the custom on Sunday afternoons to gather on Mt. Carmel before the Shrine of the Bab which commands a ravishing view of the Bay of Acca, extending on the left toward the Mediterranean Sea and on the right, in a curving silvery sweep, to the very foundations of the Prison City of Acca. When the believers had assembled, the Master would lead the way into the Shrine, and there he would lift his melodious voice in chant and prayer. After this reverent visitation, we would emerge on the terrace and for a while stroll in the lovely garden; then, we would come together again in a large room situated in the same building, to one side of the Shrine. When everyone had taken his seat on chairs ranged in a square around the four walls, the Master would enter and all would arise. *Bismillah!* he would say, *Befarmaeed! Beneshineed! Khoshamedeed!* Unforgettable words—his greeting pronounced times without number. Then he would cross the room, seat himself at the upper right corner, and we would sit down.

A pause. One or two minutes, or a little more, then Abdul Baha would begin to speak. The themes of these talks varied greatly. If there were present some pilgrims, coming from the far-flung corners of the earth, he would adapt his remarks to their special condition or needs, and refer to incidents which had taken place in their villages or cities. Often, he would mention the half-forgotten names of early pioneers in the Cause from their own native lands. Sometimes, he would take as his subject the good news contained in letters which had been received from Persia or India, from Russia or America; but more than often, during those summer months, he would speak about the tragedy of war with the destruction entailed on life and property. Occasionally, he would ask a question of one of the believers and then, on the tenuous fiber of a simple answer, would, through the magic of words and the power of the spirit, build a structure of explanation, laying the foundation of a new understanding in every mind and setting up a light to shine through the colonnades of every spirit.

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He spoke on God, on the mission of the Prophets, on immortality, on search after truth, on severance and detachment, on knowledge and wisdom, on tolerance and appreciation, on intellectual hospitality and spiritual understanding, on the sciences and arts, on economics and social services, and told stories about the martyrs and heroes of the Baháí Cause—and the subject, whatsoever it might be, was always connected with the teachings that Baha-O-Llah had come to establish in the hearts of men. In this manner were the meetings conducted both in Acca and Haifa, no person, however distinguished or learned, ever opening his mouth unless a question was put to him by the Master. His was the inexhaustible fountain of wisdom, and we filled our pitchers to their capacity with the water of life that continuously flowed from his lips.

A Ticklish Problem

As the war dragged along with no end in sight, an idea came to my mind, which according to the established rule of proceedings was completely revolutionary, but which to me, who had lived in the United States, seemed quite natural. The idea was this: that the Baháí students should themselves address the Sunday afternoon meetings in the presence of Abdul Baha; and more: that the children of the family and the children of the Baháís should also take part. So, I set about to put this simple plan into action, and presently discovered that I had addressed myself to a most ticklish problem.

At first I consulted with the Baháí students. "What," they exclaimed, "have you completely lost your mind? We always thought that you entertained outlandish notions, but never suspected anything like this. Imagine getting up and delivering speeches before Abdul Baha! It is unheard of! Wouldn't it be like carrying coals to Newcastle? Besides, what have we to say, and how would we ever dare utter a word in the presence of the Master? We all would collapse and fall to the floor right then and there."

I quite understood their attitude but could not agree with it, so my ardor did not cool down. Therefore, I sought out the parents of the children in the community and presented the plan. They were dumbfounded: Their little boys and girls who stood spellbound, with folded hands before Abdul Baha, how could they raise their voices in his presence? Besides, they continued, the children had nothing to say. In order to meet this argument, I suggested that they, the parents, might prepare the speeches; but found that their confidence in themselves was also nil. Anyhow why waste time, they said, when they had Abdul Baha in their midst to teach and guide them into the right path.

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Finding myself in an impasse, I decided to take my case directly to the Family; so, I presented myself successively before Bahyyieh Khanum, Moncerreh Khanum and the daughters of Abdul Baha. Here, to the delight of my heart, I met with some encouragement. The daughter of Baha-O-Llah, Bahyyieh Khanum, responded to the idea with an alacrity that surprised me. To her, it seemed well worthwhile that the young generation should come forward and show what it could do. Furthermore, it would be amusing to see the children standing on their feet and speaking out, even if their ideas were few and far between. As I left her, she gave me one of her heavenly, human smiles, I even could say that it was a little chuckle of sly pleasure at the prospect of what might develop in the near future, and she said:—You have met with some opposition from the believers, but it seems to me that you are not discouraged. I will pray to Baha-O-Llah. I know He will assist you—. Later, Moncerreh Khanum, the wife of the Master and her daughters treated me with equal kindness. They all understood my motive and felt that the idea might bear fruit.

The next step was to lay the plan before Abdul Baha, and the right moment arrived sooner than I had expected. One day, I found him alone in the garden of his house and, taking my courage in both hands, I brought up the subject and unfolded the plan. When the speech that had long been prepared in my mind reached its end, silence came and descended upon us. The Master, who had been walking all the time with myself following, continued on his way through the garden paths. Five minutes passed. It appeared like a century. At last, when we were close to the house he stopped, turned and looked straight at me with those inscrutable eyes that pierced the heart. I knew from past experiences that something definite was in his mind, but could not guess as to whether he approved or disapproved the plan. Then, he spoke:—*Leave the matter in my hands*, and he mounted the steps of the porch and disappeared through the door.

That night, a large meeting was held. Believers and students crowded the room, together with many of the children who seldom attended the evening gatherings. I took my seat near the entrance, feeling instinctively that something unusual was about to happen.

Abdul Baha began to speak, and the theme of his talk was something to this effect:—During many years he has raised his voice; he has delivered hundreds of speeches in Egypt, Europe and America; he has spoken at home, in Acca and Haifa, to his followers and to pilgrims coming from near and far—all this, season after season. Now, the hour has arrived for the children of Baha-O-Llah to become vocal, while Abdul Baha sits

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and listens to their words. They must unseal their lips and, relying on the confirmations of the Holy Spirit, contribute their understanding of the Teachings. The youth of Baha must train itself in the art of eloquence and public discussion. The boys and girls must not be afraid, for they have been chosen by God to deliver the glorious Message of the New Day to all the inhabitants of the world. Time is short and the hours are ticking away. Here, in this divine university, the believers, the students and the children must emulate his example. Let them learn to speak before Abdul Baha passes away from this mortal life. As soldiers in the army of Baha-O-Llah, let them sharpen their instruments, which are their tongues, and advance toward the arena of explanation. If they do not speak now, when will they do so? If the nightingale does not sing in the rose-garden, how will it be fitted to bring harmony to the desert places? Yes, the hour has come for him to keep silent and for others to take up the work. He is satisfied to sit at the side. He is waiting; he is patiently waiting.

The above is the gist of the talk given on this occasion by Abdul Baha; but he spoke much longer and I am not presenting his actual words, but rather the spirit that animated them. Then, the address having come to an end, he arose and left the room, while one could have heard the dropping of a pin. As he passed by the door, he looked at me and smiled.

Immediately following this memorable evening, plans were set afoot for the conducting by the young generation of a new type of Sunday afternoon meeting.

The Students Take Hold

The Persian Bahai students from the American University in Beirut prepared their own speeches and presently delivered them. Among these were Mirza Abdul Hossain Istakhree, Azzizollah Khan Bahadur, Mirza Badi Bushrui, Mirza Ali Mohammad Khan Shirazi, Ali Aga Rashti, Mohommad Ali Afnan, Mirza Kamal Khan, Dr. Arastou Aflatoun, Shoghi Effendi and Ruhi Effendi all of whom, in due time, presented a number of well-constructed talks on the Cause and its relation to the problems of our modern civilization.

Feeling that these efforts had a value all their own, it seemed to me that records of them should be kept, even though the speeches were delivered orally. Therefore, I requested the students to set down their talks in a series of copy books. As I now write, the old manuscripts lately bound into volumes are spread before my eyes; and, as I read them one by one, I am struck by the cogency and reasoning power that had been displayed by these

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young minds. Among the papers, I find one talk given by Shoghi Effendi and two by Ruhi Effendi, in their own Persian handwriting. The talks by Ruhi Effendi are on the following subjects:—*Religion is the Cause of the Progress of Humanity*, given on August 19, 1917 and *The Necessary Means for the Development of Persia*, given on September 16, 1917.

The fact that these students had to deliver their talks before an audience of from fifty to a hundred persons, and that this number included Abdul Baha, constituted an extraordinary experience. At first, they manifested a great deal of hesitancy but, as the weeks passed into months, they took hold of themselves, acquired assurance and played their roles with dignity and serenity. This diffidence on their part was referred to in a speech by Azzizollah Khan Bahadur, who said:—

Although we as a company of students are powerless to open our lips in the holy presence of the Master—how much less to deliver speeches—for that is considered the height of audacity—this very audacity now takes the aspect of obedience to his command. Therefore, the tongue of my conscience haltingly and with trepidation makes the following remarks . .

It goes without saying that these budding orators received their reward. At the close of each Sunday meeting and often again during the week, the Master would shower his blessings upon them, at the same time inciting them to spread the wings of their imagination over yet wider horizons.

The Children Come Forward

Once the dam of silence had been lifted, the flood of enthusiasm ran high and all the boys and girls began to clamor for the privilege of speaking in the presence of Abdul Baha. Of course they had to be helped; therefore, the task of preparing speeches, both long and short, fell on my shoulders. The subjects I chose were varied, the language obviously was Persian and the phrases simple and direct. It took a great deal of time to prepare the talks, to teach them to the children, to coach them in delivery and then to arrange the programs and supervise the conduct of the meetings. Altogether, I wrote one hundred and three speeches, a good percentage of these being for the girls, who took subjects such as: the freedom enjoyed by Western women, their struggle for suffrage, their educational and vocational advantages and their enlightened services to their fellow-men.

Most of the girls' lectures were again delivered at the weekly meetings which took place regularly on either Tuesdays or Thursdays (I do not remember which) in the home of Abdul Baha, under the auspices of the

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adies of the household. Maryam Khanum, Mehr-Angiz Khanum, Zahra Khanum and Munib Effendi were a few among the many grandchildren of the Master for whom I drew up little speeches, and who delivered them with grace and with joyful hearts.

After awhile, I began to run short of subjects and felt that the time had come for the girls to express their own ideas. I knew that they could do this, for had they not been educated by Abdul Baha and had they not been allowed to bask in his presence during the period of their lives? So, I suggested this new plan to a few of the older girls and found the result to be miraculous. Some of them took leadership in this field, demonstrating their ability in a way that surprised themselves as well as others. Notable amongst these girls was Khorsheed Onsi Khanum, daughter of Aga Sayad Yahya, who has left in my archives a record of more than forty speeches, copied in Persian in her own handwriting, all giving evidence of a spiritual outlook and a well-informed and balanced mind. Another talented young personality was Mehr-Angiz Khanum, sister of Shoghi Effendi, who displayed a facility for writing in English. I have copies of two short essays from her pen; one on *Contentment: the Foundation of Happiness* and another on *The Physical and Spiritual Beauty of Mount Carmel*, which latter essay heads this chapter.

The Master Steps In

Now, as a development of these intellectual and spiritual efforts which kept the younger generation busy and happy on Mt. Carmel during World War I, the Master one day specified a wish that the children should deal more directly with the history of the Bahai Cause; and this desire on his part brought forth a climax to our activities in a form that I have never seen tried elsewhere.

After due thought and discussion with a number of Persian students, which included Ruhi Effendi Afnan, we all came to the conclusion that there should be prepared a series of short speeches, unfolding progressively the life of the Bab. The Master applauded the idea, and as the task was put in my hands, I began to work without loss of time.

Starting with a brief sketch of the history of Sheikh Ahmad Ahsai and Haji Sayad Kazem Rashti, the two heralds who had predicted the imminent appearance of the Promised One, I advanced step by step along the historic route trod by the Bab during his ministry, continuing to the final scene of his martyrdom in Tabriz and ending with the transfer of his remains from Persia to Mt. Carmel. These essays were submitted to

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Abdul Baha, who studied them attentively as I brought them to him one by one, making corrections and suggesting facts with which I was unacquainted to be incorporated here and there. By the time that the series was finished, I had prepared twenty-five speeches, each one giving a complete phase of the life of the Bab, and all together covering the story from beginning to end. They were twenty-five vignettes, twenty-five miniatures; and the whole was a drama.

When the writing was completed, I selected twenty-five boys and girls and after I had presented each with the part that fitted him or her best, the task of memorizing and then of rehearsal began in earnest. I had to direct the company until all could recite their lines naturally and without halt or hesitation. Happy and invigorating days were these, spent in this all-absorbing labor of love! Sometimes, when the rehearsal was in full swing, the Master would drop in on us and listen to the budding orators. He often corrected them as they went along and, on one memorable occasion, he got up and gave a full lesson in elocution, instructing them, as any director would, regarding a raise in the voice or a dramatic pause; pointing out where emphasis might be laid and where the words were to come softly as the wind that murmurs through the branches of the trees.

The Drama

At long last, the expected day arrived! It was Sunday afternoon and Mt. Carmel was bathed in golden sunlight. One by one, two by two, the believers ascended the mountain to attend a unique meeting regarding which rumors had been floating about for weeks. The parents were expectant but apprehensive; the young people were tense with excitement, praying and hoping that they might not forget their lines. The large central chamber, situated next to the Shrine of the Bab, had been decorated with flowers, and presently it became filled with the pioneers of the Cause and the younger men. Through an open door, the women could be seen crowded in an adjoining room. The *speakers* were ranged in the sight of all. Abdul Baha's presence completed the picture.

The meeting opened with the chanting of prayers; then, the Master turned his eyes to me, as a signal to go ahead with the program, and the drama began.

The first speaker stood, and with perfect poise told the story of Sheikh Ahmad Ahsai, the great scholar who, in the early years of the nineteenth century, had been fully aware of the fact that the Hour of Destiny was very close. He sat down. Immediately following, the boy sitting in the next place

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arose and picking up the thread of history, went on with the life of Haji Kazem Rashti, the illumined teacher who had said of the coming Prophet:—*My knowledge is a drop, compared to the immensity of his knowledge; my attainments as a speck of dust, in the face of the wonders of his grace and power.* He sat down. Another boy took up the account with the birth of the Bab, continuing to the hour of his Declaration on May 23, 1844. From this point, the colorful and tragic life of the Bab was recounted—his pilgrimage to Mecca, his return to Shiraz, his wanderings through Persia attended by an ever-increasing host, his incarceration in the castles of Maku and Chehriz and his martyrdom in the public square of Tabriz. Then, the spread of his message, the massacre of his followers and the perilous journey to Palestine with the shattered remnants of his sacred body. All this in quick succession, like flashes on a screen, was unfolded before a breathless audience. It was a miracle of effect. From first to last, the children made no mistake, nor did they pause or fumble for a word. They spoke with fire and fervor, with conviction and love, even as little disciples of the Great Prophet, which indeed they were.

When the final note of the dramatic symphony had been struck, silence descended upon the room; while the eyes of parents and friends, of old and young in that crowded assemblage, rained with tears. Truly, it was an unforgettable day; and to me, who had labored so hard for its fulfillment, it was a *most* unforgettable day.

As I examine the manuscripts of those twenty-five speeches, bound as they now are in a single volume, and think of the young people who had played their parts so beautifully, I am carried back over the intervening span of twenty-five years and live again those hours the like of which could never be reproduced in my life or, doubtless, in the lives of any.

In December 1918 I started on my journey to America, and on the way stopped for a few weeks in Cairo, Egypt. There, I met the celebrated Arab scholar, Sheikh Mohyeddin, who had been a pupil of the even more celebrated Mirza Abul Fazl. During one of our many interviews, I showed him the manuscripts of the speeches and he was so delighted with them that he made a copy of each and every one. Sometime later, when I was living in the United States, I received a printed book mailed by him; and, on examining it, found to my infinite pleasure that it was entitled *The Book of Nineteen Speeches*. All the talks were contained in this volume, but Sheikh Mohyeddin had named it as he had because the story of the Bab as told by the children consisted of nineteen chapters. The rest of the material dealt with the history of Sheikh Ahmad Absai and Haji Sayad

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Kazem Rashti. Needless to say, this volume is among my most cherished possessions.

It is likewise interesting to note that this book is listed in a catalogue of Baha'i Publications in Oriental Languages under the title: *The 19 Talks, Cairo* (see *The Baha'i World*, Vol. VIII. 1938-1940, p. 737).

An Incontestable Fact

During those summer seasons of youthful activity on Mt. Carmel, the presence of Ruhi Effendi Afnan was felt by all. Personally, I delighted in his fresh and expansive outlook, admired the sober restraint which was his as well, and was moved by the spirit of dedication in him, which was apparent in spite of his cheerful, modest ways and manner. Looking back over those years and scanning them up to the present, I find as an incontestable fact that, in the entire family of Abdul Baha, he is the only one who has literally followed in the footsteps of his grandfather, leaving the retirement of Haifa and sailing the seas to carry the message of the Cause to distant ports. In this realization, we might transport ourselves in thought to Sunday, August 19, of the year 1917.

On Mt. Carmel, the young people are holding their meeting in the presence of the Master. It is an exciting moment as far as the seventeen year old speaker of the afternoon is concerned, for he is about to deliver his maiden speech. His grandfather is observing him closely as he arises in boyish shyness and stands erect with flushed cheeks and shining eyes.

Shall we listen to the words which Ruhi Effendi spoke on that day? His talk is here before us, and the subject-matter is definitely interesting. However if we do so, I suggest that we accord him one grace: that of questioning if the fate which has befallen him in 1942 would have seemed possible to Abdul Baha, as he watched him then—would he *acceptable*, as he watches him now:—

Religion is Conducive to the Progress of Humanity

The Ancient Beauty (Baha-O-Llah) in The First Ishrak says:

“Religion is a manifest light and a strong fortress for the protection and tranquility of the people of the world; for fear of God commands people to do that which is just and forbids them that which is evil. If the lamp of Religion remains concealed, agitation and anarchy would prevail, and the orb of Justice and Equity and the sun of Peace and Tranquility would be withheld from giving light. Every man of discernment testifies to that which is (here) mentioned.”

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Religion is conducive to the progress and prosperity of the human-kind. It is the cause of union and harmony among different tribes. Religion transforms enmity and hatred into love and friendship, and changes humiliation and poverty to glory and exaltation. If we look upon the pages of history, we realize that religion has unified and consolidated the scattered parts of every nation and brought in its train advancement and civilization. For example, the Jews consisted of various tribes while they lived in Egypt as captives subjected to the tyranny of the Pharaohs, but when His Holiness Moses appeared, he unified this lowly and humiliated people through true religion and the knowledge of the Oneness of God. Thus, he established among them a cord of union and harmony, and they became so strengthened that within a short while they were freed from the yoke of the Pharaohs and became the conquerors of the Holy Land. Presently, they established a kingdom, erected a throne and obtained a great sovereignty. They defeated their enemies and, while living under the shade of the Mosaic law, attained to the apogee of splendor, enjoying freedom and liberty. However, when they deviated from the path of Moses, their emancipation was changed into captivity and their glory transformed into humiliation. This was the result of religion among the Jewish nation.

Now, let us for a moment investigate the history of the Arabs. These consisted of scattered and divided tribes, submerged in the sea of ignorance and illiteracy, and pursuing the path of selfishness and inadvertence. They were so degraded that they buried their daughters alive; for the birth of a girl in a family was considered by them as a disgrace. Their time was occupied with internecine conflicts, warfare, despoliation and rapine. Nevertheless, when the brilliant sun of the *Prophet Mohammad* arose upon the *Horizon of Hejaz*, their hearts were illumined; they became unified and agreed, and they covered the face of the earth with the traces of their sciences and arts. Their ignorance and illiteracy had been changed into assurance and knowledge through acceptance of the One True God. By means of his message, Mohammad the Prophet made of these oppressed, divided and scattered tribes the conquerors of East and West and the wielders of great power; the ancient Persian Empire even, and the great Roman Empire coming under the shade of the Arabian banner. In *this manner did these lowly people become the guides of the nations* through knowledge and religion. But later, the Mohammadan nations deviated from the path of truth. Then their congregations became divided and their groups were scattered; their countries were conquered; their states were despoiled; their sovereignty was attacked and the foundations of their kingdoms were shaken.

The best means for the prevention of the recurrences of these differences in the world of humanity has been revealed by the pen of the Ancient Beauty (Bahá-O-Llah). He says: "If the people of the Koran had lived according to the Holy Law after the ascent of His Holiness the Seal of the Prophets (may the soul of all else be a sacrifice to Him) and had held to the firm foundation of religion,

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چون آنکه بدانشیده نباشد و محبت اوست در بیشتر علوم و در ملک صحابه حضرت رسول در امر و کبریا می باشد
از عباد برای علم و آنچه چون شهادت بود عدالت خدا و رسالت حضرت محمد و داخل زمره صحابه گشت
و برای راه رفتن می شد سندان یا پیر شخصی بود و راکب جوانی اعلان بر حضرت رسول آورد و اعلی السلام رسید
و آنکه ناسد که بر علم محمد ص بود و چه شد نظر بر آنکه و لی چون بداند که ملک است نظر بر آنکه گشت
و محبوب انقلب گشت عباد برای او بسیار دقت می کردند و او را هیچ کس ندانست که دانات و مایه
فوت که ملک از بر خدا دارد و ظاهر و نظره را کلمات هر بار بسیار شده که یک شخصی جاهل ای که ابد
از علوم و فنون بهره نداشت و آنچه بیشتر از هر قید فارغ بود و دانات منور شده ، و علم علی طرف محبت
می شد در مثل داناتی بر او علم می ساخت و بسیار شده که شخصی که از ازل نورانی و علم نظر از دانات
زین شد مظهر ادب و اخلاق و دهانه گشت سر دانات بسیار زنده و سعادت و کرامت و انکاد و انفاق
و عیش و اگر قوی بدانات نیست شوند و بختشان در گذشته و دانات
سیر ما به این سر ایستاد و در روز بگوئیم و آنکه اسوده و انیم ، آنکه این که محل اشراق و طلوع افکار
این امر عظمت باین نور می شود و این که حال دیرین است و محل شهادت و جهالت و سرگشته و غارت
و جانیه گردد و اگر چنانچه بیدار شد بر عمل کنیم انوقت لایق این هستیم که بخوانیم و این بهر
سبب دهم

دریوم بعد از ظهر گنجینه ۱۹ غلظت ۱۹۱۲ در حضور بعضی سپاهیان ادا شد

Fac-simile of the last portion of Ruhi Effendi Afnan's manuscript (in his own Persian handwriting and signed) of speech delivered by him on August 19, 1917, at a meeting on Mt. Carmel in the presence of Abdul Baha and the Bahai community.

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they would not have been scattered and their prosperous cities would not have been destroyed; nay, towns and villages would have been adorned with security and contentment."

In brief, this is the influence of religion upon a nation in a general way.

Let us now study the lives of individuals—how religion affects a person. When the wheat-thresher of Esphahan became a believer in His Holiness the Bab, he turned into one of the most exalted of souls. When the heart of a certain date merchant was illumined with the sun of religion and the knowledge of God, he became one of the companions of the Prophet Mohammad. Abazer was a shepherd, but when he acknowledged the Oneness of God and the apostleship of His Holiness Mohammad, he entered the ranks of the most favored disciples and became the shepherd and guide of the souls of men. The Persian Salman was a barber, but as soon as he confessed the cause of the messengership of the Prophet of Islam, he ascended to the highest station of honor.

Consider Mary Magdalene. Who was she, and to what heights did she rise? Peter was a fisherman, but no sooner did he grasp the cord of religion than he became the great Peter, the beloved of the hearts. He was a fisher of fish, but he became the fisher of men.

Therefore, it is clear and evident that religion has within itself such a power as to transform the stone into a brilliant diamond and the drop into a scintillating pearl. How often does it happen that when an ignorant, illiterate person, deprived of the sciences and arts but with heart freed from all attachment and possession, becomes illumined with the light of religion, he is inspired to converse with the most learned of theologians and to discuss with them the most abstruse religious problems, coming out victorious in the arena of argument! How often does it happen that when a most lowly and selfish person becomes adorned with the virtues of religion, he is characterized with the spiritual attributes and qualities!

Therefore, it has been proven that religion is conducive to the exaltation and felicity of the world and the establishment of union and accord among the nations. When a people takes hold of the hem of the garment of religion, their hearts become illumined and enlightened.

Consequently we, the Bahais, must exert ourselves by day and by night, not resting for one moment until Persia becomes the dawning-place of the rays and the horizon of the sun of this great Cause; to the end that Persia, which is now in a deplorable condition being the arena of ignorance and tyranny, may be the center of merciful susceptibilities. If we live and act in this behooving manner, then we will be entitled to attribute ourselves to Baha and to his blessed religion.

Chapter III
THE PILGRIMS

*I have had my invitation to this world's festival, and
thus my life has been blessed. My eyes have seen and
my ears have heard.*

—Rabindranath Tagore
Gitanjali, Stanza XVI

Chapter III

THE PILGRIMS

A Spiritual Discovery

The early American Bahais who visited Abdul Baha in his home in Acca, Palestine, from 1898 to 1911, were imbued with a most devout spirit. They were not *tourists* but *pilgrims*. They turned their hearts toward the Holy Land with longing and affection. They were hungry for the bread of God's knowledge and thirsty for the water of eternal life. They had been stirred by the strange story of a being, out of the ordinary in every sense of the word, who lived and taught as had the man of Nazareth 2,000 years ago. This was enough to arouse their interest and so, men and women left their offices, vocations and families, and crossed the ocean in order to see this man with their own eyes, to listen to his message with their own ears and to learn the secret of his spiritual attainments.

Once, when a Persian Bahai teacher inquired of a certain group why it had come, he received the following answer:—*For help in spiritual knowledge, so that we may be able to impart this to others. (Flowers Culled from the Rose Garden of Acca, p. 4).*

The numerous accounts of their visits made by the pilgrims are interpenetrated with a glow of enthusiasm and the joy of a great spiritual discovery. These persons describe Abdul Baha, surrounded by his family and disciples, living a simple, patriarchal life. They read in his teachings the fulfillment of the prophecies of the Old and New Testament, and feel that they have entered a fourth-dimensional world. The records are the testimony of the first Americans who looked into the face of Abdul Baha and reported his talks and informal conversations. The same scenes are described by each, and pretty much of the same ground is gone over; yet the experiences and impressions are varied according to the individuality of the writer. All, however, are unanimous in their recognition of the Master's boundless love, his extraordinary knowledge, his kindness and hospitality, his humanity and his passion for God; and they reveal his desire to share all that he possessed, whether material or spiritual, with his fellow-beings.

As we read these straightforward and unaffected recitals, we can actually see Abdul Baha at the lunch or supper table, we can hear him as he entertains his guests in his own inimitable way; and we laugh at the pointed stories that he relates and fall under the spell of his zestful and scintillating personality.

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On rare occasions, these love-intoxicated pilgrims allow a paragraph or so to a description of some member of the Master's family; but this is simply in passing, for all are primarily concerned with Abdul Baha and his wisdom. Their accounts are centered on him, what he said and what he did, and very little else interests them.

The First American Pilgrims

Dr. E. C. Getsinger and his wife Lua were the first American Bahai pilgrims to have the inestimable privilege of standing in the presence of Abdul Baha. This was in 1898. During later years, these two souls rendered conspicuous services in America, Europe and Asia, and no history of the Bahai Cause, from the American angle, would be complete without a record of their remarkable teaching campaigns. It was in June 1909 that Dr. Getsinger wrote the story of his and his wife's acceptance of the Bahai message in a manuscript consisting of one hundred pages. This account naturally covers his first visit to Abdul Baha who, at that time, was still in captivity in the city of Acca. I will quote an extract from that document:—

We arrived in Haifa on the night of December 8, 1898. The stars were so bright in the heavens, such as I never saw in America. They seemed so close to earth and so large that we stood and marveled at the scene. . . . We were anxious to land, and our hearts were panting with joy because we were to behold the face of our beloved Abdul Baha. . . . We arrived in Acca after taking that beautiful drive along the shore of the Mediterranean Sea. We were taken direct to the house of Abdul Baha and shown into a small room. Lua and myself were to pay the visit to the Holy City and did not expect to be so suddenly taken into his presence. But great was our surprise when we entered the room and found Abdul Baha sitting upon the divan before us. Lua was preceding me just a few steps and, as she entered the room, without being told we both recognized who was before us, and at once we fell to our knees and were weeping, we did not know why except that it was for joy. Then Abdul Baha approached us and bade us to rise and be seated. He spoke to us some words of welcome through Dr. Kheirullah, our interpreter. Then we were invited to drink tea with him and during one hour or so we were in conversation with him. We remained in Acca in the Holy Household for several days and then returned to Haifa. We thus went back and forth just as we received permission to do so. We remained in Haifa and Acca until March 23, 1899, having arrived on December 8, 1898.

Personal Records

The accounts by pilgrims were for the most part in manuscript or mimeograph form; however, a percentage of the writers were in a position to have their work printed, and this was done independently, without supervision of any kind. Some of these booklets are still in print and are probably

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available at the Bahai Assembly, 119 West 57th Street, New York, N. Y.
The following is a partial list:—

- (1) *An Early Pilgrimage* by Mrs. May Maxwell, in 1898. 23 pages.
- (2) *A Message From Acca* by E. C. Getsinger, in 1899. 16 pages.
- (3) *My Visit to Abbas Effendi in 1899* by Margaret P. Peeke. 23 pages.
- (4) *A Message From Acca* by Anton F. Haddad, in 1900. 16 pages.
- (5) *Utterances of our Blessed Master, Abdul Baha, revealed to Three Pilgrims: Thomas Breakwell, Herbert Hopper and Isabella D. Brittingham* in 1901. 14 pages (in mimeograph).
- (6) *Table Talks with Abdul Baha* by Mr. and Mrs. Geo. T. Winterburn, in 1904. 32 pages.
- (7) *A Brief Account of My Visit to Acca* by Mary L. Lucas, in 1905. 42 pages.
- (8) *Unity Through Love* by Howard MacNutt, in 1905. 32 pages.
- (9) *Notes Taken at Acca* by Mrs. Corinne True, 1907. 32 pages.
- (10) *Table Talks at Acca* by Arthur S. Agnew, in 1907. 32 pages.
- (11) *In Galilee* by Thornton Chase, in 1907. 84 pages.
- (12) *Ten Days in the Light of Acca* by Julia M. Grundy, in 1907. 111 pages.
- (13) *Flowers Culled from the Rose Garden of Acca* by Mrs. Ida A. Finch, Miss Fanny B. Knoblock and Miss Alma S. Knoblock, in 1908. 40 pages.
- (14) *Daily Lessons Received at Acca* by Helen S. Goodall and Ella Goodall Cooper, in 1908. 101 pages.
- (15) *A Heavenly Feast* by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Haney, in 1909. 36 pages.
- (16) *Acca Lights* by Mr. and Mrs. Jos. Hannen, in 1909. 15 pages.
- (17) *A Heavenly Vista* by Mr. Louis G. Gregory, in 1911. 32 pages.
- (18) *The Light of the World* by Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Randall and other pilgrims, in 1919. 149 pages.
- (19) *My Pilgrimage to the Land of Desire* by Marie A. Watson, in 1921. 23 pages.

As I read these booklets one by one, I am transported in imagination back to the Holy Land and live the experiences of these spiritual comrades of mine, which were so like my own. Few of the authors had trained minds or native talent; they wrote simply as they thought and felt, yet they have given to the Bahai world most valuable records which cannot, at any time, be duplicated or added to. It goes without saying that many a pen-picture of Abdul Baha was made during these visits to Palestine; so, I have chosen one from among them to reproduce herein. It is an extract from *In Galilee* by Thornton Chase, who was an executive in a Chicago Insurance Company and a deeply-read student of the Bible. Mr. Chase is the author of many books and one of the most distinguished of the early Bahai pioneers. He writes:—

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Abdul-Bahá

I have been asked to describe Abdul-Bahá, but hesitate to do so. It is not his personality that he wishes the friends to consider. Yet so many long to know even a little of the appearance of this one whom they love, not having seen, that I will try to tell of him as he appeared to me. I saw a strikingly handsome man, tall and kingly. He wore a white fez with the small turban-kerchief wound around. This, the symbol of wisdom and learning among Mohammedans, was the only *outward insignia of his station*. A long, dark coat or cloak was worn over a dove colored undercoat. He is not thin or anaemic, but has the appearance of strong health. Although of medium height he is commanding in appearance and I can never think of him as less than six feet tall. His bright, fair face, light brown in complexion, was framed in silvery white beard and moustache. Usually his hair, or much of it, was tucked up under the fez. His nose was large, straight and strong. The mouth was rather full and very gentle. Deep under the broad forehead and shaded by white, thick eyebrows, shone the wondrous eyes, large, prominent, brilliant, penetrating and kind. Around the dark pupil and brown iris is that wonderful blue circle which sometimes makes the eyes look a perfect blue. Any description of them is only an attempt, no more. In repose the face expressed a dignity, intelligence and nobility which none would dare to disrespect. Conscious power and authority were there enthroned. He assumed nothing; his powers were natural, his sincerity thorough, his affection pure. His smile charmed and attracted friends to him.

He had the stride and freedom of a king—or shepherd. My impression of him was that of a lion, a kingly, masterful Man of the most sweet and generous disposition. I had formed an idea of Jesus as very meek, humble, lowly, gentle, quiet, soft and sweet; and I looked for such another one. I have revised my idea of Jesus and now, as I read his Words, I see in that one of the past a Man of Authority, whose words were clear and forceful, penetrating the hearts as with a two-edged sword. I found in Abdul-Bahá a man, strong, powerful, without a thought as to any act, as free and unstilted as a father with his family or a boy with playmates. Yet each movement, his walk, his greeting, his sitting down and rising up were eloquent of power, full of dignity, freedom and ability.

In his presence all are small and they are conscious of this. They show a deference to him that could not be excelled before the most absolute monarch, hesitating to approach him unbidden, humbly bowing when he passes, and halting afar off when coming into his presence. This was *not of his doing or will*, but purely from their recognition of the Spiritual Power proceeding from him and through their intense love and respect for him. He seemed utterly unconscious of their deference. He extends love to every one; he draws near to them; he invites them; he loves to serve them, even in little things. He demands no awe, no reverence, no separation, but is an elder Brother of affection and sweetness. He is gentle but not weak; sweet and powerful; humble and mighty; no bar or restraint is there, but winsome love and

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attraction. His work accomplished daily is very great, and yet much time is given to social and official affairs. He is abrupt in manner, the abruptness of power, but most courteous and charming. There is no aloofness in him; he invites all to be prisoners of love and fellow-servers of humanity with him. He spoke in brief, pithy expressions, intoned in medium pitch with a clear vibrant voice. No words were wasted. He said:

"The Bounty of God is flowing. The Power of the Kingdom of God will overcome all. It will not be long before the great result will appear." "The Blessed Beauty has put in our hands the lamp of teachings. By this Light the world will be illumined." "America will be enlightened very much, and from there light will be sent to other places." "I hope that the East and the West will become one, also the North and the South, and that all differences shall be removed." "The Power of the Word of God will accomplish this."

—*In Galilee*, by Thornton Chase—an account of his visit to Abdul Baha in Acca, Palestine, April 1907, pp. 28-31.

The Interpreters

The interpreters and translators of Abdul Baha consisted of a comparatively small number of people. As more and more pilgrims visited Palestine and on their return spread the message amongst their acquaintances and friends, a stream of letters from those newly interested began to flow toward Acca. These were translated into Persian and presented to the Master, who devoted much time in dictating answers which then had to be translated into English. Thus, thousands of Tablets were written to the constantly increasing number of correspondents in the United States and Europe. I have in my library several large volumes which contain copies made by myself of a considerable percentage of these Tablets.

In those early years in Acca, even a slight knowledge of the English language was considered as quite an achievement; therefore, the talks of Abdul Baha were interpreted by young men and women whose capacity was not quite up to the mark. The Master used the channels that were available and counted on the sincerity of his followers to supplement their limited experience.

Ibrahim Kheirullah, who had guided the first group of pilgrims to the Holy Land, was highly qualified as a teacher and interpreter. Abdul Baha's daughters, Ruha Khanum and Monavvar Khanum, who by this time had learned some English, served when occasion demanded. After them, with the passing of years and as the Cause gained momentum, new interpreters and secretaries appeared on the scene. Thus, from 1908 to the

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and of his life in 1921, Abdul Baha made use of many interpreters in order to convey his words to visitors and his teachings to the Western world.

Now, the pilgrims who visited Acca were not interested in the secretaries; they mention their names but seldom, and then as a necessary evil. Often, they mistrusted the translations that were given and questioned as to whether a certain person or other had an ulterior motive in his choice of words. However, I can testify that these individuals did their work honestly and well; and that there was *never one instance* when they should have been accused of even an unconscious desire to misinterpret the words of Abdul Baha. If sometimes a mistake crept in, this was owing to lack of efficient knowledge of English, or even to lack of complete understanding of the Master's rich and profound expressions of speech; but through it all, each one served cheerfully and in utter devotion, playing his own modest but useful part in the promotion of the Cause.

Below are listed, in fairly correct sequence, a few of the better known interpreters and translators:—

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Ibrahim Kheirullah | 12. Mirza Noured-Din Zaine |
| 2. Ruha Khanum | 13. Mirza Moneer Zaine |
| 3. Monavvar Khanum | 14. Mirza Younoss Khan |
| 4. Anton Haddad | 15. Tamaddon-Ul-Molk |
| 5. Ali Kuli Khan | 16. Badi Effendi Bushrui |
| 6. Dr. Ameen-U-llah Fareed | 17. Azzizollah Khan Bahadur |
| 7. Mirza S. M. Rafie | 18 & 19. M. and Mme. |
| 8. Hussain Effendi Ruhi | Hyppolite Dreyfus Barney |
| 9. Mirza Bozork | 20. Dr. Lotfollah Hakim |
| 10. Mirza Ahmad Sohrab | 21. Shoghi Effendi Rabbani |
| 11. Dr. Zia M. Bagdadi | 22. Ruhi Effendi Afnan |

It is interesting to note that in this list of twenty-two persons who acted as interpreters and translators at one time or another, there are 17 Persians, two Syrians, one Egyptian, one American and one Frenchman. Incidentally, on many occasions when no interpreter was in sight, the Master would press into service anyone present who could translate, however poorly, for the benefit of the visiting pilgrims or tourists.

Those, having even a cursory knowledge of the subject, realize that all translation is a most delicate art and will concede that, as applied to the Bahai Cause, the task is definitely intricate. In order to do a creditable job, one must comprehend fully the nuances and shades of meaning in both Persian and Arabic as well as English; and few of us could make such a claim. Nevertheless, this group of translators and interpreters were the channels—and the only channels—through which the Western world gained instantaneous or direct access to the spiritual source of the New Revelation,

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and it is not too much to say that the American and European Bahais owe them a great debt of gratitude.

Glimpses of Ruhi Effendi

The members of Abdul Baha's family seldom figure in the accounts left to us by the pilgrims; but, once in a long while, the curtain is lifted and we get a glimpse of some of them. On page 39 of the booklet by Thornton Chase, we read:—

The children, Shoghi and Ruhi and others were playing about the fountain, and altogether it was quite a party.

Again, in a book entitled *A Heavenly Vista*, written by Louis G. Gregory following his visit to Abdul Baha in 1911, we come across a mention of the same children, four years later. On page 19, we read:—

Before entering (the presence of the Master) we met Shoghi and Ruhi, two beautiful boys, the grandsons of Abdul Baha. These children of the Holy Household show great affection for pilgrims.

In a brochure, *The Light of the World*, Mr. Harry Randall of Boston, Mass., describes his own experiences in 1919 and often refers to Shoghi Effendi who by this time had become an interpreter.

Miss Genevieve Coy, an educator and psychologist, at one time engaged as a teacher at the Tarbiat School in Teheran, Persia, visited Palestine with three friends in the year 1920. Her account of this journey is unique and valuable because, as far as I know, it is the last but one recorded pilgrimage to Haifa made during the lifetime of the Master. It is published under the title *A Week in Abdul Baha's Home*, appearing in *The Star of the West*, September 8th, September 27th, October 16th and November 4th, 1921. In these articles we find repeated mention of Ruhi Effendi, so we might skim through them, beginning at the railroad platform in Haifa as the train bearing Miss Coy and her group draws into the station:—

We were so happy to be so near our journey's end,—we were so full of expectation, that it seemed as if the train would never reach the station. But at last we did pull up in front of it! Cora went out to look for a porter, and I was ready to pass baggage out of the window to her. But almost immediately a hand was reached in to shake mine, and we were welcomed by a young man, whom we later learned was Ruhi Effendi, one of the Master's grandsons . . . We shook hands with several young men, Bahais from the Master's household, and then we four American pilgrims were in the auto, with the driver, Ruhi Effendi, and some of our baggage . . .

During our ride from the station, Ruhi Effendi told us that the Master was staying on the Mountain for a few days, to rest from the

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many demands made on his time when he is in his house in the town . . .

As we were leaving the house, Ruhi Effendi, who had just come down from the Mountain, brought word that the Master would either come down, or send for us the next day. . . .

At lunch Ruhi Effendi brought word that we were to go up to the Tomb at about four in the afternoon, to see the Master!

Miss Coy then describes the meeting with Abdul Baha in words that are instinct with feeling and realization:—

Suddenly all of the believers rose and faced the East. Then, from around the corner of the Tomb came the Master with two of the young men walking a little behind him. He came slowly toward us,—and said, "Welcome, welcome!" in English; and then, "Sit down, sit down!" Sylvia sat next to him; then Mabel Paine, myself, Cora, and Mrs. Hoagg. The other friends were beyond her, in two rows. When the Master had walked toward us, it seemed to me that I had seen him come just that way at some previous time. He seemed to be so beautifully familiar to me! I suppose it must have seemed so because of the pictures I have seen of him, and the stories I have heard other pilgrims tell. It was a moment that one would prolong if one could, that one would never forget!

The Master began to speak in Persian, and Ruhi Effendi translated into English. He asked several questions; he talked of principles of living. Sometimes he would be silent for several minutes,—with his eyes looking far, far away. It is very difficult to remember much of what he said. Indeed, it was almost difficult to listen!

Her visit to the Shrine of the Bab is recounted by Miss Coy:—

Each knelt at the inner threshold, until all had arisen, and stood in a circle about the room. Then the Master spoke to Ruhi Effendi, who began to chant a long prayer, one of the Prayers of Visitation. His chanting was the sweetest, the most melodious of any I have ever heard.

Sometimes in the course of conversation while his words were being interpreted, Abdul Baha would interject a phrase in English, to the delight of his listeners. Miss Coy tells of such an incident:—

Then the Master told the story of Mirza Abul Fazl, and the English ladies who insisted on seeing him. Finally, when they had knocked very persistently and continuously, Mirza Abul Fazl became tired of hearing it, so he went to the door and said, "Abul Fazl is not here." Up to this point in the story, the Master had been speaking in Persian or Arabic, and Ruhi Effendi had been interpreting, but when the Master came to this part, he spoke in English, very distinctly, and repeated it, "Abul Fazl not here!" and then he smiled the most adorable smile!

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Continuing with her narrative, Miss Coy conducts her readers into the garden at an early hour:—

It must have been after seven when we went out into the garden. We walked about a bit, and then Ruhi Effendi and Mirza Lotfollah came out to wish us good-morning. On the previous evening we had told Ruhi Effendi that we were going up to the Tomb early in the morning. But when he saw us there, he said, "You *really* came! I didn't think you would! Americans never get up early!" At which we laughed much! Ruhi Effendi's English is very good,—but sometimes a phrase or some slang expression is used which he does not understand. He looks courteously questioning, half surprised, and waits for some one to explain!

And now, breakfast with the Master in the house of Abbas Goli, caretaker of the Shrine of the Bab:—

But we had been there only a few minutes, when Ruhi Effendi came toward us, calling that the Master wished to see us! And we went on eager feet, following Ruhi Effendi to Abbas Goli's house . . . Abbas Goli brought to the Master a little tray with a teapot full of what looked like tea. The Master poured out some and drank it, explaining that it was kind of herb drink. Then Abbas Goli brought us tea in the lovely little Persian glasses. Afterward he came in with a tray full of things to eat and placed it on a chair in front of us. . . . As we ate he was silent, looking out of window upon the sea at Acca. His beautiful profile was outlined against the windows; his gaze seemed to dwell on distant Acca,—and I could not but think of those long years of imprisonment that he had spent in barred Acca.

After eight unforgettable days with Abdul Baha and the members of his family, Miss Coy and her three friends leave Haifa on Sept. 8, 1920:—

Next morning before daybreak, we ate our last meal in the Pilgrim House and said farewell to our happy housemates there. Said Effendi, Mirza Lotfollah, Ruhi Effendi, and faithful Esfandiar and his horses, took us to the train which left at 6 A. M. We had a half-hour's talk with the young men before the train pulled out. . . .

We come across the name of Ruhi Effendi two years later in an item in the *Star of the West*, March 21, 1922. A Tablet to the American Bahais, left by Abdul Baha amongst his papers, is translated by Ruhi Afnan, Mrs. E. Hoagg and Ali Mohammad Bakir.

In the May 17th, 1922 issue of the *Star of the West* is published an article from the pen of Mr. Louis G. Gregory under the title of *The Bahai Congress for the Teaching and the Fourteenth Annual Congress*. The writer speaks of Mr. Mountfort Mills who has just returned from Haifa and quotes a report of his as follows:—

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Ruhi Effendi, brought up with Shoghi Effendi says of him: "Shoghi is wonderful. He retired at 3 A. M. and arose at 6. Once he worked forty-eight hours without food or drink. His effort is to overcome differences between races and nations."

The Two Cousins

Thus, through tiny items incorporated in the pilgrims' report, we have been able, on a thin chain of sequence, to follow these two cousins from childhood when they were playing around the fountain, up to the time when the older of the two had assumed the guardianship of the Bahai Cause and the younger had settled willingly and enthusiastically into his niche of unobtrusive service.

We now take a jump over two decades and, picking up *Bahai News* of December 1941, read with a thrill of dismay the following lines in an article signed by the National Spiritual Assembly:—.

Our latest instruction about this very grave matter comes by cablegram, a copy of which appears in this issue and names Rubi Effendi and his family as now to be included in the list of bad eminence—persons, for the protection of the Cause, to be avoided.

The two babies, born of the same noble stock; the two children, encompassed by divine love and solicitude; the two beautiful boys, acting as hosts to the pilgrims; the two young men, taking their places among the interpreters of the Master—the two branches, sprung from the sacred Trees of the Bab and Baha-O-Allah, can no longer be coupled as servants, each in his own way, of the mighty Bahai Cause. Something has intervened and set them apart; and we see the one, on the pinnacle of absolute power within his own domain, branding the mark of infidelity on the forehead of his life-long companion and turning him out to wander forever—friendless, comfortless and without sustenance. Even so Saul, appointed first King of Israel by the Prophet Samuel, yearned for the destruction of David and drove him forth into the wilderness!

Chapter IV
THE SECRETARY

*He whom I enclose with my name is weeping in this
dungeon. I am ever busy building this wall all around;
and as this wall goes up into the sky day by day I lose
sight of my true being in its dark shadow.*

—Rabindranath Tagore
Gitanjali, Stanza XXIX

Chapter IV

THE SECRETARY

The Confidential Secretary

In this world of ours, men and women have often risen to great heights of communal service by acting as secretaries to leaders in various enterprises. Through their intimate association with their chiefs or employers, they have been enabled to learn the secrets of the technique used; to master the systems and practices of their professions, and to become in turn efficient and useful members of society. Thus, throughout the ages, apprenticeship has been considered the practical way to knowledge and advancement in the arts and sciences, in business, politics and religion. The rich and varied experiences gained by close contact with the executive or master were, in the long run, more valuable than formal education; and there are not a few examples of men who have made astounding progress as a result of past service in a comparatively humble role.

Ruhi Effendi Afnan acted as confidential secretary to the Guardian of the Bahai Cause for fourteen years; and the records of the Bahai organization show that during that time, from 1922 to 1936, he was constantly in demand in a variety of capacities. In 1924, he appeared in London as Shoghi Effendi's personal representative and delivered a brilliant address on the Bahai Religion before *The Conference of Some Living Religions Within the British Empire*. In 1927, he visited the United States as traveling agent and spiritual salesman of the Guardian, championing with fervor and zeal the system of Bahai administration before *recognized* and *declared* Bahais. He was an outstanding and honored guest at the 20th Annual Bahai Convention in Chicago, where he *participated vitally in all proceedings*; was the guest speaker at Green Acre Bahai Summer School in Maine, and traveled from coast to coast, delivering Bahai speeches before churches, colleges and outside gatherings. In 1928, we find him in Geneva, Switzerland, where, as the accredited representative of the Bahai Cause, he participates in the Conference of International Peace Through the Churches. Here, we see him taking the floor, offering some constructive suggestions which, as one report says, were very much to the point, and carrying his argument. In 1935, *with the Guardian's approval* (See *Baha'i News*, page 3, October 1935), he pays his second visit to the United States; takes part in

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the National Bahai meeting in Chicago and, before his departure, addresses a number of local Bahai communities.

At some future date, I will contrast the above-mentioned item in *Bahai News* with a recent cablegram of Shoghi Effendi dated November 10, 1941, which states that Ruhi Effendi *failed to obtain* the Guardian's *approval of his second visit to America*. I will also examine in detail the work accomplished by Ruhi Effendi in this country; but, for the present, I am merely tabulating the facts.

Thus, for fourteen years, Ruhi Effendi, as confidential secretary of the Guardian, was the main channel of communication between him and the Western world. He took charge of the correspondence sent from Haifa to this country, a few of which letters have found their way into the pages of *Bahá'í News*. As a rule, Shoghi Effendi reserved to himself the prerogative of writing general letters and cablegrams to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, but his confidence in Ruhi Effendi was so great that, occasionally, he would allow him to write letters to this body over his own signature. Such a significant letter, signed by Ruhi Afnan and addressed *To the Members of the National Spiritual Assembly and Read at the Annual Convention, Chicago, May, 1931*, is published on the front page of *Bahá'í News* of September, 1931.

Procedure of Correspondence

The letters written by Ruhi Afnan to individual Bahais generally start with *Shoghi Effendi wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter . . .* after which the various points brought up by the correspondent are answered. Once in a while, a postscript is added by the Guardian in his own handwriting, which is signed *Shoghi*. (See *Bahá'í News*, February, 1931, pp. 9-10)

From the records that I have examined, it appears that Ruhi Effendi was the chief secretary, but now and then we come across other signatures affixed to letters written on behalf of the Guardian. Soheil Afnan, Ruhi's brother is one of them (See *Bahá'í News*, March, 1928, p. 1; also *Bahá'í News*, February, 1931, pp. 8-9); Hussein Rabbani, Shoghi Effendi's brother, is another (See *Bahá'í News*, September, 1931, p. 5); Azzizollah S. Bahador is a third (See *Bahá'í News*, February, 1932, p. 3).

Quite consistently, when a letter is written and signed by Ruhi Effendi and published in *Bahá'í News*, the caption reads: *Letter from Shoghi Effendi* (See *Bahá'í News*, September, 1931, p. 1; *Bahá'í News*, January, 1932, p. 1; *Bahá'í News*, March, 1932, p. 7). One wonders why the Editor of

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Baha'i News adopted such a caption; for it evidently causes some confusion in the mind of the reader, who reaches close to the end of the letter before he comes to realize that it was not written by Shoghi Effendi after all. The object probably was that the National Spiritual Assembly wished to convey to the Bahais, in a rather subtle and indirect way, the fact that the contents of the letters written by Ruhi Effendi carried the same authority as those written by the Guardian himself.

This strange procedure caused some controversy among the Bahais, and the question was debated pro and con until the National Spiritual Assembly was moved to alter the caption on this section of *Baha'i News* so that, after a certain date it read:—*Letters from Haifa* (See *Baha'i News*, July, 1932, p. 4; *Baha'i News*, October, 1932, p. 4; *Baha'i News*, February, 1933, p. 2).

Another subject that caused a good deal of agitation among the Bahais was the question as to whether the Guardian actually read all the letters written on his behalf by Ruhi Effendi. Some orthodox individuals were distinctly worried lest the secretary might slip in his own ideas and let them pass into currency under the authority of Shoghi Effendi; while others, who were more liberal-minded, finding the matter in the communications rather hard to swallow, chose to blame the secretary and allow full exemption to the Guardian. Finally, it seems that one zealous Bahai took the matter into her own firm hands and submitted the problem directly to Haifa. It was then that the Guardian's clear and unequivocal answer definitely disposed of the question. He wrote:—

I wish to add and say that whatever letters are sent in my behalf from Haifa are all read and approved by me before mailing. There is no exception whatever to this rule.

(Signed) Shoghi
—*Baha'i News*, May, 1931, p. 5

Another point of discussion applied to the signature of the secretary: should it appear at all? This matter likewise was settled by eliminating the name altogether and simply stating that the secretary of the Guardian writes so and so. (See *Baha'i News*, May, 1936, p. 6, where we read: *On March 4, the Guardian, through his secretary, wrote the Treasurer . . .*) This new ruling eliminated all reference to the personality of the secretary, leaving Shoghi Effendi's name to stand alone.

The main purpose of the letters written by Ruhi Effendi, which are published in *Baha'i News* over his signature, is to convey to the recipients the messages of the Guardian, his replies to numerous questions and his

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orders and suggestions in regard to the various activities and policies of the Bahai Administration. As Shoghi Effendi writes in a postscript to Mr. Albert Windust:—

I have asked Ruhi to convey my messages and suggestions in my behalf. . . . and I am sure that they will be duly considered.

—*Bahá'í News*, February, 1931, p. 9

This then was the dominant and controlling note of all the letters written by Ruhi Afán in his role as confidential secretary; he was the conveyor of the messages and suggestions of the Guardian to the American people, and, it can be said that during those fourteen years of service, he kept himself completely in the background and never entered the picture at all. Later, when he did appear in person before the Bahai Assemblies, he maintained the same attitude and if, in some instances, he was greatly appreciated, this was without volition on his part, and was simply an unavoidable circumstance.

Direct and Indirect Methods of Correspondence

Let us for a moment go back to the days of Abdul Baha and contrast this method of procedure with that of the Master. When the Master received letters in the English language, whether from Bahais or any others, these were placed into the hands of one of his secretaries, who translated them into Persian. Then holding the translations in his hand, Abdul Baha would dictate the answers, and later, when these had been written out, he would very carefully read them over, correcting them or adding a word here and there. These corrected pages were then copied in Persian in excellent calligraphic style and brought back as finished letters to the Master. Finally, Abdul Baha would again read each one, and sign it; after which they were translated into English on the spot or else mailed to America for translation. Almost every week, during several years, I regularly received packages of from fifty to one hundred such letters to be translated and forwarded to their respective destinations. Naturally, the originals always accompanied the translations.

In this way, did Abdul Baha answer directly all communications addressed to him, never delegating to his secretaries the power of dealing with them on his behalf. A secretary was at liberty to carry on his own correspondence with the believers or to keep a diary but, in such case, he alone was responsible for what was written. Abdul Baha did not interfere with these personal matters nor did he ever ask to read the secretary's letters or his diary.

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In all probability, one would never find a letter from any of the Master's secretaries which would open with:—Abdul Baha wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter. . . . A secretary might include among his personal comments to a friend:—Today Abdul Baha, in the course of conversation, mentioned your name and spoke thus and so about you. I often did this myself, but neither I nor anybody else had power to answer letters addressed to Abdul Baha. In reverse, it was Abdul Baha who himself occasionally answered letters addressed to his secretary. (See an example of this in *Abdul Baha in Egypt*, p. 2)

It is apparent therefore that the system of correspondence employed by the Guardian is altogether different from that of the Master; and in this he is quite within his rights. Thus, Shoghi Effendi, although well versed in English, delegated to Ruhi Effendi the privilege of conveying his messages and suggestions to his followers and invested these letters with an authority, if not quite equal to his own, at least approximately so, as can be seen by his endorsement addressed to America:—*whatever letters are sent in my behalf from Haifa are all read and approved by me before mailing. There is no exception whatever to this rule.*

The letters in question contain a great many instructions, directions, messages, orders and regulations for the administration of the Bahai Cause by the National Spiritual Assembly. Invariably, they have bolstered up the authority of this organization, strengthened its hand and endowed it with a totalitarian outlook which has become increasingly evident in all its activities and pronouncements. After the business has been disposed of, there are usually to be found a few paragraphs or lines written in a general sense, and we can gather that the secretary has rounded out the letter according to his own judgment.

Subject Matter

I will here mention a few of the various subjects dealt with in the communications of Ruhi Effendi as they follow each other in succession according to date:—

We have instructions regarding the collecting of the originals and translations of Abdul Baha's Tablets and are told that this is one of the most important tasks of this generation. (*Baha's News*, November, 1929). We find minute and detailed instructions about a forthcoming issue of *The Baha'i World*: the Publishing Committee is told not to add, discard nor displace any of the photographs selected by the Guardian; all photographs are to be strictly copyrighted, so that no one may have the right to repro-

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duce them without specific authorization. Inasmuch as Vol. I had a green cover and Vol II a blue cover, Vol. III is to have a red cover; a sample of the particular shade of red is enclosed and the request made that the cloth selected be exactly of this color (*Bahá'i News*, February, 1931). A Bahai has the right to teach the Cause unofficially, but he must keep in close touch with his Local Spiritual Assembly which reserves to itself the right to control all teaching activities on the part of such individual Bahais. Local Spiritual Assemblies must be organized where the number of adult believers reach nine, and this is to be considered as an obligation rather than a purely voluntary act. The methods of determining the boundaries and the jurisdiction of a Local Assembly are left to the wisdom of the National Spiritual Assembly. The meetings held in the auditorium of the Temple in Chicago must be purely devotional; thus, lectures and addresses should be strictly prohibited. Choir singing by men, women and children is permitted; rigidity in the Bahai Services is to be avoided; pictures and images are banned. The National Spiritual Assembly must get in touch with the Egyptian authorities and press for the official recognition of the Bahai Cause in that land. No further restrictions should be added to the qualifications required for voting at Bahai elections, for Shoghi Effendi has already laid down the essential conditions in his letters. (*Bahá'i News*, September, 1931)

Although in a general letter Shoghi Effendi had frankly addressed himself to the problem of international politics, he later is seriously concerned at learning that this plain speaking on his part is difficult to tie up with his definite instructions on the subject, namely: that the Bahais must under no circumstances take part in political discussions. Therefore, Ruhi Effendi is called upon to square the circle and reconcile the irreconcilable by stating that the friends should spread the *message* contained in that letter, but must do it *in a very judicious way lest the people think that we have entered the arena of politics with rather drastic programs of reforms.* (*Bahá'i News*, February, 1932)

Most careful attention is to be given to the completion and external decoration of the Bahá'i Temple. For *The Bahá'i World*, Vol. IV, Ruhi Effendi reports that the Guardian has created a new section to be devoted to Bahai poems and another to Bahai music. The Bahais are advised that in every Assembly, the cooperation of at least one local paper should be gained as a help toward a teaching campaign. A much loved book, *The Divine Art of Living*, is to be removed from circulation because these reported sayings of Abdul Baha do not carry his signature and, therefore,

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have not *the necessary binding power*. In this connection Ruhi Effendi conveys the message of the Guardian in the following words:—

All the other talks such as are included in Ahmad's diary or the other diaries of the pilgrims, do not fall under this category and could be considered only as interesting material to be taken for what they are worth.

—*Baha'i News*, February, 1932

A brief explanation is given concerning *Huquq* or religious taxation; nevertheless, at this time, the Bahais must reserve their financial resources for the completion of the Temple. There is no accurate statistics on the number of Bahais throughout the world and especially in Persia. (*Baha'i News*, March, 1932)

An explanation of the meaning of No. 9, which is the numerical value of the word *Bahá*, is given as follows: *B equals 2, h equals 5, a equals 1 and there is an accent at the end of the word which also equals 1; the "a" after the "B" is not written in Persian, so it does not count*. We find an excellent biographical sketch of Abul Qasim Khorassani, custodian of the international archives and caretaker of the gardens surrounding the Shrine of the Bab on Mt. Carmel. The Guardian was so pleased with this biography written by Ruhi Effendi that he orders the National Spiritual Assembly to publish it in *The Baha'i World*. (*Baha'i News*, April, 1932)

Youth should be encouraged in public speaking; all should study the literature of the movement. There should be a plan to raise funds for building the Temple, but such a plan should exclude any method whereby the help of non-Bahais would be included. (*Baha'i News*, July, 1932)

Advice is given not to hoard gold, yet make investments very secure. We are told that Shoghi Effendi had never said that the members of the National Spiritual Assembly should be renewed partially every year, or that it would be better that teachers be not elected to the National Spiritual Assembly, thus leaving administrative functions to those who cannot serve as teachers. Bahais are urged to arrange their vacations in such a way as to spend at least a few days at the Bahai Summer Schools. Mention is made as to why Shoghi Effendi engaged himself in the translation of the book *The Dawn-Breakers* and of the effect that has been made on those who received copies of the same; the Bahais are advised to hold classes for the study of this book. There is reference to the promotion of the Cause amongst the ranchers in the Western section of the United States and a plan for the Teaching Committee. In an indirect way, Shoghi Effendi condemns the method of fund raising used at Bahai Conventions. Writing on this latter subject, he comments:—

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Such gatherings for collections of funds are permissible if it is done with a true spirit of sacrifice, not when the audience is especially aroused to a frenzy and mob psychology is used to induce them to pay. . . . Shoghi Effendi is sure that the funds gathered at the last Convention was not due to the play of mob psychology but to the prayerful attitude of the friends and their desire to make further sacrifice.

—*Bahai News*, October, 1932

The liberty of an individual to express his own opinions should not be restricted so long as he makes it clear that these views are his own. (*Baha'i News*, November, 1932)

Detailed procedure in regard to the election of the members of Bahai Local and National Assemblies; observance of the Nineteen Day Feasts and value of religious Hymns. (*Baha'i News*, February, 1933)

Bahais are warned not to refer in their public utterances to any political figures, nor side with them. They are likewise told that:—

Before you extend any sort of help to, or affiliate yourself with the World Fellowship of Faiths, Shoghi Effendi feels that the National Spiritual Assembly should find out whether its purpose is in any way political, especially now that its leadership is transferred from Rabbi Wise to Mr. DasGupta.

—*Baha'i News*, April, 1933

Stress is made on providing for the financial needs of the Cause and completing the construction of the Temple; there are provisions for the admittance of new members as *declared* Bahais and for the expulsion of others. Shoghi Effendi advises that the Assemblies should not act hurriedly in either case, otherwise they can do much harm to the body of the Cause; he is likewise pleased over the report of the construction of the dome of the Temple (*Baha'i News*, May, 1933).

In this manner, Ruhi Effendi attended to all the details connected with the running of an organization—legitimate details, innocuous details, rulings, restrictions—most of them tending to obscure the purpose of the Founders. With the minds of all those in authority fixed on administration, it was inevitable that the spirit of the Cause, so apparent in earlier days, should be submerged and stifled. Ruhi Effendi fulfilled his role to the letter. He was controlled by the Guardian in much the same way as Charlie McCarthy is manipulated by his own *deus ex machina*; and, thanks to his apparent willingness and unquestionable loyalty, the chains of a purely material organization settled heavily around the body of the Bahai Cause, where they still remain.

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A Promotional Enterprise

I will now mention instances and show documents which reveal Ruhi Effendi as trusted and authoritative agent in a promotional enterprise planned to establish Haifa as the seat of temporal power in the Bahai Church:—

For many, many years the American Bahais, besides contributing large sums towards the construction of the Temple and the maintenance of the Administration, have responded to the suggestion coming from Haifa that they buy lands on Mt. Carmel adjacent to the Shrine of the Bab. As a consequence of these individual investments, properties have, in due time and under due pressure, been turned over to the National Spiritual Assembly and, in order to facilitate the proceedings, the Guardian advised that they be transferred legally in the name of Ruhi Effendi, who thus received power of attorney to represent the owners and *to appear before the Land Registries, Courts and Government Offices, sign applications, deeds and other documents, admit receipt of purchase price and also to appoint other or others in his place and revoke at pleasure such substitutes.*

I do not know whether the recent excommunication of Ruhi Effendi by the Guardian affects the latter's legal standing as representative of the American owners of land on Mt. Carmel. That in itself is an interesting aspect of the general problem which a lawyer might like to study; however, the point that I wish to make at this juncture is the fact that Shoghi Effendi confided in his secretary so completely that he placed on his shoulders great and permanent responsibilities. We might now examine an article in *Baha'i News* of April, 1933, which deals with this plan of land transference. It includes an explanatory letter of Ruhi Effendi:—

How to Transfer Mt. Carmel Land to the Palestine Branch

Since the preliminary notice on this matter was published a few months ago, a number of individual believers have taken steps to transfer their land on Mt. Carmel to the Palestine Branch of the National Spiritual Assembly. By these generous donations, thousands of dollars worth of this precious property is now held in perpetuity for Baha'i use.

Specific instructions how to effect the transfer of legal titles are now supplied in the following letter and Power of Attorney.

"Shoghi Effendi wishes me to send you these few lines to enclose a copy of the power of attorney that our lawyer here has framed in case any one of the friends desires to transfer the property he holds around the Shrine to the name of the National Assembly.

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"As I told you in my previous letter, by law such lands can only be transferred during one's lifetime. Otherwise it will go to the heirs according to prescribed shares. The will of the deceased is inoperative in such cases. Shoghi Effendi does not want to bring any form of pressure upon the friends. They are naturally free to keep the property in their name and have it go to their heirs.

"In case they express the desire to make such a transfer and have the property revert to the Cause then they have to sign this power of attorney before a Notary Public and then have it countersigned by the British Consul in that locality.

"The power of attorney is in my name and not in the name of the Guardian because he represents the N. S. A. and will sign for them. He cannot represent both parties to the transfer.

"For the transfer there are some expenses, among them 3 per cent of the value of the land, which is government taxes. They do not, however, amount to very much.

"Please note that besides putting their name and signature they have also to state the number of the deed which is mentioned on the Certificate of Registration which they hold.

"Assuring you of Shoghi Effendi's prayers and best wishes, I remain,

Yours ever sincerely,
RUHI AFNAN

Haifa, Palestine.
October 2, 1932."

Power of Attorney

I/we the undersigned..... do hereby give power of attorney to Mr. Ruhi Afnan of Haifa, authorizing him in my/our place and name to sell, transfer and register in the name of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada—Palestine Branch the property registered in my/our name under deed No.....situate in Haifa and also to administer the said property, to effect partition, parcellation, correction of area and boundaries, sue in Courts and generally do such things and steps in connection with the said property as my said agent shall think fit, and for that purpose to appear before the Land Registries, Courts and Government Offices, sign applications, deeds and other documents, admit receipt of purchase price, and also to appoint other or others in his place and revoke at pleasure such substitutes.

In Witness Whereof I/We Have Set Hereunto My/Our Hands.

The Palestine Branch

In his resolve to organize the Bahai Cause, Shoghi Effendi has incorporated the Baha'i Assembly of Palestine as a *Branch* of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada. The

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text of application to the Palestine Government points out that this Association is composed of Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, Ruhi Afnan and such other persons as may be appointed from time to time by the Guardian. The letter to the Commissioner of Haifa making application for the incorporation of the Bahai Society is signed jointly by Shoghi Effendi Rabbani as President, and Ruhi Afnan as Secretary; the address of the incorporated Bahai Society being given as:—

**Persian Colony
c/o Ruhi Afnan, Haifa**

These remarkable Papers are published in *The Baha'i World*, 1930-1932, Vol. IV, pp. 165-166 and here are the texts:—

Documents Related to the Incorporation of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada as a Recognized Religious Society in Palestine

(1) TEXT OF APPLICATION TO THE PALESTINE GOVERNMENT

Haifa the 8th of April, 1930

**To the District Commissioner,
Haifa**

Sir,

In conformity with the notice dated the 26th of August, 1919, regarding registration of Societies I beg to request that "The National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada—Palestine Branch" be registered as a Society under the Ottoman Law of the 3rd of August, 1925.

The address of the Society is: Persian Colony, c/o Ruhi Afnan, Haifa.

The objects of the Society are stated in the attached Articles.

The Management of the Society is vested in Shoghi Effendi Rabbani; Ruhi Afnan is acting as Secretary of the Society.

Two copies of the Society's Regulations are attached.

Yours faithfully,

**Shoghi Rabbani (President)
Ruhi Afnan (Secretary)**

**Seal of
National Spiritual
Assembly of the
Baha'is of the
United States and
Canada—Palestine Branch.**

(2) ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION OF "THE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHAI'S OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA—PALESTINE BRANCH."

1. The Name.

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The name of the Association shall be:

"The National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada—Palestine Branch" (hereinafter called the Association).

2. Membership.

The Association is composed of Shoghi Effendi Rabbani or whoever may lawfully succeed him as the Guardian of Baha'i Faith, Rubi Afnan and such other persons as may be appointed from time to time by Shoghi Effendi Rabbani or his lawful successors with consent of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada organized and existing under the Declaration of Trust adopted on the 4th of April, 1927, New York City, New York, U. S. A.

3. Purposes.

The Association is formed in order to hold and to administer various movable and immovable properties belonging to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada in Palestine, and generally to act on behalf of and to represent the said Assembly.

4. Management.

Shoghi Effendi Rabbani or whoever may lawfully succeed him as the Guardian of Baha'i Faith or any other person appointed by Shoghi Effendi Rabbani or his lawful successors with approval of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada shall be entitled to act on behalf of the Association, to sign any deeds or documents, to represent the Association in any dealings or transactions, to enter into any agreements, to receive moneys and to give effectual receipts or discharges, to appear before the Courts and Government Offices, to acquire properties, lands, houses, and other immovables in the name of the Association and to dispose of any such properties, lands, houses and immovables by way of sale, mortgage, gift, partition or otherwise and generally to do validly any acts which may be lawfully done by the Association.

5. The affairs of the Association shall be conducted in conformity with such directions and instructions as may be given by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada.

6. Dissolution.

In the event of dissolution of the Association all and any properties movable or immovable and all and any assets of the Association shall be disposed of in such a manner as may be decided by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada.

7. Alteration of Articles.

The present Articles can be altered by decision of Shoghi

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Effendi Rabbani or whoever may lawfully succeed him as the Guardian of Baha'i Faith with approval of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada.

Certified true copy of regulations submitted to the District Commissioner's offices for registration.

**(Sigd) E. MacLaren,
for District Commissioner.**

Haifa 15.5.30

**Seal of
National Spiritual
Assembly of the
Baha'is of the
United States and
Canada—Palestine Branch.**

According to the above Papers, Ruhi Effendi is a charter member of the Incorporated Bahai Society in Palestine, as well as Secretary with power of attorney, while the National Spiritual Assembly, an American organization, is the controlling factor of a Palestinian association. This latter fact is made clear in *Article Six* for, here we find that in the event of the break-up of the organization, all its properties, movable and immovable, shall be *disposed of in such manner, as may be decided by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada.*

Oases in the Desert of Rules

Reverting to the letters written by Ruhi Effendi in his role as secretary: we have realized that as transmitter of the messages and orders from Shoghi Effendi to the American Bahais, he fulfilled his task in a most exemplary manner. The dominant note, which he was expected to strike unremittingly, i.e.: the unconditional authority of the National Spiritual Assembly, comes out full and strong in every communication, making a recurrent theme which never fades nor wavers. Indeed, it can be said that the instrument was at all moments tuned to the required pitch.

At the same time, although Ruhi Effendi Afnan acted as spokesman for the Administration, he also, by chance or mischance, advocated the Bahai Cause itself. Here and there, we find in his letters certain liberal and inspiring sentiments, and can see him again as the witness to eternal truths which he started out to be. Thus, Ruhi Effendi speaks as an emancipated soul to other emancipated souls in a language which remains part of his being; and these paragraphs, rising like verdant oases in the dreary desert of rules and requirements, evoke a picture of more wholesome days. I like to think that he consciously, or even a little mischievously, put something over on his

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masters; but, whether or not such a supposition is justified, he did contribute something genuine and vibrant that warms the heart and comforts the soul.

With this thought in mind, it is something of an experience to reread the letters of Ruhi Effendi; to wade through the dry legalisms, and the arid wastes of materialism, and to come with a sudden delightful shock upon the Bahai ideals expressed in the Master's own modern, universal spirit and with his contagious energy. Therefore, may I invite the reader to wander awhile in the domain of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha? It is to be found in the letters which came from Haifa, as written by the Guardian's secretary, Ruhi Effendi Afnan.

This failure of material civilization should bring man near to spiritual matters. Working for material comfort and prosperity is becoming so useless and hopeless that we may well turn our attention more to God and the future life.

—Baha'i News, April, 1932

As you mention in your letter the Cause needs some more people who are able to shoulder its responsibilities and extend real help in promoting its many interests, both spiritual and material. These people whom we are so eagerly awaiting to appear will not, however, come of their own accord. They have to be brought in. It is for us to become active and really spread the Message.

—Baha'i News, July, 1932

From every corner of the earth letters come . . . asking for teachers . . . The only way we can satisfy that need is to have every Baha'i follow the command of Baha'u'llah and become himself a teacher. And that task is not so very impossible; it only needs a thorough knowledge of the teachings and a burning desire to spread the Message.

—Baha'i News, July, 1932

As to teaching work in colleges and universities, this is very important, for students as a whole are open-minded and little influenced by tradition. They would easily enter the Cause if the subject is properly presented and their intellect and sentiments properly satisfied. . . . The movement surely needs educated and devoted souls who will through their deeds as well as pen promulgate the teachings throughout the world.

—Baha'i News, July, 1932

A group that does not progress and show signs of life will soon die out and be forgotten. We have to keep virile and remain active if we desire our Cause to prosper and become an active force in shaping the destiny of the world.

—Baha'i News, July, 1932

The present condition of the world—its economic instability,

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social dissensions, political dissatisfactions and international distrust—should awaken the youth from their slumber and make them inquire what the future is going to bring. It is surely they who will suffer most if some calamity sweeps over the world. They should therefore open their eyes to the existing conditions, study the evil forces that are at work and then with a concerted effort arise and bring about the necessary reforms—reforms that shall contain within their scope the spiritual as well as social and political phases of human life.

—*Baha'i News*, November, 1932

Moreover, it is the duty of the Baha'is to help one another in time of difficulty—in times such as these when our economic life is disrupted and as a result innumerable people are left without work and proper means of livelihood.

—*Baha'i News*, November, 1932

You mention the need of the Cause for capable and enlightened souls who would arise and help the promotion of our beloved Faith and the carrying through of its divine plans. . . . It may be because we have failed to do our best, in living the life, and promoting the spread of the Message to the best of our ability. We have first to create the material with which we have to work and then hope to succeed. In the *Beyan* the Bab says that every religion of the past was fit to become universal. *The only reason why they fail to attain that mark was the incompetence of their followers.* He then proceeds to give a definite promise that this would not be the fate of the revelation of "Him whom God would make manifest," that it will become universal and include all the people of the world. This shows that we will ultimately succeed. But could we not through our shortcomings, failures to sacrifice and reluctance to concentrate our efforts in spreading the Cause, retard the realization of that ideal? And what would that mean? It shall mean that we will be held responsible before God, that the race will remain longer in its state of waywardness, that wars would not be so soon averted, that human suffering will last longer.

—*Baha'i News*, April, 1932

The youth should be encouraged to train themselves in public speaking while they are still pursuing their studies in schools or colleges. It is surely very necessary that the friends should keep in touch with the modern social movements.

—*Baha'i News*, July, 1932

When such a crisis sweeps over the world no person should hope to remain intact. We belong to an organic unit and when one part of the organism suffers all the rest of the body will feel its consequences. This is in fact the reason why Baha'u'llah calls our attention to the unity of mankind. But as Baha'is we should not let such hardships weaken our hope in the future.

—*Baha'i News*, July, 1932

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The best Assembly is the one that capitalizes the talents of all the members of the group and keeps them busy in some form of active participation in serving the Cause and spreading the Message.

—*Bahá'i News*, November, 1932

The friends have a great duty, first toward the Cause and then towards society at large. Bahá'u'lláh has come to the world with a divine Message and devoted all His life and withstood all forms of persecution in the hope of establishing it firmly. We are now the trustees of that Mission. It is for us to bring that task begun by Bahá'u'lláh to a final consummation. Should we fail we have been untrue to our Lord and also remained deaf to the cry of humanity seeking salvation.

—*Bahá'i News*, February, 1933

Chapter V
THE SPEAKER

*Your speech is simple, my Master, but not theirs who
talk of you.*

*I understand the voice of your stars and the silence
of your trees.*

—Rabindranath Tagore
Fruit-Gathering, Stanza XV

Chapter V

THE SPEAKER

An Unparalleled Orator

The Bahai Cause is a revelation, in that it has disclosed the *Plan* of the Supreme Being for the establishment and continuance of a *Moral Society* on the earth; and the accomplishment of the plan is dependent upon speech. Now, mankind as a whole is endowed with this faculty, but only a very few have developed the sense into a talent, while it is but here and there throughout the centuries that the exercise of this natural capacity has become an act of genius.

In the case of Abdul Baha, words were the golden harvest that followed the blossoming of spirit, for the fragrant hours of his consciousness dropped half their petals into his speech. His was the voice of the heart which came from the heart and went to the heart. Simple yet profound, broad yet pointed, it was at once the easiest of languages and the most difficult; easy, because attuned ears understood it without effort; difficult, because certain ears could not catch its vibrations. Abdul Baha's discourse was like the rich carpet of his own Persian native land; it rolled to the feet of the observer and extended before him, revealing a wealth of subject matter, infinite coloring, delicacy, craftsmanship and inspiration. He was an unparalleled orator, the first in the Bahai Cause, and the secret of his eloquence was in his vehement simplicity. His thoughts breathed the breath of life and his words burned with the brilliancy of suns and stars.

Abdul Baha spoke extemporaneously and spontaneously. He never used a manuscript, nor did he keep at hand any note whatsoever in order to refresh his memory or guide his theme toward its logical climax. He discoursed out of the abundance of his knowledge and spiritual experience; and, when he referred to the writings of Baha-O-Llah, he did not read from them, but talked about them. He set his pattern of speech before the Bahais and wished them to emulate it; accompanying it the while with the resources of their own minds and spirits, and always adapting it to the changing circumstances of time and place.

Nevertheless, in certain Bahai groups in the United States there existed, and for that matter still exists, a persistent inclination to exclude all public speaking. Many thought it appropriate to confine themselves to the reading of the Tablets. This limited conception of turning Bahai meet-

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ings into reading circles—the reading done mostly by simple folk who understand little of the subject, amused Abdul Baha greatly. He wondered why these people were averse to delivering the message out of their hearts; and he often wrote on this topic, stating plainly that the most important service was to deliver addresses and speeches, as fluent and eloquent as was possible. Thus, he encouraged the Bahais to speak, advising them *to read but sparingly*. They must unloose the tongue, promulgate the fragrances and diffuse the words of God. They must present to the public the proofs and evidences of this Cause *with the language of fire*—so that the souls may be exhilarated and the minds become the arena of tumult and the seat of exclamation. Then divine inspiration would descend, the bounties of the Holy Spirit would be conferred, the breezes from the Paradise of Abha would waft and the glad-tidings of Baha-O-Llah would spread across the world.

The basis of a Bahai address must be the oneness of the world of humanity, so that religious fanaticism, sectarian bias, racial prejudice and political rivalry may be removed from the hearts of men. In referring to his Western tour and his addresses before sundry audiences, he would often state that the Bahais should imitate his own conduct and manner. When a teacher delivers an address, his words must first of all have a supreme and *powerful effect upon himself*; then the hearer will likewise be affected. His utterances must be like unto flames of fire, burning away the veils of separation and disunity.

Meeting the World on its Own Ground

From 1898, when the first vanguard of American pilgrims visited Acca, Palestine, up to 1910, Abdul Baha's talks before visitors were mainly in the form of conversation. He dealt with the problems of religion, philosophy, science and art, according to the questions that were put to him; and, of course, he touched upon all these subjects in the countless Tablets that *were ever on their way to his followers*. Yet, he did not speak in public meetings nor make what may be termed addresses. The conditions of his life rendered such activity impossible, for it must be recalled that from childhood to old age he had been held a captive. Then, in the year 1908, the Ottoman government was overturned and the political prisons of the Empire were thrown open by the Young Turks. Then was seen the miracle of miracles; one which, as far as I know, cannot be matched in human history. Another person, in like circumstances, would have retained upon his mind and body the marks of confinement. The spirit might yet be intrepid,

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but the elasticity would be gone. In an instance of this kind, one would denote signs of abstraction, probably of vagueness; one could not expect to find a man at the apex of his powers, and certainly not a man of the world, deft in his dealings, assured in his every move, a modernist far beyond the *moderns of his day and generation*. Yet such was the Master at the age of sixty-seven as he passed out of life-long retirement and emerged into public view. In his case, there were no inhibitions of whatsoever kind; no sense that his career was drawing to a close; no idea that his mission could be fulfilled at a distance. Abdul Baha, without the slightest hesitation, stepped forth to meet the world on its own ground.

After a stay in Egypt, he crossed the continent and arrived in London on Monday, September 3, 1911. The great majority of articles that appeared in the press were both restrained and dignified in tone. Everywhere, wonder was expressed that forty years of imprisonment should have left behind so few physical traces. In describing him, W. Tudor Pole in an article published in *Star of the West*, September 27, 1911, writes:—

Abdul Baha receives all who come to him, whether great or small. . . . Countless press correspondents have been received and they usually retire from the interview greatly impressed by his noble dignity and spiritual simplicity. Many of the London dailies refer to him as the great Persian Prophet. . . . Abdul Baha has been visited by many well-known leaders of thought now in this country.

He rises about 5 A. M. and works for some hours at his correspondence. Interviews commence soon after 9 A. M. and last until midday. After lunch he takes a short rest and then usually drives out into the parks or to visit various people who are deeply interested in his work. Gatherings of friends take place nearly every evening and he has given some wonderful discourses at such times. . . . On Sunday evening, September 10th, Abdul Baha accepted an invitation from Rev. R. J. Campbell to visit the City Temple. The visit was kept secret, but the congregation was as usual very large, probably well over 2,000. Abdul Baha spoke from the pulpit for about 9 minutes and the tense thrill vibrating throughout the whole building was most strongly marked. He spoke in Persian in full, vibrant tones and the whole congregation was held spellbound. For the first time probably, in the history of the Bahai Movement, its venerable leader addressed a great public gathering, and those of us who were privileged to attend can never forget the wonderful impression produced. It seemed to us as if a new page in history was being turned over and as if a new religious and spiritual epoch was being outwardly launched upon an expectant world before our very eyes. . . .

His presence among us is a profound blessing and its unifying spiritual effect will grow unceasingly. . . . Abdul Baha, Servant of God! No other title would be so appropriate or so dignified. The

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work now being so triumphantly brought to fruition by this great Master of Men will endure throughout all future ages and the great spiritual ideals that lie behind it will become actual realities. . . . Surely we require no greater inspiration than this!

In the same issue of *Star of the West*, September 27, 1911, there is the reprint of an article entitled *Towards Spiritual Unity* which appeared in *The Christian Commonwealth* of September 13th above the signature "A. D." This long article is valuable in many respects, mainly because it records one of the first interviews between Abdul Baha and an English correspondent. "A. D." opens as follows:—

For years past, word has been coming to the West that a new prophet has arisen in the East, and that a great religious movement, starting in Persia, was spreading far and wide. Reports were vague and conflicting, but gradually the main facts emerged. . . . On Monday evening of last week "The Master," as his followers naturally call him, arrived in London, and on Tuesday I had the privilege of meeting him.

"What is he like?" Let me quote the words of one who visited him at Akka a few years ago:—

"He is of middle stature, strongly built. He wears flowing light-colored robes. On his head is a light buff fez with a white cloth wound about it. His long grey hair rests on his shoulders. His forehead is broad, full, and high, his nose slightly aquiline, his moustaches and beard, the latter full, though not heavy, nearly (now quite) white. His eyes are grey and blue, large and both soft and penetrating. His bearing is simple, but there is grace, dignity and even majesty about his movements. . . . We see the benignity and the kindness of his countenance. . . ."

During his long imprisonment he thought not of himself, but of others; he enjoyed continual communion with God, he ministered to the needs of his fellow-prisoners, and it was because he lived this unselfish life that he survived while many others perished. "A captive for the Cause of God," his interpreter explained, "his prison was to him as a palace. His body was suffering, but his soul was free."

The invariable tendency on the part of the followers of a great religious leader is to attribute to him supernatural powers. Abdul Baha emphatically disclaims possessing any such, and even deprecates the description of himself as a prophet. He told me he had never spoken a single word implying that he had right to such an appellation. "I am simply a servant of God," he said, "and I do not wish to be called anything more than that." He assured me that he has no desire to found another sect. "The foundation truth of Baha'u'llah is the foundation truth of all religions. . . . Therefore, the Bahais have for the followers of other religions the greatest love and yearning, because they know that mankind is one. Baha'u'llah seeks to promote and establish friendship and union. He addresses himself not to a sect, but to the whole world. . . ."

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It is not surprising that people in increasing numbers are attracted to the Bahai faith by its catholicity, the loftiness of its ethic, the simplicity of its teaching, its complete freedom from narrow and exclusive dogma. It has no organization, no hierarchy, no ritual, no fixed places and times of meetings; in short, it is spirit and life. It does not seek to proselytize; you can be a Bahai without ceasing to be a Christian, a Jew, or Mohammadan. There are adherents of the Bahai faith in every country in the world. . . .

It has been my good fortune to meet Abdul Baha several times during the past week. In one conversation I sought his impressions of England . . . already he has been much impressed by the freedom we enjoy. "I admire the liberty you have in England and the use you make of it," he said. "Every person in this country can go his own way and say what he thinks without any one making him afraid. In fact, he is king of himself."

"Do you consider we have too much liberty?"

"Oh, no; you all seem to be perfectly comfortable and perfectly safe. Freedom of thought and speech enlarges the circle of one's understanding and leads to progress and unity. . . ."

The First Speech

The meeting at the City Temple is a landmark in history, for it was there that the flood of Abdul Baha's utterance was unloosed upon the world. Let us then continue reading the article of "A. D". By means of his description, we shall transport ourselves over the years and take our places in the vast congregation at that evening service. While all are joining in the hymn which precedes the sermon, a venerable figure in Persian robes slowly ascends the stairs of the pulpit; then, the Rev. R. J. Campbell, Pastor of the City Temple, introduces his distinguished guest, saying:—

This evening we have in the pulpit of the City Temple the leader of one of the most remarkable religious movements of this or any age. . . . The Bahai movement, as it is called, in Hither Asia rose on that soil just as spontaneously as Christianity rose in the middle territories adjoining, and that faith—which, by the way, is very closely akin to, I think I might say identical with, the spiritual purpose of Christianity—that movement stands for the spiritual unity of mankind; it stands for universal peace among the nations. These are good things and the man who teaches them . . . must be a good man as well as great. Abdul Baha is on a visit to this country—a private visit—but he wished to see the City Temple; and I think I am right in saying, for the first time in his life he has consented to lift his voice in public. He does not address public meetings, he does not preach sermons; he is just a religious teacher. He spent forty years in prison for his faith, and from his prison directed the efforts of his followers. There is not much in the way of organization, but simple trust in the Spirit

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of God. We, as followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is to us and always will be the Light of the World, view with sympathy and respect every movement of the Spirit of God in the experience of mankind, and therefore we give greeting to Abdul Baha—I do not know whether I could say in the name of the whole Christian community—that may be too much—but I think in the name of all who share the spirit of our Master, and are trying to live their lives in that spirit. Abdul Baha, I think, intends to say a word or two in response to this greeting that I address to him in your name.

"A. D.," the English correspondent, continues his article as follows:—

Abdul Baha then advanced to the front of the pulpit and addressed the congregation. He spoke for eight minutes in Persian with considerable animation, his voice rising and falling as in a rhythmic chant. Towards the close he placed the palms of his hands together as in prayer. The translation was read afterwards by Mr. W. Tudor Pole, as follows:—

. . . This is a new cycle of human power. All the horizons of the world are luminous, and the world will become indeed as a garden and a paradise. It is the hour of unity of the sons of men, and a drawing together of all races and all classes. . . . The gift of God to this enlightened age is the knowledge of the oneness of mankind and the fundamental oneness of religion. War shall cease between nations, and by the will of God the Most Great Peace shall come; the world will be seen as a new world, and all men shall live as brothers. . . . There is one God; mankind is one; and the foundations of religion are one.

Mr. Charles Mason Remey, who had been called to join Abdul Baha in Europe, gives an account of the meeting in a letter published in *Star of the West*, October 16, 1911. He also describes the Master's method of teaching. We will quote a portion of this letter:—

He spoke for several minutes with an increasing forcefulness. . . . Then a stillness and a quietness fell over the assemblage and as Abdul Baha raised his hands in prayer and benediction, we were all conscious of the Omnipresent Spirit of God, for every soul seemed to vibrate in unison with the soul of Abdul Baha, who is God's servant here upon earth today. . . .

(Abdul Baha's) methods of teaching are positive in the extreme without the slightest suggestion of negation. In meeting people of all manner of thought from orthodoxy to atheism, his one object is to strike a positive sympathetic chord with the individual.

Through accentuating and dwelling upon the ground of common thought, spiritual chords of Unity are extended from him to many souls, and through ignoring the differences, those destructive, negative forces, finding nothing to set them in vibration, are as non-existent.

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From this we can learn a valuable lesson in teaching. It is not only unnecessary but also very harmful for one to attempt to dislodge religious beliefs from the mind of a truth-seeker by any other method than that employed by Abdul Baha.

Thousands of Speeches

That first eight minute speech was the mother that gave birth to thousands of other speeches—bright, happy children which tramped forth from the mind and heart of Abdul Baha to bless mankind with their messages of goodwill and fellowship. A percentage of these speeches have, since 1912, been brought together and published in book form, but many more, in the possession of Bahais throughout the world, are not yet in print. The following is a very incomplete list of the published works that contain the texts of the speeches:—

1. *Abdul Baha in London. Addresses and Notes of Conversations, 1912.*
2. *Talks of Abdul Baha Given in Paris, 1912.*
3. *The Wisdom of Abdul Baha, 1911-1912.*
4. *Abdul Baha in New York, 1912.*
5. *Abdul Baha on Divine Philosophy, 1918.*
6. *The Promulgation of Universal Peace, Vol. I, 1922, Vol. II, 1925.*

There are besides other works which carry, either in part or in whole, the words of Abdul Baha and extracts from his conversations and talks, as recorded in the diaries kept by his secretaries or other individuals. A list of these may assist the student of Bahai literature:—

1. *Compilation, Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha, 1918.*
2. *Bahai Scriptures, 1923.*
3. *The Divine Art of Living, Abdul Baha, 1926.*
4. *The Oneness of Mankind, Baha-U-Llah, Abdul Baha, 1927.*
5. *Foundations of World Unity, Abdul Baha, 1927.*
6. *Abdul Baha in Egypt, 1929.*
7. *The Baha'i Peace Program, From the Writings of Abdul Baha, 1930.*

Besides the above books, I have in my library a precious Manuscript which contains textual translations from the original Persian copies of his talks delivered in Europe and America. The translations, made by a well-known East Indian Bahai, were approved by Abdul Baha himself.

Thus, it is evident that the great speeches delivered by Abdul Baha during his sojourn throughout Europe and America, from 1911 to 1913,

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have resulted in the creation of a library of information on the Bahai Cause which is a treasure-house of knowledge and inspiration. From the day when he set foot on the soil of the Western continent, *The Star of the West*, *World Order* and other Bahai publications in Asia, Europe and America have dedicated their pages year in and year out to the reproduction of his public talks. He arrived in England, September 10, 1911. After a sojourn in that country, he visited France and then returned to Egypt, from whence on March 25, 1912, he sailed for America. Reaching New York on April 11th, he journeyed throughout the United States and Canada until December 5th. On his homeward trip, he visited England, Scotland, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary and Egypt, and arrived in Haifa, Palestine, on December 10, 1913. During all this time, Abdul Baha was occupied in teaching the Cause and expanding the boundaries of the movement, and as we can see, he provided the Bahai world with a supply of timeless literature that is applicable to all conditions and circumstances and appears to be almost inexhaustible. All this within a period of two years.

Picking up the February, April and May copies of *World Order*, of this year, 1942, we, to our delight, come across three, until now unpublished speeches of Abdul Baha delivered in Baltimore and New York in the year 1912. Their titles are not only suggestive of the vitality of the message but also of the hopes and aspirations of the speaker. *All are servants of God* rings assuringly in our ears; *Be Ever Ready* lifts us out of our sluggishness; *The Happiness of Mankind Will be Realized* puts us on our mettle and sets us to work with hope and confidence.

Although Abdul Baha's physical presence has for long been removed from our midst, his marvelous speeches, like an omnipresent army, have been assisting us by day and by night; gaining for us victories without number. They have been used in a variety of ways, and are absolutely essential to Bahai work.

(1) There exist today many excellent compilations of extracts and quotations (published and unpublished) selected by individuals out of the never-ending mass of Abdul Baha's talks.

(2) The talks have supplied fitting texts for speeches delivered during all these years by Bahai teachers and non-Bahai scholars.

(3) Few Bahai meetings are considered complete without reading some suitable parts from the talks for the edification and enlightenment of the audience.

(4) Numberless general articles have been published by Bahai writ-

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ers and others in which the authors try to prove their points and clinch their arguments by quoting from Abdul Baha's talks.

(5) These talks have provoked creative discussions and have suggested collateral and useful ideas to many authors, speakers and writers.

(6) The Editors of the Bahai Publications have for years made suitable and interesting selections out of these speeches and published them monthly under various titles. The bound volumes of the *Star of the West*, 1922, 1923, 1924, 1925, 1926, 1927, 1928, 1929 contain many such selections which, at a glance, give us the variety of subjects dealt with by Abdul Baha. Here are some of the titles:—*The Progress in Religion—the question of Evolution. The Morn of Unity. Two Kinds of Education. Education must include the Spiritual ideas of World Peace and Brotherhood. Reality is One. Ideal Brotherhood. The Story of Baha-U-Llah's Life. What is Faith? If Persia and America Co-operate. The Brilliant Star—Christ. The Divine Perfections of Jesus Christ. The Spiritual Foundation of Education. Religion the basis for an enduring Civilization. The divine Phase of Economics. How to Make Life Successful. The two Natures of Man. God's Perfect Laws. The Existence of God. Equality of Man and Woman. Immortality. What is Death? The Accident of Color. The Elemental Atom and its Composition. Is Disarmament Possible? Communication with the other World.*

The above titles were not chosen by the Master, for he never entitled his speeches; but were selected later as descriptive of the topics dealt with in the various talks. The titles are interesting in themselves for they indicate the broad field of subject matter covered by Abdul Baha before his Western audiences.

This listing of records applying to the Master's European and American journeys would not be complete without a mention of newspaper accounts. I have in my library over twenty large clipping books containing news and feature articles, mostly illustrated, which appeared in the press of England, Scotland, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Switzerland, the United States, Canada and Egypt. These articles and interviews show the impression made on the spot by Abdul Baha and will be exceedingly valuable in the hands of future historians.

The Inhabitants of the World are Ready to Hearken

On his return from his Western tour, Abdul Baha, in a Tablet written in Haifa, continues to accentuate the virtues of teaching. In part, he says:—

In short, although Abdul-Baha considers himself as a drop, yet

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this drop is connected with the Most Great Sea. Although he looks upon himself as an atom, yet this atom is related to the world-illuminating sun. As it is said: "The Originator of all these voices is the King himself;" or in other words: "It is through His assistance."

Unquestionably this physical body and human energy would have been unable to stand this constant wear and tear, and were it not for the support of the angel of Providence even the bones of this servant would have mouldered away. But the aid and help of His Highness the Desired One was the Guardian and Protector of the weak and humble Abdul-Bahá. Through the many annoyances and inconveniences of the journey, physical exhaustion was produced in the nerves and the various indispositions caused poor health, but the Spirit was so energized that this great weakness and excessive feebleness disappeared in a short period of time, and ere long Abdul-Bahá will be occupied again with reading and writing. . . .

Consider, that the Apostles of Christ were few in number, but because they were filled to overflowing with His Graces, and the essence of His Advice and Commandments were circulating, like unto the spirit, through their veins and arteries, to such an extent that one could find nothing else throughout their beings save His Love, and they girded up the loins of endeavor to convey the Message. Now it has become manifest what a tremendous effect and result their services produced! We must also act accordingly and follow in their footsteps.

O ye divine believers! Today any soul who is a teacher of the Cause is confirmed. The Teachers are in the front rank, are favored at the Threshold of the Almighty and helped from the Kingdom of ABHÁ! The believers of God must exercise the utmost love, respect and consideration towards the teachers;—so that in whatever place they may enter, joy and happiness be obtained. But regarding the qualifications of the teachers, they are revealed in the Divine Tablets. They must adorn themselves with those attributes. I declare by God, beside whom there is no God, that if today a weak mosquito is characterized with the qualifications of the teachers and summons the people to the Divine Kingdom, it will become a soaring falcon of heaven and the ephemeral moth will be changed into an eagle of the apex of the Merciful; the drop will be transformed into a surging ocean and the atom will emit the brilliancy of the sun. From every part the cry of, "*Where are the teachers?*" is being raised, and from the Kingdom of ABHÁ, the voice of, "*Where are the attracted ones. Where are the severed ones? Where are the sanctified ones?*" reaches to the ear of intelligence. The inhabitants of the world have attained to a most astonishing capacity and are ready to hearken to this Call.

O ye friends of God! Show ye an effort, put ye forth an extraordinary exertion—so that this Candle may become the witness of

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every congregation, and this lay or strain be the Cause of happiness to every human soul. . . .

from "*Trumpet Call to the East and West*". Tablet by Abdul-Baha Abbas, translated on Mount Carmel, Haifa, Palestine, Sept. 22, 1914—in *Star of the West* Vol. V, November 23, 1914, No. 14.

September in England

On page 79 of *Abdul Baha in London*, we find a chapter in which is described the Master's stay at the Clifton Guest House in Bristol during the week-end of September 23rd to 25th, 1911. This is as lovely an account of the Master as one could read anywhere. One sees him talking with his British friends, attending a general reception in his honor, driving along the countryside and walking on the downs; finally, we have a picture of him gathering together the servants of the Clifton Guest House and thanking them for their care of him as he speaks on the dignity of labor and gives to each a tangible remembrance of his visit. Let us hold in our consciousness this scene in a suburban English town, with Abdul Baha as the central figure, the while noting the date: *September, 1911*.

Thirteen years have rolled into the lap of eternity, and, taking a mental trip back to England, we find ourselves once more in the month of September. It is 1924.

We do not see the Master; that gracious presence is no longer on the earth, but his place is not vacant. A youthful figure is standing before a British audience, instead of that so familiar, patriarchal one; an untried voice is raised, substituting those rich, powerful tones, yet the message is the same. Let us then focus our attention on Ruhi Effendi, a young man of twenty-four years, as he steps to the front and takes up his grandfather's work. This is his maiden trip to the West and he comes as personal representative of the Guardian of the Bahai Cause.

The occasion is *The Conference of Some Living Religions Within the British Empire* which held sessions in London from September 22nd to October 3rd, 1924. The official report by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of Great Britain, signed by its joint secretaries, E. J. Rosenberg and G. P. Simpson, is published in *The Bahai World*, 1926-1928, Vol. II, p. 225. It reads as follows:—

The British Empire Exhibition at Wembley in 1924 afforded opportunity for holding a number of conferences on many subjects of imperial interest. Amongst these was one on "*Some Living Religions Within the British Empire*," organized by the School of Oriental Studies and the Sociological Society, the purpose of which was to

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render more widely known the Faiths now prevailing in the Eastern and Western Dominions of the British Commonwealth. With this object in view it was decided by the Executive Committee of the Conference that the papers to be presented should be contributed by adherents of each religion, who, while touching lightly on creed and dogma, should treat chiefly of the everyday results of the teachings as evidenced in the personal and social life of its followers.

It was originally intended that the Conference should be held in one of the halls at the Wembley Exhibition, but owing to difficulties which arose with regard to accommodation, it was held at the Imperial Institute, South Kensington, from September 22nd to October 3rd, 1924.

Amongst the twelve or more living religions dealt with, the Bahá'í religion naturally found its place, both because of its own inherent importance and because of its widespread range throughout the Empire, covering as it does not only Eastern but also Western countries.

The Bahá'í paper to be presented to the Conference was written, at the express wish of the Guardian of the Cause (Shoghi Effendi), under the supervision of a committee of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada, by Mr. Horace Holley—the other members of the committee being Mr. Mountfort Mills and Mrs. Parsons. It was subsequently revised by some member of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Great Britain, and was read at the meeting on September 25, 1924, by Mr. Mountfort Mills, the chair being taken by Dr. Walter Walsh, the leader of the Free Religious Movement.

The Assembly came to the conclusion that it would be desirable to bring out more fully the practical results obtained through the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, and a short supplementary paper was therefore written by Ruhi Afnan with the direct advice of Shoghi Effendi, and was read by the author at the above mentioned meeting.

These two papers are now published in a separate edition for the benefit of Bahá'ís especially, but they will find their place also in the memorial volume of *Transactions of the Conference*, issued by the Committee and published by Messrs. Duckworth & Co., Ltd.

Of the Bahá'í talks above-mentioned, it is the second that we are concerned with, and this I would like to reproduce in full, did space allow. However, I am forced to content myself with quoting the opening remarks made by Ruhi Effendi before the Congress, after which I will skip over to the conclusion of his speech.

Speech of Ruhi Effendi Afnan

The speaker who preceded me gave you a sketch of the history of the Bahá'í Movement as well as a statement of some of its fundamental principles and teachings. It now rests with me to explain

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briefly the significance of those principles and teachings and to describe the profound changes they have wrought in the lives of their followers.

At a time when the spirit of materialism was spreading all over Europe, when internal revolutions, diplomatic intrigues, political strife and economic rivalries were darkening the horizon of an agitated and suffering world, Baha'u'llah, from the prison city of Akka, addressed a number of Epistles to the monarchs and rulers of the world to whom He declared His teachings and principles.

To the Baha'is these teachings stand out as the only remedy for the divers ills of the present age and the only solution of its manifold problems.

Baha'u'llah saw the world like the surface of a glacier hopelessly divided by innumerable fissures and dark and deep crevasses. The development of modern science had opened the eyes of men to the bigotry and prejudice that existed in religion and had so alienated them from it that even its pure and fundamental truths seemed, to their minds, to be darkened. The gulf existing between man and God was widening and agnosticism was the fashion of the day.

The spirit of nationalism, embittered by fierce economic and political rivalries, had so widened the chasms separating the nations, that nothing less than a great world war could be foreseen.

Within the individual nations also, new lines of cleavage accentuated the divisions and differences of man, and class hatred and economic unrest were spreading fast over the European continent.

Baha'u'llah conceived the glorious vision of the Oneness of Mankind and set before Himself the task of healing, by aid of His fundamental principles, every sore that afflicted the body of humanity. He knew well that unless all the crevasses were bridged over and all the differences removed, unity and universal peace would not prove enduring, nor even attainable.

To bring back man to God and at the same time to enable him to appreciate the advantages which science provides, He declared that true religion and science cannot possibly be antagonistic. For both, in their essence, are truths, and between truths there can be no conflict. Moreover, to reconcile the religions, he laid it down, as a guiding principle, that the purpose of Religion is to provide a social bond, to create a new force in man's life, to infuse in him the love of his neighbor. If, therefore, a religion, which He likened to a medicine, should aggravate the disease, it is far better to be without it.

In adjusting international difficulties He did not advocate political methods. He knew that war is only the result of a state of mind, a spirit of blind and narrow nationalism inherent in man's heart. He, therefore, dealt His first blow by declaring that "Glory is not his who loves his country, but glory is his who loves his kind." All men are the sheep of one fold and God the divine and loving Shepherd. Why, therefore, slay each other?

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As one of the sources of misunderstanding is multiplicity of languages, He called upon the members of the International House of Justice, either to create a new auxiliary language or to choose one of those already existing and to have it taught in all the schools of the world, so that ideas might be more easily diffused and the risk of grave misunderstanding lessened. He then laid down the broad lines that should direct the formation of the International House of Justice, a supreme and all-inclusive body whose members shall be fully accredited representatives of all the peoples of the world. They shall assemble, and after mature deliberation, arbitrate on all questions, social, political and economic, which may lead to war.

In order to eliminate the root cause of all forms of class hatred He proclaimed, "Do ye know why We have created you from one clay? That no one should exalt himself over the other. Ponder in your heart how ye were created. It behooveth you, since We have created you all from the same substance, to be even as one soul, in such wise that ye may walk with the same feet, eat with the same mouth and dwell in the same land; that from your inmost being, by your deeds and actions, the signs of oneness and the essence of detachment may be made manifest. This is My counsel unto you, O ye concourse of Light! Heed ye this counsel, that ye may obtain the Fruit of Holiness from the Tree of Wondrous Glory."

Thus by taking away all the causes of differences Baha'u'llah sought to establish the Oneness of Mankind and to abolish definitely international and class war. . . .

* * * *

In conclusion, it will be generally agreed that it would be far from God's infinite mercy to give His helpless creatures the freedom to tread on dangerous ground, and whilst knowing the solution of their problems to stand aside heedless of their sufferings and deaf to their constant prayers. It is in accordance with His divine attributes to give them guidance when need arises, to send them a Messenger with the necessary laws and commandments to put them on the right path of safety. And now that the social unrest is becoming a real menace to civilization itself, when world problems in their acuteness and multiplicity are baffling the minds of men, we, a small yet determined band, fired by the unquenchable enthusiasm of the promise of a New Day, firmly believe that the sea of divine compassion has surged, that the Lord has sent His Messenger with the necessary solution of those intricate problems. The Baha'is on their part have tried their utmost, have sacrificed their well-being, their property, their all, to diffuse this spirit far and wide. Is the world willing to answer their call, or at least to deem it worthy of attention?

—The Baha'i Magazine, *Star of the West*, April, 1925, Vol. XVI; also reproduced in *The Baha'i World*, Vol. II, 1926-1928, pp. 239-242.

THE SPEAKER

Bahai News of December 1924 gives an account of the conference. In it we find a glowing tribute to Ruhi Afnan who spoke in faith and wisdom, his youth and enthusiasm winning all hearts to a close attention to the Baha'i teachings. Following is the report in its entirety:—

Since the return of Shoghi Effendi to Haifa, the most important news of the Cause outside this country has been the great interest with which the two papers on the Baha'i Cause were received by the audience attending the Conference of Some Living Religions within the British Empire, held at the Imperial Institute, London, from September 22nd to October 3rd. Quoting from a general letter from the Spiritual Assembly of London, dated November 12th:

"The paper which presented the Baha'i Message was the product of consultation and cooperation and was read by Mr. Mountfort Mills, the delegate from the Canadian Baha'is, in clear and reverent tones reaching every part of the large hall, and was listened to with wrapt attention. Through the guidance of Abdu'l Baha the text was clearly inspired by his spirit, which was felt by all the believers.

"Ruhi Afnan then spoke in faith and wisdom, his youth and enthusiasm winning all hearts to a close attention to the Baha'i teachings he gave with sincerity and conviction. The power of the spiritual Presence was like a baptism. We felt the outpouring which Abdu'l Baha foretold would awaken the world with the Divine Message, and this must have been reflected in all hearts who were praying with us for the illumination of the world on that day of great opportunity."

—*Baha'i News, December, 1924.*

The Clock that Marked the Hour

We have observed the interesting fact that England was the setting of the initial public appearances of both the Master and his young grandson. Abdul Baha, emerging from life-long confinement in the East, faced his first audience in London. Ruhi Effendi, leaving the protective restrictions of his native Haifa, made his debut as a public speaker in the same city. That talk of Abdul Baha, compact with celestial meaning, was the first note in a symphony of speeches delivered throughout Europe and America. It opened a new era in the Bahai Cause; while the talk of Ruhi Effendi was likewise the starting point of fruitful journeyings in the interest of the movement. Naturally talented, well educated, endowed with a most sympathetic personality and, above all, possessed of a high sense of responsibility, this young man, then and there, embarked on a career which promised to be of incalculable value to the Cause. We can only guess how far he might have gone and what impetus the movement might have derived through him; we can only regret that he was never given wings to develop his mission

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to its fullest capacity, and can only mourn the cutting off from the Cause of this, its most living branch. For, in November, 1941, after nineteen years of service to the Baháí Movement and the Baháí Administration, Rúhí Effendi, together with his family, was excommunicated by order of his cousin, the Guardian; at the age of forty-two, this gifted exponent of the Teachings of Bahá-O-Lláh and Abdúl Bahá was cast out from the Cause and placed in *spiritual quarantine*.

And now, one wonders: Shall it be that this bright light is snuffed out permanently? Is this sacrificial spirit wounded beyond recovery? Can this son of mighty lineage concur in his own disinheritance? Only time will answer these questions; but, in the meanwhile, we are conscious of the fact that Rúhí Effendi arose to follow in the footsteps of the Great Speaker, and remember that there are precedents for those who determine to hold to their missions, in the face of official disapproval:

Bahá-O-Lláh had made certain contracts with God; and Church and State combined in order to stifle his sense of obligation.

Abdúl Bahá had accepted responsibilities at the hands of his Father; and governments and their agencies combined in order to stifle his sense of obligation.

Did temporal power succeed? The years settled that question; history recorded the answer, and the world bears testimony to the result.

And now comes the young branch grown from the Mighty Tree! He alone in the Master's large family responded to Abdúl Bahá's call for speakers; and the winds of adversity are blowing heavily upon him. Will they stifle *his* sense of obligation? The same clock that marked the hour when the responses of his great Forebears were sounded will strike out the answer of Rúhí Effendi Afán.

Chapter VI
THE WRITER

*They come with their laws and their codes to bind
me fast; but I evade them ever, for I am only waiting
for love to give myself up at last into his hands.*

—Rabindranath Tagore
Gitanjali, Stanza XVII

Chapter VI

THE WRITER

Style

Abdul Baha was a master of words through the mediums of Persian, Arabic and Turkish. He spoke in these three languages with utter fluency; he wrote in them with simplicity and art. There is no obscurity in his method, never a shadow of the superior attitude, no pedantry, no oratorical flourishes. He went straight to the point, rejecting everything superfluous. His style is free, and balanced as wings bearing on them grave reflections; his sentiments are as sunbeams, condensed and burning.

The Master's eloquence, his rhythmic style, his warm poetic outpouring, his prophetic explanations were as much part of him as was his physiognomy, his stature, the throbbing of his pulse, the action of his will; thus, the writings that he has left behind are fraught with himself—they are Abdul Baha in person.

An author's manner is the reflection of his mentality. If he wishes to write with lucidity, he must first of all let light take possession of his mind; if he aims at writing in a grand style, he must live in a grand consciousness. The mind of Abdul Baha was a center of radiance; his consciousness was wide-spread and heroic. Therefore, his writings are like unto the clear, swift current of a river that flows fresh and unconstrained, beautifying the countryside and bringing life to the farmlands of the neighborhood.

It is said that some authors write nonsense in a clear style, and others sense in an obscure one. Some can reason without being able to persuade; others can persuade without being able to reason. Some dive so deep that they disappear from our view; while others soar so high that they lose their own bearings. Again, there is the type that employs sarcasm and irony in order to cover the dry bones of dead idealism. Meanwhile, the poet, the inspired teacher writes simply of things that he knows, logically of things that he understands, warmly of things that he feels and convincingly of things that he believes. The difficult is easy for him; the beautiful is familiar to him and the miraculous is part of daily life.

Collections of Tablets

Abdul Baha is author of few books but he wrote thousands upon thousands of Tablets. These were addressed to Bahais and non-Bahais: men,

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women and children of all nationalities and races, in every country of the world. I can imagine that there never will be a time when *all* the Tablets of Abdul Baha will be collected and published in a series of volumes. The task is well-nigh impossible, for they are scattered throughout the cities and hamlets of the earth and add up to an incredible number.

From the earliest days of the Cause, the Babís and later the Baháís in Persia, Iraq, Palestine, Turkey, Egypt, India and other parts of the East made individual collections of the Tablets of the Bab, Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha. These collections were, and still are to be found in practically every Bahai family; the size depending entirely upon the opportunities and the industry of the owners. Copies of the Tablets had to be gathered from near and far, written in longhand and later bound in volumes. The teachers on their travels often carried along rich and varied collections of Tablets. Immediately upon their arrival in whatsoever city or village, the eager and spiritually hungry residents borrowed these precious documents and applied themselves to the copying of them. If the teacher's sojourn in a particular place was short, the Baháís would forego food and sleep in order to reproduce as many Tablets as was humanly possible. Occasionally, they offered all kinds of inducements to the teacher so that he would prolong his stay in their midst.

After the introduction of the Bahai Cause in the United States, the same procedure was established here, and for a like reason; there being practically no printed booklets or books of the Writings available. Thus, the early believers gave much time to the copying and distribution of the Tablets. With typewriter and mimeograph machine at hand, these American Baháís had at their disposal a far more simplified method for the dissemination of the teachings than did their Oriental brothers; and they made full use of it.

Mr. Charles Everett Sprague, a pioneer Bahai was indefatigable in making copies of the Tablets of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha and in sending them out broadcast. *Star of the West*, March 2, 1913 contains two interesting obituary notices on the life and work of Mr. Sprague, signed respectively by Major Honoré Joseph Jaxon and Edna McKinney, which bear testimony to his far-reaching work. To quote one of them:—

Those who have been in the Cause for a number of years will remember how the copies of Tablets from both Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha, which Mr. Charles E. Sprague sent broadcast over this country during the early days of the Cause in America were appreciated. From the moment of his entering the Cause, his main thought was "service," and the spread of the Glad-tidings to all. It was largely

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through his efforts that the first edition of the small book of prayers revealed by Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha was published.

I have in my library five volumes of these early Tablets which Mr. Sprague mimeographed and distributed amongst the seekers; also ten mimeographed collections of rare Tablets put out by Mr. J. H. Hougen, an active member of the Bahai Assembly of Seattle, Washington, who rendered a similar service to the Cause.

One of the most enthusiastic collectors and distributors of the Tablets of Abdul Baha was Miss Juliet Thompson. In those days, I lived in Washington, D. C., as secretary to the Persian Legation, and inasmuch as I received from the Master weekly packages of his Tablets, I made the habit of regularly sending the translations to Miss Thompson in New York who, on her part, made numerous copies and disseminated them amongst the believers. Her Friday night meetings were generally thronged with seekers who listened with rapt attention to these constantly arriving communications from Abdul Baha.

Practically every Bahai gave some of his or her time to the copying of the Tablets and to the sharing of their contents with others, and almost all of them had their individual collections. These were constantly being compared in order to find out which was most complete, and then the owners would fill in the gaps and bring their own collections up to the last minute. Amongst those who rendered conspicuous service in this field of spiritual education were Mr. and Mrs. Joseph H. Hannen, Mrs. Harlan Ober, Mrs. Edward Kinney, Miss Harriet Magee, Mr. Charles Mason Remey, Miss Gertrude Buikema, Mr. Albert Windust, Mrs. May Maxwell, Mr. Arthur Pilsbury Dodge, Mr. Hooper Harris, Mr. Carl Scheffler, Mrs. Mary Lesch, Mr. Howard McNutt, Mrs. Isabella Brittingham, Mrs. Louise R. Waite, Mr. Roy C. Wilhelm, Mrs. Corinne True, Dr. Zia M. Bagdadi, Mrs. Helen S. Goodall, Mrs. Ella G. Cooper, Mr. Thornton Chase, Miss Mary Rabb, Mrs. Ella Rice-Wray, Miss Henrietta Wagner, Miss Berthelin Lexow, now Mrs. Frederick Allen, and Miss Ella M. Roberts. The last named was editor of the *Magazine of the Children of the Kingdom*, and she achieved excellent results in the new field of child education from the Bahai point of view. I could go on with this list, adding many more names, did space allow; for I have only touched on this subject and the work that was accomplished through the dissemination of Tablets.

Collections Published

Finally, many of these partial, individual efforts were crystallized into

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a whole; for, in a general circular letter dated March 21, 1908 and sent out by the Bahai Spiritual Assembly of Chicago, the believers were requested to submit to the Assembly copies of their Tablets from Abdul Baha for preservation and eventual publication.

Thus, with the consent of the recipients and the permission of the Master, the first volume of the *Tablets of Abdul Baha* was published in 1909; the second, in 1915 and the third, in 1930. These three volumes, containing altogether 730 pages, present a glorious selection from the thousands upon thousands of Tablets written by Abdul Baha to his followers in this country. They are treasure-stores of spiritual knowledge and an invaluable section of Bahai literature.

While the American Bahais were engaged in copying, disseminating and, finally, in publishing the Tablets of Abdul Baha, the Spiritual Assembly of Cairo, Egypt, was addressing itself to the same task. A volume of Tablets, in Arabic and Persian, containing 488 pages appeared in 1910 and a second in the same languages, consisting of 336 pages, came out two years later. These books brought to light some very early and little known Tablets of Abdul Baha written to the Mohammadan, Jewish and Zoroastrian Bahais; and they reveal to us an angle of the Master's encyclopedic mind which was packed with knowledge of the religions and philosophies of the East.

My Own Collection

From early childhood, I have been inclined toward copy-keeping (a very useful form of activity, especially when a writer is concerned) and this inclination developed into a passion in regard to the talks and letters of Abdul Baha. Therefore, in the early years of my service to the Cause, when the Master began to send to me for translation his Tablets addressed to the American Bahais, I invariably made copies of these documents in handwriting, and thus started my own collection which in time became very large indeed. It is now bound in two volumes; the first consisting of 1477 pages and the second of 1522 pages—in all 2999 pages.

Apart from these most precious volumes, I have several books that contain Abdul Baha's Tablets as dictated to me, and also as dictated to my fellow-secretaries while I was in his service; for after the Tablets had been written in Persian by others, the Master would allow me to keep the copies as spiritual gifts and reminders of the days when I was in his presence. These last collections are the gems of my Bahai library, for all the tablets carry the Master's corrections made by his own hand.

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As I stated in the beginning of this chapter, Abdul Baha wrote few books, as such. However, two books of which he is the author exist and are available in English. The first is *A Traveller's Narrative*—a history of the appearance of the Bab. It was written about 1886, when the Master was 42 years old. Professor Edward G. Browne of Cambridge University, London, England translated it from the Persian in 1891. The second work is *The Mysterious Forces of Civilization*, written in 1887 and translated by Johanna Dawud. The first edition was published in 1910.

Having sketched herein a picture of Abdul Baha as a tireless writer, a master of language and a prophetic exponent of Truth, it will be appropriate to present a few extracts from the collections of his Tablets. At the same time, I suggest that the reader bear in mind the fact that the translations are far from perfect and do not give a completely satisfactory rendition of the Master's inimitable style.

The Follies of the Old World

Look thou with seeing eyes at the world about thee and at the inhabitants thereof. Upon the stage of this immense theatre, most spectacular plays are being enacted. On one side thereof thou wilt see the victorious and the vanquished legions of profit and loss. On the other side thou wilt observe the waves of the sea of folly rising and falling. Cries are being raised on every side and the agonies of revolution, revolt and unrest reach unto the ears of progressive men. There is a tremendous strike and clash between capital and labor, and the war between the aristocrats and democrats is carried on relentlessly with bow and arrow, sword and javelin. The phalanxes of a great army are drawn in battle array, each division taking its position. Armed troops and artillery are to be found in every part of the field. The flash of the swords of enmity blind the eyes from even the most remote distance, the lightning effect of breast-plate and lance, and the sparkle of the bucklers of hatred light up the night and bewilder the sight. In short: strife, battle, slaughter and war are prepared in organized perfection.

On the other hand thou wilt hear that from every house strains of music are raised, and confusing melodies of harp, lyre, cymbal and flute are heard, and mad revellers are dancing to the tunes, while they are inebriated with the wine of vanishing pleasures. In one place thou wilt behold the wanton and soiled decorations, and in another the flimsy shows of the gilded class of creatures. On the one hand is to be seen the embellishment and luxury made possible through illicit wealth, and on the other hand, the ravishing of this mortal world of its beautiful appearance.

From different parts are to be heard sighs of anguish, lamentations of poverty, cries of agony and misery,—and the calls for succor.

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have reached to the gate of heaven. One hears the weeping of the hopeless, the appeals of the oppressed, the trembling murmurs of the helpless and the harrowing wails of the ship-wrecked in the sea of persecution. The heat of the conflagration of separation spreads on all sides, the fire of longing is raging with great intensity and the tongues of the flames of calamity leap forth in every direction. Here one sees the oppression of kings and the thoughtlessness of cabinet ministers; there one sees conflict on the battle field of thoughts and ideals by ambitious generals, statesmen and administrators of the nations and countries. They consult, scheme, plot and exchange views; they organize falacious and superfluous companies and make false the established values; and thus do they lay and destroy the foundation of their political careers.

In short: when thou observest these things with the eye of reality, thou wilt see that the outcome, result and fruit of all these theatrical performances are mirages, and their sweetness is bitter poison. A few days the earth shall roll on its axis, and these fleeting visions will be completely forgotten.

When thou shuttest thine eyes to this dark world and lookest upward and heavenward, thou wilt see light upon light stretching from eternity to eternity. The reality of the mysteries will be revealed. Happy is the pure soul who does not attach himself to the transient conditions and comforts, but rather seeks to attach himself to the purity, nobility and splendor of the world which endures.

—Abdul-Bahá Abbas

Star of the West, Vol. IV, No. 16, p. 273 Dec. 31, 1913

The New Year

O ye children of the Kingdom!

It is New Year; that is to say, the rounding of the cycle of the year. A year is the expression of a cycle (of the sun); but now is the *beginning of a cycle of Reality, a New Cycle, a New Age, a New Century, a New Time and a New Year*. Therefore, it is very blessed.

I wish this blessing to appear and become manifest in the faces and characteristics of the believers, so that they, too, may become a new people, and having found new life and been baptized with fire and spirit, may make the world a new world, to the end that the old earth may disappear and the new earth appear; old ideas depart and new thoughts come; old garments be cast aside and new garments put on; ancient politics whose foundation is war, be discarded and modern politics founded on peace, raise the standard of victory; the new star shine and gleam and the new sun illumine and radiate; new flowers bloom; the new spring become known; the new breeze blow; the new bounty descend; the New Tree give forth new fruit; the new voice become raised and this new sound reach the ears, *that the new will follow the new*, and all the old furnishings and adornments be cast aside and new decorations put in their places.

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I desire for you all that you will have this great assistance and partake of this great bounty, and that in spirit and heart you will strive and endeavor until the world of war become the world of peace; the world of darkness the world of light; satanic conduct be turned into heavenly behavior; the ruined places become built up; the sword be turned into the olive branch; the flash of hatred become the flame of the love of God and the noise of the gun, the voice of the Kingdom; the soldiers of death; the soldiers of life; all the nations of the world one nation; all races as one race; all national anthems harmonized into one melody.

Then this material realm will be Paradise, the earth Heaven, and the world of satan become the world of angels.

—Abdul Baha Abbas

Star of the West, Vol. IV, No. 16, p. 266, Dec. 31, 1913

Resurrection Day

This period of time is the Promised Age, the assembling of the human race to the "Resurrection Day", and now is the great "Day of Judgment." Soon the whole world, as in spring-time, will change its garb. The turning and falling of the autumn leaves is past; the bleakness of the winter-time is over. The new year hath appeared and the spiritual spring-time is at hand. The black earth is becoming a verdant garden, the deserts and the mountains are teeming with red flowers; from the borders of the wilderness the tall grasses are standing like advance guards before the cypress and jessamine trees; while the birds are singing among the rose branches like angels in the highest heavens, announcing the glad tidings of the approach of that spiritual spring, and the sweet music of their voices is causing the real essence of all things to move and quiver.

O my spiritual friend! Dost thou know from what airs emanate the notes sung by those birds? They are from the melodies of peace and reconciliation, of love and unity, of justice and security, of concord and harmony. In a short time this heavenly singing will intoxicate all humanity; the foundations of enmity shall be destroyed; unity and affection shall be witnessed in every assembly, and the lovers of the love of God at these great festivals shall behold their splendor.

Therefore, contemplate what a spirit of life God hath given that the body of the whole earth may attain life everlasting! The Paradise of El-Abha will soon spread a pavilion from the Pole-star of the world, under whose shelter the beloved shall rejoice and the pure hearts shall repose in peace.

—Abdul-Baha Abbas

Star of the West, Vol. VII, March 21, 1916, No. I, p. 169.

New Writers Come into the Field

With the departure from this life of Abdul Baha, an era in Bahai teaching came to an end. The great River of Explanation, which had been

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set in motion by him, continued on its way and flowed into the Sea of Truth, on the margins of which mankind is refreshed and invigorated. Its waters added to the volume of the sea, but the river itself was no more. Thus, the *Tablets of Abdul Baha* dropped out of the field of current literature and became Holy Writ.

Meanwhile life continues; it must be so. When the Master has withdrawn, the followers must take hold; and so a few of the Bahais engaged themselves in writing with very creditable results. Among these was Ruhi Effendi Afnan.

Ruhi Effendi is not a poet. If he owns a pair of poetic wings, he keeps them well tucked under his shoulder-blades. He does not soar in the rarified atmosphere of imagination, but keeps his feet firmly planted on the ground of logic and experience. His mysticism does not resolve into the mists of metaphysics and speculation, but inclines toward a practical solution of our mundane problems. He follows the deductive rather than the inductive method of reasoning, although it must be admitted that he does not dismiss the latter as unsound and that he wields it with good effect on certain occasions. Schooled through the scientific system of the West as taught in the American University at Beirut, he has the humanistic outlook; yet his humanism is not lacking in spirituality. He is neither a dry intellectualist nor an emotional religionist. His explanations of the Bahai Cause are sane, logical and convincing. He calmly and dispassionately reasons with his reader, taking nothing for granted and trying to persuade him without offending his intelligence. He does not possess the fire and warmth of Abdul Baha, but I think that he has his humility and patience. His scholarship is simple, profound and searching, without the pomp and circumstance of ambition or presumption. In a word, he is no theological swashbuckler, but a thorough modern in training, attitude and approach.

Writings of Ruhi Effendi

During the years 1924, 1925 and 1926, three classic articles by Ruhi Effendi, which dealt with various aspects of the Bahai Movement, appeared in Bahai publications. Much later, in 1934 the Baha'i Publishing Committee, with the approval of the Reviewing Committee of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada, brought out his remarkable monograph on *Mysticism and the Baha'i Revelation—a Contrast*. Incidentally, the authorities were so much interested in this monograph and in circularizing it as widely as possible that they printed two advance announcements concerning it in *Baha'i News* of May and No-

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vement, 1934 and, finally after publication, inserted an advertisement of the booklet in the January 1935 issue of the same publication. This advertisement reads:—

Publishing

Mysticism and the Baha'i Revelation: A Contrast

by Ruhi Afnan, a scholarly discussion of the "path to God" as expounded by Christian and Muslim mystics, with an exposition of the spiritual teaching of Baha'u'llah. The contrast is between doctrines which would make man independent of the Manifestation and the Baha'i doctrine of the Manifestation as source of Reality.

Paper covers\$0.50

This work, covering eighty pages, contains a brief and highly satisfactory introduction and then is divided into the following sections:—

- Mysticism and the Baha'i Revelation**
- I. The Trinity**
 - The World of the Divine Essence**
- II. The Prophets**
- III. The World of Creation**
- IV. The Dualistic Aspect of Being**
 - The Mystic Interpretation of the doctrine of Incarnation**
- V. The Circling Course of the Divine-Life Process**
 - The Mystic Path**
 - Purgation**
 - Illumination of Self**
 - Divine Presence**
 - Union—the Goal of the Mystic Quest**
- VI. The Seven Valleys of Baha'u'llah**
 - Conclusion**

In the introduction to his essay on the above listed highly controversial and metaphysical topics, the author makes a very modest acknowledgement as follows:—

I have undertaken this task to clarify in my own mind the points of difference between Baha'u'llah and this other interesting conception of the spiritual life. My approach is therefore that of a student who seeks knowledge rather than a teacher desiring to impart his learning.

Passing to the last pages of this illuminating booklet, we find the quietistic philosophy of mysticism contrasted with the practical idealism

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of Baha-O-Llah. Here, the author's tendency toward humanism is clearly revealed; he exalts social responsibilities and recommends a healthy, practical spirituality. His treatment of the subject is very satisfying and is distinctly worth quoting:—

Mysticism and the Baha'i Revelation—a Contrast

... Mysticism similarly fails to present a solution for the baffling social and international problems that seem to threaten our very existence. How are the international problems to be solved? How are the excesses of poverty and wealth to be eliminated? How are wars to be replaced by arbitration? Should a super-state be advocated? Man cannot be divorced from his environment. In such an environment that breeds war, hatred, distrust, jealousy and destitution, our spirit can never find an atmosphere in which it can progress. A fortunate person with all his material needs well secured can give up the trammels of the world and in an environment all his own, seek an inward peace; but the mass of the people are not so favorably situated. World conditions are vital problems to them, they can find no other sanctuary than their slums, they are forced to go to war and slaughter their brethren; they are taught to hate their fellow-men that happen to reside across the frontier. How can they in such an environment obtain peace and help the development of their soul?

Mysticism, especially in its extreme forms, tends to be blind to these facts. Its attitude is to give up hope in earthly life and seek instead spiritual poise. If outward life is hopelessly muddled, seek the inward. It applies a spiritual palliative rather than faces the real occasion. It is the philosophy of man who has lost hope in ever bettering his earthly life rather than the attitude of a soul alive to the evils of the day and fully prepared to face them and conquer them.

This latter is in fact the attitude of Baha'u'llah. He knows the world problems, is conscious of their magnitude and fully provides for their solution. At least he sets forth the guiding principles that if applied in their entirety will make the world a better place to live in and a more suitable atmosphere in which to develop our spiritual life. The more the mystic discards the quietistic tendencies of his philosophy and becomes attuned with the reforming and socializing spirit of the Prophets, the more he will become a real force, active in the betterment of the group to which he belongs . . .

The Baha'i conception of the goal of our spiritual life, therefore, is to bring into actuality those divine powers inherent in our souls, it is to attain an unlimited perfection, it is to secure an ever growing of our personality. To become the likeness of God by acquiring His attributes, Abdu'l-Baha says "is the supreme goal of the world of humanity." God has treasured in our souls pearls of ineffable beauty, it is our task to produce them . . .

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This goal is not imaginary, it is no mere psychological experience. It is not the privilege of the few. The door of this heaven is open to all. It is the salvation that all humanity can seek and attain. Through it a spiritualization of the whole race can be achieved without in the least impairing the social and intellectual progress of man. In fact, the social, moral, intellectual and spiritual factors are so vitally connected that we cannot help one without enhancing the operation of the others. These factors are the environment in which our personality is to develop. They form the air it breathes, and the food it consumes. Let us have this form of spirituality permeate our life and we shall see how our civilization, even its material aspect, will leap forward and achieve miracles . . .

What He (Baha'u'llah) demands is not a renunciation of the world, but a healthy life as active member of society—a task to begin at the very start, and not after attaining the stage of Unity. For it is only by being active and healthy members of society that we can achieve spirituality. He asks us to enjoy the beauties of the world but not to be attached to them; to seek them but not to let them retard our moral and spiritual development. Salvation is not the life of renunciation but of healthy participation in our social duties. While living in this world we are meant to be human.

—*Mysticism and the Bahai Revelation— A Contrast* by
Ruhi Afnan, pp. 76-80

This essay, so much heralded by the Administration, is at present unobtainable at the Bahai Assembly in New York, and it goes without saying that the other Assemblies throughout the country have also been stripped of it, although it is still advertised as follows:—

Mysticism and the Baha'i Revelation, by Ruhi Afnan. An essay which analyzes in the light of the teachings of Baha-u'llah the mystical tradition of the soul's union with God: demonstrating that the Prophet or Manifestation is the intermediary between God and man. 80 pp.

In section of Baha'i Bibliography

The Baha'i World, 1938-1940, Vol. VIII, p. 717

Fortunately however, the New York Public Library at 42nd Street and 5th Ave. is in possession of a copy, and it is to be found under the serial No. *OAC, p. v. 182. There, the discriminating student might spend a profitable afternoon or evening examining the contents of the booklet and taking notes; after which he may wonder about the Guardian's reasons for excommunicating from the Cause a writer of such brilliance and acumen, because obviously this discriminating student would not have taken seriously the flimsy charges made against the writer in the cables which came from Haifa.

ABDUL BAHÁ'S GRANDSON

Three Articles by Ruhi Effendi

Between the years 1924 and 1926, Ruhi Effendi, as I have already stated, wrote three articles on the Bahai Cause; and his scientific outlook and spiritual sanity are well demonstrated in these works. Now these articles cannot be withdrawn from publication for they are incorporated in *Star of the West*, where anyone who possesses the old numbers can read them at will. The first article entitled: *The Relation of the Baha'i Cause to Modern Progressive Movements*, published June, 1924, must have been highly thought of by the *Guardian* and the National Spiritual Assembly, for it is reproduced in the *Baha'i Year Book*, Vol. I, 1925-1926, pp. 139-141. The second under the title: *Religion and Our Modern Social Problems* appears in February, 1925 while the third, propounding the question:—*What is New in the Baha'i Teachings?* is published April, 1926.

I wish that it were possible to reproduce herein these articles in their entirety. They are well worth the printers' ink and the space, if space there were. Possibly, some fair-minded and generous person will some day come forward and collect all the available writings of Ruhi Effendi to be published in one volume. This would be a distinct service to the Cause. The work of this author is valuable intrinsically, and valuable historically, as expressing the thoughts of the first and, thus far, the only descendant of the Master who has accepted the mission of teaching. In this light alone, the writings of Ruhi Effendi are inextricably part and parcel of the Cause.

I consider that the case of Ruhi Effendi arises before every Bahai to be decided in the arena of his own conscience. He has been condemned without a hearing; he has been cast out of the Bahai community, here and in all parts of the world; he has been designated for the contumely of coming generations. Is this acceptable to the followers of Abdul Baha? Is this acceptable to free Americans, or to Persian Bahais who are acquainted only too well with the horrors of martyrdom? I do not think so!

I have faith in the innate goodness of human nature and in the increasing enlightenment of minds and hearts everywhere; and I know of a certainty that no humane mortal, and not even an immortal whose being is kneaded with the quality of divine patience, can wish to hush up the case of the Bahai authorities versus Ruhi Effendi. I go on record as saying that it will be adjudicated before the Court of Baha-O-Llah and the tribunal of mankind.

I will now close this chapter with an extract from each of the three articles by Ruhi Effendi, published in the *Star of the West*:—

THE WRITER

The Relation of the Baha'i Cause to Modern Progressive Movements

. . . The Divine Power is behind all progressive movements. Baha'u'llah's teachings would have remained a utopia, never to be realized, if His spirit, that is God's hand, had not stirred some souls to establish new movements and work, although in apparent independence, yet for similar aims. These souls are the enlightened teachers who have been showing the world that material prosperity should not be the aim of life; that through appropriate taxation and education the rich can help the betterment of the social and economic conditions of the poor; that war should cease; that nationalism should give way to a higher and nobler policy of internationalism; that a League of Nations should be established to settle international disputes; that an international language should be created to become a universal medium of communication and eliminate misunderstandings.

In a word, these progressive movements which have sprung up during the nineteenth century have been instruments used by God to make the world more receptive to His Cause. They have been like the plowing and harrowing by which the farmer prepares the ground for his crop. And we can measure the extent of this preparation if we take the pains to find out *how much nearer now are the popular views to the Teachings of the Cause than they were at the beginning of the last century.* Since Baha'u'llah first proclaimed His Principles, the world has, through the work of these progressive teachers and the various societies they have founded, advanced so much towards the Baha'i teachings that we would not be in the least astonished, if from now on people would join the Cause in whole groups rather than as isolated individuals. As some one aptly said, "if the Baha'is do not make the world Baha'i, it will through its natural development, become so." . . .

In publishing the above illuminating article, the Editor of *Star of the West* makes the following generous and appreciative comment:—

The world is full of wonderfully progressive movements. In every direction the mind of man, responding to the stimuli of necessity and of desire for bettered conditions, is creating new solutions to old evils. One by one the outer enemies of man are being conquered and subdued. One by one the guardians of his inner citadel of self are being better disciplined and marshaled. Myriads of clubs, associations, new sects, are taking birth and growing to vigor in the fruitful soil of modern tolerance, spirit of research, and ardent world desire for an ideal civilization.

What part does the Baha'i Movement play in this rivalry of beneficent institutions? Is it but one of the many claimants for attention? Or can it be seen as an all-inclusive movement which contains

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not only the complete and ideal pattern for the coming world civilization, but also a dynamic power capable of putting into effect the remedies which it projects? And if the Baha'i Cause is so universal, so all-embracing, and so perfect in winning, as it never fails to do, the sympathy of all open-minded men and women to whom its great teachings are presented, why does it not at this time gain adherents by the thousands?

These are questions which are bound to arise in the mind and heart of every person looking newly into the Baha'i Movement, and seeking to adjust themselves and their past beliefs or cherished causes to its all-embracing appeal. Nowhere to our knowledge have these two important questions been better answered than in the article in this number by Ruhi Afnan, grandson of Abdul'l-Baha,—*"The Relation of the Baha'i Cause to Modern Progressive Movements."*

—*The Baha'i Magazine—Star of the West,*
Vol. 15, June, 1924, No. 3, pp. 39-40

Religion and Our Modern Social Problems

During the last century religion gradually lost ground before the progressing material civilization and weakened its hold upon the life and action of man. Through the many centuries of ignorance and priestly domination, its fundamental principles and underlying spirit were neglected and only the external rituals and practices emphasized. As science progressed, and as man's critical power developed, religion, due to this misrepresentation at the hands of its superficial adherents, failed to stand the attacks and vindicate its old, yet deserving position. The era of irreligion and agnosticism was thereby ushered in, and the cause of religion as a whole was weakened.

At present, however, we can detect certain signs of religious revival and the beginning of a definite reaction toward religion. Science has come to the conclusion that the material body of man cannot function without the help and assistance of some invisible power, which we may call spirit or soul. It has learned that from such infinitesimally small premises provided by science we cannot deduce a conclusion. So infinitely great, as what God is. Man's intellect and experience are too limited to deal with such a problem and attain such a truth. It suffices us to know that His Spirit permeates all things, that he is the Cause of Life and the Creator of man. The heads of the different religions on the other hand are opening their eyes to the truth of science and beginning to interpret religion in its true and spiritual significance. Thus religion and science are gradually unravelling each other's truth and uniting in the pursuit of their common aim . . .

The past century of agnosticism, though it has created a general apathy towards religion, was fraught with important consequences.

THE WRITER

Before that time most of the people were fettered with superstitions. Religion to them, was in many cases, a series of outward practices to be observed at different times and places. If they were to become Baha'is they would bring most, if not all, of those cherished, but outgrown ideas with them. The Cause would become a conglomeration of religious beliefs, rather than religion purified. It would become a dumping place of all sorts of ideas. This spirit of agnosticism has demolished those antiquated institutions and left the hearts free to be influenced only by the teachings of Baha'u'llah and the spirit of 'Abdu'l-Baha.

What is New in the Baha'i Teachings?

... At the advent of every prophet the world undergoes a great social, intellectual, religious revival. At the time of Christ, for example, the old religions of the Romans and Greeks had lost their hold on the minds of their adherents. They could not shape the conduct of man or keep him within the bounds of moral law. Abandoning religion, therefore, the people turned to philosophy, hoping that thereby the rules of ethics would be more strictly adhered to. They thought that through learning alone the moral life of the individual could be improved. But this hope was also frustrated. The people remained in search of a remedy until Christianity came to the rescue and saved the soul of the seekers. Meanwhile by this continuous and faithful search the people had come independently very near to the truth which was later propounded by Christianity. The teachings were so to say, "in the air", every one unconsciously absorbed them, so that when they came in touch with those teachings they did not have much to change, or many new principles to adopt.

Such is the case today. The intellectual people of the eighteenth century, weary of the narrowness and dogmas of the church, confused it with true Christianity. They tried to seek salvation in other fields, they were absorbed in research and philosophy, hoping again that through knowledge they might attain to the solution of their problems, to the establishment of peace, to the security of moral integrity. How successful humanity will be this time we cannot say and the theme, interesting though it be, is beyond the subject of our discussion. The point is that through this constant and sincere search the world has come to truths very near to those proclaimed by Baha'u'llah

We may well compare the advent of the different prophets of God to different stations on a long royal road. What a traveler needs is a new spirit, an encouragement to follow the road, a word of guidance to save him from dangers and difficulties. Likewise, so society, on its way to progress has come across these prophets of God these stations of divine power who have urged man to the attainment of his purpose, endowed him with a new spirit, restored his power

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by their word of encouragement and assurance. The student of the Baha'i Movement, therefore, should not consider it as a mere source of original ideas but rather as one of those dynamic powers which are successively sent by God to push society onward. He should look at the spirit which it creates in its followers and the solution which it advocates for world problems.

Chapter VII
RUHI EFFENDI AFNAN'S
VISIT TO THE UNITED
STATES

*You took my hand and drew me to your side, made
me sit on the high seat before all men, till I became
timid, unable to stir and walk my own way; doubting
and debating at every step lest I should tread upon
any thorn of their disfavour.*

I am freed at last!

*The blow has come, the drum of insult sounded, my
seat is laid low in the dust.*

My paths are open before me.

*—Rabindranath Tagore
Fruit-Gathering, Stanza X*

Chapter VII

RUHI EFFENDI AFNAN'S VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES

A Distinguished Guest

The visit of Ruhi Effendi Afnan to this country in 1927-8 was a signal event in the Bahai world for it gave the American believers their first opportunity of seeing a member of Abdul Baha's family. It is true that some persons had made the journey to Haifa and there had met or come to know the ladies of the household and the Master's grandchildren, but these fortunate ones were comparatively few. Consequently, the Assemblies throughout the country were on the *qui vive* to welcome this young man who not only was a descendant of Baha-O-Llah, but who came as representative of the Guardian of the Cause.

The preliminary plans for the reception of the distinguished guest are incorporated in an article entitled *Ruhi Afnan Will Visit America*, which appeared in *Baha'i News*, June 1927. It reads as follows:—

The good news has been received that Ruhi Afnan, grandson of Abdu'l Baha and cousin of Shoghi Effendi, will arrive at New York on or about June 17. We are informed that his purpose in coming is to attend the sessions of the Green Acre Institute of World Unity to be held at Green Acre from August 1 to September 3, and it is announced that he will also be at Green Acre during July.

A Committee has been appointed by the National Assembly and the Spiritual Assembly of New York to meet him on his arrival and to arrange with him the details of his visit. Until the committee has consulted with Ruhi Afnan, no definite arrangements can be announced.

However, the Committee has taken the privilege of arranging a Baha'i reception for our distinguished guest at St. Marks Hall, St. Marks Church, East 10th Street at Second Avenue, New York City on Saturday, June 18. This will consist of a feast in the hall so frequently placed at the disposal of the friends by the rector, William Norman Guthrie. A special notice of this event has been mailed to nearby Assemblies, extending a cordial welcome to all Baha'is to attend. The Committee will appreciate acceptances in advance, in order that the feast may be suitably arranged. Dinner will be served at 7 P. M.

The believers will also have an opportunity to meet Ruhi Afnan on Saturday, June 25, at the Annual Souvenir of Abdu'l-Baha to be held during the afternoon and evening at Evergreen Cabin, on the estate of Mr. Roy C. Wilhelm at West Englewood, N. J.

None of the friends will overlook the inestimable privilege of

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receiving this visit from a member of the Holy Family. Since the historic journey of the Master in 1912 many great souls have come to this country reflecting the Bahá'í spirit, but until now none has been of the sacred lineage.

The two receptions above scheduled took place in localities which during many years have been settings for Bahai reunions. St. Mark's-In-The-Bouwerie, through the generous hospitality of its rector the Rev. Dr. William Guthrie has, both before and since this occasion, been identified with Bahai work; and Evergreen Cabin, at West Englewood, N. J., on the estate of Mr. Roy C. Wilhelm, a member of the National Spiritual Assembly, likewise holds historic import. The latter, a lovely country place within easy access of New York City, was the scene of a memorable picnic conducted under the supervision of the Master; and that event made such a deep impression upon the Bahais that they have repeated it every spring. How well I remember that first picnic and the preparations made for it!

Plans for the Picnic

It was in 1912, during the month of June, that Abdul Baha decided to give a feast in the country to which all the Bahais would be invited; and, on hearing of the plan, Mr. Roy C. Wilhelm suggested that his country place be used as picnic grounds. The offer was accepted and the date set; then the Master began to make his arrangements.

One morning, I found him walking back and forth in his room at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Edward J. Kinney, 780 West End Ave. where he was stopping. As was his habit on occasions, he gave me a fairly sharp slap on the cheek and then began to speak. Naturally, I cannot quote him exactly, but his words were something along this line and the subject was cooking:—

Abdul Baha was a cook. In the past, he had prepared delicious dishes for Baha-O-Llah, as well as for the believers when they were ill or in trouble. Now, he was to be host, at a feast; all the Bahais had been invited and he was in need of a cook. Would I take charge? He had heard that I was quite an artist along this line, and was ready to put me to the test. Therefore, he continued, I was to prepare for his friends a Persian luncheon, seasoned not only with the mysterious condiments of the East but perfumed with an added touch of Bahai love. I had to produce such dishes as: *Polow*, *Chelow*, *Adas-Polow*, *Bagali-Polow*, *Zafaran-Polow*, *Morgeh-Mosamma*, *Fessenjan*, *Khoresh-Badinjan*, *Tass-Kabab*, *Abgousht*, *Koukou* and *Sharbat*. The believers of God probably were angels, but they had good appetites too. Consequently, I must exert myself and spread for them a royal table

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that would fulfill their requirements and, at the same time, do him credit as host. What did I think of the idea?

"My Lord," I answered, "your commands are my law; but I will need your assistance."

Abdul Baha laughed. "Assistance! Very well. I will be your assistant, and together we shall prepare a feast that the believers will long remember. We will lay the foundations of an everlasting Feast; and we are beginning right now." Then, he placed in my hands a few bills of fairly large denominations and sent me on my way.

Mrs. Kinney's Kitchen

Mr. and Mrs. Kinney could tell the rest of the story. How they placed their spacious kitchen at my disposal; borrowed charcoal stoves of various sizes, and procured a staff of willing workers. At the proper time, the culinary angels set themselves to shelling peas, to cutting tomatoes, to peeling egg plant, potatoes and even onions; and how they did weep as they applied themselves to the latter! Presently, aromatic condiments of the East were being combined with meat and vegetables and, when the mixtures arrived at the boiling point, the scent of Oriental spices spread abroad into the streets. Our nervous excitement kept pace with the preparations as they neared the point of perfection and, through it all, our great Assistant looked in on us now and then, made suggestions here and there and kept us in a condition of hysterical delight.

Having worked practically all night, the morning of June 29th dawned on the exhausted cooks who had provided sustenance for close to three hundred guests. Then, the ticklish task of transporting the food from New York to West Englewood, New Jersey, in a state to be served hot and appetizing, absorbed our attention. We tackled the problem in this manner: first we waited in Mrs. Kinney's kitchen until the arrival of a telephone call from West Englewood which appraised us of the fact that the guests were practically assembled; then we took from the fire the steaming cauldrons and capacious containers, wrapped them in newspapers and quilts, and piled them into automobiles which were ranged in file, waiting to be dashed at break-neck speed to the picnic grounds.

The Picnic

Luncheon was served by dozens of Bahai waitresses on a smooth cloth of pine needles. The guests sat on the ground, while the incomparable

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Host, his face beaming with satisfaction, walked among them. The day was perfect; the mood of everyone at top notch and, wonder of wonders, the food was piping hot.

Let us then take part in the pastoral scene and, all of us who are reading this account, become for a few minutes guests of Abdul Baha. We know that his hospitality knows no bounds and that he would welcome us in spirit regardless of space and time.

The Master, attired in a long cream-colored robe, his white turban on his head, is moving to and fro. He is affability personified, and his words are addressed now to this group, now to that. He is saying:—

True Bahai meetings are the mirrors of the kingdom wherein images of the Supreme Concourse are reflected. In them the lights of the most great guidance are visible. They voice the summons of the heavenly kingdom and echo the call of the angelic hosts to every listening ear. The efficacy of such meetings as these is permanent throughout the ages. This assembly has a name and a significance which will last forever. Hundreds and thousands of meetings shall be held to commemorate this occasion and the very words I speak to you today shall be repeated in them for ages to come. Therefore be ye rejoiced for ye are sheltered beneath the providence of God. Be happy and joyous because the bestowals of God are intended for you and the life of the Holy Spirit is breathing upon you. . .

How many blessed souls have longed for this radiant century, their utmost hopes and desires centered upon the happiness and joy of one such day as this. Many the nights they passed sleepless and lamenting until the very morn, in longing anticipation of this age, yearning to realize even an hour of this time. God has favored you in this century and has specialized you for the realization of its blessings. Therefore you must praise and thank God with heart and soul in appreciation of this great opportunity and the attainment of this infinite bestowal; that such doors have been opened before your faces, such abundance is pouring down from the cloud of mercy and that these refreshing breezes from the paradise of Abha are resuscitating you. You must become of one heart, one spirit and one susceptibility. May you become as the waves of one sea, stars of the same heaven, fruits adorning the same tree, roses of one garden; in order that through you the oneness of humanity may establish its temple in the world of mankind, for you are the ones who are called to uplift the cause of unity among the nations of the earth.

—*The Promulgation of Universal Peace* Vol. I,
pp. 209-10

Many pictures were taken that afternoon, notably a snapshot of a group with Abdul Baha, an enlargement of which appears in *The Baha'i World*, Vol. VI, 1934-1936, p. 628. It is not very distinct, yet one can

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recognize many faces. The Master stands near the extreme left; behind him, close to the margin of the picture, is Seyyed Assadullah Gomi. Then, looking from left to right, one sees two ladies close to Abdul Baha; the second looks to me like Mrs. Kinney. Afterwards comes Mirza Mahmoud Zargani and then myself, a humble and happy cook.

That feast under Mr. Wilhelm's pine trees left an impression upon the minds of all those present and, as the years roll around to its anniversary, I, at present an outsider and an untouchable, can very easily live again those joyous hours and find myself cooking for, and serving my friends of long ago.

Star of the West gives an account of the picnic, continuing the description on into the evening:—

Abdul Baha gave a Unity Feast in West Englewood, N. J. on Saturday, June 29 to the Bahais of New York and vicinity. About three hundred were present. In addition to the seven Persians in his party there were guests from Philadelphia, Buffalo, Green Acre, Me., Washington, D. C., Pittsburgh, San Francisco and Portland, Ore.

There in the fragrant pine grove, on a bright June day, Abdul Baha himself the host, smiling joyously and radiating the spirit of good-will, welcomed the happy friends. It was indeed a picture, and one of the utmost spiritual significance. Christians, Jews, Mohammedans and white and black races represented. Abdul Baha's very presence seemed to fill every soul with love. The bountiful meal was a Persian Feast, the delicious dishes being prepared by members of his Oriental party . . . After the dinner, Abdul Baha passed around . . . and himself blessed each guest, placing rose perfume upon their foreheads.

In the evening a meeting was held on the lawn of the Wilhelm home, Abdul Baha speaking from the veranda to some one hundred and fifty Englewood guests, who were seated in camp chairs. After this meeting questions were answered while he walked up and down the country road in front of the house. He remained with the Wilhelm family until Sunday morning when he left to fill an engagement in another part of New Jersey.

—*Star of the West*, August 1, 1912, No. 8, Vol. III, pp. 16-18

The Master's Grandson Attends Bahai Picnic

The Feast given by Abdul Baha in 1912 has been celebrated by the Bahai community every year at the same season and in the same place; and it was on one of these occasions that the young grandson of the Master was entertained nine days after his arrival in this city. In an article printed in *Baha'i News*, the late Mrs. Keith Ransom-Kehler writes of the significance

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of the feast and then goes on to describe the picnic at which Ruhi Effendi was present:—

Each year on this anniversary, Mr. Roy C. Wilhelm and his mother lovingly welcome as guests of Abdu'l-Bahá the Baha'is and their friends from all over the world.

Several hundred gathered on June twenty-fifth 1927 to commemorate the founding of the Feast and the visit of Abdu'l-Bahá fifteen years ago . . .

The feature of outstanding importance at the Souvenir meeting was the presence of Ruhi Effendi Afnan, who but a few days before had arrived from Haifa, Palestine. The most striking characteristics of this pleasing young man are sanity and modesty. Gifted with exceptional clarity of thought and native penetration, he brings to the work of the Cause a true spiritual ardor, that usually does not accompany the attitude of the student.

To the average man an ideal is something wistful, elusive, withdrawn, impractical. To the social benefactor and man of vision the ideal is not the antithesis of the practical: the ideal and the practical go hand in hand; the antithesis of the ideal is the brutal. The only distinction between the ideal and the practical is a difference of tense: the practical is present; the ideal is the future. And if today's ideal does not become the practice of tomorrow, then it was not an ideal at all, but a phantasy, a chimera, a vagary.

It is with the definite assurance that today's teachings will become tomorrow's action that Ruhi Effendi Afnan continually speaks of the Cause of Baha'u'llah. To his enlightened eyes "the glory of the coming of the Lord" is already existent, and the government of Baha'u'llah already established, through that leap of the mind that sees the present order of brutality and chaos replaced by the "healing of the nations."

In his brief speech he developed a very interesting theme on the reconciliation of science and religion. . .

At the evening session, Mr. Hooper Harris of New York, one of the most impressive and informed speakers in the Cause, gave a brief survey of some of the fundamental Baha'i teachings, followed by Ruhi Effendi Afnan, who, with his marked lucidity and restraint, set forth our most important principles.

—*The Baha'i Magazine, Star of the West*, August 1927
Republished in *The Baha'i World*, Vol. II, 1926-1928,
pp. 263-264

Now in this year 1942 we may, if we are able, realize the fact that if this one-time honored guest were to set foot on the property of Mr. Roy C. Wilhelm at the next Souvenir Anniversary, he would immediately be asked to withdraw, otherwise the entire group would melt away, shivering

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and sighing, like so many terror-stricken sheep at the sight of a ravening wolf.

Green Acre

The third place visited by Ruhi Effendi, of which we have record, is likewise an historic spot in American Bahai history. The late Miss Sarah Farmer founded a colony at Green Acre, Maine, as a center for expounding the teachings of the great religions of the world; and on her death the property came into the hands of the Bahai community. A book could be written about this gallant enterprise and the memorable incidents that were enacted at the Green Acre Summer School. I was there under the Persian Pines, when the great scholar, Mirza Abul Fazl gave courses of lectures on Bahai teachings, and later accompanied Abdul Baha when he spent a few days with Miss Farmer. For two summers, I interpreted the talks of Janabe Fazel Mazandrani given before Green Acre audiences and finally did some lecturing myself on those same grounds. It was to be expected that Ruhi Effendi's first summer in America should have been spent at the Bahai Summer School and, according to *Baha'i News* of August, 1927, his visit was a rare occasion:—

As mentioned in the last News Letter, Ruhi Afnan is spending July and August at Green Acre, after which he will visit as many local communities as possible before returning to Haifa in October.

The privilege of meeting this profound student of the teachings and devoted worker will not be overlooked by the friends in planning their stay at Green Acre this season.

An item in a later issue reads:—

At this time it is sufficient to inform the friends that the Institute of World Unity carried out its remarkable series of courses as announced . . . in addition to the series of Sunday morning talks delivered to some of the largest audiences in the history of Green Acre by Ruhi Afnan.

—*Baha'i News*, November, 1927

Again, in an article by Mr. Louis G. Gregory entitled: *Amity at Green Acre*, we learn of Ruhi Effendi's treatment of the race problem:—

Ruhi Effendi Afnan, scion of the noblest family of earth, mingled in joyfulness with the people of all races and in his formal address drew a striking picture of the entire lack of racial consciousness among people in the Orient who were awakened and taught human solidarity by the Holy Ones of God.

—*Baha'i Magazine, Star of the West*, August, 1927, Vol. 18, No. 5, p. 160

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Trans-Continental Tour

The next step, and a long one at that, was a journey athwart the country. It is a course that I know well, having followed it through to California with Abdul Baha in 1912, and personally lectured as far as the state of Washington in 1920; after which I went over the same itinerary with Janabe Fazel Mazandrani in 1921, and again in 1922-23. Other Bahai teachers likewise, have crossed and recrossed the continent, expounding the principles of Baha-O-Llah; and each one has made a dent in the American consciousness and a place for him or herself in countless groups.

I can therefore well imagine the effect produced by Ruhi Effendi as he followed the well-trodden highway to the Pacific coast. As flesh and blood of the Master and personal representative of the Guardian, this gifted speaker must have made a profound impression on audiences well-keyed up to meet him. His crowded program is outlined in *Baha'i News* of November, 1927.

Ruhi Afnan Visiting American Assemblies

The teaching work will be greatly reinforced during the next few weeks by Ruhi Afnan, who at the request of the Teaching Committee, has arranged to extend his visit in this country. The following schedule has been planned, subject to minor changes:

Geneva, New York, October 24 and 25; Buffalo, October 26 and 27; Cleveland, October 28 and 29; Detroit, October 30; Chicago, October 31 to November 3.

Ruhi Afnan will then proceed to California, where speaking appointments have been already assured in prominent educational institutions. Returning to Chicago after a stay of perhaps two weeks in California, he will then visit Baha'i Centers in the Middle West and proceed to New York via Washington, D. C., Baltimore and Philadelphia.

During his stay at Green Acre, Ruhi Afnan prepared and delivered a series of addresses developing the social significance of the Cause. These talks attracted many who are seeking a religion capable of improving the world and not merely offering a new mysticism. It is hoped that each local Assembly in the above cities will arrange as many meetings as possible for Ruhi Afnan during his all too brief stay, particularly at colleges and before liberal groups whose adherence would prove a valuable asset to the Faith.

Rufi Effendi's journey throughout the United States was a period of hard and exacting work. This fact is attested to in an article entitled *Ruhi Afnan's American Visit*, from which we get an idea of the many en-

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gements that were filled by the young speaker; and although this account applies to California, it unquestionably is an example of the manner in which his time was spent in other states. The article reads:—

Since October last, Ruhi Afnan has been engaged without interruption in most effective services to the Cause in North America, journeying from New York to the cities of the Pacific Coast in a teaching trip which recalls the mighty work accomplished by the beloved Janabe Fazel. A little time will be required in order to gather together the details and present a complete record of Ruhi Afnan's public addresses and innumerable meetings with groups of friends. Local Secretaries and others in touch with his program are cordially urged to send detailed accounts to the Teaching Committee of the National Assembly, through Mrs. Maxwell, so that this important event may be shared with Baha'i communities throughout the world.

Meanwhile, letters from Berkeley and Visalia, Calif., convey the spirit of enthusiastic appreciations and gratitude, and indicate accurately, if briefly, the results secured through this generous and self-sacrificing cooperation given the American friends by a member of the Master's family.

Among the audiences addressed by Ruhi Afnan in Berkeley and vicinity were: the student body of the College of the Pacific, Stockton; Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley; Brotherhood of Races, Y. M. C. A. Berkeley; Student's Lyceum and Berkeley Civic Unit; Epworth League; Colored M. E. Church; Y. W. C. A., San Francisco; High School, Visalia; Taylor Memorial Church; Hillel Foundation; Y. M. C. A.; Y. W. C. A.; Fellowship; Pacific Unitarian School; Mills College, Oakland; Montezuma School, Los Gatos; Unitarian Church, Palo Alto; First Congregational Church, Berkeley; Theosophical Society, San Francisco; Faculty Club, Berkeley; in addition to many meetings with the Baha'i communities of Oakland, Berkeley and San Francisco.

This extensive program was carried out between November 11 and December 13.

An interesting program forwarded from Chicago announced a Baha'i Public Conference in New Masonic Temple on Friday, February 13: Mr. Carl Scheffler, Chairman; Invocation by Mr. Albert R. Vail; Address "Binding Power of Truth" by Dr. Fred Merrifield of University of Chicago; and Address on "Unity of Mankind—The Social Idea of Religion" by Ruhi Afnan.

—*Baha'i News*, March, 1928

That Ruhi Effendi not only followed in the Master's footsteps across the continent, but that he also used the Master's method of teaching is a fact which is brought out in the following interesting comment:—

In the words of Abdul Baha: "The unique accomplishment of Baha'u'llah in this day is the reconciliation of Science and Religion." Shoghi Effendi has indicated a desire that the Baha'is as teachers make

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an appeal to all classes, moreover he says that in order to do this we will have to make many changes in presentation and use of our subject matter. He has impressed upon us the importance of a working knowledge of science and sociology, for example, as an aid to advancing the Baha'i viewpoint to students and leaders in the world of progressive thought.

As a brilliant exemplar of the adaptation of this phase of the Cause to an important class of people not adequately reached before, Ruhi Effendi in his trip across the continent interested thoughtful people everywhere by a colorful tie-up of the Baha'i teachings with the discoveries of advanced thinkers in the modern world.

Baha'i News, October, 1928

Finally, when the time came for the National Teaching Committee to evaluate the effects of Ruhi Effendi's tour in the United States, it embodied the following tribute in its official Report:—

The depth and power of Baha'i teachings in this country has been a steady growth since the Master impregnated this land with his Holy Essence and quickened this continent through the Breaths of the Holy Spirit. The teaching has passed through many phases and last year culminated in its first national expression through the visit of a member of the Holy Family when Ruhi Effendi visited some thirty-five centers and through the mutual cooperation of the National Teaching Committee and Local Assemblies made many public addresses and penetrated more widely the cultured and educational groups than had heretofore been possible.

—Report of National Teaching Committee,
Baha'i News, October 1929, p.6

This series of quoted passages, dealing with Ruhi Effendi's services as a teacher in this country, would not be complete without an extract from a letter written to the National Spiritual Assembly by the Guardian himself. Here we learn of Shoghi Effendi's appreciation of the work that had been accomplished by his cousin:—

The warm hospitality accorded by the National Spiritual Assembly and the American believers to my dear cousin and collaborator, Ruhi Effendi, has deeply touched me, particularly as I realize from the appreciative reports I have recently received that by his radiant and earnest spirit of service he has deserved well of his dear fellow-workers in that continent, and contributed substantially to their better appreciation of the Teachings of the Cause. Much as I desire him to work by my side here in the Holy Land, I very gladly concur with your wish to further extend his sojourn with you, trusting that he will prove of great assistance to you all in the discharge of your noble task.

—*Baha'i News*, January, 1928, p. 8; also
Baha'i Administration, p. 135

RUHI EFFENDI AFNAN'S VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES

Bahai Convention

Convention time is an important period in the yearly program of the Bahai Administration, and the 20th Annual Convention conducted in the auditorium of the Temple at Wilmette, Ill., from April 26th to April 30th, held special significance in that it was signalized by the presence of Ruhi Effendi, who shortly afterwards returned to Palestine. *The Star of the West* of June, 1928 states:—

Of unique importance also was the attendance of Ruhi Effendi Afnan (grandson of Abdul Baha) of Haifa, Palestine, who participated vitally in all the proceedings.

Each of these lines carries much significance. Obviously, it was a unique experience and a rare privilege to take part in a convention which was made different from any other by the exhilarating presence of the Master's grandson. So much for the first line; now for the last: He *participated vitally in all the proceedings*. Here we catch the inference that Ruhi Effendi not only took part in the big public meetings, but that he also attended the private sessions of the National Spiritual Assembly. Of course, he would have done so; but the word *vitally* suggests that his attitude was completely satisfactory to the authorities. Undoubtedly, the Bahai officials had intended to make use of their distinguished guest's prestige in order to back up their practices; and, apparently, the guest in his turn had fallen in with their plans. The following cable from the Guardian shows that Ruhi Effendi was definitely in line:—

Overjoyed delegates spontaneous, most generous response. Praying for sustained effort by entire body (of) believers . . . Congratulate Ruhi.

**(Signed) Shoghi, Haifa, Palestine, May 2, 1928
—Baha'i News, June 1928**

Baha'i News of June, 1928 makes the following description of some of the proceedings:—

The Spiritual blessings consisted in the chanting of the Holy Words, the reading of beautiful Tablets and letters, the addresses of pilgrims recently returned from the White Spot, and the remarks of Ruhi Effendi Afnan.

The actual impression made by Ruhi Effendi at the Convention is shown in an article which appeared shortly afterwards in *Baha'i News*. Here we find evidence that his talents were thoroughly appreciated and observe that stress is laid on the fact that he placed himself under the

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shadow of the Guardian. How little did Ruhi Effendi know that, with the passing years, the shadow would deepen and thicken; and that one day, it would descend upon him and crush the heart out of him!

Following is the article in question:—

The report of the Teaching Committee related the increasing capacity of souls and the ease of reaching those who are now eager for the message. It especially featured the great and unusual services rendered during the past year by Ruhi Effendi Afnan . . . Ruhi Afnan addressed the Convention several times and was always listened to with profound attention. In one of his talks he gave a detailed account of his teaching work in America which covered a wide area. He pointed out the great possibilities of this work and the special need of reaching the youth with the glorious message. He stressed the need of holding before them high moral standards not only as ideals but exemplified in the conduct of the teachers, also the need of presenting the teachings in a modern and rational way. His frank and manly expressions brought the light of wisdom to the consultations of the friends and his placing of himself under the shadow of our blessed Guardian evoked much love—

*"Rich in saving common sense,
In his simplicity, sublime."*

These words of the Victorian poet might well have been written about this youthful, devoted and eloquent servant of God . . . The culmination of the Convention teaching effort was the one great public meeting held in Chicago . . . At this great meeting, which filled to overflowing one of the most spacious auditoriums in the new Masonic Temple, the committee was favored in having the services of Dr. John Herman Randall and Ruhi Effendi Afnan who from the respective standpoints of West and East gave the message and teachings of Bahá'u'lláh with eloquence and power.

—*Bahai News*, June, 1928

A Champion of Administration

I have sketched Ruhi Effendi's first trip to the United States from the material available to me; however, more detailed records are unquestionably to be found in the archives of the National Spiritual Assembly. Some day, these records may be studied in their order and certain conclusions arrived at; yet, for the present, a few obvious facts which I have set down in these pages are sufficiently clear:—

Ruhi Effendi is the first, and thus far the only descendant of Abdul Baha who has arisen to promote the Cause. He is the first, and thus far the only member of that distinguished family who has been seen in this country.

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Consequently, his place in the annals of the movement is unique and of historic importance.

Ruhi Effendi was a faithful and zealous champion of the Guardian and of his instrument, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada. In spite of his liberal tendencies and of his scientific approach to the problems of the day, he yet threw in his weight, with apparent and probably with actual sincerity, on the side of the fast-growing orthodox and reactionary elements in the movement; and it is certain that he rendered yeoman's service to the Bahai authorities. We cannot wonder at this: organizations have a powerful effect upon their memberships, while the influence of religious organizations is compelling to the extreme. Besides, it must be remembered that Ruhi Effendi held a key-position in the administrative structure and that his sense of responsibility toward the Guardian must have been great. Doubtless, there were a *good many times* when he had to close his eyes to what was going on; yet, he held firm to his duty as he saw it. Through everything, he was the loyal servant of Shoghi Effendi.

Now, for reasons as diaphanous as gossamer, Ruhi Effendi has been expelled by the Guardian from the organization which he had served so devotedly; while this institution, lifting up its metallic hands, has made resounding applause. Here again we cannot be surprised, for organizations are machines, devoid of soul; and he who makes a god of the machine will be crushed by the very god that he has worshipped. A fictional character by the name of Frenkenstein centered all his hopes upon a machine-man who in the end destroyed him; while many a person, known and unknown to history, has been slave to temporal power to his disillusionment and loss.

Although Ruhi Effendi is at the height of maturity, I may compare him to Cardinal Wolsey who, if history quotes correctly, said:—"Had I but served God as dilligently as I have served the King, he would not have given me over in my grey hairs;" for, what do a few years, or the exact color of the hair amount to when the parallel is sound!

Biblical Allusions

In upholding the Guardian's action against Ruhi Effendi, the National Spiritual Assembly was unable to find any modern or reasonable arguments; therefore, it dived to the very depths of the sea of legend and, in an article published in *Baha'i News* of December 1941, emerged with the story of the first family quarrel, namely that of Cain and Abel. For no reason what-

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soever, Ruhi Effendi is supposed to be Cain; although, who was the victim and where lies the corpse are questions that remain obscure.

Secondly, he is likened to a son of Noah, called Ham, who saw his father in a state of drunkenness and shared the news with the family circle, although he let it go no further. Personally, I think that Ham was rather discreet; but that is beside the point, the problem being: how does the story apply to Ruhi Effendi and his cousin the Guardian?

Thirdly, he is paralleled with the brethren of Joseph who in order to get rid of their little kinsman threw him into a well; and again we cannot see the point, for it would seem that Ruhi Effendi more resembles Joseph who was so drastically disposed of.

It is suggested that we compare Ruhi Effendi with Aaron, the brother of Moses, who was misled by his wife; and here we catch an allusion to Zahra Khanum, Abdul Baha's grand-daughter. Naturally, we have no means of knowing anything about the conversations which passed between Ruhi Effendi and his wife; but just the same, we do not think it likely that *this young girl, brought up in the most restricted manner, had the power to dominate such an experienced and resolute husband.*

As a final case in point we are offered the four brothers of Jesus; and now our scrutiny of the charges grows distinctly awkward, because, if we are to study the parallel on its merits, we must place Ruhi Effendi in the composite role of the four brothers, and Shoghi Effendi in that of the Christ. We are willing to strain our mental muscles and make an attempt to view the picture as it is presented by the National Spiritual Assembly; yet, try as we will to be complaisant, we find that so little is known about *these four brothers that we are left balancing in mid-air.* All that we have to go on is that, according to the Gospels, they are not numbered among the devoted followers of Jesus during his lifetime; and here we suddenly realize that we have gained a foothold, nay rather, we are on solid ground and from this point of vantage can deny the charge squarely and unequivocally. Ruhi Effendi was a staunch and loyal supporter of the Guardian during nineteen years of service, as can be proven by the records of the official Bahai publications.

So much for Biblical allusions put to bewilder an all too docile flock!

I Am Thy Companion

The above analyzed literary effort, printed in extenuation of an act of injustice perpetrated upon the Master's most brilliant grandchild, will take its place in the annals of the Cause as a *bizarre and totally unfounded*

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bill of accusation; while, other documents, written in an altogether different spirit, may be referred to as applying to the subject of Ruhi Effendi in a more direct manner. Let us then listen to Abdul Baha as he addresses a follower in his hour of trouble:—

Be thou not unhappy; the tempest of sorrow shall pass; regret will not last; disappointment will vanish; the fire of the love of God will become enkindled, and the thorns and briars of sadness and despondency will be consumed! Be thou happy; rest thou assured upon the favors of Baha', so that uncertainty and hesitation may become non-existent and the invisible outpourings descend upon the arena of being! . . .

If the friends and relatives are keeping themselves at a distance from thee, be thou not sad, for God is near to thee. Associate thou, as much as thou canst, with the relatives and strangers; display thou loving kindness; show thou forth the utmost patience and resignation. The more they oppose thee, shower thou upon them the greater justice and equity; the more they show hatred and opposition toward thee, challenge thou them with great truthfulness, friendship and reconciliation.

Praise be to God, thou art near the Kingdom of ABHA! Rest thou assured. With all my soul and spirit, I am thy companion at all moments. Know thou this of a certainty!

—Tablets of Abdul-Baha, Vol. III, pp. 557-558

Chapter VIII
GUIDE, PHILOSOPHER
AND FRIEND

*The child finds its mother when it leaves her womb.
When I am parted from you, thrown out from your
household, I am free to see your face.*

*—Rabindranath Tagore
Fruit-Gathering, Stanza X*

Chapter VIII

GUIDE, PHILOSOPHER AND FRIEND

The Young Advisor

Ruhi Effendi Afnan was guest of honor at the 20th Annual Bahai Convention held in Wilmette, Ill., from April 26th to April 30th, 1928; and there he delivered an address before the delegates which is a masterly resumé of his teaching campaign in the United States. Many were the impressions which had been made on his mind by the Bahai Assemblies and the outside world. He describes his reactions to both; points out where there is room for improvement in methods of teaching, and gives an encouraging report on the receptivity of the public mind.

To a great extent, the world has outgrown the sectarian concepts of the past, he explains, and is now ready for a scientific religion. Such a religion has been set up by Baha-O-Llah and the time is ripe for the propagation of his teachings. Now the question is: Can the Bahais take hold of this great opportunity?

He speaks of the American student and of his open mind, but specifies that youth should be approached by youth. He emphasizes the need of mingling with all peoples, with all groups: Go to them, he advises. You will sit forever if you wait for them to come to you. He mentions the fact that, upon his arrival in this country, he had been urged to speak on the principles of the Cause without mentioning its name or the names of its great Founders. Although unfamiliar with American ways, he had put aside this suggestion and had come out frankly as a Bahai; later he was glad that he had made no compromise. He felt that the straight-forward attitude was desirable in every way and was the least that should be expected of a follower of Baha-O-Llah.

He accentuates the necessity for a teacher to live up to the standards formulated by Abdul Baha. If he cannot do this, he had better give up teaching the Cause. A pure life is even more important than prayer; and modern youth is wide awake; it does not endure hypocrisy.

Then he expresses his desire to see the Bahais achieve three things: break the shell which in some places they have created around themselves; pursue a form of adult education which would show the position of the Cause in society, and administer to the needs of youthful but seeking souls, through their teachers.

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In this talk, Ruhi Effendi maps out a chart for the future and he tells his listeners how to address themselves to it. We find no vague remarks, no generalizations; but keen analyses and practical plans. We see him as the young advisor, directing his colleagues of far more mature years; and we feel again, as many felt at the time, that if his visit could have been prolonged indefinitely, the benefit to the Cause would have been extreme.

The convention speech of Ruhi Effendi is a forthright and courageous document, a guide for teaching and an evangel of initiative and resourcefulness; and feeling that his advice applies to all of us, I have chosen a few generous extracts for reproduction in these pages.

Convention Speech of Ruhi Effendi

A little study of the progress of religion in this country, especially in the light of the books and periodicals that are coming out, will show every unprejudiced mind that on the one hand there is a dying out of the spirit of sectarianism and, on the other, a gradual creeping in of the desire for true religion. Man is becoming too broad along every line to be kept narrow in his religious views, but he has at the same time learned that without the value religion gives to life and the outlook it creates in the individual, science cannot proceed very far without at the same time opening up new channels for destruction. Science is gradually learning to value the importance of religion and drawing nearer to it.

At such a juncture the Baha'i Movement exists on the field, with the full equipment in principles and in spiritual dynamics, to provide the world with the necessary religious views. Is it going to avail itself of this wonderful chance, or is it going to let it slip away? It all depends upon us, the Baha'is, for ever since 1844 we have been trained for this purpose!

What I wish now is to say how we can do it, how we can arise to the occasion and spread this great Cause of ours. During these last few months, as you already know, I have been travelling around in this country and the experiences I have had in the field of teaching have led me to certain conclusions. I do not maintain that these views are beyond reproach, for after a few more experiences, I may modify them to a great extent. But maybe, if expressed frankly and clearly, these experiences will prove of some use to that body which will undertake the task of arranging for the teaching work during the coming year.

First, let us consider the condition of the Cause at present. Except in a few centers, such as New York, Portland and various other small centers, the Cause is not spreading rapidly. The friends do attend their meetings, they hold their feasts most regularly, but, as far as I can make out, they are not satisfied as to the progress they are making in attracting new individuals . . .

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. . . Many times I have been brought by Baha'is in contact with certain individuals who have heard me most diligently, perhaps even asked me a question or two, but who before leaving said "this is all interesting, but we are satisfied with what we have." It is useless to talk to people who are satisfied, unless we can first create in them a dissatisfaction and then a desire for some reformed ideas. Consequently, the proper persons to approach are not necessarily those who conform to certain religious views. Sometimes a person who is agnostic and has left religion in the pursuit of some other reformative movement is far easier to reach. There are millions of people in this country, who are craving for some religious views that would satisfy their reason as well as their spiritual longing, and it is these that we want no matter in what walk of life they may be. These are naturally broad-minded and ready to accept whatever satisfies their reason. Among teachers, educated people, club people and those who interest themselves in humanitarian services, there are throngs who would accept the Cause if approached in a broad way. Students of some philosophic or mystic cults are not generally so receptive . . .

Then our mode of approach should be exactly like that of the Master. I believe there are few who appreciate the great change the Master made in the method of teaching when he came to this country. Previous to that, in the East at least, the only way they proved the importance of the Cause was by referring to prophecies concerning the Cause that had been mentioned in the Holy Scriptures or the Qu'ran. The Master, when He undertook His trip to the West, saw the futility of such a method; he saw that if the people are not ready to comply with the authority of the Bible, surely they will not listen to what its prophecies prove! So he set aside that method and began to emphasize the social teachings of the Cause. Take the Paris or London talks, or the discourses he delivered in America and find for yourself how he emphasized primarily the social aspect of the Movement. My point is merely to follow His example, if we desire to succeed.

But though the Master laid for us the best form of teaching the Cause, He wants us to modify it to suit the occasion. Moreover, what He gives are certain generalizations: it is for us to prove them. 'Abdu'l Baha speaks of a graduated Income Tax as the only form of taxation; it is for us to prove its use. He mentions the Unity of Science and Religion; it is for us to find out how the movement is to be brought about. He advocates stronger family ties, it is for us to find out how the measures he advocates concerning marriage and divorce fit in with the family problems we have at present. In short, we have to study the historical background to find out the significance of what 'Abdu'l Baha advocates. It is only by doing that, that a newcomer can find out the true importance of the Cause and be attracted to it. Moreover, supposing the world were suddenly to awaken to the truth that only the Baha'is have the true solution for the world problems, and

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were to give us the reign of administration to adjust society according to our ideals, would we be able to undertake the task?

We have to prepare ourselves for this task in two ways. First by mixing more with the world outside. One unfortunate thing I have found in many centers that I have visited is that Baha'is, enchanted by the wonderful treasures they possess, do nothing more than sit down, count them and admire them. Baha'u'llah did not desire to attract us away from society, he definitely says, mingle with all the peoples of the world and share with them the fruits of your endeavors. A true Baha'i, therefore, is the one who lives as a member of society, alive with its activities. He should be a leader of society and a source of inspiration to it, always busy to apply in its life the precepts of the Cause. Mix with your fellow Baha'is, so as to keep in touch with the source of inspiration and then go out into the world using that spirit which you have obtained in quickening the world and solving its impending problems . . .

But to be able to do real service to humanity and appreciate the significance of the Movement, we should also try and educate ourselves. As far as my experiences go, the more books I read the more I appreciate the Cause . . .

One important conclusion that I have come to, while travelling throughout this country speaking about the Cause, is the method of presenting it. I was told on my arrival in this country, that the safest way to attract individuals is by avoiding the name of the Cause and its founders. I was even told that the name of the Cause is a handicap to it. Unfamiliar with the condition of the country, I almost believed it. The only reason why I did not subscribe to that idea was because a little knowledge of Christianity had taught me that the same thing was told about the early Christians. They called them Christians and jeered at them. But they did not change their name to satisfy the idiotic public, so I thought we should not give way to their prejudicial sentiments and commit a most humiliating act to the Cause and its founders.

Time and experience, however, have proven to me that such is not the case. I have not as yet found anyone who heard me mention the Cause and was prejudiced by its name. In fact, when on certain occasions the subject given to me was such that it did not necessitate a direct reference to the Cause, I have had people come to me later and ask why I did not mention the Movement and speak of it more exhaustively. The better the group, the more freedom I have had in mentioning the Cause. In a hall, on the grounds of Cornell University, I spoke on the work of the prophets and on Baha'u'llah as the manifestation of God to this day and no prejudice was manifested. Similarly did I speak to groups in Stanford University, University of British Columbia, Pacific School of Religion, in Vassar College and Mills College and to almost the whole student body of Howard University and many other groups.

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What I believe is the reason for the prejudice is the sentimental or sectarian way some people present it. When all the talk is about certain personal experiences in Haifa, or in the Cause in general, only few individuals who are already familiar with the Movement find it inspiring, others are not interested. Why should a college student or teacher care to know about the wonderful life of the people in Haifa? What he is interested in is the way they propose to help the betterment of the world.

Secondly, we sometimes are apt to speak of the wonderful teachings of the Cause, as if they are rival teachings with those of Christianity and far superior to them. Such an attitude would undoubtedly arouse a great amount of justified ill-feeling towards the Cause. In fact, it shows a lack of understanding on the part of the speaker. Baha'u'llah has not come to the world to create a religion to rival with Christianity, with a different set of teachings, all the time be on the alert to deprive others of their religion and bring them into His own fold. Baha'u'llah has come to reform different religions, to make Christianity true and pure Christianity, Islam true and pure Islam, and so on. In other words, our belief is that all these religions are the renewals of the ancient and the same religion. They are the different fruits that the same ancient tree produced at different seasons. All the religions, in their true form, are religions renewed, and not new religions to rival with the existing ones.

Thus, whenever any prejudice is found against the Cause, you can trace it back to some misconceived statement made to that individual, and not an inherent handicap due to the name of the Cause. In fact, the names of Baha'u'llah and the Master bring with them a spiritual power that operates as the dynamic force behind the teachings . . .

At the beginning of my work around the Bay Region, a great friend of the Cause, who had obtained for me some wonderful openings, told me "I would like to give you two advices. First, get to people of your own age, for those of my age are too hard-boiled; then, do not try to get the people to you, go to them." "There is always," he said, "a class of people, who go habitually to lectures as a form of entertainment. They will listen to you, but they will never take what you say seriously." . . .

On the subject of the young people, also, my friend was right. Out of the many groups I spoke to, college students were the most receptive. They are considered at present, by their elders, as irresponsible and irreligious individuals, but the truth is that they are too broad to conform to any sectarian form of religion to which their parents subscribe. Moreover, being free from dogmas and trained to use their reason, they are unwilling to accept anything on mere faith. They want a religion that would conform to their reason and, at the same time, satisfy their spiritual longings. Moreover, religion has always been the source of ideals for man. The early Christians became Christians because they found in it the hopes and ideals they

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craved for. The only reason why the Churches at present do not attract man is because they do not provide the intelligent individual with those ideals society needs at present. Religion is meant to be always in the vanguard; when it begins to drag behind, society will set it aside, rather than be encumbered by it. The only reason why the young students do not go to Church is because there is nothing the Churches can give them. The Churches do not stand any more as the source of ideals and inspirations, and that is the reason why the students do not frequent them. If we Baha'is come to the front and, in their own language and without exuberant emotionalism, show them that we have the breadth of outlook they crave to see in religion, if we show that our belief is that science and religion have to go hand in hand, and that they are both based on reason and faith; if we then present them the social ideals the Baha'i movement advocates, then they will run to its support and manifest the energy that is so characteristic of the young people as a whole.

But only young people can appeal to young people. With older people, they will have a lack of confidence and mutual understanding and, therefore, will not come out with questions so freely. With one of their own age, the case is however different. Moreover, only a young person can appreciate the problems of another young person. I was, one day, mentioning to a grown-up friend of mine some questions put to me by a Baha'i youth. I soon found that this friend of mine, instead of sympathizing with the problems that the youth had, began to scorn them. To me, however, the case was different; having had those problems to solve myself, I could show greater sympathy and leniency in the matter. Just as a young person cannot appreciate the difficulties of his elders, so grown-up people cannot appreciate the problems of the youth . . .

What I desire to see achieved along that line is that ten young and competent individuals, who are ready to sacrifice two years of their life, should prepare themselves for the work. These should be put under a rigorous course of study for one whole summer. During this time they should, under a competent teacher of the Cause and also a competent Professor of Social Science, obtain a general view of the Cause in a scientific way and also go deep and specialize along one of the phases of the teachings. Then prepare an essay, showing their competence in presenting the Cause. Once this is achieved, they should be sent from one College to another, to establish centers and study classes. They should not stay, however, for more than two weeks in any center, they should keep on moving and let others come in their place.

During this period, the Teaching Committee should also see that they are keeping up their study. For, unless they read outside books constantly, they are apt to become stale and incapable of standing up to the mark in winning their point while discussing the Cause with the students. . .

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Now we Baha'is should be on our guard lest the Baha'i teachings lose their purity. The Baha'i Movement is not a conglomeration of all sorts of religious ideas plus the beliefs of some mystic cults. It is religion purified, it is the ancient religion freed of the debris of human imaginings. If we desire to be true Baha'is we have to experience one of the greatest revolutions in our very soul. We have first to set aside old conceptions, we have to cleanse our slate from ancient outgrown, human imaginings, from those beliefs that have degraded the other religions into their present condition and then usher in the Baha'i ideals and beliefs and give them the complete and uncontested reign in the kingdom of our soul. We have first to "ring out the old" and then "ring in the new." . . .

Aside from this report, I would like to avail myself of this great opportunity where I am facing the representatives of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada, to express my heartiest thanks for all the kindness that has been showered upon me. Without the constant help and inspiration that was given me by the teaching committee, through its secretary, I would have never undertaken such a trip all alone or obtained any one of the wonderful openings that were arranged for me. My experiences along that line have proven to me definitely that, being under the shadow of Shoghi Effendi, and keeping in touch with the National Assembly, through its proper committees, put us in unity with the source of spiritual power which is absolutely indispensable for success. We individuals are infinitesimal in our influence, it is that source of energy which makes us what we are in achieving success, in serving the Cause.

Then, I would like to thank all those individuals that took me into their homes and sheltered me as a son and brother. As I have often remarked, the world would be a different one from what it is at present, if every individual were to find as many homes in foreign lands as I have found in this. Thank you for all you have done for me. I will try to repay you if you come to Haifa.

—*Baha'i News*, June and July, 1928 issues

Return to Haifa

A farewell dinner to Ruhi Effendi was given by the Bahai community in the Hall of St. Mark's-In-The-Bouwerie, where he had been welcomed on his arrival in this city. Being included in the large assemblage of guests, I had the opportunity of looking into the face of this Bahai brother of mine whom I had not seen since youthful days in Haifa, and of hearing him speak with the charm and assurance of which I had heard much in recent months. A day or so later, I spent the lunch hour with him in an uptown restaurant where we discussed methods for propagating the teachings. All my talks are derived from the Master's, he said to me; I simply sowed a

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few of those very seeds, here and there. I have done my duty to the best of my ability. Baha-O-Llah will take care of the rest.

On his way to Palestine, Ruhi Effendi stopped in Geneva, where he addressed *The Conference of International Peace Through the Churches*; then he resumed his work in Haifa as secretary to the Guardian.

Short Shrift for The New History Society

It was in the following spring that The New History Society came into being, becoming a subject of controversy from the very start. The point at issue was that I would not place this new movement under the control of the National Spiritual Assembly or accept the unconditional authority of this body. Willing as I was to work in full cooperation with the Administration, I yet could not prostitute my conscience and my spirit to a religious dictatorship; consequently, after the passage of an agitated year and four months, The New History Society and its founders were expelled from the Bahai administration.

Throughout this proceeding, voluminous correspondence passed between New York and Haifa, most of it being attended to by Ruhi Effendi; and here we see the young secretary as a staunch advocate of the Administration and the passionate protector of its prerogatives. The fact that The New History Society received short shrift at his hands has never affected my high regard for him personally, for I realize that agents of organizations are cogs in the wheels, or, if very highly placed they are wheels in themselves and the machines are dependent upon their remaining in place. It can be said that throughout his active career, Ruhi Effendi fulfilled to the letter his obligations to the Administration; while at the same time, and I concede that his adjustive processes must have been rather complicated, he continued to uphold the Cause itself in all its universality and grandeur.

During the early Thirties, *Baha'i News* occasionally refers to Ruhi Effendi. The April issue of 1930 carries some teaching suggestions made by him; and the May issue of the same year includes an account by Dr. Walter B. Guy of his stay in Haifa, in which he repeats a prayer offered by himself at the Shrine on Mount Carmel in the sympathetic presence of the young secretary. In April 1931, Ruhi Effendi is referred to as being member of a committee in Palestine, together with his brother Soheil Effendi Afnan and Miss Effie Baker, engaged in collecting data for publication in Vol. IV of *The Bahai World*. The following July he is again mentioned, this time by Mrs. Keith Ransom-Kehler who, after a long time,

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yet recalls his speech given before *the Congress of Some Living Religions Within the British Empire*. Mrs. Kehler writes:—

Ruhî Afnan said in his paper before the Congress of Living Religions that when we see the teachings and principles of this Revelation at last stepping down out of the cold empyrean of idealism and becoming part of the everyday working order of the world, we cannot but agree with Abdu'l-Bahá that the "pulse of this mighty message of Baha'u'llah is beating like an artery through the five continents of the world."

—*Bahá'i Magazine*, July 1931

A Unique University

The American University of Beirut is an institution of incalculable value in the Near East. It has moulded the characters of countless young Oriental men and women, and stands as a beacon of tolerance and broad thinking upon the educational horizon of the world. Abdul Baha offered his most eloquent tribute to Dr. Bayard Dodge, President of the University, when he sent his own grandsons to be educated under his auspices; and he further recommended that the Persian Baháís enter their sons as students on this campus. An article by Dr. Dodge entitled *Education as a Source of Good Will*, which is published in *The Baháí World*, 1930-1932, gives the reader an idea of the spiritual attitude that has made the American University of Beirut unique among *Alma Maters*.

It is with a sense of deep appreciation that I reproduce herewith a few passages from this article. Dr. Dodge writes:—

The word "university" implies something broader than the use of education to nurture a specific influence or propaganda. It suggests an effort to set forth the ideas of the world as a whole, so that a student may seek the truth through broad horizons and be free to choose for himself. It is this conception that underlies the work of the American University of Beirut. An effort is made to prevent all forms of propaganda, except for a consistent pressure to promote good will and friendship.

During the past year there have been representatives of fourteen nationalities and twelve major religious sects on the teaching and administrative force of the University. . .

During the year 1930-1931 there have been 812 students in the University proper, 33 in the Institute of Music, and 697 in the elementary and secondary classes of the Preparatory School. These students represented twenty-two important religious sects and thirty-

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nine countries. They have come from places as far apart as India and the Argentine; Russia and Zanzibar. . .

As the University at the foot of Lebanon has given an interpretation of the gospel of Jesus and the teachings of the prophets which is similar to that proclaimed by the great Bahá'í leaders at the foot of Carmel, there has naturally been a bond of sympathy between the colony at Haifa and the American University of Beirut.

During the past year there have been three Bahá'ís on the staff of the University and twenty-six enrolled as students. The following is a list of the Bahá'ís who have graduated and become a great credit to their Alma Mater. . .

Dr. Dodge presents a list of twenty-six names which includes those of Shoghi Rabbani, Ruhi Afnan and his brother Soheil Afnan.

After mentioning the qualifications which mark the Bahai students at the Beirut University, some of which are refinement and courtesy, clean living, honesty and intuitive internationalism, President Dodge concludes thus:—

Centuries ago shepherds, who were watching their flocks in the fields of Bethlehem, heard heavenly voices singing of "Goodwill to all mankind." Today this same song is being chorused from Carmel and Beirut. May the whole world catch the spirit of the music, that harmony may take the place of discord and enmity be turned to peace.

—*The Bahá'í World*, 1930-1932, Vol. IV, pp. 368-371

The Attentive Host

I have striven to present a composite picture of Ruhi Effendi, drawn from published records, together with some printed items of more or less worth, which show him as guide, philosopher and friend to the Bahai Community. Now, I will close this chapter with a few lines having no historical importance whatsoever, but which give us one more glimpse of him in the modest role which he filled so long and so successfully—that of the attentive young host on the slope of Mount Carmel.

After landing, some of us chose to walk through the narrow crooked streets with Ruhi Afnan, grandson of Abdul Baha, and cousin of Shoghi Effendi, who was at the dock to greet us.

—In an article entitled: *Glimpses of the New World Order* by Mabel and Sylvia Paine, *Bahá'í Magazine*, March, 1933

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And men, who contemptuously treat their own brothers and sisters as eternal babies, never to be trusted in the most trivial details of their personal life,—coercing them at every step by the cruel threat of persecution into following a blind lane to nowhere, driving a number of them into hypocrisy and into moral inertia,—will fail over and over again to rise to the height of their true and severe responsibility.

**—Rabindranath Tagore
Creative Unity, pp. 139-140**

Chapter IX

BAHAI STATESMANSHIP TRANSCENDENTALISM AND APOLOGETICS

A Decisive Event

Eight years after Ruhi Effendi's fruitful journeyings in this country, a second visit took place which was counted as of extreme importance, judging from the Annual Report of the National Spiritual Assembly, printed after his return to Haifa. Here, under the caption *Decisive Events of the Year 1935-1936*, we find, among other items, the following:

6. The second visit made to America by Ruhi Effendi Afnan.
Baha'i News, May, 1936

This visit although short was a repetition of the first, in that the time of the distinguished guest was kept very full indeed. *Baha'i News* announces in the following article:—

Ruhi Effendi Afnan Makes Second Visit to America

The National Spiritual Assembly is privileged to announce that Ruhi Effendi Afnan, great-grandson of Baha'u'llah, has come to America and with the Guardian's approval can remain until November in order to take part in the National Meeting at the Temple on October 26 and 27, and visit local Baha'i communities to assist in teaching on his way to and from Chicago.

The following itinerary has been arranged:—

September 8 to 22, Upper New York State.

September 25 to October 4, New England.

October 6 to 13, New York City Metropolitan area.

October 14 to 20, Washington, D. C. area.

October 21 to November 6. From Washington to Chicago, stopping at Pittsburgh en route.

November 7 until his departure from America. From Chicago to New York, stopping at Detroit and Cleveland.

Due to important work which requires his presence at Haifa in November, Ruhi Effendi Afnan regrets his inability to extend his visit to include a journey to Assemblies in the West.

From reports already received, the friends are making every effort to take advantage of this unique opportunity to have the Message presented publicly by so distinguished a believer, and the center already visited are enthusiastic and grateful for the results achieved.

Baha'i News, October 1936

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A Second Home

During this second visit, Ruhi Effendi was on familiar ground. The majority of those he came in contact with had met him before, and to most of these persons, the joy of renewing so rare an acquaintanceship was intense. Besides, some actual friendships had been formed on the first trip, and not a few men and women had come to look upon him as a guide when difficult problems came up. Therefore in many ways, the United States was to Ruhi Effendi a second home.

A characteristic of his, which was discomfiting to some but which, nevertheless, won for him universal respect, was his charitableness toward those who were absent. Gossip died in his presence, or else slunk fainting away to be revived when the coast was clear; and the example of his forbearance and kindness produced a definite impression, one as useful perhaps as were his explanations and teachings. A most lovely injunction of the Master is this: *The Bahais must possess the sin-covering eye*. It seems to me that Ruhi Effendi exemplified this teaching.

Bahai Statesmanship

A notable step forward on the second trip was the fact that this time Ruhi Effendi gave a talk on one of the great national networks. He spoke on W. A. B. C., of the Columbia Broadcasting System, on October 11, 1935 and presented the Cause in a manner that was highly satisfactory to his Bahai listeners. His voice is well suited to broadcasting and his delivery was remarkable, considering the fact that he was a novice along this line.

I am including this entire radio speech in my sketch of Ruhi Effendi, for in it he addresses himself to the subject of universal civilization from the Bahai point of view. It is an attitude that must be adopted by the world statesmen of the future. The title of his address is:

The Contribution of the East to World Civilization

It is venturesome to maintain that the mind of an Easterner is essentially different from that of a Westerner; that there are inherent qualities and capacities that distinguish them one from the other; but the fact still remains that whereas Western development has been in the direction of material civilization, the contribution of the East has been more along the spiritual line.

The expert knowledge, technique and specialization that has been produced in the West, especially in these latter days, is a reality that

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will for ever stand to its credit and characterize its civilization. The discoveries of the laws of nature, the progress of science in all its different branches, the development of industry and its mass production, the perfection that is achieved in business methods, all are arresting to an Eastern visitor in a Western land, arouse his admiration and awaken his hope that some day the same forces may permeate Asia and Africa.

There is no reason why such potentialities residing in nature and in man should not be developed and manipulated to serve the peoples of the East. All they have to do is to enter the centers of learning in Europe and America and partake of the knowledge accumulated there. To develop man has to follow in the footsteps of those who have advanced farther on the road to progress, and for a period of time, acquire knowledge from them. Only by emulating the West, in its physical and economic development, can the East start to evolve, and gradually reach a point when it can turn back and begin to contribute its share to world civilization. The material development of Japan is a decisive proof confirming the efficacy of this process.

But just as the East has to acquire from the West industrialization, technique and the specialized branches of learning, so the West must turn to the East for the spiritual element that will lift its civilization, balance it, make it perfect and raise it to the rank of a culture.

It is idle to theorize on the reason why the great cultural movements of the world, the great revealed religions, such as Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, have all sprung from the East and form the sources of the different cultural movements history records. I hesitate to suggest that the Eastern frame of mind makes it more susceptible to revelation, that the people of the Orient are a better channel through which God can express His Divine Will, that they are the chosen medium for regenerating mankind. But the facts are too glaring to be denied that all the cultures existing in the world today have sprung from revealed religions invariably born in the East.

Consider how the Christian spirit and teachings form the cultural background of Western civilization. The mode of thought, the basic moral principles that distinguish the European and American nations from the other peoples of the world, trace their source back to Jesus Christ; and this is a fact admitted by most students of Western culture. Jesus Christ introduced into the world a universal consciousness and outlook on life that permeated Roman thought and gradually remoulded its culture, as well as its legal system and institutions. It was the Christian spirit that balanced the Roman civilization and provided its true cultural element. There is much ground for doubt whether the influence of Rome upon the world and later civilizations would have been so great if the cultural and spiritual elements brought in by Christianity had been withheld; if Pagan

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Rome had not been conquered and refashioned by the spirit of Jesus Christ. Westerners, however, often fail to remember that Jesus was a Jew, born and bred in Palestine which is an integral part of Asia. *Because Islam supplanted Christianity in the Near East and drove it into Europe, we are often apt to identify Jesus so closely with Europe as to forget that He was an Oriental.*

Even more outstanding and irrefutable is the influence of Muhammad and the Qur'an upon the culture that developed in the Near East and gradually spread its influence into Western lands. Not only did that religion start a new civilization of its own, and in the tenth and eleventh centuries, give rise to centers of learning such as Khorasan in Northern Persia, Baghdad and Spain, but also the Persian, Arab and Moorish culture, that had obtained their spirit and basic teachings from Islam, exerted a cultural influence upon countries that were purely Christian in Faith. *The more we follow, with an unprejudiced mind, the study of Islam and the Renaissance, the more we find the influence the religion of Muhammad exerted upon European culture. Many of the earliest leaders of Renaissance pursued their studies in Muhammadan countries and were infused with the spirit of Islam. Among them was St. Thomas Aquinas, who spent his early days in Spain learning philosophy from Moorish scholars. Spinoza was greatly influenced in his thought by the Jewish philosophers who flourished in the atmosphere of a Muhammadan culture. Many of the unbiased students of history today maintain that if the French had not actually won the battle of Tours, Europe would have not gone through the period called the Dark Ages. This shows the importance of the cultural influence of Islam when its spirit was still young and virile.*

The progress of modern science is a glowing example of what human intellect can achieve when freed from the fetters of outgrown dogmas and superstitions. *The more man disentangled himself from medieval conceptions, the more he advanced and discovered the methods whereby he could use physical forces for his social and individual development.*

But as our civilization is more along material and industrial lines, as its drift has been increasingly away from true religion and spirituality, that cultural element has shown itself to be disturbingly lacking. The attention of the world has been directed towards the development of industry and commerce, towards the growth of technique and specialized study that is conducive to human well-being upon this earth. Much less importance has been attached to cultural values and the unfoldment of the spiritual faculties of man. *Can a civilization be considered a true culture when the spiritual destiny of man is ignored, when values are distorted and perverted? Can a truly cultured humanity perpetrate international crimes and cause the death of millions as we are doing?*

Science has laid at our disposal great forces that may be used

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for the betterment of humanity, but they are actually employed to destroy life and impoverish peoples. The curse of mankind in this day is that material civilization has progressed by leaps and bounds while spiritual culture has been dragging behind. We have obtained a detailed and accurate knowledge of many of the forces that operate in our physical universe but have not reached a true and proper understanding as to the goal of our moral and spiritual development, as to the purpose for which we were created and the direction in which we ought to develop. These are aspects of a true cultural life that is still unborn.

Again can the East come to the front and contribute, as on previous occasions, its cultural element to world civilization. It is only by acknowledging and accepting this worthy contribution the East can make in this day, that Europe and America will be able to perfect their material civilization and give it a cultural and finishing touch.

Being too near to the origin of the Baha'i Faith, which arose during the middle of the last century in Persia, we are apt to underestimate its value. In time we may obtain a better perspective and a more accurate method to appraise its importance. But even now it can be taken into consideration and its value recognized. It undoubtedly possesses a rich cultural value for all the civilized world.

Consider, for example, the goal of the oneness of mankind which it establishes as an ideal for all the peoples of the world. Baba'u'llah, the founder of this new Faith that has arisen in the Orient, proclaims: "Do we see your kings and rulers lavishing their treasures more freely on means for the destruction of the human race than on that which would conduce to the happiness of mankind. . . This strife and this bloodshed and discord must cease, and all men be as one kindred and one family. . . Let not a man glory in this that he loves his country; let him rather glory in this, that he loves his kind. . ."

With such a cultural ideal before us, with such a universal spirit to stimulate our inner emotions, narrow nationalism and its devastating influences can be overcome. Then the forces of nature harnessed by man, which now are employed for purposes of destruction and self-aggrandizement, can be used to strengthen the bonds that unite the human family. These forces could then be made to operate for furthering the conception of world unity and the brotherhood of man.

If this cultural movement (again sprung from the East), should be employed as the ideal of Western material civilization, as the spiritual force that is to animate it and direct its course, then, instead of dissipating our life along unworthy pursuits we will build up a nobler home in this world and make ready for the worlds to come. This is a practical idealism which will absorb youth and guide its footsteps.

We are born in this world with a spirit that is a store-house

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of infinite potentialities; with the capacity to develop these potentialities and reflect the rich and glorious attributes of God. Should we bear this cultural principle in mind, should we recognize the fact that we have more than a physical being, should we become conscious of the fact that the purpose of all creation is the spiritual development of man, then we will take life more seriously and joyously and concentrate our attention upon things vital and uplifting.

If the East and the West should each contribute its share along these lines destined by God; should they bear in mind that they are indebted and in need one of the other, then they would build up the future civilization in such a manner that both the material and cultural elements would be incorporated—elements indispensable for the richness and beauty of the whole. Then we will behold the true Kingdom of God, foretold by all the prophets, which constitutes the ideal world state the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh tries to establish upon earth.

—*World Order*, December, 1935

Bahai Transcendentalism

During this same year and the following one, much of Ruhi Effendi's writings were included in Bahai publications. A certain article, appearing in *World Order*, November, 1935 deserves the study of those who are interested in metaphysics, theology and religion. Here, the abstruse topics of the Divine Essence, of the Logos, of incarnation, re-birth and resurrection are handled with learning and acumen, his knowledge of these transcendental subjects being directly derived from the New Testament, the Koran and the writings of Bahá-O-Llah and Abdul Baha. This Paper, under the lengthy title: *A World Faith—Studies in the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh—The Oneness of the Prophets*, gives the author standing as a Bahai transcendentalist.

A beautiful section of the article, dealing with the potentialities of man and the continuing influence of the Prophets, reads thus: —

Man is born in this world endowed with latent and infinite potentialities with the object of developing them to the full. In this process of training he needs the counsel and guidance of a loving teacher who is above the prevailing social conceptions, who is not carried away by the trend of social influences, who is able to create his own environment as well as the environment for the whole world, and at the same time is himself guided by an inner and unerring Divine Light.

God who has created us loves us, and because He loves us desires our progress. Hence He has sent us His Prophets and given them the necessary power to raise us above our environment, overcome the forces of evil and set before us the true path of salvation and

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spiritual upliftment. But the Prophets do not act as spiritual educators only in this world, in all the worlds to come through which the human spirit passes on its road to progress, Prophets appear and help the development of man.

A new religion, therefore, comes into being whenever the previous one becomes too old to exert any appreciable and healthy influence upon society, whenever, in the words of Jesus, it becomes like a salt that has lost its savor. In one of His Tablets 'Abdu'l-Baha says: "This bounty and great opportunity shall end and this brilliant morn shall fade away into dark night. When you find the world in this condition know and be sure that the day of certainty has neared, that the light of the merciful God shall soon shine upon the horizon and the Lord shall appear upon the dark clouds."

In referring to the principle of the finality of revelation and of absolutism in religion, Ruhi Effendi has this to say:—

How foolish, therefore, is the principle maintained by the generality of the followers of the different religions that with the advent of their Prophet revelation has ceased; that their religion is the "absolute religion," the final word uttered by God to man. According to Baha'u'llah it is blasphemy "to believe that all revelation is ended, that the portals of divine mercy are closed, that from the day-spring of eternal holiness no sun shall rise again, that the ocean of everlasting bounty is forever stilled, and that out of the tabernacle of ancient glory the Messengers of God have ceased to be manifest."

Speaking of religion as *spiritual atmosphere*, embracing all life, he strikes a very high note:—

If we take religion to mean that spiritual atmosphere which embraces moral and social laws as well as beliefs and motivating emotions that God creates for the spiritual development of man, then all that the Prophets do, is to renew that atmosphere and make it more healthy and invigorating. The Prophets do not come into the world to establish rival institutions and to rob one another of their adherents. They are all servants of the same Cause, revealers of the same ancient religion of God, which, at the hands of man, is constantly corrupted and obscured. This is why Jesus said: "I have not come to destroy but to fulfill." He did not come to abolish the religion of Moses but to infuse it with a new life and spirit, to make it more effective in changing and uplifting the human heart.

To him all the Prophets have one and the same mission, namely, to help in the spiritual development of man:—

We have thus seen that all the Prophets are the manifestation of the Word of God, that they all come to the world for the same purpose, namely to help the spiritual development of man. Their

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mission is to renew the ancient religion of God, and so they all accept the Prophets who appeared before them and foretell the advent of the future ones. Hence, we should admit that they constitute members of the same race of spiritual and moral educators, destined by the hand of Providence to help the upliftment of man in this and in the myriad worlds to come.

Bahai Apologetics

A second article by Ruhi Effendi, written during this period, is published in the April 1936 issue of *World Order*. The author addresses himself to the subject: *Institutionalism and Religion*, a choice undoubtedly provoked by the existence of The New History Society and by its silent stand against the administrative theology of the National Spiritual Assembly. Here, writing at his own inclination or else at the bidding of those higher up, Ruhi Effendi tries his very best to discover the rational justification for the institutions of the Faith. He describes two manners of approach to religion: the *mystical* and the *revelational*—the first, emphasizing the inner feelings of man; the second, the necessity for institutionalizing the Faith in order to insure its life and continuity. The latter belief was held, as every one knows, by Christianity and Islam; and it is now the cornerstone of the Bahai Administration. Yet, was it the belief of the Founders of these religions? If I remember correctly, the great Prophets to whom I refer opened the vials of their condemnation upon the religious institutions of their day; while they built their movements on the untrammelled hearts of brave men who made themselves free to follow them. That institutionalizing did take place after their departure from this life is quite another story, and a very sad one, as far as my own views are concerned.

I now return to the explanations of Ruhi Effendi, who addresses himself to his subject as follows:—

Modern thought is inclined to consider any form of organization as detrimental to the spirit of true religion, and it bases its reasoning upon the belief that whereas religion requires a freedom of the spirit, laws and institutions force it into a groove and subject it to a definite and preconceived mould. How could the spirit soar and attain its full stature if restrained by the dictates of an organization?

The next paragraph contains a dart that is levelled straight at me. Instinctively, I want to duck my head; and then I change my mind and plead guilty.

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To denounce the administrative aspect of the Faith of Baha'u'llah, or in a general form, maintain that religion cannot and should not be organized, betrays a lack of understanding of the philosophy of the spiritual life. Only mystic movements can logically maintain that organization weighs down upon the spirit, that it retards its progress. The followers of the revealed religions, be they Christians, Moslems or Baha'is, on the other hand, cannot with any justification maintain such a theory.

Having carried his argument up to this point, the writer must have thought it incumbent upon him to make some note of the disastrous effects produced upon all the religions by ecclesiastical organizations, for he says:—

It is true that at times organization becomes a handicap to a spiritual movement, but that is only when its function is over-emphasized, when the organization becomes an end in itself rather than a mere means provided by God for the spiritual development of man.

In reading the following statement, I can only smile at the two words *after ages*:—

The administration of the Faith of Baha'u'llah is still in its infancy, it has to grow and mature, to fulfill its mission in the world; but after ages of activity and useful service it will become subject to corruption.

In spite of the fact that the *pros* on institutionalized religion are not my pet subject, but rather the *cons*, I yet consider this apologia of Ruh Effendi as a very clever piece of writing. It should have been appreciated by those for whom it was drawn up, and I do not doubt but that it was judging from the prominence that was given it; however, according to the documents that are in my possession, this article is his swan song for, following this date, I do not find any more of Ruhi Effendi's writings in Baha publications.

The Order of Bahai Apologists

The religion of Bahai Institutionalism is headed by Horace Holley known very simply as Mr.; although with time, an appropriate title such as Monsignor or the Right Reverend is likely to be added to him. Below stands an order of hierophants and prelates, acting as advocates and protectors of rights, rites and privileges. Some of them are men of erudition and learning; and these are occasionally called upon to explore the domain of philosophy, sociology, science, economics, church and state in orde

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to find plausible arguments and sophistic explanations for the introduction of institutionalism in the Bahai Cause—all this to prove to the rank and file of the faithful, the logical necessity, the *raison d'être* and the divine origin of the said institution.

In Professor Glen A. Shook, the Bahai Administration has found a valuable exponent and interpreter of its institutional ideology. The May, June, July and August issues of *World Order*, 1936 carry four scholarly articles from his pen, entitled respectively: *Man as an Organic Unit*; *Society as an Organic Unit*; *The Divine Plan—A Creation* and *Elements of the Divine Plan*. A second series of articles by the same author appears in the March, April, May and June issues of this publication, under the general title: *A Study of Church Organizations*; while again, in 1938, we have in the January, February, March and April issues of *World Order* a third series of articles by Professor Shook, entitled: *Philosophy and Revelation*.

Mr. Mountford Mills has devoted his legal talents and experience to the establishment of the Bahai organization. As a former president of the National Spiritual Assembly, as most trusted agent of the Guardian and as a widely loved and respected personality, he has made notable contributions to the administrative system which he ranks, at the least, on a par with the Teachings. Three articles of his entitled *The World Crisis* which, in 1928, are published in the February, March and April issues of *World Order*, give his views on the subject.

Another consistent advocate of organization within the Cause is Mr. Kenneth Christian. His essays: *Education in a World Order*, published in *Baha'i Magazine*, March, 1934 and *Peace Realists*, appearing in *World Order*, October, 1937 rationalize the need of a Bahai administration.

In this campaign of apologetics, mapped out by the authorities, many American women have played prominent parts. The late Mrs. Keith Ransom-Kehler, a fine writer and speaker, as well as a dynamic and utterly devoted servant of the Cause and of the Administration, has cooperated whole-heartedly with the National Spiritual Assembly; her writings having consistently been featured in Bahai publications. The *Baha'i Magazine* of August, September and October 1933 carries a series of her articles under the title: *A World at Peace—Baha'i Administration as Presented to a Group of Free Thinkers*. In one of these, Mrs. Kehler praises the system of voting as conducted by the Bahai Administration. Her description is as follows:—

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The manner of voting is unique. There are no parties, no candidates, no nominations. Canvassing and electioneering are strictly forbidden. . . The elections have now been accomplished without contest, majorities or minorities. . . In advance of the election not only have no names been mentioned, no preferences asserted . . . but since no one is nominated previously there can be no platform.

I have said it before, when the subject of Bahai voting has come up, but I still can find no parallel to this conduct of affairs outside of the totalitarian systems as practiced in Europe. These elections are as different from the Democratic ideal as is *Mein Kampf* from the Constitution of the United States.

The World Order of Baha'u'llah is the title of another series of articles published in *World Order* of February, March, April, May and June of 1937. In them, the author, Mary Collison pays her own tribute to the Bahai system of elections.

Hussein Effendi Rabbani, brother and secretary to the Guardian, has, since 1932, been a consistent contributor to Bahai publications in America; and, his writings have helped greatly in moulding the thoughts of the community along reactionary and institutional lines. His articles in the *Baha'i Magazine* are: *The Social Emphasis in the Baha'i Revelation*, November 1932; *The Baha'i View of Authority and Organization*, January and February 1933; *The Baha'i Faith and the Forms of Government*, May, 1933; *Church and State in the Baha'i Social Order*, July and August 1933.—Appearing in *World Order* are:—*The Church and the World*, February, 1938 and *Religion and Society*, April 1940.

Another Cause

It was in the middle Twenties, only a few years after the Master's departure from this life, that the Bahai community first became aware of the fact that an administrative system was about to be fastened on to the Cause. The majority did not take the idea very seriously; yet, when lectures on the subject were announced, many attended because it was understood that this was Mr. Holley's hobby. A little later, when the existence of The New History Society had become an issue, the thoughts of all Bahais were directed toward the newly created administrative order; and presently the Bahai Cause, to all intents and purposes, drifted into the discard.

This substitution of *another* cause for the Cause itself necessitate some explanation, and it was to meet this requirement that the Baha

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apologists were set to work. That they did a good job of it is unquestionable. The believers have been induced to take a detour, on the understanding that it will eventually turn back to the great highway; and they are forging ahead at top speed on a road that leads into the dim and distant past.

In their own times, the *stately apologists* of Christendom accomplished their mission most satisfactorily. The tomes of their Jesuitical writings may be heaped with the dust of centuries, yet their influence still goes on. It was in appreciation of the complicated structure of the Catholic Church, and with the ambition of gaining an even greater measure of temporal power, that the Bahai authorities converted the Ark of the Lord into a Theological Fortress, in the dungeons of which the living teachings of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha are conserved as archives.

The Crucial Choice

There is a time in the life of nation and of man when a crucial choice has to be made between slavery and freedom. The American fathers made that choice on the soil of this continent; the Democracies and would-be-democracies of the entire world are making that choice right now. On the other hand, there are masses of people whose mental and spiritual equipment does not warrant even a consideration of liberty; to them, the goose-step is rhythm and the voice of officialdom law, while the locked door makes home:—

A tame bird was in a cage and a free bird was in the forest.

In due time they met as a decree of fate.

The free bird cried: "O my love, let us fly to the wood."

The caged bird whispered: "Come hither, let us both live in the cage."

Said the free bird: "Among bars, where there is no room to spread one's wings?"

"Alas," cried the caged bird, "I should not know where to sit, perched in the sky."

—Rabindranath Tagore

Chapter X
THE CASE AGAINST
RUHI EFFENDI AFNAN

The cowardice of the weak; the arrogance of the strong, the greed of fat prosperity, the rancour of the wronged, pride of race, and insult to man—

Has burst God's peace, raging in storm.

*Fruit-Gathering, Stanza LXXXIV
—Rabindranath Tagore*

Chapter X

THE CASE AGAINST RUHI EFFENDI AFNAN

My Purpose

The narrative of Ruhi Effendi, as I have presented it, was written with the purpose of preserving the memory of this man in the literature which is growing around the Cause. This was necessary, because those who have incurred the displeasure of the Bahai organization are expunged from the record wherever possible, so that with time even their shadows are practically obliterated. It is true that on occasions, the names of these persons do come up in a mass listing, under a direful heading; but their achievements and good works are totally forgotten and, of course, their stories are never told.

Now, I have not attempted to tell Ruhi Effendi's story from his point of view. Such an effort would have been presumptive for, although I knew him well in his youth and have since observed his development with interest, the barriers of distance and separate channels of activity have intervened between us. Likewise, I could not comment on the events which led to his excommunication, for these are shrouded in mystery; yet, one thing I could do, and have done—this was to state his standing in the Cause which was won on his own merits, and to offer a picture of him based on his writings, for the benefit of the Bahai public of today and of the years to come.

Needless to say, I have not received a sign of approval from him, for excommunicated persons do not place themselves in one category, to make merry or lament on the same ground. Of this order, there are definite grades which are recognized not only by the Bahai community but by the outcasts themselves. Consequently I, who am close to black on the tone chart of untouchability, cannot expect to communicate with those who are listed under the greys; although, for my part, I confess to being rather color-blind in this respect and feel myself fundamentally involved with all shades of God's children, however different their opinions may be from my own.

The writing of a biographical sketch on a living person is not an easy task. In praising, one tries to be restrained; in implying a criticism, one hopes to be inoffensive. Through it all, truth is of first importance;

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otherwise, it were best either to lay down the pen or else devote one's time to fiction.

These difficulties were apparent to some of my friends within the Bahai organization and to the others outside of it. It was said that I had enough trouble on my hands, and that I should not go hunting for more. Also, I was reminded that my readers had small interest in the internal disputes of the Bahai organization and that they might lose patience with me altogether. This latter was sound advice and I realized it; nevertheless, an inner voice insisted that it was incumbent upon me to pay a tribute to his grandson of Abdul Baha, which task I have discharged to the best of my ability.

Reasons in Toto

The excommunication of Ruhi Effendi was a totally arbitrary act as can be estimated from the Guardian's cablegrams, passages of which I quote. The reasons given, and all of them, are as follows:—

- Reason I:—** Ruhi's sister married covenant-breaker Fayzi.
- Reason II:—** (The) flagrant disloyalty (of) Ruhi's family compels me (to) disclose information so long (and) patiently withheld (from) American believers concerning his failure (to) obtain my approval (of) his second visit (to) America.
- Reason III:—** His subsequent conduct regarding his marriage which I refrained from revealing (to) anyone except your Assembly, as well as Foad's departure (to) England without my knowledge should now be made known to believers.

Reason I

The First Reason applies to the marriage of Ruhi Effendi's sister to the son of Furighyyeh Khanum, daughter of Baha-O-Llah.

Now, I happen to have known the two elder brothers of this young man, the late Hussein Effendi Afnan when he was *aide-de-camp* to Fayzal, King of Iraq, and Nayyar Effendi Afnan who was Commissioner of Parks in Cairo, Egypt. Both of them were noble Bahais, who had achieved distinction in their respective fields; yet the Guardian has chosen to stigmatize this entire family, which incidentally was greatly cherished by Abdul Baha, with the name of covenant-breaker, and he therefore is displeased with the marriage which has taken place between these two cousins of his.

However, this is a story in itself and does not apply to Ruhi Effendi.

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He did not marry into the honorable family above-mentioned; therefore, I claim that the First Reason given for his excommunication is entirely beside the point and cannot be taken seriously.

Reason II

The Second Reason is on the grounds that Ruhi Effendi failed to obtain the Guardian's approval of his second visit to America.

It happens that my readers have seen the advance announcement of this visit, published in *Bahai News* by the National Spiritual Assembly, in which it was stated that *Ruhi Effendi was expected in this country and that he was coming with the approval of the Guardian*. Now, we can say with certainty that the National Assembly had been in communication with the Guardian in regard to this visit; that this announcement was made following his instructions, and that the warm welcome accorded to, and the series of meetings arranged for the distinguished guest were in conformance with Shoghi Effendi's wishes. It seems incredible that the printed words of the National Spiritual Assembly should now be flouted to so great an extent; yet, such is the case. The Guardian in his cablegram of excommunication goes back on his trusted administrative organ and brands it with untruth; an action which is unwise, for hereafter no one can put much weight on the statements made by the National Spiritual Assembly.

Let us suppose that Ruhi Effendi's visit to this country was made *without* the Guardian's approval, but with his *permission* which we know had to be granted. If such were the case, there was an excellent precedent for it which we will now review:—

Shortly before the Master's departure from this life, Shoghi Effendi determined to go to Oxford, England, to continue his education. He had suffered a disappointment at the University of Beirut, having failed to obtain the degree of M. A. upon which he had set his heart; and the fact that his fellow Bahai students had won this honor made the situation all the harder. Now, Abdul Baha was disappointed too, but he did not make a point of it. He felt that his grandson had derived much benefit from the University and that a degree was not absolutely essential. He wished Shoghi Effendi to remain in Haifa to take up the work of the Cause at his side. Undoubtedly, he needed him; also he probably felt that his time on this earth was not to be very long. So, Shoghi Effendi stayed in Haifa for a few years.

Now, Shoghi Effendi has a very strong scholastic leaning and he could not give up the desire for further education; consequently, the time at

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rived when a definite issue arose in Haifa: Shoghi Effendi insisted on going to Oxford, and the Master insisted that he should remain at home.

To make a long story short, Shoghi Effendi won his point, for the ladies of the household were so sympathetic to his distress that they interceded for him with Abdul Baha. Thus, Shoghi Effendi finally went to Oxford, without the Master's *approval* but with his *permission*. He was there when Abdul Baha passed away from this life and was unable to return until more than a month after the funeral services.

Naturally, the Master did not excommunicate his grandson for this determination to have his own way; therefore, by the same token, if Ruhi Effendi came to America without the Guardian's *approval* but with his *permission*, he likewise should not have received punishment. Also, in view of the fact that the National Spiritual Assembly had gone on record as saying that the visit was made with the Guardian's approval, the statement should have been honored. Consequently, I claim that the Second Reason given for the excommunication of Ruhi Effendi cannot be sustained in a court of ethics or of law.

Reason III

The Third Reason is in regard to his marriage, although nothing is told us of this event other than the fact. It would seem that Ruhi Effendi had a right to pick out his own wife, and as his choice fell within the family circle it is obvious that he did not marry outside of his class or of the Cause. This excuse of marriage brings to mind an event of world-wide importance which took place in the first family of England, which has a similar aspect to the one with which we are dealing, although it cannot be called a parallel.

In the case of Edward VIII there existed certain disadvantages: the lady was an American; she was divorced; she was not of royal birth. However, in view of prevailing modern conditions, an adjustment could have been made if the Tory element in England had so wished. Yet, the tragic break occurred; the King was deprived of his rights and sent into exile. Why was this? The answer is well known: Edward VIII was too liberal, too progressive, too democratic; the stand-pat dignitaries of the Empire thought him dangerous and longed for his downfall. So, the abdication was consummated and the idol of the nation became *persona non grata*. Thus, the royal house of England lost its most gifted and decorative representative, and the nation, a valuable asset which could not be replaced or supplemented.

Those who have studied the talks and writings of Ruhi Effendi can

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see very clearly that this material could not have been pleasing to the Administration, for it contained an inherent liberality and tolerance which did not fit into a totalitarian pattern. Doubtless, this descendant of Baha-O-Llah caused a good deal of anxiety to the authorities. He seemed to be of the old order of Abdul Baha, which is synonymous with being of the new order of a world society; and he constituted a threat to the system which had chosen to forget the universality in the Cause, which was its heritage, and its destiny. Consequently, reasons for his elimination from the picture had to be worked out; and one of the excuses was his marriage.

Now, I claim that the outworn method of excommunication applies to heresy in religion, having nothing to do with the private life of an individual, and that the Third Reason for the excommunication of Ruhi Effendi is totally invalid.

We have examined in their order the excuses given for the expulsion of Abdul Baha's grandson from the Bahai community; and can accept them as just, reject them as unjust, or pass on to other matters with a sigh of relief, finding the whole subject outside of our line of interests. However that may be, the case of the Guardian of the Bahai Cause against Ruhi Effendi, in which the extreme penalty was exacted on grounds that were not legal, nor logical, nor ethical, nor moral, must stand before history as one more example of the overriding irresponsibility of Fascism as expressed in this abnormal age. Let us however expect that, in the perspective of the future, organized terrorism will appear as but a phase of the great day of transition which will have developed into the day of Universal Democracy—the Day of Baha-O-Llah.

Foad

"But, who is Foad?" This question was asked of me by some Bahais who had noted the name in one of Shoghi Effendi's cables of excommunication. It is included in the Third Reason, as quoted in this chapter.

Foad is the youngest brother of Ruhi Effendi; but he is not merely part of a family that has been placed under *spiritual quarantine*. He is a wrongdoer in his own right. Quote:—*Foad's departure (to) England without my knowledge, should now be made known (to) believers.*

It is questionable whether this action was better or worse than was that of his brother. The latter went to England without the Guardian's approval; the former, without his knowledge. It seems to me that Foad Effendi was wise; he intended to go to England (I surmise, to pursue his

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studies), and, not wishing to run the risk of being forbidden to do so, he simply took French leave. I hope he got what he wanted out of his sojourn in that country and, certainly, I think no less of him for having conducted his private life as he saw fit.

I remember Foad as a baby of a year or so at the time when I left Palestine in 1918. Since then, I have not returned to that country, so the little knowledge I have of him is derived from the writings of the pilgrims. This actually is not knowledge, but rather a few glimpses of a child as seen through the eyes of visitors to Haifa. It appears that he was an independent little personality even at the age of three, and I have heard that he was a delight to his grandfather who found much amusement in his precocious ways.

In *The Light of the World* by William H. Randall, published in 1919, we read a description of *An Afternoon with the Household*. In the above-named chapter, on page 132, Foad makes his appearance as naturally as would any child in any ordinary family:—

At this point little Foad entered the room breathlessly and began speaking very fast and excitedly. It seemed that his pet donkey had a fever and he was asking Abdul Baha to pray for it. Earlier in the afternoon he had given two oranges to Abdul Baha. The Master now gave him one to eat. When he had finished, the other was given to him with the instruction: "Give this to the ladies." He firmly refused, saying the gardener had said that no one but Abdul Baha should eat the oranges, and no amount of persuasion could make him give it to the ladies—but he had already eaten one himself.

In the same book, on page 86, we find the children at the supper-table, in the presence of the ever-loving and indulgent Host:—

At supper, Foad and Riaz, the two three-year old grandchildren of Abdul Baha, were both seated at one end of the table, their faces shining with joy and happiness for this privilege. We learned that before dinner, the Greatest Holy Leaf had told Foad that as he had been there all the day, it were better for him to go home for dinner. He quickly left the room, going direct to Abdul Baha and complained of this. He replied with loving kindness: "Of course, you can stay with me for dinner." Immediately Foad returned triumphant to the rest of the family, saying:—"Now you see, the Master wants me to stay with him."

In an article by Miss Genevieve L. Coy printed in *Star of the West*, October 16, 1921, page 198, we come across the irrepressible Foad offering his services as protector to Abdul Baha:—

In a short time the Master came from around the eastern corner

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of the Tomb, followed by little Foad. The Master was radiantly beautiful. He wore a dove-colored overcoat or wrap, for the wind was cool on the mountainside. Foad was dressed in a stiffly starched white dress, and made a staunch little bodyguard for the Master. (Someone told us that one night Foad went up to the Master after supper and said, "You go to bed now and rest. I will take my gun and lie across the threshold. If any thieves come, I will scare them away!")

These simple anecdotes give a picture of Foad Effendi Afnan as he figured in Abdul Baha's household at the start of his life. Now at the age of twenty-five years, he has been excluded from the one-time happy family circle and from the Bahai community in all parts of the world. He will forever be classed as an enemy of the Cause and be relegated to the limbo of forgotten things, if the Bahais continue to agree that the punishment of excommunication fitted the crime, which was, I blush to remind my readers, that of traveling to England without permission.

Conclusion

The above digression from the account of Ruhi Effendi is not actually such, for his family is an inextricable part of the sad story which I have felt called upon to write. My task is now completed and I leave it for whatever it may be worth, happy in the fact that my tribute is paid and is on record. In this work, I have had no *arrière pensée* of any kind, and especially no expectation that Ruhi Effendi should, at any time, lend his talents to the aspect of Bahai endeavor for which I strive. The world is large; our pathways will probably never cross, but the Light which we follow is the same. It falls on us without distinction and will guide us to the same goal. I trust that his journey will be fruitful in the future as it has been in the past; that his name will continue to shine on the records of the Cause and that he, descendant of the Bab, Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha, will fulfill a glorious destiny as a man, the ramparts of whose spirit are unbreached.

Meanwhile, I must express my very ardent hope that the evaluation of an excommunicated person, as set down by the National Spiritual Assembly (*Baha'i News*, No. 134, March 1940, page 2), will seem as ridiculous to Ruhi Effendi as it does to me. This statement reads:—

... his expulsion or excommunication from the Faith, which can be effected by the Guardian alone, in his capacity as the supreme spiritual head of the community, has far-reaching spiritual implications affecting the very soul of that believer.

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And a little further in the same article:—

But in case he is excluded from the body of the Cause by an act of the Guardian he ceases to be a believer, and cannot possibly identify himself even nominally with the Faith.

I know that Ruhi Effendi is far too intelligent to take such an argument seriously; besides, he has had his instructions long since—instructions from Baha-O-Llah himself. They read:—

Verily God hath made it incumbent upon every soul to deliver His Cause according to his ability. Thus hath the command been recorded by the Finger of Might and Power upon the Tablet of Majesty and Greatness.

—Bahai Scriptures, p. 257

Again:—

Be as the blowing wind of the Merciful to the trees of the created world, and rear them up in the name of thy Lord, the Equitable, the Learned One.

—Bahai Scriptures, p. 189

These teachings cannot be abrogated; they are there to stay, as is the promise:—

Whosoever quickens one soul in this Cause is like unto one who quickeneth all the servants and the Lord shall bring him forth in the Day of Resurrection into the Rizwan of oneness, adorned with the Mantle of Himself.

—Bahai Scriptures, p. 258

And now comes the burden of Abdul Baha's message, delivered on earth. It is his message now, received according to our understanding; and, dare anyone doubt, conveyed at this time to his grandson with peculiar emphasis:—

Abandon silence and seclusion and solitary nooks and go forth into the arena of explanation. Convey the Message of thy Lord with clearest speech and most complete elucidation. This is better for thee than solitude.

—Tablets of Abdul Baha, Vol. III, p. 520

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ABDUL BAHA'S GRANDSON

ABDUL BAHA'S
GRANDSON



RUHI EFFENDI AFNAN
Grandson of Abdul Baha
with Mrs. Keith Ransom-Kehler

ABDUL BAHÁ'S GRANDSON

Story of a Twentieth Century Excommunication

by

MIRZA AHMAD SOHRAB



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BY THE SAME AUTHOR

Heart Phantasies
The New Humanity
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Renaissance
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Living Pictures (Co-author, Julie Chanler)
I Heard Him Say
Silver Sun (Co-author, Julie Chanler)
The Bible of Mankind
Broken Silence

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AUTHOR'S STATEMENT

The subject of this book is an untimely one. It might have been taken up in the Middle Ages by some intrepid hero. Voltaire would have considered it deserving of his pen, had he thought that the religion of his day was worth saving; but in the Twentieth Century, when the rights and dignity of the individual are respected in the society of free nations, this subject can be passed over as not requiring serious attention. Such is the opinion of my friends, while my own sense of humor, fearful of becoming unrecognizable in the cumbersome armor of the knight errant, has wistfully echoed their sentiments.

Nevertheless, there are moments when friends and even sense of humor must make way for passionate indignation. This is such a moment, stark and terrible. It comes as a result of the excommunication by Shoghi Effendi, Guardian of the Bahai Cause, of the descendants of Baha-O-Llah, Prophet of the Modern Age.

In dealing with this subject, I have picked out for discussion one person from among the many involved, and have told the story of Ruhi Effendi Afnan, great grandson of Baha-O-Llah, and grandson of Abdul Baha. Starting with a few incidents connected with his childhood, in the warm setting of Abdul Baha's household in Haifa, I have followed his career to maturity and shown him as the confidential secretary and chosen representative of his cousin, the Guardian. I have sketched his character, studied the trend of his mind and reviewed the services rendered by him to the Bahai Administration during his two visits to the United States. Finally, I have analyzed the reasons given out for his excommunication by the solitary judge in star-chamber proceedings; while throughout the story I have wondered, as I wonder yet, about the future and what it will bring to this man under the guidance of his own soul.

The subject of this book is an untimely one; but, the affectionate re-

gard which has animated the author is timely at all seasons and under all conditions.

The selections from poems by Rabindranath Tagore, appearing before the chapters, are printed with the kind permission of the poet's publisher, The Macmillan Company, 60 Fifth Avenue—the selections being from *Gitanjali*, *Fruit-Gathering*, *Collected Poems and Plays* and *Creative Unity*. This favor is deeply appreciated by the author. A single selection from *Rabindranath Tagore: The Man And His Poetry*, by Basanta Kumar Roy, printed through the courtesy of Dodd, Mead & Company, 432 Fifth Ave. is likewise acknowledged with thanks.

Mirza Ahmad Sohrab

PROTEST
against the Excommunication of
Members of Baha-O-Llah's Family
signed by
Leaders of Religion and Educators

Leopold von Ranke on Martin Luther

Even at the last station, a councillor of his sovereign sent him word that he had better not come, for that he might share the fate of Huss. "Huss," replied Luther, "was burnt, but not the truth with him: I will go, though as many devils took aim at me as there are tiles on the roofs of the houses." Thus he reached Worms, on the 18th of April, 1521, one Tuesday about noon.

—In Leopold von Ranke's *History of the Reformation in Germany*, translated by Sarah Austin, Vol. I, Book II, Chapter IV, p. 533, (Published by Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1845, London)

PROTEST

**against the Excommunication of
Members of Baha-O-Llah's Family**

signed by

Leaders of Religion and Educators

May 1942

In these days when the principles of humanity are threatened on all sides, there is urgent need for men and women of good faith and purpose to band together for the upholding of the common rights of man, within their own communities and religions and within the communities and religions of others.

It is with this thought in mind that the undersigned consider conditions within a minority group, namely the Bahai Cause, and make passionate protest against the recent excommunication by Shoghi Effendi Rabhani, Guardian of the Cause, of certain members of Baha-O-Llah's family.

Excommunication, as we take it, is an order for severance of ties between the excommunicated and their fellow-members in Faith. It is an un-Christ-like act which, although practiced in medieval ages by religious authorities, is now totally condemned by enlightened persons of every rank and profession.

Therefore we go on record, at this hour when the Four Freedoms enunciated by the President of the United States are ringing around the earth, endorsing whole-heartedly and without qualifications whatsoever a sentence from Mr. Roosevelt's historic speech before Congress, delivered in January 1941:—

“The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way—everywhere in the world.”

On the basis of this principle we insist that, in the New World Order which all of us picture and strive for, the irreligious practice of excommunication be set aside forever and replaced by the practice of Love and Tolerance as set forth throughout the ages by Christ and the great company of prophets, seers and spiritual teachers.

We urge men and women of all Faiths to consistently oppose, and to refuse to recognize, any and all exclusion acts within their religion, and under all circumstances to keep open the doors of their temples and hearts to their fellow-believers and to their fellows of every race, creed and color.

ABDUL BAHÁ'S GRANDSON

Signed by:

Mr. David P. Berenberg, Author: *A Worker's World*; Educator, Lecturer

Kedarnath DasGupta, Author: *Essence of Religions* and Founder of World Fellowship of Faiths

Dr. Georgia Dunn, Professor of Psychology, Hunter College, New York

Mr. William Floyd, Editor: *Arbitrator*; Author, Educator

Archbishop William H. Francis of the Old Catholic Church

Miss Frances Grant, President of Pan-American Women Association, New York

Mr. Jacob Greenwald, Counsellor-at-Law, New York

Dr. John Haynes Holmes, Minister of Community Church, New York

Mr. Gordon S. P. Kleeberg, Counsellor-at-Law, New York

Commander R. E. Lambert, U. S. N. R.; Editor: *Sourcebook*

Rev. Leon Rosser Land, Minister of Bronx Free Fellowship, New York

Dr. John Howland Lathrop, Minister of Church of the Saviour, Brooklyn, New York

Mr. William Pickens, Director of Branches, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Washington, D. C.

Dr. Haridas T. Muzumdar, Author: *The United Nations of the World*; Lecturer, Sociologist

Mr. John J. O'Neill, Science Editor, *New York Herald-Tribune*

Rev. A. J. Muste, Secretary, The Fellowship of Reconciliation, New York

The Rev. Dr. Charles Francis Potter, Author: *The Story of Religion*; Founder and Leader of The First Humanist Society of New York

Miss Lisa Sergio, Radio Commentator

Dr. Krishnalal Shridharani, Author: *My India, My America*; Lecturer

Dr. Anup Singh, Editor: *India To-Day*; Author: *Nehru, the Rising Star of India*

Dr. George Maychin Stockdale, Minister of Church of Christ in America, Methodist Branch, Clinton, N. Y.

Dr. Eliot White, Clergyman, Writer, Lecturer

PROTEST

Comment and Some Notable Letters

In the Old World, we were not our brother's keeper; but were of the cautious type, looking for our own interests and letting others shift for themselves. In the New World that is to be, we shall recognize the fact that all of us are part of the human organism and will boldly apply ourselves to the task of keeping that organism in good shape. The averted eyes, the careful picking of one's way on the other side of the road will no longer be the acceptable attitude; but the straight look and the helping hand will be the characteristic of a new citizenry, *everywhere in the world*.

Of such an order are the distinguished educators who have condemned the action of Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, Guardian of the Bahai Cause, taken against several members of Baha-O-Llah's family. Excommunication, to their minds, has no place in modern society; intolerance, exclusion and cruelty has no place in any society, and so they have condemned this deed and gone on record in a *Protest* that will make a landmark in religious history. The Protestant Minister, the Catholic Bishop, the Jewish Rabbi, the Hindu, the Sikh have arisen together to protect the Bahai—their brother before God and man. So have the boundary lines grown thin under the penetrating warmth of the Religion of Love.

Dr. George Maychin Stockdale, Minister of Church of Christ in America, Methodist Branch, Clinton, New York, in a letter dated March 25, 1942 writes to us that their Young Men's Class studied Bahaism the previous week and is to consider Shoghi Effendi's excommunications the following Sunday. Dr. Stockdale states that he is ready to do anything "to help banish this ancient barbarism of excommunication from off this earth" and has actually communicated directly with the Guardian on this subject. He encloses a copy of his letter, which we herewith reproduce:—

CHURCH OF CHRIST IN AMERICA

Methodist Branch

George Maychin Stockdale, Minister

Clinton, New York,
March 25, 1942.

Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, Guardian of the Bahai Cause,
Persian Colony,
Haifa, Palestine.
Dear Guardian of the Bahai Cause,

Your Christlike Grandfather, Abdul Baha, when asked on one occasion, "What is a Bahai?" replied,

ABDUL BAHÁ'S GRANDSON

"TO BE A BAHAI SIMPLY MEANS TO LOVE ALL THE WORLD: TO LOVE HUMANITY AND TRY TO SERVE IT; TO WORK FOR UNIVERSAL PEACE AND UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD."

(J. E. Esslemont, "Bahá'U'lláh and the New Era," page 70.)

I'd like to make the above my own definition of what it is to be a Christian. On this definition the Hindu Gandhi and the Buddhist Das Gupta are both Christians and Bahais, as well as true Hindus and Buddhists respectively. Some of my Bahai friends do me more honor than I deserve by telling me that I am a Bahai, although I am just trying to be a Christian.

If we agree on the above, and I hope we do, it is the more amazing to get word of what are called, and seem to be, your excommunications of Ruhi Effendi Afnan, your cousin; his wife; your sister and *others*.

What troubles me, my dear Sir, is the method employed. If we love all humans, and the Love of God cannot dwell in us unless we do, how can we use any other than Love and Persuasion as our means of seeking change of mind and heart in those we deem wrong? Can excommunication be a method of Love?

Now far be it from us to prematurely make up our minds in this controversy. We would hear your side, Sir. Yet we assure you that even if you should submit proof positive of the commission of the more heinous crimes by any or all of the excommunicated, (which I am sure you wouldn't,) still would we say that the WAY of LOVE demands we retain community with the vilest of sinners. **THEY NEED LOVE EVEN MORE THAN NINETY and NINE SPIRITUALLY TRANSFORMED SOULS, in whom GOD (LOVE) DWELLS.** That seems clear to me from both the teachings of Christ and of Bahá'U'lláh, interpreted too by Paul and Abdul Baha respectively.

It troubles me too that it is reported that you are not too sure amid this world madness just what loyalty we owe to God and what to the state. We are blessed beyond many here in America, as in Britain, in that the Draft Law here specifically makes room for us pacifists, who could not disobey God at the command of man, no matter what the consequences. We know you have the cares of a world gone mad in suicidal slaughter on your mind and heart. Yet it would be heartening to have from you a word, clear as crystal, that Bahaism officially "although making no attempt to bind the consciences of its individual members, will **NOT OFFICIALLY ENDORSE, SUPPORT OR PARTICIPATE IN WAR.**" I have slipped into the exact words of our Methodist Branch of the Christian Church, with which I agree one hundred per cent.

Yours, strong in the Faith that LOVE (GOD) alone can win,

(Signed) George Maychin Stockdale

PROTEST

The author of this book was very much impressed by Dr. Stockdale's stand. Of course, one expects all liberal-minded men, in the ministry and outside of it, to look with stern disapproval on the sacrilegious performance of this excommunication; yet, when one of them, of his own volition, comes forward to reassert the principles of a Faith of which he is not part, it is an act of generosity which one could not anticipate nor even hope for.

A copy of Dr. Stockdale's letter to the Guardian was forwarded to Dr. John Haynes Holmes and an answer, a section of which is quoted below, was received from him:—

I have your letter of the 26th with enclosures. You will be interested to know that Mr. Stockdale, of Clinton, N. Y., is one of my oldest and dearest friends in the ministry. This letter of his to Shoghi Effendi Rabbani is supremely characteristic of his mind and heart. I know of no nobler or braver spirit in the Christian ministry here in America today, and it comforts me to discover that he is in touch with you and Mrs. Chanler.

In rather shocking contrast to my friend, Mr. Stockdale, I find myself moved to a feeling of regret and shame that I have known nothing about this excommunication business. I make it a practice to read your NEW HISTORY magazine, of course, but the March issue has not yet had my attention. Now that I have the case before me, I am grieved to the bottom of my soul by what you fittingly describe as a piece of medievalism. It seems to me well-nigh incredible that the head of the Bahai faith would have taken such a step as this. Mr. Stockdale describes the significance of the event with precision and exalted vision, and I can think of nothing to be added thereto. I say Amen to every word with all my heart and soul.

In another letter, written three days later, Dr. Holmes refers to his visit to Haifa. He says in part:—

Ever since you wrote me, my mind has been going back to the day in Haifa when I made a call on Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, to pay my profound respects through him to the Bahai faith. It was at the time when I was making my pilgrimage to the sepulchres of Abdul Baha and the other prophets and saints. I remember my astonishment when I was taken into the reception room, placed in the corner farthest removed from the door, instructed that I must rise when Shoghi Effendi entered, and must under no circumstances approach his person. I was hardly used to that sort of thing, and it gave me a kind of a chill which spoiled the interview. I had previously met Abdul Baha on the occasion of his visit to this country, had sat close to him, taken his hand, and conversed with him in most informal and friendly fashion. And here in Haifa I had to keep my distance, as though I

ABDUL BAHÁ'S GRANDSON

were in the presence of some king or pope. I didn't like it, and the memory of it as a kind of offense has lingered with me ever since. I assume that you have met with Shoghi Effendi, and I wonder if you were put through any such performance as this.

Archbishop William H. Francis, of the Old Catholic Church, writes on April 16th.

I most cheerfully subscribe my name to the protest against the excommunication of the members of Abdul Baha's family and others by Shoghi Effendi. It seems incredible that such steps should have been taken. What is this world coming to? Bombs on civilizations and excommunications on religious folks. I wonder if they will be taking a leaf from the diary of Torquemada—he of the inquisition—next?

A letter, dated April 19th, comes from Mr. David P. Berenberg, poet, writer and educator.

As you know, coercion and regimentation of any sort are detestable to me. I am happy, therefore, to add my name to the list of those who, like Dr. Holmes, are protesting against the excommunication of some of the members of Baha-O-Llah's family. I wish you all success in your effort to nullify this act.

Letter from Dr. Stephen S. Wise, Rabbi of the Free Synagogue, New York; President of the Jewish Institute of Religion and the American Jewish Congress, dated April 22, 1942.

I have been thinking much about the matter which has been brought to my attention by the Heads of The New History Society. I am shocked as The New History Society is shocked to think, of the issuance of a proclamation of excommunication against members of the family of the founder of the movement, and that for what you say are totally negligible reasons.

Excommunication is self-condemnation. One excommunicates only those of whom one is fearful, with whom one knows one cannot argue through a cause. It is about time that excommunication as a method of suppression and exclusion cease to be used.

As for excommunicating the members of the family of the founder of the movement, that is an act which is irreligion at its worst. I wish I could bring my thought to the attention of the guardian of the Bahai cause.

I am, with cordial greeting, my dear Sohrab,

Faithfully yours,

(Signed) Stephen S. Wise

The Rev. Dr. William Norman Guthrie, author of many books, lover of the arts and advanced thinker in the Church became Rector of historic

PROTEST

St. Mark's-In-The-Bouwerie in 1911. Here, among the many proofs of his liberalism was the fact that he opened wide his door to the Bahais, to the point that this edifice actually became the second home of the Cause.

Mr. Mountfort Mills and Mr. Horace Holley, distinguished exponents of the Bahai Administration, became Vestrymen; office facilities were provided in the parish house for the activities of the movement; countless meetings were arranged, and a long list of Bahai speakers, including Ruhi Efendi Afnan, gave their messages under the hospitable roof of St. Mark's.

In a Tablet from Abdul Baha to Miss Juliet Thompson, published in *Star of the West*, June 24, 1919, we find these words:—

"Convey my greetings to Dr. Guthrie and Mr. Ledoux. From the bounties of God I ask that these two souls may be the cause of the promulgation of divine teachings, may proclaim the oneness of the world of humanity, may spread the cause of universal peace . . ."

It is certain that all who cherish the ideals of Baha-O-Llah owe a debt of eternal gratitude to Dr. Guthrie.

The following letter from Stamford, Conn., dated May 18, 1942, shows that Dr. Guthrie's love of liberty in religion is as keen and vibrant today as it was during his colorful years of service in New York:—

A word of thanks and congratulation are overdue. It took me exactly one month to peruse carefully the book and four pamphlets you sent me. The suit you have won is on behalf of spiritual liberty. May it stay won. But I fear you cannot save those who are mad with an official self-deification, or those who are greedy for tyranny, to exercise or endure. It would seem as tho' the spirit of Hitler had taken possession of the Guardian of the Cause, to cover in this fashion what he should have protected, with mortal ridicule by "Ex-communication!"

I know you want me to express myself. Mrs. Chanler and you can find my considered views in the paragraph quoted (pp. 221-2 "Broken Silence") spoken by Dr. Butler, my former teacher; and more explicitly in the paragraphs (pp. 163-165 "Broken Silence") written in 1925 by Dr. Alfred W. Martin, the very year I shared a trip to Beth-Shean near the Jordan with the most delightful Ruhi . . .

**(Signed) William Norman Guthrie,
Retired Rector of St. Mark's-In-The Bouwerie,
New York, N. Y.**

Manly P. Hall, lecturer, author and teacher writes from Los Angeles, California on July 16, 1942:—

This tardy reply to your letter of May 11 does not reflect my interest in the problems which confront you. In spite of my delay in

ABDUL BAHA'S GRANDSON

answering, I feel very sincerely the unhappy condition which is set forth in your book, "Broken Silence," which I have just finished reading, and for copy of which I thank you.

As you may imagine, the matter of excommunication is revolting to the sensibilities of any deep and sincere student. Our comfort is that while men may exercise these divine prerogatives according to the fallacies of their own judgements, the Gods of high decision are untouched and unmoved by the smallness in human nature. It were better for man to be excommunicated an hundred times by the priestly hierarchies of the earth than to be condemned once by the voice of his own spirit.

My kindest thoughts await you and your co-workers.

Very sincerely,

(Signed) Manly P. Hall

Chapter I
RUHI EFFENDI AFNAN

*For every throb of their pain has pulsed in the secret
depth of thy night, and every insult has been gathered
into thy great silence.*

—Rabindranath Tagore

Fruit-Gathering, Stanza LXXXVI

Chapter I

RUHI EFFENDI AFNAN

A Nosegay of Cablegrams

A calamity of vast proportions has befallen the Bahai world; so far-reaching in its implications and tragic in its significance, that the student of the Cause is left speechless and breathless. In some instances his faith is actually threatened. Indeed, the magnitude of this event dwarfs all other considerations at this critical hour of Bahai history.

The news of the calamity is contained in a series of cablegrams coming from Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Bahai Cause, and addressed to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada. It is published on the front pages of the December 1941 and January 1942 issues of *Bahai News*.

These cablegrams announce to the American believers the excommunication of the major part of Abdul Baha's family; namely: Ruhi Effendi Afnan; his wife, Zahra Khanum Shahid; his sister, Soraya Khanum Afnan and his brother, Foad Effendi Afnan—all grandchildren of Abdul Baha. The reasons given are as follows: Ruhi Afnan incurred the Guardians dis-
Afnan; his wife, Zahra Khanum Shahid; his sister, Saraya Khanum Afnan his second visit to America in 1935 was made without the consent of the Guardian. Soraya Khanum, sister of Ruhi Effendi, married so-called *Covenant-breaker* Feyzi Effendi Afnan, son of Aga Sayyed Ali Afnan and of Furighyyeh Khanum, a daughter of Baha-O-Llah. Foad Effendi Afnan, brother of Ruhi Effendi, made a trip to England without informing the Guardian.

Touba Khanum, second daughter of Abdul Baha and mother of Ruhi, Soraya and Foad, is apparently included in the excommunication; for in the first cablegram, we find these words:—*Ruhi's family concurred. Inform all believers (that) all manner of communication (with) excommunicated family (is) forbidden.* Likewise, Rouha Khanum, third daughter of Abdul Baha and mother of Zahra, is likewise implicated; for, if she has stood by the side of her daughter and continues to do so, the ban falls on her also.

These drastic steps, taken against the families of two of Abdul Baha's daughters, did not conclude this dark entry in the current annals of the Cause; for the nosegay of cablegrams contains a further pronouncement,

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applying to the excommunication of Shoghi Effendi's own sister, Mehr-Angiz Khanum. This latter message, which was sent on January 1st, constitutes a strange greeting for a New Year's morn. Was the date a circumstance, pure and simple, or was it perhaps the Guardian's conception of a blessing to his flock at the birth of another year? We have heard of a Roman Holiday. This was a Bahai Holiday indeed!

The cablegram states that Mehr-Angiz Khanum has *followed the example of Ruhi's sister*. Now, we know that Ruhi Effendi's sister, Soraya, married without the Guardian's consent; therefore, it seems likely that Mehr-Angiz has done the same thing. Possibly, she also married one of her cousins.

Inter-Family Alliances

Such inter-family marriages are rather startling to the Occidental mind, but in the Islamic world they are customary; and it is not on this ground that the Guardian has made objection. Moreover, in the instance of Abdul Baha's family, the explanation is easy to find. These children grew up without the intimacy which is usual in the West, among cousins living in the same locality. The girls led a retired life, and when they did see boys of their own age, these boys were necessarily cousins—there was no one else. Furthermore, Shoghi Effendi did not approve of foreigners, as husbands to the members of his family; he also did not approve of prospective husbands who were not Bahais or who had lately become Bahais. These restrictions set his cousins completely apart from other young people, so it is not surprising that they fell in love among themselves.

Another marriage in the family, which took place some time ago, was that of Ruh-Angiz, the older of the Guardian's two sisters. This young girl married Nayyar Effendi Afnan, grandson of Baha-O-Llah, and brother of Feyzi Effendi Afnan whose marriage to Ruhi Effendi's sister, Soraya Khanum, has just brought this latter into disgrace. Although this marriage of his sister was very displeasing to Shoghi Effendi, the couple remained in the Near East, no official act of expulsion having been taken in their regard, as far as I know. *Their existence must be precarious; but, Ruh-Angiz has received lenient treatment in comparison with her cousin Soraya, for it will be noted that both of them married sons of Baha-O-Llah's daughter, Furighyyeh Khanum, whom Shoghi Effendi posthumously brands as an enemy.*

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In order to untangle this maze of relationship and gain a clearer picture of Abdul Baha's direct descendants, it would be well to study the following chart. It is based on my own knowledge and is corroborated by an article entitled *Members of the Holy Family* which appeared in *Baha'i News*, June 1927. I also have consulted a chart of the geneology of Baha-O-Llah, drawn up by Shoghi Effendi, which was published in *The Bahai World*, Vol. V, 1932-1934, p. 205; likewise *Daily Lessons*, by Helen S. Goodall and E. G. Cooper, published in 1908, which booklet contains a description of Abdul Baha's family under the chapter heading: *The Households* (pages 10-14).

Family Chart

Abdul Baha's four Daughters and their Children

1. Ziayyeh Khanum, wife of Mirza Hadi Afnan.

Children from this marriage:

- (1) Shoghi Effendi Rabbani
- (2) Ruh-Angiz Khanum
- (3) Mehr-Angiz Khanum
- (4) Hussain Effendi Rabbani
- (5) Riaz Effendi Rabbani

2. Touba Khanum, wife of the late Mirza Mohsen Afnan.

Children from this marriage:

- (1) Ruhi Effendi Afnan
- (2) Soraya Khanum
- (3) Sobeil Effendi Afnan
- (4) Foad Effendi Afnan

3. Rouha Khanum, wife of Mirza Jalal Effendi Shahid, son of the *King of the Martyrs* of Esphahan.

Children from this marriage:

- (1) Maryam Khanum Shahid
- (2) Dr. Munib Effendi Shahid
- (3) Zahra Khanum Shahid
- (4) Hassan Effendi Shahid

4. Monavvar Khanum, wife of Ahmad Effendi Yazdi.
No issue.

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Collateral

Furighyyeh Khanum, daughter of Baha-O-Llah and wife of **Aga Sayyed Ali Afnan**.

Children from this marriage:

- (1) The late **Hussain Effendi Afnan**
- (2) **Nayyar Effendi Afnan**
- (3) **Feyzi Effendi Afnan**
- (4) **Hassan Effendi Afnan**

Those who have lately been swept out of the Cause at the order of the Guardian are:—

Direct Excommunications

1. **Ruhi Effendi Afnan**: Grandson of Abdul Baha.
2. **Zahra Khanum**: Grand-daughter of Abdul Baha and wife of **Ruhi Effendi Afnan**.
3. **Soraya Khanum**: Grand-daughter of Abdul Baha and wife of **Feyzi Effendi Afnan**.
4. **Foad Effendi Afnan**: Grandson of Abdul Baha.
5. **Mehr-Angiz**: Grand-daughter of Abdul Baha and sister of **Shoghi Effendi**.
6. **Feyzi Effendi Afnan**: Grandson of Baha-O-Llah.

Indirect Excommunications

7. **Touba Khanum**: Second daughter of Abdul Baha.
8. **Rouha Khanum**: Third daughter of Abdul Baha.
9. **Mirza Jalal Shahid**: Son of the King of the Martyrs and husband of **Rouha Khanum**.

Posthumous Excommunications

10. **Furighyyeh Khanum**: Daughter of Baha-O-Llah.
11. **Aga Sayyed Ali Afnan**: Husband of **Furighyyeh Khanum**.

This Year of Disgrace

The law of excommunication puts an absolute ban on those who are expelled from the Faith. The families of these persons and their fellow-believers must leave the ostracized individuals alone. They must neither communicate nor associate with them. They must break all ties of friendship and of humanity even; for, if they deviate one hair's breath from this law, they themselves fall into the same ditch.

Thus as time goes on, the number of the excommunicated increases;

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for a few are generally to be found, here and there, who are willing to risk ease and safety in order to follow their generous impulses. Such evidently was the case in the instance of Toubah Khanum; it probably is the case in the instance of Rouha Khanum. However, in the instance of Ziayyeh Khanum, the Guardian cables that his *parents strongly condemn Mehr-Angiz's action*. Thus, Shoghi Effendi's father and mother have been forced to publicly denounce and repudiate their own daughter. Hereafter, they must be as strangers to her. They can never approach her in her hours of trouble or illness. They will never hold their grandchildren in their arms.

Such is the Bahai Cause in this year of disgrace—1942.

A Fact Beyond Realization

I intend to take up the matter, treating it in connection with historical data and in the light of reason; and, in order to simplify the subject as far as possible, I will center my thoughts around the personality of Ruhi Effendi Afnan. His excommunication and the reasons given for it tell the story of all the rest.

Ruhi Effendi Afnan has twice visited the United States; he has lectured before numerous Bahai gatherings and outside groups; his articles on the Bahai Cause are published in Bahai publications and the records of his loyal services to the Guardian and the Bahai organization are spread on the pages of *Baha'i News*. Knowing full well that he has not deserved the treatment accorded him at the hands of his cousin, Shoghi Effendi, I am taking it upon myself to vindicate him, as far as I am able.

Having experienced excommunication together with the ostracism of all those who are associated with me, I naturally sympathize with other excommunicated persons. However, this is not the reason that impels me to raise a voice of protest at this juncture.

During eight years, I was fed, clothed and educated by Abdul Baha. Throughout that time, the Master's daughters were most gracious to me and I carry in my memory lively tokens of their kindness. I associated most intimately with their children, and vividly remember the ardent respect of these young ones for their grandfather, and their devotion to him. I hold each and all of them in high regard.

I never objected to my own excommunication, nor did I take it at all seriously; but the excommunication of the very family of Abdul Baha has shaken my being to its foundations. I am amazed and indignant. I am outraged and horror-stricken. The fact that Shoghi Effendi has dared to expel from his own household these souls, in whose bodies run the blood

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and life of Abdul Baha, is beyond realization. The reasons given for their excommunication are childish to the extreme, having nothing to do with their faith and love for the Bahai Cause.

In the writing of this book, I have not had the opportunity of consulting with any of the members of Abdul Baha's family. It is certain that none of them would consult with me. Thus, I have asked permission of no one, and am alone responsible for every word appearing here. My own conscience is my sole guide.

Another reason for my taking up the pen in this regard is that a number of Bahais have written to me on this subject. To put it very mildly, they are disillusioned, shocked and confused. They cannot square the actions of the Guardian with his role in life. They are wondering what precipice is around the corner; toward what swamp of despair the Bahai Cause is being driven. They are anxiously asking if there may possibly be a modern rational explanation for these medieval and irrational procedures.

We will therefore face the issue and, as a first step, will examine the Bulls of Excommunication as presented in the up-to-date guise of the cablegram.

Text of Cablegrams

(Cablegram received November 10, 1941)

Ruhi's sister married covenant-breaker Feyzi, whose mother joined and supported arch-enemy Muhammad Ali and whose father 'Abdu'l-Baha denounced openly and repeatedly as His deadly enemy. Ruhi's family concurred. Inform all believers (that) all manner (of) communication (with) excommunicated family (is) forbidden.

(Signed) Shoghi Rabbani.

(Cablegram received November 10, 1941)

(The) flagrant disloyalty (of) Ruhi's family compels me (to) disclose information so long (and) patiently withheld (from) American believers concerning his failure (to) obtain my approval (of) his second visit (to) America. His subsequent conduct regarding his marriage which I refrained from revealing (to) anyone except your Assembly, as well as Foad's departure (to) England without my knowledge, should now be made known (to) believers. Confident (of) unshakable steadfastness (of) exemplary American Baha'i Community.

(Signed) Shoghi Rabbani

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Answer sent on November 17th by the National Spiritual Assembly:—

Informing friends (of your) message (about) Ruhi's family.
Assure complete obedience protection unity (of) sacred Faith.

(Cablegram received on November 21, 1941)

My confidence (in) immovable steadfastness (and) unstinted loyalty (of) American believers (is) reinforced.

(Signed) Shoghi Rabbani.

—*Baha'i News*, December, 1941, No 149, pp. 1-2

The Spiritual Quarantine

In the following article published in *Baha'i News* under the above heading, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada responds to the call in all energy and enthusiasm.

Warnings have come to the American Bahai's from the Master and the Guardian in turn, at odd intervals over a long period of years, to avoid association with Covenant-breakers. Our latest instruction about this very grave matter comes by cablegram, a copy of which appears in this issue and names Ruhi Afnan and his family as now to be included in the list of bad eminence—persons, for the protection of the Cause, to be avoided.

That a scion of the Holy Family and a close relative of the Guardian should fall into such error and loss cannot be surprising to those aware of some happenings in past cycles. Those records, however fragmentary, afford ample proof that the real bond between the Holy Manifestations, their appointed successors and those whom they guide and teach, is spiritual rather than one after the flesh.

It is recorded that God had no respect for Cain, one of the sons of Adam. A son of Noah likewise became apostate. The brethren of Joseph, the Beloved of God, sold that Holy One into exile and slavery. Aaron, the brother of Moses, misled by his wife, joined her in murmuring against his Lord whom he had long so faithfully served. Both were grievously punished and Aaron was forgiven and restored only after his repentent plea for mercy.

Perhaps few persons recall that Jesus Christ had four brothers after the flesh. Their brief mention in the Gospels implies that they were quite unaware of the station of their illustrious kinsman; while strangers attracted by the power of His Word, attained high rank in the spread of Christianity. Subh-i-Azal, half-brother of Baha'u'llah, became the Evil Tree and center of death in opposing the Tree of Life. Mirza Musa, another brother, was loyal.

Christ prophesied:

"Many shall come from the North and the South, the East and the West and shall sit down in the Kingdom of God with Abraham,

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Isaac and Jacob, while the children of the Kingdom shall be in darkness."

This prophecy was directly fulfilled in the lives of Mohammed Ali and Badi'Ullah, the two sons of Baha'u'llah who became the fallen branches, influenced by pride and greed and opposing 'Abdu'l Baha. High in birth, they were abased to the lowest depths.

And now our Guardian utters the word which means the spiritual quarantine of the excommunicated family of Rubi Afnan. The Guardian has been extremely patient and long-suffering. In making this special requirement he but fulfills his sacred duty of Guardian to all the friends. He counts upon our discernment and loyalty. We on our part know that our faith in the Cause of God, divinely aided and confirmed, is far too precious a pearl for us to imperil by our disobedience to such commands. Not only is the Guardian's right to direct us revealed by the highest authority, but for fully a score of years, with supreme wisdom, ardent devotion, proficient services and high courage, he has guided the ship of the Cause through troublous seas to the havens of victory after victory. Unitedly, heartily, devotedly, reverentially, we hear and heed his behest.

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

—*Baha'i News*, December, 1941, No. 149, pp. 23

A Rare Morsel

One would think that these highly seasoned dishes would have been enough to offer up to the Bahai community at a single sitting; but, no! Before the gruesome meal is even half digested, Shoghi Effendi comes forward with a morsel fit for the most jaded of palates, and lays before his followers the fair body and soul of his younger sister, his one-time favorite.

(Cablegram received on January 1, 1942)

Faithless sister Mehrangiz (has) followed (the) example (of) Rubi's sister. All ties (have been) severed. No consideration (of) family relationships can ever be allowed (to) interfere (with the) dictates (of) justice or (to) supersede supreme fidelity (to) Center (of) Baha'u'llah's Covenant. Inform believers.

(Signed) Shoghi Rabbani

(Cablegram received on January 3rd)

Parents strongly condemn Mehrangiz's action.

(Signed) Shoghi Rabbani

After presenting the above cablegrams in his columns, the Editor of *Baha'i News* continues:

In publishing these two messages from the Guardian, the National

RUHI EFFENDI AFNAN

Assembly reminds the friends of the statement on "The Spiritual Quarantine" prepared for the December, 1941 issue of *Bahá'í News* in connection with the Guardian's two previous cablegrams reporting Covenant-breakers within the family . . .

The final cablegram to share with the friends came January 8th:—

Comforted (and) fortified (by) fervent messages testifying (to) solidity (of) bonds (of) spiritual kinship uniting me (with) true upholders (of the) Covenant. (I) prize their loyalty, glory (in) their achievements, hail their resolve, invoke still greater blessings (upon) their superb exertions.

(Signed) Shoghi Rabbani

—*Bahá'í News*, January, 1942, No. 150, p. 1

These amazing cablegrams sent by Shoghi Effendi across the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean, and the article by the National Spiritual Assembly on *The Spiritual Quarantine* breathe the essence of fanaticism, bigotry, and mental and spiritual aberration. They are not only out of place with the World of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha, but are contrary to the forward trend of this 20th century, as far as civilized countries are concerned. Indeed, they are contrary to the forward trend that was felt in all past centuries for, even in the darkest periods, there have existed wise and humane personalities which influenced their times in various effective ways. In the course of my writing, I shall again refer to the contents of these documents and try to analyze the spirit and the motives that are back of them; but, now let us return to Ruhi Effendi Afnan.

Early Training

Ruhi Afnan was a child of thirteen years when I first met him in Port Said, Egypt, in 1913. Since then, I have followed his career with interest. I have watched him as grandson to Abdul Baha, an earnest, obedient child, possessed of rapt adoration for his grandfather. I have watched him as an eager youth on Mount Carmel, as a brilliant student at the University of Beirut, as a teacher and lecturer in the United States and as the hard-working and faithful representative of Shoghi Effendi.

When I was in the service of Abdul Baha, I kept a diary in which I wrote down his talks, both formal and informal, his actions and the impression made on the people who came in contact with him. This record of past events is a treasury of historical data, and I can now return to it in reference to Ruhi Afnan.

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During the months of July and August 1913, Abdul Baha, having completed his journey through the United States, Canada and Europe, lived for a while in Port Said and Ramleh, Egypt. I was then acting as secretary to him and now, after the lapse of twenty-nine years, I find the following entries in my diary. To me, they are of interest and value, because they give a spontaneous picture of Ruhi Effendi as he appeared at that time to a fellow-believer and a fellow-Persian.

Port Said, Egypt, July 22, 1913

About six o'clock we left our apartment in search of news. The headquarters of all news is Ahmad Yazdi's store. We found there to our surprise and delight Haji Sayad Javad and Ruhi Effendi, just arrived from Haifa at the bidding of the Master. The former is an old Bahá of the time of Baha-O-Llah with an interesting history as background; the latter is the grandson of Abdul Baha. He is about 13 years old, the son of Mirza Mohsen Afnan. He is a quiet, lovely boy. I liked him at first sight. He outhreats the spirit of devotion and beauty, and no doubt some day will be a power in the Cause.

Port Said, Egypt, July 23, 1913

This morning Haji Sayad Javad and Ruhi Effendi came to call on us and we welcomed them with Bahai cordiality.

Port Said, Egypt, July 24, 1913

This morning the believers of Port Said, including myself, went to the station to bid farewell to Haji Sayad Javad, Ruhi Effendi and Mrs. Getsinger, who are leaving for Ramleh to be honored with the blessing of the Master's presence.

Ramleh, Egypt, August 2, 1913

Ruhi Effendi and his mother left today for Haifa. He is about 13 years old. He has captivated my heart and I have surrendered. What a sweet soul he is! I love him, oh, ever so much! He is so polite, so gentle, so humble, so beautiful, so pure, so noble! What a wonderful person he will become when he has grown to manhood! Watch him! Some day he will become a great power in the Cause.

From Ramleh, the Master journeyed to Haifa and I find the following note in the last week of December.

Haifa, Palestine, December 26, 1913

At noon we enjoyed a nice lunch at which were present Mirza Jalal, Shoghi Effendi and Ruhi Effendi.

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From 1914 to 1918, I observed Ruhi Effendi as he grew in physical and mental stature. His devotion to Abdul Baha was proverbial and the Master, in turn, bestowed upon him the graces of his wisdom and spirit. During eight or nine months of the year, he attended the University of Beirut in company with other Persian students, while the summer months were spent with his family on Mount Carmel. It was in the course of the holiday seasons that I was in a position to note the increase of his understanding; for, he literally basked in the presence of the Master, losing no opportunity to gain further grip on the teachings and principles of the Cause.

Later, at the suggestion of Abdul Baha, I myself entered the University of Beirut, taking a number of extra-curricular courses on *International Law*, *Education* and *History*. Here, I met Ruhi Effendi almost daily on the Campus and in the Library, at play and at work, and noticed his industry and good humor, displayed in the various departments of college life. Here, I saw him on Sunday mornings in a dormitory room where the Persian students gathered to pray, to chant and to take part in talks and discussions, which were delivered with all the fervor and enthusiasm of youth looking upon the world through the marvelous eyes of Abdul Baha. Those were happy days, usefully spent; while Ruhi Effendi played his little part in making them more profitable and more cheerful for all of us.

The record of services rendered the Cause by Ruhi Afnan, after the departure from this life of Abdul Baha, proves that I had not been wrong in my early estimation of his character and ability. Therefore, I will review this record and spread it before the eyes of the Bahai world. Perchance those eyes may see the truth, and the souls back of them may act according to that justice which is so repeatedly eulogized by Baha-O-Llah in his sacred writings.

Actually, no other grandson of Abdul Baha has displayed equal talents, equal energy or equal power of teaching and explanation as has Ruhi Effendi. In fact, he is the only descendant of the Master who was sent to this country to represent the Cause. And, how well he fulfilled his mission! From coast to coast, the Bahais remember and cherish his name. It was a memorable experience for them to meet and know a member of Abdul Baha's family; while, at the same time, to meet and know an illumined teacher, a noble character and an unusually charming personality was, in itself, a privilege. Besides, what a champion of the Guardian he was! How he used his influence to uphold the National Spiritual Assembly and the system that it embodies! This influence was quite penetrating, as I know

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to my cost, for several of the intimate and valued members of The New History Society left us at his bidding.

The End of the Road?

Now, in full maturity at the age of forty-two, this promising career has been cut short. The accumulated knowledge that was his, the experience that he had gained, as well as the natural advantages that came to him through his holy lineage, have been cast overboard and wasted. His name is anathema; communication with him forbidden, and oblivion offered as his sole refuge. Ruhi Effendi, his wife and baby, grandson, grand-daughter and great grandchild of Abdul Baha, have been stigmatized and despoiled of their heritage by another grandson of Abdul Baha. What a mockery! What an excruciating travesty of religion! Does Shoghi Effendi really think that the Cause is his plaything, to be kicked about at random and rolled into the muddy stream of the gutter? Is the Will, of which he talks so much, simply a mandate of personal property? And are we children too, that we should stand spell-bound before the antics of a fretful child?

As to the members of the National Spiritual Assembly: Is this procedure in accordance with their idea of the Cause which came to unify and to bless? Has this body no conscience, no respect for the descendants of the Master, that it so willingly and with such alacrity, joins in the chase and presses in on the kill?

Now, regarding the few that are left in the family and the Bahais at large: Do they think that this is the end—the closing chapter of an impious book? Why should it be so? The Guardian has had a taste of very pungent blood. After it, the common kind will seem flat. The circle can yet be drawn in. Shoghi Effendi is on the watch, waiting for the slightest slip; and a slip will come, sooner or later. Maybe, the next victim will be one of his brothers; maybe, his father or mother; maybe, his American wife, the former Mary Maxwell of Montreal, Canada, and New York City. No one, absolutely no one is safe. Then (to let loose our fancy for a moment), when the circle has narrowed to a point, the Guardian, in search of yet another thrill or perhaps as an act of contrition, may take it into his head to excommunicate himself. Well! Perhaps this would solve the whole Bahai problem.

Returning to Ruhi Effendi: I, personally, believe that this cruel blow will not terminate his career of service to the Cause; and I venture to predict that he will not allow himself and his family to be engulfed by the opaque waves of obliteration. His great grandfather, Baha-O-Llah, surmounted

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the formidable barricades raised before him by the Imperial Houses of Iran and Turkey. His grandfather, Abdul Baha, overstrode the pitfalls laid in his path by power and circumstance, and raised the banner of the Cause in the proud capitals of Europe and America. Ruhi Effendi is of their race; his son is of their race. They belong to the Cause, and the Cause belongs to them. They need the Cause, and the Cause needs them; and no voice, however thunderous, and no document, however embossed, stamped and sealed can take it away from them.

It is an axiomatic fact that inborn, inherent spiritual talents can never be completely stifled or nullified by an outside will. A blind man may insist that it is midnight at noon, but the seeing eye beholds the sun standing in the azure sky. I believe that Ruhi Effendi, in spite of his natural modesty, realizes that certain valuable, inborn, inherent spiritual talents have been planted in his nature by the hand of the Almighty, and I have faith that the conscience that is in him will not permit these assets, together with the training that he received at the hands of the Master, to become a total loss to the Cause.

In the course of the years, Ruhi Effendi has consistently demonstrated his capacity, and the record of his services stands clear in the publications put out by the National Spiritual Assembly. I, therefore, intend to refresh the memory of the Bahai world by reprinting a portion of these records in the chapters that are to follow.

Chapter II
MOUNT CARMEL

The myriads of human beings that inhabit the globe of ours enter my heart and find unspeakable joy in each other's company. There lovers enter and look at each other, and children stand and laugh in merriment . . . My heart is full to the brim with transcendent joy, and I find the world without a single human soul in it. It is all empty.

Oh, I know. How can it be otherwise when all have entered my heart?

—Rabindranath Tagore
The Man and his Poetry by
Basanta Koomar Roy, p. 153

Chapter II

MOUNT CARMEL

Away from the Ever-Rumoring World

Nearly twenty-five years ago, a little Persian girl, living at the foot of Mt. Carmel, transposed into English words her impressions of that mountain ridge which had dominated her outlook since birth. Now, it is with deep regard for that little girl and for the woman that she has become that I reproduce, *verbatim*, an article on *The Physical and Spiritual Beauty of Mt. Carmel*, written on June 30, 1917 by Mehr-Angiz Khanum who has lately come into prominence through the cablegrams sent to this country by her brother Shoghi Effendi, Guardian of the Bahai Cause:—

On the eastern coast of Mediterranean Sea rises high the chain of Mt. Carmel swelling up to a noble height and jutting into the restless waters that lays at its foot. The scenery it offers is of a most ideal and picturesque beauty, specially now at spring time. Taking part in the awakening of nature from its wintry rest, its surface is incrustated with herbs of a sombre velveteen green. Large prickly bushes, clad in tiny yellowish flowers, spread high their thorny hands as tho' to protect their blossoms from the fatal touch of an injurious hand. Everywhere in the valleys, dells and ravines, wild flowers have flushed into life; violets, half hidden timidly among their leaves, fill the air with their sweet fragrance; blue-bells, hanging loosely along their twining, fragile stems, exhibit their golden breasts; daisies, poppies and lilies, growing in all their richness and exquisiteness of color, turn up their smiling faces bedewed with the gems of morning toward the clear azure sky.

Pine groves are numerous on its summit, and they grow in their full grace and charm. These beautiful woods, full of life and restlessness, are haunted by bevvies of twittering birds, who, while chirping merrily, build their nests among the foliage of the trees. Singing birds, perched on lofty branches, mingle their thrilling melodies to the constant rustle of the pines. The view of this magical mountain is of a most captivating beauty: like a sea-nymph, arrayed in all its majestic pomp and magnificence, it looks down benignly from its height at the country and further off at the sea beneath. The houses, built in the fashion of an amphitheatre, get crowded at the sea-shore while they reduce in number as they gradually ascend its lower hills.

The physical charm is enhanced by its spiritual beauty. It is the mountain so frequently mentioned in the old Testament and known as the "Mountain of God." It was the abode and shelter of the Prophet Elijah who, being threatened by the wicked King Ahab and his atrocious wife Jezebel, sought refuge in one of its caverns; and that

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cavern, having been identified, has grown the object of respect of many a person who goes to visit it as a shrine.

But recently, Mt. Carmel has grown of vivid interest to the Baháís; for on one of its vine-clad slopes rests the Blessed Remains of His Holiness the Bab, laid beneath the stone floor of a house erected for that special purpose. A small garden surrounds the building, and the air is embalmed with the sweet fragrance of the blooming flowers. In the rear of the tomb, there is a cluster of ever-green cypresses, overlooking the panorama of the whole country. Under the shade of these trees, Bahá'u'lláh sat to view the beautiful sceneries. And, up there, away from the ever-rumoring world, an atmosphere of heavenly peace and of sublime concord pervades over all things, filling the heart with blissful feelings of love, unity and joy.

A Unique Family

During World War I, I lived in Haifa and Acca where for five years I was engaged in the service of Abdul Baha. While the war was being fought on land and sea, the Master and his family as well as his Persian followers led a quiet, retired life and engaged themselves in caring for the suffering community nestled at the foot of Mt. Carmel. Abdul Baha was our rock of safety. He was a spiritual horizon toward which the people turned their eyes, and from which they received comfort and joy in the midst of misery and pain. Although we were surrounded with perils of all sorts, we were never mentally disturbed, for the Master enveloped us with the mantle of his protection and saw to it that, as far as was possible, no actual danger encroached on the fringes of our existence. Through his personal direction, he dispelled the darkness of those embattled years, bringing consolation and cheer to old and young, friend and stranger. He was the one whom every person consulted when in trouble; and the needs of all, whether material or spiritual, were supplied without hesitation or loss of time.

Cut off from the rest of the world and relying mainly on our inner resources, I became better acquainted than I had been before with the members of Abdul Baha's household: his sister, Bahyyieh Khanum; his wife, Moneereh Khanum; his four daughters, his sons-in-law and his many grandchildren. Consequently, I came to realize through personal contact that this was a distinguished and glorious family, dedicated to the welfare of the Cause which their Beloved was interpreting, to an unbelieving world, through his life and teachings. Truly, these women, men and children had no other idea but to serve the Master, no earthly desire but to please him and no concern but to live, to the utmost of their capacity, in accord with

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his lofty principles. To a very large extent, they succeeded in their aim, setting up an example worthy of emulation.

Now, I can honestly confess that it has never been in my nature to envy anybody's station, whether inherited through ties of blood relationship or attained through talent and industry. As a humble servant of my Master, I had my own place; and with it I was completely satisfied. Neither then, nor now do I aspire to reach a higher position for, in my estimation, there never has been nor will there ever be one higher than that of full and unconditional servitude. Nevertheless, I looked upon each member of the household as greatly gifted by birth; we associated on terms of a transcendent friendship, and now, after the years, I retain an abiding respect and an unshakable love for this unique family.

A Potential Teacher

In this privileged and fascinating group that circled around Abdul Baha, receiving his daily consideration and care, was Ruhi Effendi Afnan, the oldest son of the Master's second daughter; and for this boy I set aside in my heart an especially warm spot. From the day on which I had first seen him in Port Said, I was drawn to him on account of his modesty and princely dignity; and later, on Mt. Carmel, it became one of my pleasures to engage him in conversation and watch the workings of his mind. He was a dreamer of dreams and, inasmuch as I myself was a prodigious dreamer, we dreamed together the dreams of Baha-O-Llah and those of our Master. Our conversations, lengthy, and numerous, often centered on Abdul Baha and his spiritual victories in Europe and America; and here, as one who had been an eye-witness to these exploits, I was able to recount the story of the Master's successive appearances in churches, synagogues and universities, and in meetings of all sorts, and to describe the impression that had been produced on the people. Also, we studied together the Writings of Baha-O-Llah and mapped out youthful plans to spread these teachings throughout the length and breadth of the land.

When the Tablets of the Divine Plan were revealed by Abdul Baha, Ruhi Effendi Afnan was one of the few who grasped their significance and understood their world-wide implications; and it was with these thoughts in mind that he arranged the program of his courses in the American University of Beirut. All who, in later years, came to meet him in England and America and heard his masterly lectures, gave testimony to the fact that he had attained the position of an authoritative, fluent and convincing teacher.

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Holiday Seasons

During the summer months, Ruhi Effendi spent his holidays on Mt. Carmel, together with some thirty Persian Bahai students from the American University of Beirut; and there, this enthusiastic company had the opportunity of listening to the daily discourses of Abdul Baha. The Master instructed his youthful pupils in the fundamentals of the Cause; explained those principles and ideals that ultimately would usher in the dawn of international understanding and peace, and exhorted all who heard him to acquire the educational advantages of the modern world so that, at the proper time, they might become the wise expounders and spreaders of the teachings of Baha-O-Llah.

A distinguished Persian, Professor Noured-Din Zeine, the son of Janabe Zeinel-Mogarrabin who had joined Baha-O-Llah in his exile at Acca, has held for many years, a position on the faculty of the American University of Beirut. During World War I, Professor Zeine lived in Haifa and, as one of the secretaries of Abdul Baha, was an integral member of the Bahai Colony. A statement prepared by him for the Spiritual Assembly at Beirut gives a graphic account of those holiday seasons on Mt. Carmel. He writes:—

Between 1900 and 1910 we do not find more than six Bahai students in the Syrian Protestant College, studying in the schools of Arts and Sciences and Medicine. . . . The following nine years may well be called the golden period of the Bahai students in the Syrian Protestant College. Their number increased very rapidly, until in 1913-1914 it reached thirty. Persian, Palestinian, Turkish and Egyptian Bahais they were, all of them living in utmost friendship and love with each other. Add to that the presence of Shoghi Effendi and Ruhi Effendi among the students during that period and then try to imagine how great was their happiness. Then came the terrible catastrophe of 1914. . . . During those four years . . . in spite of the fact that the number of Bahai students decreased one-third, in spite of the economic difficulties that they had to face, away from home and cut off from all communication with their loved ones, they lived together in the same brotherly love and unity, the same happiness on their faces and in their hearts.

Before closing the account of this second period a word must be said about their summer vacations. In the early part of it, when the Master was travelling in Europe and America, the Bahai students spent their summers in Lebanon, but after His return, they were asked to come to Haifa. With what joy did they dismount the donkeys that had brought them from Beirut, for in those days the modern conveniences of travelling were not known. . . . Those days spent with the Master were indeed glorious days. To hear him every morning and afternoon and to walk with him on Mt. Carmel, to pray with Him

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in the Holy Shrines, such was the privilege of the Bahai students of that time, a privilege that very few then had and no one will ever again have.

Those three months of summer vacation were a period of spiritual education received from the lips of the Great Educator Himself. That is why all their material difficulties were forgotten, especially in the days of the War, all their worries and anxieties melted away; they were in the presence of the Master, what else mattered?

—*The Bahai World*, Vol. III, 1928-1930, p. 57

Sunday Meetings

In Haifa, it was the custom on Sunday afternoons to gather on Mt. Carmel before the Shrine of the Bab which commands a ravishing view of the Bay of Acca, extending on the left toward the Mediterranean Sea and on the right, in a curving silvery sweep, to the very foundations of the Prison City of Acca. When the believers had assembled, the Master would lead the way into the Shrine, and there he would lift his melodious voice in chant and prayer. After this reverent visitation, we would emerge on the terrace and for a while stroll in the lovely garden; then, we would come together again in a large room situated in the same building, to one side of the Shrine. When everyone had taken his seat on chairs ranged in a square around the four walls, the Master would enter and all would arise. *Bismillah!* he would say, *Befarmaeed! Beneshineed! Khoshamedeed!* Unforgettable words—his greeting pronounced times without number. Then he would cross the room, seat himself at the upper right corner, and we would sit down.

A pause. One or two minutes, or a little more, then Abdul Baha would begin to speak. The themes of these talks varied greatly. If there were present some pilgrims, coming from the far-flung corners of the earth, he would adapt his remarks to their special condition or needs, and refer to incidents which had taken place in their villages or cities. Often, he would mention the half-forgotten names of early pioneers in the Cause from their own native lands. Sometimes, he would take as his subject the good news contained in letters which had been received from Persia or India, from Russia or America; but more than often, during those summer months, he would speak about the tragedy of war with the destruction entailed on life and property. Occasionally, he would ask a question of one of the believers and then, on the tenuous fiber of a simple answer, would, through the magic of words and the power of the spirit, build a structure of explanation, laying the foundation of a new understanding in every mind and setting up a light to shine through the colonnades of every spirit.

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He spoke on God, on the mission of the Prophets, on immortality, on search after truth, on severance and detachment, on knowledge and wisdom, on tolerance and appreciation, on intellectual hospitality and spiritual understanding, on the sciences and arts, on economics and social services, and told stories about the martyrs and heroes of the Baháí Cause—and the subject, whatsoever it might be, was always connected with the teachings that Baha-O-Llah had come to establish in the hearts of men. In this manner were the meetings conducted both in Acca and Haifa, no person, however distinguished or learned, ever opening his mouth unless a question was put to him by the Master. His was the inexhaustible fountain of wisdom, and we filled our pitchers to their capacity with the water of life that continuously flowed from his lips.

A Ticklish Problem

As the war dragged along with no end in sight, an idea came to my mind, which according to the established rule of proceedings was completely revolutionary, but which to me, who had lived in the United States, seemed quite natural. The idea was this: that the Baháí students should themselves address the Sunday afternoon meetings in the presence of Abdul Baha; and more: that the children of the family and the children of the Baháís should also take part. So, I set about to put this simple plan into action, and presently discovered that I had addressed myself to a most ticklish problem.

At first I consulted with the Baháí students. "What," they exclaimed, "have you completely lost your mind? We always thought that you entertained outlandish notions, but never suspected anything like this. Imagine getting up and delivering speeches before Abdul Baha! It is unheard of! Wouldn't it be like carrying coals to Newcastle? Besides, what have we to say, and how would we ever dare utter a word in the presence of the Master? We all would collapse and fall to the floor right then and there."

I quite understood their attitude but could not agree with it, so my ardor did not cool down. Therefore, I sought out the parents of the children in the community and presented the plan. They were dumbfounded: Their little boys and girls who stood spellbound, with folded hands before Abdul Baha, how could they raise their voices in his presence? Besides, they continued, the children had nothing to say. In order to meet this argument, I suggested that they, the parents, might prepare the speeches; but found that their confidence in themselves was also nil. Anyhow why waste time, they said, when they had Abdul Baha in their midst to teach and guide them into the right path.

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Finding myself in an impasse, I decided to take my case directly to the Family; so, I presented myself successively before Bahyyieh Khanum, Moncerreh Khanum and the daughters of Abdul Baha. Here, to the delight of my heart, I met with some encouragement. The daughter of Baha-O-Llah, Bahyyieh Khanum, responded to the idea with an alacrity that surprised me. To her, it seemed well worthwhile that the young generation should come forward and show what it could do. Furthermore, it would be amusing to see the children standing on their feet and speaking out, even if their ideas were few and far between. As I left her, she gave me one of her heavenly, human smiles, I even could say that it was a little chuckle of sly pleasure at the prospect of what might develop in the near future, and she said:—You have met with some opposition from the believers, but it seems to me that you are not discouraged. I will pray to Baha-O-Llah. I know He will assist you—. Later, Moncerreh Khanum, the wife of the Master and her daughters treated me with equal kindness. They all understood my motive and felt that the idea might bear fruit.

The next step was to lay the plan before Abdul Baha, and the right moment arrived sooner than I had expected. One day, I found him alone in the garden of his house and, taking my courage in both hands, I brought up the subject and unfolded the plan. When the speech that had long been prepared in my mind reached its end, silence came and descended upon us. The Master, who had been walking all the time with myself following, continued on his way through the garden paths. Five minutes passed. It appeared like a century. At last, when we were close to the house he stopped, turned and looked straight at me with those inscrutable eyes that pierced the heart. I knew from past experiences that something definite was in his mind, but could not guess as to whether he approved or disapproved the plan. Then, he spoke:—*Leave the matter in my hands*, and he mounted the steps of the porch and disappeared through the door.

That night, a large meeting was held. Believers and students crowded the room, together with many of the children who seldom attended the evening gatherings. I took my seat near the entrance, feeling instinctively that something unusual was about to happen.

Abdul Baha began to speak, and the theme of his talk was something to this effect:—During many years he has raised his voice; he has delivered hundreds of speeches in Egypt, Europe and America; he has spoken at home, in Acca and Haifa, to his followers and to pilgrims coming from near and far—all this, season after season. Now, the hour has arrived for the children of Baha-O-Llah to become vocal, while Abdul Baha sits

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and listens to their words. They must unseal their lips and, relying on the confirmations of the Holy Spirit, contribute their understanding of the Teachings. The youth of Baha must train itself in the art of eloquence and public discussion. The boys and girls must not be afraid, for they have been chosen by God to deliver the glorious Message of the New Day to all the inhabitants of the world. Time is short and the hours are ticking away. Here, in this divine university, the believers, the students and the children must emulate his example. Let them learn to speak before Abdul Baha passes away from this mortal life. As soldiers in the army of Baha-O-Llah, let them sharpen their instruments, which are their tongues, and advance toward the arena of explanation. If they do not speak now, when will they do so? If the nightingale does not sing in the rose-garden, how will it be fitted to bring harmony to the desert places? Yes, the hour has come for him to keep silent and for others to take up the work. He is satisfied to sit at the side. He is waiting; he is patiently waiting.

The above is the gist of the talk given on this occasion by Abdul Baha; but he spoke much longer and I am not presenting his actual words, but rather the spirit that animated them. Then, the address having come to an end, he arose and left the room, while one could have heard the dropping of a pin. As he passed by the door, he looked at me and smiled.

Immediately following this memorable evening, plans were set afoot for the conducting by the young generation of a new type of Sunday afternoon meeting.

The Students Take Hold

The Persian Bahai students from the American University in Beirut prepared their own speeches and presently delivered them. Among these were Mirza Abdul Hossain Istakhree, Azzizollah Khan Bahadur, Mirza Badi Bushrui, Mirza Ali Mohammad Khan Shirazi, Ali Aga Rashti, Mohommad Ali Afnan, Mirza Kamal Khan, Dr. Arastou Aflatoun, Shoghi Effendi and Ruhi Effendi all of whom, in due time, presented a number of well-constructed talks on the Cause and its relation to the problems of our modern civilization.

Feeling that these efforts had a value all their own, it seemed to me that records of them should be kept, even though the speeches were delivered orally. Therefore, I requested the students to set down their talks in a series of copy books. As I now write, the old manuscripts lately bound into volumes are spread before my eyes; and, as I read them one by one, I am struck by the cogency and reasoning power that had been displayed by these

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young minds. Among the papers, I find one talk given by Shoghi Effendi and two by Ruhi Effendi, in their own Persian handwriting. The talks by Ruhi Effendi are on the following subjects:—*Religion is the Cause of the Progress of Humanity*, given on August 19, 1917 and *The Necessary Means for the Development of Persia*, given on September 16, 1917.

The fact that these students had to deliver their talks before an audience of from fifty to a hundred persons, and that this number included Abdul Baha, constituted an extraordinary experience. At first, they manifested a great deal of hesitancy but, as the weeks passed into months, they took hold of themselves, acquired assurance and played their roles with dignity and serenity. This diffidence on their part was referred to in a speech by Azzizollah Khan Bahadur, who said:—

Although we as a company of students are powerless to open our lips in the holy presence of the Master—how much less to deliver speeches—for that is considered the height of audacity—this very audacity now takes the aspect of obedience to his command. Therefore, the tongue of my conscience haltingly and with trepidation makes the following remarks . .

It goes without saying that these budding orators received their reward. At the close of each Sunday meeting and often again during the week, the Master would shower his blessings upon them, at the same time inciting them to spread the wings of their imagination over yet wider horizons.

The Children Come Forward

Once the dam of silence had been lifted, the flood of enthusiasm ran high and all the boys and girls began to clamor for the privilege of speaking in the presence of Abdul Baha. Of course they had to be helped; therefore, the task of preparing speeches, both long and short, fell on my shoulders. The subjects I chose were varied, the language obviously was Persian and the phrases simple and direct. It took a great deal of time to prepare the talks, to teach them to the children, to coach them in delivery and then to arrange the programs and supervise the conduct of the meetings. Altogether, I wrote one hundred and three speeches, a good percentage of these being for the girls, who took subjects such as: the freedom enjoyed by Western women, their struggle for suffrage, their educational and vocational advantages and their enlightened services to their fellow-men.

Most of the girls' lectures were again delivered at the weekly meetings which took place regularly on either Tuesdays or Thursdays (I do not remember which) in the home of Abdul Baha, under the auspices of the

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adies of the household. Maryam Khanum, Mehr-Angiz Khanum, Zahra Khanum and Munib Effendi were a few among the many grandchildren of the Master for whom I drew up little speeches, and who delivered them with grace and with joyful hearts.

After awhile, I began to run short of subjects and felt that the time had come for the girls to express their own ideas. I knew that they could do this, for had they not been educated by Abdul Baha and had they not been allowed to bask in his presence during the period of their lives? So, I suggested this new plan to a few of the older girls and found the result to be miraculous. Some of them took leadership in this field, demonstrating their ability in a way that surprised themselves as well as others. Notable amongst these girls was Khorsheed Onsi Khanum, daughter of Aga Sayad Yahya, who has left in my archives a record of more than forty speeches, copied in Persian in her own handwriting, all giving evidence of a spiritual outlook and a well-informed and balanced mind. Another talented young personality was Mehr-Angiz Khanum, sister of Shoghi Effendi, who displayed a facility for writing in English. I have copies of two short essays from her pen; one on *Contentment: the Foundation of Happiness* and another on *The Physical and Spiritual Beauty of Mount Carmel*, which latter essay heads this chapter.

The Master Steps In

Now, as a development of these intellectual and spiritual efforts which kept the younger generation busy and happy on Mt. Carmel during World War I, the Master one day specified a wish that the children should deal more directly with the history of the Bahai Cause; and this desire on his part brought forth a climax to our activities in a form that I have never seen tried elsewhere.

After due thought and discussion with a number of Persian students, which included Ruhi Effendi Afnan, we all came to the conclusion that there should be prepared a series of short speeches, unfolding progressively the life of the Bab. The Master applauded the idea, and as the task was put in my hands, I began to work without loss of time.

Starting with a brief sketch of the history of Sheikh Ahmad Ahsai and Haji Sayad Kazem Rashti, the two heralds who had predicted the imminent appearance of the Promised One, I advanced step by step along the historic route trod by the Bab during his ministry, continuing to the final scene of his martyrdom in Tabriz and ending with the transfer of his remains from Persia to Mt. Carmel. These essays were submitted to

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Abdul Baha, who studied them attentively as I brought them to him one by one, making corrections and suggesting facts with which I was unacquainted to be incorporated here and there. By the time that the series was finished, I had prepared twenty-five speeches, each one giving a complete phase of the life of the Bab, and all together covering the story from beginning to end. They were twenty-five vignettes, twenty-five miniatures; and the whole was a drama.

When the writing was completed, I selected twenty-five boys and girls and after I had presented each with the part that fitted him or her best, the task of memorizing and then of rehearsal began in earnest. I had to direct the company until all could recite their lines naturally and without halt or hesitation. Happy and invigorating days were these, spent in this all-absorbing labor of love! Sometimes, when the rehearsal was in full swing, the Master would drop in on us and listen to the budding orators. He often corrected them as they went along and, on one memorable occasion, he got up and gave a full lesson in elocution, instructing them, as any director would, regarding a raise in the voice or a dramatic pause; pointing out where emphasis might be laid and where the words were to come softly as the wind that murmurs through the branches of the trees.

The Drama

At long last, the expected day arrived! It was Sunday afternoon and Mt. Carmel was bathed in golden sunlight. One by one, two by two, the believers ascended the mountain to attend a unique meeting regarding which rumors had been floating about for weeks. The parents were expectant but apprehensive; the young people were tense with excitement, praying and hoping that they might not forget their lines. The large central chamber, situated next to the Shrine of the Bab, had been decorated with flowers, and presently it became filled with the pioneers of the Cause and the younger men. Through an open door, the women could be seen crowded in an adjoining room. The *speakers* were ranged in the sight of all. Abdul Baha's presence completed the picture.

The meeting opened with the chanting of prayers; then, the Master turned his eyes to me, as a signal to go ahead with the program, and the drama began.

The first speaker stood, and with perfect poise told the story of Sheikh Ahmad Ahsai, the great scholar who, in the early years of the nineteenth century, had been fully aware of the fact that the Hour of Destiny was very close. He sat down. Immediately following, the boy sitting in the next place

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arose and picking up the thread of history, went on with the life of Haji Kazem Rashti, the illumined teacher who had said of the coming Prophet:—*My knowledge is a drop, compared to the immensity of his knowledge; my attainments as a speck of dust, in the face of the wonders of his grace and power.* He sat down. Another boy took up the account with the birth of the Bab, continuing to the hour of his Declaration on May 23, 1844. From this point, the colorful and tragic life of the Bab was recounted—his pilgrimage to Mecca, his return to Shiraz, his wanderings through Persia attended by an ever-increasing host, his incarceration in the castles of Maku and Chehriz and his martyrdom in the public square of Tabriz. Then, the spread of his message, the massacre of his followers and the perilous journey to Palestine with the shattered remnants of his sacred body. All this in quick succession, like flashes on a screen, was unfolded before a breathless audience. It was a miracle of effect. From first to last, the children made no mistake, nor did they pause or fumble for a word. They spoke with fire and fervor, with conviction and love, even as little disciples of the Great Prophet, which indeed they were.

When the final note of the dramatic symphony had been struck, silence descended upon the room; while the eyes of parents and friends, of old and young in that crowded assemblage, rained with tears. Truly, it was an unforgettable day; and to me, who had labored so hard for its fulfillment, it was a *most* unforgettable day.

As I examine the manuscripts of those twenty-five speeches, bound as they now are in a single volume, and think of the young people who had played their parts so beautifully, I am carried back over the intervening span of twenty-five years and live again those hours the like of which could never be reproduced in my life or, doubtless, in the lives of any.

In December 1918 I started on my journey to America, and on the way stopped for a few weeks in Cairo, Egypt. There, I met the celebrated Arab scholar, Sheikh Mohyeddin, who had been a pupil of the even more celebrated Mirza Abul Fazl. During one of our many interviews, I showed him the manuscripts of the speeches and he was so delighted with them that he made a copy of each and every one. Sometime later, when I was living in the United States, I received a printed book mailed by him; and, on examining it, found to my infinite pleasure that it was entitled *The Book of Nineteen Speeches*. All the talks were contained in this volume, but Sheikh Mohyeddin had named it as he had because the story of the Bab as told by the children consisted of nineteen chapters. The rest of the material dealt with the history of Sheikh Ahmad Absai and Haji Sayad

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Kazem Rashti. Needless to say, this volume is among my most cherished possessions.

It is likewise interesting to note that this book is listed in a catalogue of Baha'i Publications in Oriental Languages under the title: *The 19 Talks, Cairo* (see *The Baha'i World*, Vol. VIII. 1938-1940, p. 737).

An Incontestable Fact

During those summer seasons of youthful activity on Mt. Carmel, the presence of Ruhi Effendi Afnan was felt by all. Personally, I delighted in his fresh and expansive outlook, admired the sober restraint which was his as well, and was moved by the spirit of dedication in him, which was apparent in spite of his cheerful, modest ways and manner. Looking back over those years and scanning them up to the present, I find as an incontestable fact that, in the entire family of Abdul Baha, he is the only one who has literally followed in the footsteps of his grandfather, leaving the retirement of Haifa and sailing the seas to carry the message of the Cause to distant ports. In this realization, we might transport ourselves in thought to Sunday, August 19, of the year 1917.

On Mt. Carmel, the young people are holding their meeting in the presence of the Master. It is an exciting moment as far as the seventeen year old speaker of the afternoon is concerned, for he is about to deliver his maiden speech. His grandfather is observing him closely as he arises in boyish shyness and stands erect with flushed cheeks and shining eyes.

Shall we listen to the words which Ruhi Effendi spoke on that day? His talk is here before us, and the subject-matter is definitely interesting. However if we do so, I suggest that we accord him one grace: that of questioning if the fate which has befallen him in 1942 would have seemed possible to Abdul Baha, as he watched him then—would he *acceptable*, as he watches him now:—

Religion is Conducive to the Progress of Humanity

The Ancient Beauty (Baha-O-Llah) in The First Ishrak says:

“Religion is a manifest light and a strong fortress for the protection and tranquility of the people of the world; for fear of God commands people to do that which is just and forbids them that which is evil. If the lamp of Religion remains concealed, agitation and anarchy would prevail, and the orb of Justice and Equity and the sun of Peace and Tranquility would be withheld from giving light. Every man of discernment testifies to that which is (here) mentioned.”

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Religion is conducive to the progress and prosperity of the human-kind. It is the cause of union and harmony among different tribes. Religion transforms enmity and hatred into love and friendship, and changes humiliation and poverty to glory and exaltation. If we look upon the pages of history, we realize that religion has unified and consolidated the scattered parts of every nation and brought in its train advancement and civilization. For example, the Jews consisted of various tribes while they lived in Egypt as captives subjected to the tyranny of the Pharaohs, but when His Holiness Moses appeared, he unified this lowly and humiliated people through true religion and the knowledge of the Oneness of God. Thus, he established among them a cord of union and harmony, and they became so strengthened that within a short while they were freed from the yoke of the Pharaohs and became the conquerors of the Holy Land. Presently, they established a kingdom, erected a throne and obtained a great sovereignty. They defeated their enemies and, while living under the shade of the Mosaic law, attained to the apogee of splendor, enjoying freedom and liberty. However, when they deviated from the path of Moses, their emancipation was changed into captivity and their glory transformed into humiliation. This was the result of religion among the Jewish nation.

Now, let us for a moment investigate the history of the Arabs. These consisted of scattered and divided tribes, submerged in the sea of ignorance and illiteracy, and pursuing the path of selfishness and inadvertence. They were so degraded that they buried their daughters alive; for the birth of a girl in a family was considered by them as a disgrace. Their time was occupied with internecine conflicts, warfare, despoliation and rapine. Nevertheless, when the brilliant sun of the *Prophet Mohammad* arose upon the *Horizon of Hejaz*, their hearts were illumined; they became unified and agreed, and they covered the face of the earth with the traces of their sciences and arts. Their ignorance and illiteracy had been changed into assurance and knowledge through acceptance of the One True God. By means of his message, Mohammad the Prophet made of these oppressed, divided and scattered tribes the conquerors of East and West and the wielders of great power; the ancient Persian Empire even, and the great Roman Empire coming under the shade of the Arabian banner. In *this manner did these lowly people become the guides of the nations* through knowledge and religion. But later, the Mohammadan nations deviated from the path of truth. Then their congregations became divided and their groups were scattered; their countries were conquered; their states were despoiled; their sovereignty was attacked and the foundations of their kingdoms were shaken.

The best means for the prevention of the recurrences of these differences in the world of humanity has been revealed by the pen of the Ancient Beauty (Bahá-O-Llah). He says: "If the people of the Koran had lived according to the Holy Law after the ascent of His Holiness the Seal of the Prophets (may the soul of all else be a sacrifice to Him) and had held to the firm foundation of religion,

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چون آنکه بدینسانت و محنت است در پیشبرد عجله نمی در ملک صحابه حضرت رسول در آمد و رسیدیم
 از عذر برای غم نمی و آنچه چون شهادت بود دانستند و در رسالت حضرت محمد (ص) داخل زمره صحابه گشت
 و برای راه رفتن میسر شد سلمان را نیز شخصی بود که چون ایوان را بر حضرت رسول آورد و علی انهم رسید
 به خطه ناسد که برلم محمد (ص) بود و در نزد نظر میسر میسر بود و لی چون بدینانست که یک نظر میسر میسر
 و محبوب انقلب گشت و در راهی بود و بسیار گفتند که سر معلوم و واضح کرد و بدینانست و بسیار
 نوشت که کنگ از بر عهدا دار و نادر و نظره را کوالا است هرار به بسیار شده که یک شخصی جابل ای که ادا
 از علوم و فنون بهره بدینانست و به نسبت از هر قید فارغ میسر و بدینانست منور شده با علم علی طرف محبت
 میسر و در مثل دینتی براد علیهم السلام به بسیار شده که شخصی که از ازل میسر و کلمه نظر از بدینانست
 زین شد مظهر ادب و اخلاق و در خانه گشت سر و بدینانست کسب توفیق و سعادت و کلمه و دانسته و
 روح نشد و اگر قوی بدینانست نشست شوند و به نسبت و بدینانست
 پس ما به این سر آمدیم و در روز یکشنبه و ده اسوده و نهم به آنکه اینانست که محل اشراق و طلوع افکار
 این امر عظمت باین نور منور شود و اینانست که حال ویران است و محل شهادت و جهالت برتر شود و
 چنانچه کرد و اگر چنانچه بیدار شد بر عمل کنیم انوقت لایق این هستیم که خود را به این بسیار
 سبت دهم

در یوم نهم از ظهر گنجینه ۱۹ غیبر ۱۹۱۷ در حضور بعضی جوانان و بزرگان ادهمه روحانی

Fac-simile of the last portion of Ruhi Effendi Afnan's manuscript (in his own Persian handwriting and signed) of speech delivered by him on August 19, 1917, at a meeting on Mt. Carmel in the presence of Abdul Baha and the Bahai community.

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they would not have been scattered and their prosperous cities would not have been destroyed; nay, towns and villages would have been adorned with security and contentment."

In brief, this is the influence of religion upon a nation in a general way.

Let us now study the lives of individuals—how religion affects a person. When the wheat-thresher of Esphahan became a believer in His Holiness the Bab, he turned into one of the most exalted of souls. When the heart of a certain date merchant was illumined with the sun of religion and the knowledge of God, he became one of the companions of the Prophet Mohammad. Abazer was a shepherd, but when he acknowledged the Oneness of God and the apostleship of His Holiness Mohammad, he entered the ranks of the most favored disciples and became the shepherd and guide of the souls of men. The Persian Salman was a barber, but as soon as he confessed the cause of the messengership of the Prophet of Islam, he ascended to the highest station of honor.

Consider Mary Magdalene. Who was she, and to what heights did she rise? Peter was a fisherman, but no sooner did he grasp the cord of religion than he became the great Peter, the beloved of the hearts. He was a fisher of fish, but he became the fisher of men.

Therefore, it is clear and evident that religion has within itself such a power as to transform the stone into a brilliant diamond and the drop into a scintillating pearl. How often does it happen that when an ignorant, illiterate person, deprived of the sciences and arts but with heart freed from all attachment and possession, becomes illumined with the light of religion, he is inspired to converse with the most learned of theologians and to discuss with them the most abstruse religious problems, coming out victorious in the arena of argument! How often does it happen that when a most lowly and selfish person becomes adorned with the virtues of religion, he is characterized with the spiritual attributes and qualities!

Therefore, it has been proven that religion is conducive to the exaltation and felicity of the world and the establishment of union and accord among the nations. When a people takes hold of the hem of the garment of religion, their hearts become illumined and enlightened.

Consequently we, the Bahais, must exert ourselves by day and by night, not resting for one moment until Persia becomes the dawning-place of the rays and the horizon of the sun of this great Cause; to the end that Persia, which is now in a deplorable condition being the arena of ignorance and tyranny, may be the center of merciful susceptibilities. If we live and act in this behooving manner, then we will be entitled to attribute ourselves to Baha and to his blessed religion.

Chapter III
THE PILGRIMS

*I have had my invitation to this world's festival, and
thus my life has been blessed. My eyes have seen and
my ears have heard.*

—Rabindranath Tagore
Gitanjali, Stanza XVI

Chapter III

THE PILGRIMS

A Spiritual Discovery

The early American Bahais who visited Abdul Baha in his home in Acca, Palestine, from 1898 to 1911, were imbued with a most devout spirit. They were not *tourists* but *pilgrims*. They turned their hearts toward the Holy Land with longing and affection. They were hungry for the bread of God's knowledge and thirsty for the water of eternal life. They had been stirred by the strange story of a being, out of the ordinary in every sense of the word, who lived and taught as had the man of Nazareth 2,000 years ago. This was enough to arouse their interest and so, men and women left their offices, vocations and families, and crossed the ocean in order to see this man with their own eyes, to listen to his message with their own ears and to learn the secret of his spiritual attainments.

Once, when a Persian Bahai teacher inquired of a certain group why it had come, he received the following answer:—*For help in spiritual knowledge, so that we may be able to impart this to others. (Flowers Culled from the Rose Garden of Acca, p. 4).*

The numerous accounts of their visits made by the pilgrims are interpenetrated with a glow of enthusiasm and the joy of a great spiritual discovery. These persons describe Abdul Baha, surrounded by his family and disciples, living a simple, patriarchal life. They read in his teachings the fulfillment of the prophecies of the Old and New Testament, and feel that they have entered a fourth-dimensional world. The records are the testimony of the first Americans who looked into the face of Abdul Baha and reported his talks and informal conversations. The same scenes are described by each, and pretty much of the same ground is gone over; yet the experiences and impressions are varied according to the individuality of the writer. All, however, are unanimous in their recognition of the Master's boundless love, his extraordinary knowledge, his kindness and hospitality, his humanity and his passion for God; and they reveal his desire to share all that he possessed, whether material or spiritual, with his fellow-beings.

As we read these straightforward and unaffected recitals, we can actually see Abdul Baha at the lunch or supper table, we can hear him as he entertains his guests in his own inimitable way; and we laugh at the pointed stories that he relates and fall under the spell of his zestful and scintillating personality.

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On rare occasions, these love-intoxicated pilgrims allow a paragraph or so to a description of some member of the Master's family; but this is simply in passing, for all are primarily concerned with Abdul Baha and his wisdom. Their accounts are centered on him, what he said and what he did, and very little else interests them.

The First American Pilgrims

Dr. E. C. Getsinger and his wife Lua were the first American Bahai pilgrims to have the inestimable privilege of standing in the presence of Abdul Baha. This was in 1898. During later years, these two souls rendered conspicuous services in America, Europe and Asia, and no history of the Bahai Cause, from the American angle, would be complete without a record of their remarkable teaching campaigns. It was in June 1909 that Dr. Getsinger wrote the story of his and his wife's acceptance of the Bahai message in a manuscript consisting of one hundred pages. This account naturally covers his first visit to Abdul Baha who, at that time, was still in captivity in the city of Acca. I will quote an extract from that document:—

We arrived in Haifa on the night of December 8, 1898. The stars were so bright in the heavens, such as I never saw in America. They seemed so close to earth and so large that we stood and marveled at the scene. . . . We were anxious to land, and our hearts were panting with joy because we were to behold the face of our beloved Abdul Baha. . . . We arrived in Acca after taking that beautiful drive along the shore of the Mediterranean Sea. We were taken direct to the house of Abdul Baha and shown into a small room. Lua and myself were to pay the visit to the Holy City and did not expect to be so suddenly taken into his presence. But great was our surprise when we entered the room and found Abdul Baha sitting upon the divan before us. Lua was preceding me just a few steps and, as she entered the room, without being told we both recognized who was before us, and at once we fell to our knees and were weeping, we did not know why except that it was for joy. Then Abdul Baha approached us and bade us to rise and be seated. He spoke to us some words of welcome through Dr. Kheirullah, our interpreter. Then we were invited to drink tea with him and during one hour or so we were in conversation with him. We remained in Acca in the Holy Household for several days and then returned to Haifa. We thus went back and forth just as we received permission to do so. We remained in Haifa and Acca until March 23, 1899, having arrived on December 8, 1898.

Personal Records

The accounts by pilgrims were for the most part in manuscript or mimeograph form; however, a percentage of the writers were in a position to have their work printed, and this was done independently, without supervision of any kind. Some of these booklets are still in print and are probably

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available at the Bahai Assembly, 119 West 57th Street, New York, N. Y.
The following is a partial list:—

- (1) *An Early Pilgrimage* by Mrs. May Maxwell, in 1898. 23 pages.
- (2) *A Message From Acca* by E. C. Getsinger, in 1899. 16 pages.
- (3) *My Visit to Abbas Effendi in 1899* by Margaret P. Peeke. 23 pages.
- (4) *A Message From Acca* by Anton F. Haddad, in 1900. 16 pages.
- (5) *Utterances of our Blessed Master, Abdul Baha, revealed to Three Pilgrims: Thomas Breakwell, Herbert Hopper and Isabella D. Brittingham* in 1901. 14 pages (in mimeograph).
- (6) *Table Talks with Abdul Baha* by Mr. and Mrs. Geo. T. Winterburn, in 1904. 32 pages.
- (7) *A Brief Account of My Visit to Acca* by Mary L. Lucas, in 1905. 42 pages.
- (8) *Unity Through Love* by Howard MacNutt, in 1905. 32 pages.
- (9) *Notes Taken at Acca* by Mrs. Corinne True, 1907. 32 pages.
- (10) *Table Talks at Acca* by Arthur S. Agnew, in 1907. 32 pages.
- (11) *In Galilee* by Thornton Chase, in 1907. 84 pages.
- (12) *Ten Days in the Light of Acca* by Julia M. Grundy, in 1907. 111 pages.
- (13) *Flowers Culled from the Rose Garden of Acca* by Mrs. Ida A. Finch, Miss Fanny B. Knoblock and Miss Alma S. Knoblock, in 1908. 40 pages.
- (14) *Daily Lessons Received at Acca* by Helen S. Goodall and Ella Goodall Cooper, in 1908. 101 pages.
- (15) *A Heavenly Feast* by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Haney, in 1909. 36 pages.
- (16) *Acca Lights* by Mr. and Mrs. Jos. Hannen, in 1909. 15 pages.
- (17) *A Heavenly Vista* by Mr. Louis G. Gregory, in 1911. 32 pages.
- (18) *The Light of the World* by Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Randall and other pilgrims, in 1919. 149 pages.
- (19) *My Pilgrimage to the Land of Desire* by Marie A. Watson, in 1921. 23 pages.

As I read these booklets one by one, I am transported in imagination back to the Holy Land and live the experiences of these spiritual comrades of mine, which were so like my own. Few of the authors had trained minds or native talent; they wrote simply as they thought and felt, yet they have given to the Bahai world most valuable records which cannot, at any time, be duplicated or added to. It goes without saying that many a pen-picture of Abdul Baha was made during these visits to Palestine; so, I have chosen one from among them to reproduce herein. It is an extract from *In Galilee* by Thornton Chase, who was an executive in a Chicago Insurance Company and a deeply-read student of the Bible. Mr. Chase is the author of many books and one of the most distinguished of the early Bahai pioneers. He writes:—

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Abdul-Bahá

I have been asked to describe Abdul-Bahá, but hesitate to do so. It is not his personality that he wishes the friends to consider. Yet so many long to know even a little of the appearance of this one whom they love, not having seen, that I will try to tell of him as he appeared to me. I saw a strikingly handsome man, tall and kingly. He wore a white fez with the small turban-kerchief wound around. This, the symbol of wisdom and learning among Mohammedans, was the only *outward insignia of his station*. A long, dark coat or cloak was worn over a dove colored undercoat. He is not thin or anaemic, but has the appearance of strong health. Although of medium height he is commanding in appearance and I can never think of him as less than six feet tall. His bright, fair face, light brown in complexion, was framed in silvery white beard and moustache. Usually his hair, or much of it, was tucked up under the fez. His nose was large, straight and strong. The mouth was rather full and very gentle. Deep under the broad forehead and shaded by white, thick eyebrows, shone the wondrous eyes, large, prominent, brilliant, penetrating and kind. Around the dark pupil and brown iris is that wonderful blue circle which sometimes makes the eyes look a perfect blue. Any description of them is only an attempt, no more. In repose the face expressed a dignity, intelligence and nobility which none would dare to disrespect. Conscious power and authority were there enthroned. He assumed nothing; his powers were natural, his sincerity thorough, his affection pure. His smile charmed and attracted friends to him.

He had the stride and freedom of a king—or shepherd. My impression of him was that of a lion, a kingly, masterful Man of the most sweet and generous disposition. I had formed an idea of Jesus as very meek, humble, lowly, gentle, quiet, soft and sweet; and I looked for such another one. I have revised my idea of Jesus and now, as I read his Words, I see in that one of the past a Man of Authority, whose words were clear and forceful, penetrating the hearts as with a two-edged sword. I found in Abdul-Bahá a man, strong, powerful, without a thought as to any act, as free and unstilted as a father with his family or a boy with playmates. Yet each movement, his walk, his greeting, his sitting down and rising up were eloquent of power, full of dignity, freedom and ability.

In his presence all are small and they are conscious of this. They show a deference to him that could not be excelled before the most absolute monarch, hesitating to approach him unbidden, humbly bowing when he passes, and halting afar off when coming into his presence. This was *not of his doing or will*, but purely from their recognition of the Spiritual Power proceeding from him and through their intense love and respect for him. He seemed utterly unconscious of their deference. He extends love to every one; he draws near to them; he invites them; he loves to serve them, even in little things. He demands no awe, no reverence, no separation, but is an elder Brother of affection and sweetness. He is gentle but not weak; sweet and powerful; humble and mighty; no bar or restraint is there, but winsome love and

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attraction. His work accomplished daily is very great, and yet much time is given to social and official affairs. He is abrupt in manner, the abruptness of power, but most courteous and charming. There is no aloofness in him; he invites all to be prisoners of love and fellow-servers of humanity with him. He spoke in brief, pithy expressions, intoned in medium pitch with a clear vibrant voice. No words were wasted. He said:

"The Bounty of God is flowing. The Power of the Kingdom of God will overcome all. It will not be long before the great result will appear." "The Blessed Beauty has put in our hands the lamp of teachings. By this Light the world will be illumined." "America will be enlightened very much, and from there light will be sent to other places." "I hope that the East and the West will become one, also the North and the South, and that all differences shall be removed." "The Power of the Word of God will accomplish this."

—*In Galilee*, by Thornton Chase—an account of his visit to Abdul Baha in Acca, Palestine, April 1907, pp. 28-31.

The Interpreters

The interpreters and translators of Abdul Baha consisted of a comparatively small number of people. As more and more pilgrims visited Palestine and on their return spread the message amongst their acquaintances and friends, a stream of letters from those newly interested began to flow toward Acca. These were translated into Persian and presented to the Master, who devoted much time in dictating answers which then had to be translated into English. Thus, thousands of Tablets were written to the constantly increasing number of correspondents in the United States and Europe. I have in my library several large volumes which contain copies made by myself of a considerable percentage of these Tablets.

In those early years in Acca, even a slight knowledge of the English language was considered as quite an achievement; therefore, the talks of Abdul Baha were interpreted by young men and women whose capacity was not quite up to the mark. The Master used the channels that were available and counted on the sincerity of his followers to supplement their limited experience.

Ibrahim Kheirullah, who had guided the first group of pilgrims to the Holy Land, was highly qualified as a teacher and interpreter. Abdul Baha's daughters, Ruha Khanum and Monavvar Khanum, who by this time had learned some English, served when occasion demanded. After them, with the passing of years and as the Cause gained momentum, new interpreters and secretaries appeared on the scene. Thus, from 1908 to the

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and of his life in 1921, Abdul Baha made use of many interpreters in order to convey his words to visitors and his teachings to the Western world.

Now, the pilgrims who visited Acca were not interested in the secretaries; they mention their names but seldom, and then as a necessary evil. Often, they mistrusted the translations that were given and questioned as to whether a certain person or other had an ulterior motive in his choice of words. However, I can testify that these individuals did their work honestly and well; and that there was *never one instance* when they should have been accused of even an unconscious desire to misinterpret the words of Abdul Baha. If sometimes a mistake crept in, this was owing to lack of efficient knowledge of English, or even to lack of complete understanding of the Master's rich and profound expressions of speech; but through it all, each one served cheerfully and in utter devotion, playing his own modest but useful part in the promotion of the Cause.

Below are listed, in fairly correct sequence, a few of the better known interpreters and translators:—

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Ibrahim Kheirullah | 12. Mirza Noured-Din Zaine |
| 2. Ruha Khanum | 13. Mirza Moneer Zaine |
| 3. Monavvar Khanum | 14. Mirza Younoss Khan |
| 4. Anton Haddad | 15. Tamaddon-Ul-Molk |
| 5. Ali Kuli Khan | 16. Badi Effendi Bushrui |
| 6. Dr. Ameen-U-llah Fareed | 17. Azzizollah Khan Bahadur |
| 7. Mirza S. M. Rafie | 18 & 19. M. and Mme. |
| 8. Hussain Effendi Ruhi | Hyppolite Dreyfus Barney |
| 9. Mirza Bozork | 20. Dr. Lotfollah Hakim |
| 10. Mirza Ahmad Sohrab | 21. Shoghi Effendi Rabbani |
| 11. Dr. Zia M. Bagdadi | 22. Ruhi Effendi Afnan |

It is interesting to note that in this list of twenty-two persons who acted as interpreters and translators at one time or another, there are 17 Persians, two Syrians, one Egyptian, one American and one Frenchman. Incidentally, on many occasions when no interpreter was in sight, the Master would press into service anyone present who could translate, however poorly, for the benefit of the visiting pilgrims or tourists.

Those, having even a cursory knowledge of the subject, realize that all translation is a most delicate art and will concede that, as applied to the Bahai Cause, the task is definitely intricate. In order to do a creditable job, one must comprehend fully the nuances and shades of meaning in both Persian and Arabic as well as English; and few of us could make such a claim. Nevertheless, this group of translators and interpreters were the channels—and the only channels—through which the Western world gained *instantaneous or direct access* to the spiritual source of the New Revelation,

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and it is not too much to say that the American and European Bahais owe them a great debt of gratitude.

Glimpses of Ruhi Effendi

The members of Abdul Baha's family seldom figure in the accounts left to us by the pilgrims; but, once in a long while, the curtain is lifted and we get a glimpse of some of them. On page 39 of the booklet by Thornton Chase, we read:—

The children, Shoghi and Ruhi and others were playing about the fountain, and altogether it was quite a party.

Again, in a book entitled *A Heavenly Vista*, written by Louis G. Gregory following his visit to Abdul Baha in 1911, we come across a mention of the same children, four years later. On page 19, we read:—

Before entering (the presence of the Master) we met Shoghi and Ruhi, two beautiful boys, the grandsons of Abdul Baha. These children of the Holy Household show great affection for pilgrims.

In a brochure, *The Light of the World*, Mr. Harry Randall of Boston, Mass., describes his own experiences in 1919 and often refers to Shoghi Effendi who by this time had become an interpreter.

Miss Genevieve Coy, an educator and psychologist, at one time engaged as a teacher at the Tarbiat School in Teheran, Persia, visited Palestine with three friends in the year 1920. Her account of this journey is unique and valuable because, as far as I know, it is the last but one recorded pilgrimage to Haifa made during the lifetime of the Master. It is published under the title *A Week in Abdul Baha's Home*, appearing in *The Star of the West*, September 8th, September 27th, October 16th and November 4th, 1921. In these articles we find repeated mention of Ruhi Effendi, so we might skim through them, beginning at the railroad platform in Haifa as the train bearing Miss Coy and her group draws into the station:—

We were so happy to be so near our journey's end,—we were so full of expectation, that it seemed as if the train would never reach the station. But at last we did pull up in front of it! Cora went out to look for a porter, and I was ready to pass baggage out of the window to her. But almost immediately a hand was reached in to shake mine, and we were welcomed by a young man, whom we later learned was Ruhi Effendi, one of the Master's grandsons . . . We shook hands with several young men, Bahais from the Master's household, and then we four American pilgrims were in the auto, with the driver, Ruhi Effendi, and some of our baggage . . .

During our ride from the station, Ruhi Effendi told us that the Master was staying on the Mountain for a few days, to rest from the

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many demands made on his time when he is in his house in the town . . .

As we were leaving the house, Ruhi Effendi, who had just come down from the Mountain, brought word that the Master would either come down, or send for us the next day. . . .

At lunch Ruhi Effendi brought word that we were to go up to the Tomb at about four in the afternoon, to see the Master!

Miss Coy then describes the meeting with Abdul Baha in words that are instinct with feeling and realization:—

Suddenly all of the believers rose and faced the East. Then, from around the corner of the Tomb came the Master with two of the young men walking a little behind him. He came slowly toward us,—and said, "Welcome, welcome!" in English; and then, "Sit down, sit down!" Sylvia sat next to him; then Mabel Paine, myself, Cora, and Mrs. Hoagg. The other friends were beyond her, in two rows. When the Master had walked toward us, it seemed to me that I had seen him come just that way at some previous time. He seemed to be so beautifully familiar to me! I suppose it must have seemed so because of the pictures I have seen of him, and the stories I have heard other pilgrims tell. It was a moment that one would prolong if one could, that one would never forget!

The Master began to speak in Persian, and Ruhi Effendi translated into English. He asked several questions; he talked of principles of living. Sometimes he would be silent for several minutes,—with his eyes looking far, far away. It is very difficult to remember much of what he said. Indeed, it was almost difficult to listen!

Her visit to the Shrine of the Bab is recounted by Miss Coy:—

Each knelt at the inner threshold, until all had arisen, and stood in a circle about the room. Then the Master spoke to Ruhi Effendi, who began to chant a long prayer, one of the Prayers of Visitation. His chanting was the sweetest, the most melodious of any I have ever heard.

Sometimes in the course of conversation while his words were being interpreted, Abdul Baha would interject a phrase in English, to the delight of his listeners. Miss Coy tells of such an incident:—

Then the Master told the story of Mirza Abul Fazl, and the English ladies who insisted on seeing him. Finally, when they had knocked very persistently and continuously, Mirza Abul Fazl became tired of hearing it, so he went to the door and said, "Abul Fazl is not here." Up to this point in the story, the Master had been speaking in Persian or Arabic, and Ruhi Effendi had been interpreting, but when the Master came to this part, he spoke in English, very distinctly, and repeated it, "Abul Fazl not here!" and then he smiled the most adorable smile!

THE PILGRIMS

Continuing with her narrative, Miss Coy conducts her readers into the garden at an early hour:—

It must have been after seven when we went out into the garden. We walked about a bit, and then Ruhi Effendi and Mirza Lotfollah came out to wish us good-morning. On the previous evening we had told Ruhi Effendi that we were going up to the Tomb early in the morning. But when he saw us there, he said, "You *really* came! I didn't think you would! Americans never get up early!" At which we laughed much! Ruhi Effendi's English is very good,—but sometimes a phrase or some slang expression is used which he does not understand. He looks courteously questioning, half surprised, and waits for some one to explain!

And now, breakfast with the Master in the house of Abbas Goli, caretaker of the Shrine of the Bab:—

But we had been there only a few minutes, when Ruhi Effendi came toward us, calling that the Master wished to see us! And we went on eager feet, following Ruhi Effendi to Abbas Goli's house . . . Abbas Goli brought to the Master a little tray with a teapot full of what looked like tea. The Master poured out some and drank it, explaining that it was kind of herb drink. Then Abbas Goli brought us tea in the lovely little Persian glasses. Afterward he came in with a tray full of things to eat and placed it on a chair in front of us. . . . As we ate he was silent, looking out of window upon the sea at Acca. His beautiful profile was outlined against the windows; his gaze seemed to dwell on distant Acca,—and I could not but think of those long years of imprisonment that he had spent in barred Acca.

After eight unforgettable days with Abdul Baha and the members of his family, Miss Coy and her three friends leave Haifa on Sept. 8, 1920:—

Next morning before daybreak, we ate our last meal in the Pilgrim House and said farewell to our happy housemates there. Said Effendi, Mirza Lotfollah, Ruhi Effendi, and faithful Esfandiar and his horses, took us to the train which left at 6 A. M. We had a half-hour's talk with the young men before the train pulled out. . . .

We come across the name of Ruhi Effendi two years later in an item in the *Star of the West*, March 21, 1922. A Tablet to the American Bahais, left by Abdul Baha amongst his papers, is translated by Ruhi Afnan, Mrs. E. Hoagg and Ali Mohammad Bakir.

In the May 17th, 1922 issue of the *Star of the West* is published an article from the pen of Mr. Louis G. Gregory under the title of *The Bahai Congress for the Teaching and the Fourteenth Annual Congress*. The writer speaks of Mr. Mountfort Mills who has just returned from Haifa and quotes a report of his as follows:—

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Ruhi Effendi, brought up with Shoghi Effendi says of him: "Shoghi is wonderful. He retired at 3 A. M. and arose at 6. Once he worked forty-eight hours without food or drink. His effort is to overcome differences between races and nations."

The Two Cousins

Thus, through tiny items incorporated in the pilgrims' report, we have been able, on a thin chain of sequence, to follow these two cousins from childhood when they were playing around the fountain, up to the time when the older of the two had assumed the guardianship of the Bahai Cause and the younger had settled willingly and enthusiastically into his niche of unobtrusive service.

We now take a jump over two decades and, picking up *Bahai News* of December 1941, read with a thrill of dismay the following lines in an article signed by the National Spiritual Assembly:—.

Our latest instruction about this very grave matter comes by cablegram, a copy of which appears in this issue and names Rubi Effendi and his family as now to be included in the list of bad eminence—persons, for the protection of the Cause, to be avoided.

The two babies, born of the same noble stock; the two children, encompassed by divine love and solicitude; the two beautiful boys, acting as hosts to the pilgrims; the two young men, taking their places among the interpreters of the Master—the two branches, sprung from the sacred Trees of the Bab and Baha-O-Allah, can no longer be coupled as servants, each in his own way, of the mighty Bahai Cause. Something has intervened and set them apart; and we see the one, on the pinnacle of absolute power within his own domain, branding the mark of infidelity on the forehead of his life-long companion and turning him out to wander forever—friendless, comfortless and without sustenance. Even so Saul, appointed first King of Israel by the Prophet Samuel, yearned for the destruction of David and drove him forth into the wilderness!

Chapter IV
THE SECRETARY

*He whom I enclose with my name is weeping in this
dungeon. I am ever busy building this wall all around;
and as this wall goes up into the sky day by day I lose
sight of my true being in its dark shadow.*

—Rabindranath Tagore
Gitanjali, Stanza XXIX

Chapter IV

THE SECRETARY

The Confidential Secretary

In this world of ours, men and women have often risen to great heights of communal service by acting as secretaries to leaders in various enterprises. Through their intimate association with their chiefs or employers, they have been enabled to learn the secrets of the technique used; to master the systems and practices of their professions, and to become in turn efficient and useful members of society. Thus, throughout the ages, apprenticeship has been considered the practical way to knowledge and advancement in the arts and sciences, in business, politics and religion. The rich and varied experiences gained by close contact with the executive or master were, in the long run, more valuable than formal education; and there are not a few examples of men who have made astounding progress as a result of past service in a comparatively humble role.

Ruhi Effendi Afnan acted as confidential secretary to the Guardian of the Bahai Cause for fourteen years; and the records of the Bahai organization show that during that time, from 1922 to 1936, he was constantly in demand in a variety of capacities. In 1924, he appeared in London as Shoghi Effendi's personal representative and delivered a brilliant address on the Bahai Religion before *The Conference of Some Living Religions Within the British Empire*. In 1927, he visited the United States as traveling agent and spiritual salesman of the Guardian, championing with fervor and zeal the system of Bahai administration before *recognized* and *declared* Bahais. He was an outstanding and honored guest at the 20th Annual Bahai Convention in Chicago, where he *participated vitally in all proceedings*; was the guest speaker at Green Acre Bahai Summer School in Maine, and traveled from coast to coast, delivering Bahai speeches before churches, colleges and outside gatherings. In 1928, we find him in Geneva, Switzerland, where, as the accredited representative of the Bahai Cause, he participates in the Conference of International Peace Through the Churches. Here, we see him taking the floor, offering some constructive suggestions which, as one report says, were very much to the point, and carrying his argument. In 1935, *with the Guardian's approval* (See *Baha'i News*, page 3, October 1935), he pays his second visit to the United States; takes part in

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the National Bahai meeting in Chicago and, before his departure, addresses a number of local Bahai communities.

At some future date, I will contrast the above-mentioned item in *Bahai News* with a recent cablegram of Shoghi Effendi dated November 10, 1941, which states that Ruhi Effendi *failed to obtain* the Guardian's *approval of his second visit to America*. I will also examine in detail the work accomplished by Ruhi Effendi in this country; but, for the present, I am merely tabulating the facts.

Thus, for fourteen years, Ruhi Effendi, as confidential secretary of the Guardian, was the main channel of communication between him and the Western world. He took charge of the correspondence sent from Haifa to this country, a few of which letters have found their way into the pages of *Bahá'í News*. As a rule, Shoghi Effendi reserved to himself the prerogative of writing general letters and cablegrams to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, but his confidence in Ruhi Effendi was so great that, occasionally, he would allow him to write letters to this body over his own signature. Such a significant letter, signed by Ruhi Afnan and addressed *To the Members of the National Spiritual Assembly and Read at the Annual Convention, Chicago, May, 1931*, is published on the front page of *Bahá'í News* of September, 1931.

Procedure of Correspondence

The letters written by Ruhi Afnan to individual Bahais generally start with *Shoghi Effendi wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter . . .* after which the various points brought up by the correspondent are answered. Once in a while, a postscript is added by the Guardian in his own handwriting, which is signed *Shoghi*. (See *Bahá'í News*, February, 1931, pp. 9-10)

From the records that I have examined, it appears that Ruhi Effendi was the chief secretary, but now and then we come across other signatures affixed to letters written on behalf of the Guardian. Soheil Afnan, Ruhi's brother is one of them (See *Bahá'í News*, March, 1928, p. 1; also *Bahá'í News*, February, 1931, pp. 8-9); Hussein Rabbani, Shoghi Effendi's brother, is another (See *Bahá'í News*, September, 1931, p. 5); Azzizollah S. Bahador is a third (See *Bahá'í News*, February, 1932, p. 3).

Quite consistently, when a letter is written and signed by Ruhi Effendi and published in *Bahá'í News*, the caption reads: *Letter from Shoghi Effendi* (See *Bahá'í News*, September, 1931, p. 1; *Bahá'í News*, January, 1932, p. 1; *Bahá'í News*, March, 1932, p. 7). One wonders why the Editor of

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Baha'i News adopted such a caption; for it evidently causes some confusion in the mind of the reader, who reaches close to the end of the letter before he comes to realize that it was not written by Shoghi Effendi after all. The object probably was that the National Spiritual Assembly wished to convey to the Bahais, in a rather subtle and indirect way, the fact that the contents of the letters written by Ruhi Effendi carried the same authority as those written by the Guardian himself.

This strange procedure caused some controversy among the Bahais, and the question was debated pro and con until the National Spiritual Assembly was moved to alter the caption on this section of *Baha'i News* so that, after a certain date it read:—*Letters from Haifa* (See *Baha'i News*, July, 1932, p. 4; *Baha'i News*, October, 1932, p. 4; *Baha'i News*, February, 1933, p. 2).

Another subject that caused a good deal of agitation among the Bahais was the question as to whether the Guardian actually read all the letters written on his behalf by Ruhi Effendi. Some orthodox individuals were distinctly worried lest the secretary might slip in his own ideas and let them pass into currency under the authority of Shoghi Effendi; while others, who were more liberal-minded, finding the matter in the communications rather hard to swallow, chose to blame the secretary and allow full exemption to the Guardian. Finally, it seems that one zealous Bahai took the matter into her own firm hands and submitted the problem directly to Haifa. It was then that the Guardian's clear and unequivocal answer definitely disposed of the question. He wrote:—

I wish to add and say that whatever letters are sent in my behalf from Haifa are all read and approved by me before mailing. There is no exception whatever to this rule.

(Signed) Shoghi
—*Baha'i News*, May, 1931, p. 5

Another point of discussion applied to the signature of the secretary: should it appear at all? This matter likewise was settled by eliminating the name altogether and simply stating that the secretary of the Guardian writes so and so. (See *Baha'i News*, May, 1936, p. 6, where we read: *On March 4, the Guardian, through his secretary, wrote the Treasurer . . .*) This new ruling eliminated all reference to the personality of the secretary, leaving Shoghi Effendi's name to stand alone.

The main purpose of the letters written by Ruhi Effendi, which are published in *Baha'i News* over his signature, is to convey to the recipients the messages of the Guardian, his replies to numerous questions and his

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orders and suggestions in regard to the various activities and policies of the Bahai Administration. As Shoghi Effendi writes in a postscript to Mr. Albert Windust:—

I have asked Ruhi to convey my messages and suggestions in my behalf. . . . and I am sure that they will be duly considered.

—*Bahá'í News*, February, 1931, p. 9

This then was the dominant and controlling note of all the letters written by Ruhi Afnan in his role as confidential secretary; he was the conveyor of the messages and suggestions of the Guardian to the American people, and, it can be said that during those fourteen years of service, he kept himself completely in the background and never entered the picture at all. Later, when he did appear in person before the Bahai Assemblies, he maintained the same attitude and if, in some instances, he was greatly appreciated, this was without volition on his part, and was simply an unavoidable circumstance.

Direct and Indirect Methods of Correspondence

Let us for a moment go back to the days of Abdul Baha and contrast this method of procedure with that of the Master. When the Master received letters in the English language, whether from Bahais or any others, these were placed into the hands of one of his secretaries, who translated them into Persian. Then holding the translations in his hand, Abdul Baha would dictate the answers, and later, when these had been written out, he would very carefully read them over, correcting them or adding a word here and there. These corrected pages were then copied in Persian in excellent calligraphic style and brought back as finished letters to the Master. Finally, Abdul Baha would again read each one, and sign it; after which they were translated into English on the spot or else mailed to America for translation. Almost every week, during several years, I regularly received packages of from fifty to one hundred such letters to be translated and forwarded to their respective destinations. Naturally, the originals always accompanied the translations.

In this way, did Abdul Baha answer directly all communications addressed to him, never delegating to his secretaries the power of dealing with them on his behalf. A secretary was at liberty to carry on his own correspondence with the believers or to keep a diary but, in such case, he alone was responsible for what was written. Abdul Baha did not interfere with these personal matters nor did he ever ask to read the secretary's letters or his diary.

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In all probability, one would never find a letter from any of the Master's secretaries which would open with:—Abdul Baha wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter. . . . A secretary might include among his personal comments to a friend:—Today Abdul Baha, in the course of conversation, mentioned your name and spoke thus and so about you. I often did this myself, but neither I nor anybody else had power to answer letters addressed to Abdul Baha. In reverse, it was Abdul Baha who himself occasionally answered letters addressed to his secretary. (See an example of this in *Abdul Baha in Egypt*, p. 2)

It is apparent therefore that the system of correspondence employed by the Guardian is altogether different from that of the Master; and in this he is quite within his rights. Thus, Shoghi Effendi, although well versed in English, delegated to Ruhi Effendi the privilege of conveying his messages and suggestions to his followers and invested these letters with an authority, if not quite equal to his own, at least approximately so, as can be seen by his endorsement addressed to America:—*whatever letters are sent in my behalf from Haifa are all read and approved by me before mailing. There is no exception whatever to this rule.*

The letters in question contain a great many instructions, directions, messages, orders and regulations for the administration of the Bahai Cause by the National Spiritual Assembly. Invariably, they have bolstered up the authority of this organization, strengthened its hand and endowed it with a totalitarian outlook which has become increasingly evident in all its activities and pronouncements. After the business has been disposed of, there are usually to be found a few paragraphs or lines written in a general sense, and we can gather that the secretary has rounded out the letter according to his own judgment.

Subject Matter

I will here mention a few of the various subjects dealt with in the communications of Ruhi Effendi as they follow each other in succession according to date:—

We have instructions regarding the collecting of the originals and translations of Abdul Baha's Tablets and are told that this is one of the most important tasks of this generation. (*Baha's News*, November, 1929). We find minute and detailed instructions about a forthcoming issue of *The Baha'i World*: the Publishing Committee is told not to add, discard nor displace any of the photographs selected by the Guardian; all photographs are to be strictly copyrighted, so that no one may have the right to repro-

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duce them without specific authorization. Inasmuch as Vol. I had a green cover and Vol II a blue cover, Vol. III is to have a red cover; a sample of the particular shade of red is enclosed and the request made that the cloth selected be exactly of this color (*Bahá'i News*, February, 1931). A Bahai has the right to teach the Cause unofficially, but he must keep in close touch with his Local Spiritual Assembly which reserves to itself the right to control all teaching activities on the part of such individual Bahais. Local Spiritual Assemblies must be organized where the number of adult believers reach nine, and this is to be considered as an obligation rather than a purely voluntary act. The methods of determining the boundaries and the jurisdiction of a Local Assembly are left to the wisdom of the National Spiritual Assembly. The meetings held in the auditorium of the Temple in Chicago must be purely devotional; thus, lectures and addresses should be strictly prohibited. Choir singing by men, women and children is permitted; rigidity in the Bahai Services is to be avoided; pictures and images are banned. The National Spiritual Assembly must get in touch with the Egyptian authorities and press for the official recognition of the Bahai Cause in that land. No further restrictions should be added to the qualifications required for voting at Bahai elections, for Shoghi Effendi has already laid down the essential conditions in his letters. (*Bahá'i News*, September, 1931)

Although in a general letter Shoghi Effendi had frankly addressed himself to the problem of international politics, he later is seriously concerned at learning that this plain speaking on his part is difficult to tie up with his definite instructions on the subject, namely: that the Bahais must under no circumstances take part in political discussions. Therefore, Ruhi Effendi is called upon to square the circle and reconcile the irreconcilable by stating that the friends should spread the *message* contained in that letter, but must do it *in a very judicious way lest the people think that we have entered the arena of politics with rather drastic programs of reforms.* (*Bahá'i News*, February, 1932)

Most careful attention is to be given to the completion and external decoration of the Bahá'i Temple. For *The Bahá'i World*, Vol. IV, Ruhi Effendi reports that the Guardian has created a new section to be devoted to Bahai poems and another to Bahai music. The Bahais are advised that in every Assembly, the cooperation of at least one local paper should be gained as a help toward a teaching campaign. A much loved book, *The Divine Art of Living*, is to be removed from circulation because these reported sayings of Abdul Baha do not carry his signature and, therefore,

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have not *the necessary binding power*. In this connection Ruhi Effendi conveys the message of the Guardian in the following words:—

All the other talks such as are included in Ahmad's diary or the other diaries of the pilgrims, do not fall under this category and could be considered only as interesting material to be taken for what they are worth.

—*Baha'i News*, February, 1932

A brief explanation is given concerning *Huquq* or religious taxation; nevertheless, at this time, the Bahais must reserve their financial resources for the completion of the Temple. There is no accurate statistics on the number of Bahais throughout the world and especially in Persia. (*Baha'i News*, March, 1932)

An explanation of the meaning of No. 9, which is the numerical value of the word *Bahá*, is given as follows: *B equals 2, h equals 5, a equals 1 and there is an accent at the end of the word which also equals 1; the "a" after the "B" is not written in Persian, so it does not count*. We find an excellent biographical sketch of Abul Qasim Khorassani, custodian of the international archives and caretaker of the gardens surrounding the Shrine of the Bab on Mt. Carmel. The Guardian was so pleased with this biography written by Ruhi Effendi that he orders the National Spiritual Assembly to publish it in *The Baha'i World*. (*Baha'i News*, April, 1932)

Youth should be encouraged in public speaking; all should study the literature of the movement. There should be a plan to raise funds for building the Temple, but such a plan should exclude any method whereby the help of non-Bahais would be included. (*Baha'i News*, July, 1932)

Advice is given not to hoard gold, yet make investments very secure. We are told that Shoghi Effendi had never said that the members of the National Spiritual Assembly should be renewed partially every year, or that it would be better that teachers be not elected to the National Spiritual Assembly, thus leaving administrative functions to those who cannot serve as teachers. Bahais are urged to arrange their vacations in such a way as to spend at least a few days at the Bahai Summer Schools. Mention is made as to why Shoghi Effendi engaged himself in the translation of the book *The Dawn-Breakers* and of the effect that has been made on those who received copies of the same; the Bahais are advised to hold classes for the study of this book. There is reference to the promotion of the Cause amongst the ranchers in the Western section of the United States and a plan for the Teaching Committee. In an indirect way, Shoghi Effendi condemns the method of fund raising used at Bahai Conventions. Writing on this latter subject, he comments:—

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Such gatherings for collections of funds are permissible if it is done with a true spirit of sacrifice, not when the audience is especially aroused to a frenzy and mob psychology is used to induce them to pay. . . . Shoghi Effendi is sure that the funds gathered at the last Convention was not due to the play of mob psychology but to the prayerful attitude of the friends and their desire to make further sacrifice.

—*Bahai News*, October, 1932

The liberty of an individual to express his own opinions should not be restricted so long as he makes it clear that these views are his own. (*Baha'i News*, November, 1932)

Detailed procedure in regard to the election of the members of Bahai Local and National Assemblies; observance of the Nineteen Day Feasts and value of religious Hymns. (*Baha'i News*, February, 1933)

Bahais are warned not to refer in their public utterances to any political figures, nor side with them. They are likewise told that:—

Before you extend any sort of help to, or affiliate yourself with the World Fellowship of Faiths, Shoghi Effendi feels that the National Spiritual Assembly should find out whether its purpose is in any way political, especially now that its leadership is transferred from Rabbi Wise to Mr. DasGupta.

—*Baha'i News*, April, 1933

Stress is made on providing for the financial needs of the Cause and completing the construction of the Temple; there are provisions for the admittance of new members as *declared* Bahais and for the expulsion of others. Shoghi Effendi advises that the Assemblies should not act hurriedly in either case, otherwise they can do much harm to the body of the Cause; he is likewise pleased over the report of the construction of the dome of the Temple (*Baha'i News*, May, 1933).

In this manner, Ruhi Effendi attended to all the details connected with the running of an organization—legitimate details, innocuous details, rulings, restrictions—most of them tending to obscure the purpose of the Founders. With the minds of all those in authority fixed on administration, it was inevitable that the spirit of the Cause, so apparent in earlier days, should be submerged and stifled. Ruhi Effendi fulfilled his role to the letter. He was controlled by the Guardian in much the same way as Charlie McCarthy is manipulated by his own *deus ex machina*; and, thanks to his apparent willingness and unquestionable loyalty, the chains of a purely material organization settled heavily around the body of the Bahai Cause, where they still remain.

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A Promotional Enterprise

I will now mention instances and show documents which reveal Ruhi Effendi as trusted and authoritative agent in a promotional enterprise planned to establish Haifa as the seat of temporal power in the Bahai Church:—

For many, many years the American Bahais, besides contributing large sums towards the construction of the Temple and the maintenance of the Administration, have responded to the suggestion coming from Haifa that they buy lands on Mt. Carmel adjacent to the Shrine of the Bab. As a consequence of these individual investments, properties have, in due time and under due pressure, been turned over to the National Spiritual Assembly and, in order to facilitate the proceedings, the Guardian advised that they be transferred legally in the name of Ruhi Effendi, who thus received power of attorney to represent the owners and *to appear before the Land Registries, Courts and Government Offices, sign applications, deeds and other documents, admit receipt of purchase price and also to appoint other or others in his place and revoke at pleasure such substitutes.*

I do not know whether the recent excommunication of Ruhi Effendi by the Guardian affects the latter's legal standing as representative of the American owners of land on Mt. Carmel. That in itself is an interesting aspect of the general problem which a lawyer might like to study; however, the point that I wish to make at this juncture is the fact that Shoghi Effendi confided in his secretary so completely that he placed on his shoulders great and permanent responsibilities. We might now examine an article in *Baha'i News* of April, 1933, which deals with this plan of land transference. It includes an explanatory letter of Ruhi Effendi:—

How to Transfer Mt. Carmel Land to the Palestine Branch

Since the preliminary notice on this matter was published a few months ago, a number of individual believers have taken steps to transfer their land on Mt. Carmel to the Palestine Branch of the National Spiritual Assembly. By these generous donations, thousands of dollars worth of this precious property is now held in perpetuity for Baha'i use.

Specific instructions how to effect the transfer of legal titles are now supplied in the following letter and Power of Attorney.

"Shoghi Effendi wishes me to send you these few lines to enclose a copy of the power of attorney that our lawyer here has framed in case any one of the friends desires to transfer the property he holds around the Shrine to the name of the National Assembly.

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"As I told you in my previous letter, by law such lands can only be transferred during one's lifetime. Otherwise it will go to the heirs according to prescribed shares. The will of the deceased is inoperative in such cases. Shoghi Effendi does not want to bring any form of pressure upon the friends. They are naturally free to keep the property in their name and have it go to their heirs.

"In case they express the desire to make such a transfer and have the property revert to the Cause then they have to sign this power of attorney before a Notary Public and then have it countersigned by the British Consul in that locality.

"The power of attorney is in my name and not in the name of the Guardian because he represents the N. S. A. and will sign for them. He cannot represent both parties to the transfer.

"For the transfer there are some expenses, among them 3 per cent of the value of the land, which is government taxes. They do not, however, amount to very much.

"Please note that besides putting their name and signature they have also to state the number of the deed which is mentioned on the Certificate of Registration which they hold.

"Assuring you of Shoghi Effendi's prayers and best wishes, I remain,

Yours ever sincerely,
RUHI AFNAN

Haifa, Palestine.
October 2, 1932."

Power of Attorney

I/we the undersigned..... do hereby give power of attorney to Mr. Ruhi Afnan of Haifa, authorizing him in my/our place and name to sell, transfer and register in the name of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada—Palestine Branch the property registered in my/our name under deed No.....situate in Haifa and also to administer the said property, to effect partition, parcellation, correction of area and boundaries, sue in Courts and generally do such things and steps in connection with the said property as my said agent shall think fit, and for that purpose to appear before the Land Registries, Courts and Government Offices, sign applications, deeds and other documents, admit receipt of purchase price, and also to appoint other or others in his place and revoke at pleasure such substitutes.

In Witness Whereof I/We Have Set Hereunto My/Our Hands.

The Palestine Branch

In his resolve to organize the Bahai Cause, Shoghi Effendi has incorporated the Baha'i Assembly of Palestine as a *Branch* of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada. The

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text of application to the Palestine Government points out that this Association is composed of Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, Ruhi Afnan and such other persons as may be appointed from time to time by the Guardian. The letter to the Commissioner of Haifa making application for the incorporation of the Bahai Society is signed jointly by Shoghi Effendi Rabbani as President, and Ruhi Afnan as Secretary; the address of the incorporated Bahai Society being given as:—

**Persian Colony
c/o Ruhi Afnan, Haifa**

These remarkable Papers are published in *The Baha'i World*, 1930-1932, Vol. IV, pp. 165-166 and here are the texts:—

Documents Related to the Incorporation of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada as a Recognized Religious Society in Palestine

(1) TEXT OF APPLICATION TO THE PALESTINE GOVERNMENT

Haifa the 8th of April, 1930

**To the District Commissioner,
Haifa**

Sir,

In conformity with the notice dated the 26th of August, 1919, regarding registration of Societies I beg to request that "The National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada—Palestine Branch" be registered as a Society under the Ottoman Law of the 3rd of August, 1925.

The address of the Society is: Persian Colony, c/o Ruhi Afnan, Haifa.

The objects of the Society are stated in the attached Articles.

The Management of the Society is vested in Shoghi Effendi Rabbani; Ruhi Afnan is acting as Secretary of the Society.

Two copies of the Society's Regulations are attached.

Yours faithfully,

**Shoghi Rabbani (President)
Ruhi Afnan (Secretary)**

**Seal of
National Spiritual
Assembly of the
Baha'is of the
United States and
Canada—Palestine Branch.**

(2) ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION OF "THE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHAI'S OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA—PALESTINE BRANCH."

1. The Name.

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The name of the Association shall be:

"The National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada—Palestine Branch" (hereinafter called the Association).

2. Membership.

The Association is composed of Shoghi Effendi Rabbani or whoever may lawfully succeed him as the Guardian of Baha'i Faith, Rubi Afnan and such other persons as may be appointed from time to time by Shoghi Effendi Rabbani or his lawful successors with consent of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada organized and existing under the Declaration of Trust adopted on the 4th of April, 1927, New York City, New York, U. S. A.

3. Purposes.

The Association is formed in order to hold and to administer various movable and immovable properties belonging to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada in Palestine, and generally to act on behalf of and to represent the said Assembly.

4. Management.

Shoghi Effendi Rabbani or whoever may lawfully succeed him as the Guardian of Baha'i Faith or any other person appointed by Shoghi Effendi Rabbani or his lawful successors with approval of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada shall be entitled to act on behalf of the Association, to sign any deeds or documents, to represent the Association in any dealings or transactions, to enter into any agreements, to receive moneys and to give effectual receipts or discharges, to appear before the Courts and Government Offices, to acquire properties, lands, houses, and other immovables in the name of the Association and to dispose of any such properties, lands, houses and immovables by way of sale, mortgage, gift, partition or otherwise and generally to do validly any acts which may be lawfully done by the Association.

5. The affairs of the Association shall be conducted in conformity with such directions and instructions as may be given by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada.

6. Dissolution.

In the event of dissolution of the Association all and any properties movable or immovable and all and any assets of the Association shall be disposed of in such a manner as may be decided by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada.

7. Alteration of Articles.

The present Articles can be altered by decision of Shoghi

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Effendi Rabbani or whoever may lawfully succeed him as the Guardian of Baha'i Faith with approval of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada.

Certified true copy of regulations submitted to the District Commissioner's offices for registration.

**(Sigd) E. MacLaren,
for District Commissioner.**

Haifa 15.5.30

**Seal of
National Spiritual
Assembly of the
Baha'is of the
United States and
Canada—Palestine Branch.**

According to the above Papers, Ruhi Effendi is a charter member of the Incorporated Bahai Society in Palestine, as well as Secretary with power of attorney, while the National Spiritual Assembly, an American organization, is the controlling factor of a Palestinian association. This latter fact is made clear in *Article Six* for, here we find that in the event of the break-up of the organization, all its properties, movable and immovable, shall be *disposed of in such manner, as may be decided by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada.*

Oases in the Desert of Rules

Reverting to the letters written by Ruhi Effendi in his role as secretary: we have realized that as transmitter of the messages and orders from Shoghi Effendi to the American Bahais, he fulfilled his task in a most exemplary manner. The dominant note, which he was expected to strike unremittingly, i.e.: the unconditional authority of the National Spiritual Assembly, comes out full and strong in every communication, making a recurrent theme which never fades nor wavers. Indeed, it can be said that the instrument was at all moments tuned to the required pitch.

At the same time, although Ruhi Effendi Afnan acted as spokesman for the Administration, he also, by chance or mischance, advocated the Bahai Cause itself. Here and there, we find in his letters certain liberal and inspiring sentiments, and can see him again as the witness to eternal truths which he started out to be. Thus, Ruhi Effendi speaks as an emancipated soul to other emancipated souls in a language which remains part of his being; and these paragraphs, rising like verdant oases in the dreary desert of rules and requirements, evoke a picture of more wholesome days. I like to think that he consciously, or even a little mischievously, put something over on his

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masters; but, whether or not such a supposition is justified, he did contribute something genuine and vibrant that warms the heart and comforts the soul.

With this thought in mind, it is something of an experience to reread the letters of Ruhi Effendi; to wade through the dry legalisms, and the arid wastes of materialism, and to come with a sudden delightful shock upon the Bahai ideals expressed in the Master's own modern, universal spirit and with his contagious energy. Therefore, may I invite the reader to wander awhile in the domain of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha? It is to be found in the letters which came from Haifa, as written by the Guardian's secretary, Ruhi Effendi Afnan.

This failure of material civilization should bring man near to spiritual matters. Working for material comfort and prosperity is becoming so useless and hopeless that we may well turn our attention more to God and the future life.

—Baha'i News, April, 1932

As you mention in your letter the Cause needs some more people who are able to shoulder its responsibilities and extend real help in promoting its many interests, both spiritual and material. These people whom we are so eagerly awaiting to appear will not, however, come of their own accord. They have to be brought in. It is for us to become active and really spread the Message.

—Baha'i News, July, 1932

From every corner of the earth letters come . . . asking for teachers . . . The only way we can satisfy that need is to have every Baha'i follow the command of Baha'u'llah and become himself a teacher. And that task is not so very impossible; it only needs a thorough knowledge of the teachings and a burning desire to spread the Message.

—Baha'i News, July, 1932

As to teaching work in colleges and universities, this is very important, for students as a whole are open-minded and little influenced by tradition. They would easily enter the Cause if the subject is properly presented and their intellect and sentiments properly satisfied. . . . The movement surely needs educated and devoted souls who will through their deeds as well as pen promulgate the teachings throughout the world.

—Baha'i News, July, 1932

A group that does not progress and show signs of life will soon die out and be forgotten. We have to keep virile and remain active if we desire our Cause to prosper and become an active force in shaping the destiny of the world.

—Baha'i News, July, 1932

The present condition of the world—its economic instability,

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social dissensions, political dissatisfactions and international distrust—should awaken the youth from their slumber and make them inquire what the future is going to bring. It is surely they who will suffer most if some calamity sweeps over the world. They should therefore open their eyes to the existing conditions, study the evil forces that are at work and then with a concerted effort arise and bring about the necessary reforms—reforms that shall contain within their scope the spiritual as well as social and political phases of human life.

—*Baha'i News*, November, 1932

Moreover, it is the duty of the Baha'is to help one another in time of difficulty—in times such as these when our economic life is disrupted and as a result innumerable people are left without work and proper means of livelihood.

—*Baha'i News*, November, 1932

You mention the need of the Cause for capable and enlightened souls who would arise and help the promotion of our beloved Faith and the carrying through of its divine plans. . . . It may be because we have failed to do our best, in living the life, and promoting the spread of the Message to the best of our ability. We have first to create the material with which we have to work and then hope to succeed. In the *Beyan* the Bab says that every religion of the past was fit to become universal. *The only reason why they fail to attain that mark was the incompetence of their followers.* He then proceeds to give a definite promise that this would not be the fate of the revelation of "Him whom God would make manifest," that it will become universal and include all the people of the world. This shows that we will ultimately succeed. But could we not through our shortcomings, failures to sacrifice and reluctance to concentrate our efforts in spreading the Cause, retard the realization of that ideal? And what would that mean? It shall mean that we will be held responsible before God, that the race will remain longer in its state of waywardness, that wars would not be so soon averted, that human suffering will last longer.

—*Baha'i News*, April, 1932

The youth should be encouraged to train themselves in public speaking while they are still pursuing their studies in schools or colleges. It is surely very necessary that the friends should keep in touch with the modern social movements.

—*Baha'i News*, July, 1932

When such a crisis sweeps over the world no person should hope to remain intact. We belong to an organic unit and when one part of the organism suffers all the rest of the body will feel its consequences. This is in fact the reason why Baha'u'llah calls our attention to the unity of mankind. But as Baha'is we should not let such hardships weaken our hope in the future.

—*Baha'i News*, July, 1932

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The best Assembly is the one that capitalizes the talents of all the members of the group and keeps them busy in some form of active participation in serving the Cause and spreading the Message.

—*Bahá'i News*, November, 1932

The friends have a great duty, first toward the Cause and then towards society at large. Bahá'u'lláh has come to the world with a divine Message and devoted all His life and withstood all forms of persecution in the hope of establishing it firmly. We are now the trustees of that Mission. It is for us to bring that task begun by Bahá'u'lláh to a final consummation. Should we fail we have been untrue to our Lord and also remained deaf to the cry of humanity seeking salvation.

—*Bahá'i News*, February, 1933

Chapter V
THE SPEAKER

*Your speech is simple, my Master, but not theirs who
talk of you.*

*I understand the voice of your stars and the silence
of your trees.*

—Rabindranath Tagore
Fruit-Gathering, Stanza XV

Chapter V

THE SPEAKER

An Unparalleled Orator

The Bahai Cause is a revelation, in that it has disclosed the *Plan* of the Supreme Being for the establishment and continuance of a *Moral Society* on the earth; and the accomplishment of the plan is dependent upon speech. Now, mankind as a whole is endowed with this faculty, but only a very few have developed the sense into a talent, while it is but here and there throughout the centuries that the exercise of this natural capacity has become an act of genius.

In the case of Abdul Baha, words were the golden harvest that followed the blossoming of spirit, for the fragrant hours of his consciousness dropped half their petals into his speech. His was the voice of the heart which came from the heart and went to the heart. Simple yet profound, broad yet pointed, it was at once the easiest of languages and the most difficult; easy, because attuned ears understood it without effort; difficult, because certain ears could not catch its vibrations. Abdul Baha's discourse was like the rich carpet of his own Persian native land; it rolled to the feet of the observer and extended before him, revealing a wealth of subject matter, infinite coloring, delicacy, craftsmanship and inspiration. He was an unparalleled orator, the first in the Bahai Cause, and the secret of his eloquence was in his vehement simplicity. His thoughts breathed the breath of life and his words burned with the brilliancy of suns and stars.

Abdul Baha spoke extemporaneously and spontaneously. He never used a manuscript, nor did he keep at hand any note whatsoever in order to refresh his memory or guide his theme toward its logical climax. He discoursed out of the abundance of his knowledge and spiritual experience; and, when he referred to the writings of Baha-O-Llah, he did not read from them, but talked about them. He set his pattern of speech before the Bahais and wished them to emulate it; accompanying it the while with the resources of their own minds and spirits, and always adapting it to the changing circumstances of time and place.

Nevertheless, in certain Bahai groups in the United States there existed, and for that matter still exists, a persistent inclination to exclude all public speaking. Many thought it appropriate to confine themselves to the reading of the Tablets. This limited conception of turning Bahai meet-

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ings into reading circles—the reading done mostly by simple folk who understand little of the subject, amused Abdul Baha greatly. He wondered why these people were averse to delivering the message out of their hearts; and he often wrote on this topic, stating plainly that the most important service was to deliver addresses and speeches, as fluent and eloquent as was possible. Thus, he encouraged the Bahais to speak, advising them *to read but sparingly*. They must unloose the tongue, promulgate the fragrances and diffuse the words of God. They must present to the public the proofs and evidences of this Cause *with the language of fire*—so that the souls may be exhilarated and the minds become the arena of tumult and the seat of exclamation. Then divine inspiration would descend, the bounties of the Holy Spirit would be conferred, the breezes from the Paradise of Abha would waft and the glad-tidings of Baha-O-Llah would spread across the world.

The basis of a Bahai address must be the oneness of the world of humanity, so that religious fanaticism, sectarian bias, racial prejudice and political rivalry may be removed from the hearts of men. In referring to his Western tour and his addresses before sundry audiences, he would often state that the Bahais should imitate his own conduct and manner. When a teacher delivers an address, his words must first of all have a supreme and *powerful effect upon himself*; then the hearer will likewise be affected. His utterances must be like unto flames of fire, burning away the veils of separation and disunity.

Meeting the World on its Own Ground

From 1898, when the first vanguard of American pilgrims visited Acca, Palestine, up to 1910, Abdul Baha's talks before visitors were mainly in the form of conversation. He dealt with the problems of religion, philosophy, science and art, according to the questions that were put to him; and, of course, he touched upon all these subjects in the countless Tablets that *were ever on their way to his followers*. Yet, he did not speak in public meetings nor make what may be termed addresses. The conditions of his life rendered such activity impossible, for it must be recalled that from childhood to old age he had been held a captive. Then, in the year 1908, the Ottoman government was overturned and the political prisons of the Empire were thrown open by the Young Turks. Then was seen the miracle of miracles; one which, as far as I know, cannot be matched in human history. Another person, in like circumstances, would have retained upon his mind and body the marks of confinement. The spirit might yet be intrepid,

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but the elasticity would be gone. In an instance of this kind, one would denote signs of abstraction, probably of vagueness; one could not expect to find a man at the apex of his powers, and certainly not a man of the world, deft in his dealings, assured in his every move, a modernist far beyond the *moderns of his day and generation*. Yet such was the Master at the age of sixty-seven as he passed out of life-long retirement and emerged into public view. In his case, there were no inhibitions of whatsoever kind; no sense that his career was drawing to a close; no idea that his mission could be fulfilled at a distance. Abdul Baha, without the slightest hesitation, stepped forth to meet the world on its own ground.

After a stay in Egypt, he crossed the continent and arrived in London on Monday, September 3, 1911. The great majority of articles that appeared in the press were both restrained and dignified in tone. Everywhere, wonder was expressed that forty years of imprisonment should have left behind so few physical traces. In describing him, W. Tudor Pole in an article published in *Star of the West*, September 27, 1911, writes:—

Abdul Baha receives all who come to him, whether great or small. . . . Countless press correspondents have been received and they usually retire from the interview greatly impressed by his noble dignity and spiritual simplicity. Many of the London dailies refer to him as the great Persian Prophet. . . . Abdul Baha has been visited by many well-known leaders of thought now in this country.

He rises about 5 A. M. and works for some hours at his correspondence. Interviews commence soon after 9 A. M. and last until midday. After lunch he takes a short rest and then usually drives out into the parks or to visit various people who are deeply interested in his work. Gatherings of friends take place nearly every evening and he has given some wonderful discourses at such times. . . . On Sunday evening, September 10th, Abdul Baha accepted an invitation from Rev. R. J. Campbell to visit the City Temple. The visit was kept secret, but the congregation was as usual very large, probably well over 2,000. Abdul Baha spoke from the pulpit for about 9 minutes and the tense thrill vibrating throughout the whole building was most strongly marked. He spoke in Persian in full, vibrant tones and the whole congregation was held spellbound. For the first time probably, in the history of the Bahai Movement, its venerable leader addressed a great public gathering, and those of us who were privileged to attend can never forget the wonderful impression produced. It seemed to us as if a new page in history was being turned over and as if a new religious and spiritual epoch was being outwardly launched upon an expectant world before our very eyes. . . .

His presence among us is a profound blessing and its unifying spiritual effect will grow unceasingly. . . . Abdul Baha, Servant of God! No other title would be so appropriate or so dignified. The

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work now being so triumphantly brought to fruition by this great Master of Men will endure throughout all future ages and the great spiritual ideals that lie behind it will become actual realities. . . . Surely we require no greater inspiration than this!

In the same issue of *Star of the West*, September 27, 1911, there is the reprint of an article entitled *Towards Spiritual Unity* which appeared in *The Christian Commonwealth* of September 13th above the signature "A. D." This long article is valuable in many respects, mainly because it records one of the first interviews between Abdul Baha and an English correspondent. "A. D." opens as follows:—

For years past, word has been coming to the West that a new prophet has arisen in the East, and that a great religious movement, starting in Persia, was spreading far and wide. Reports were vague and conflicting, but gradually the main facts emerged. . . . On Monday evening of last week "The Master," as his followers naturally call him, arrived in London, and on Tuesday I had the privilege of meeting him.

"What is he like?" Let me quote the words of one who visited him at Akka a few years ago:—

"He is of middle stature, strongly built. He wears flowing light-colored robes. On his head is a light buff fez with a white cloth wound about it. His long grey hair rests on his shoulders. His forehead is broad, full, and high, his nose slightly aquiline, his moustaches and beard, the latter full, though not heavy, nearly (now quite) white. His eyes are grey and blue, large and both soft and penetrating. His bearing is simple, but there is grace, dignity and even majesty about his movements. . . . We see the benignity and the kindness of his countenance. . . ."

During his long imprisonment he thought not of himself, but of others; he enjoyed continual communion with God, he ministered to the needs of his fellow-prisoners, and it was because he lived this unselfish life that he survived while many others perished. "A captive for the Cause of God," his interpreter explained, "his prison was to him as a palace. His body was suffering, but his soul was free."

The invariable tendency on the part of the followers of a great religious leader is to attribute to him supernatural powers. Abdul Baha emphatically disclaims possessing any such, and even deprecates the description of himself as a prophet. He told me he had never spoken a single word implying that he had right to such an appellation. "I am simply a servant of God," he said, "and I do not wish to be called anything more than that." He assured me that he has no desire to found another sect. "The foundation truth of Baha'u'llah is the foundation truth of all religions. . . . Therefore, the Bahais have for the followers of other religions the greatest love and yearning, because they know that mankind is one. Baha'u'llah seeks to promote and establish friendship and union. He addresses himself not to a sect, but to the whole world. . . ."

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It is not surprising that people in increasing numbers are attracted to the Bahai faith by its catholicity, the loftiness of its ethic, the simplicity of its teaching, its complete freedom from narrow and exclusive dogma. It has no organization, no hierarchy, no ritual, no fixed places and times of meetings; in short, it is spirit and life. It does not seek to proselytize; you can be a Bahai without ceasing to be a Christian, a Jew, or Mohammadan. There are adherents of the Bahai faith in every country in the world. . . .

It has been my good fortune to meet Abdul Baha several times during the past week. In one conversation I sought his impressions of England . . . already he has been much impressed by the freedom we enjoy. "I admire the liberty you have in England and the use you make of it," he said. "Every person in this country can go his own way and say what he thinks without any one making him afraid. In fact, he is king of himself."

"Do you consider we have too much liberty?"

"Oh, no; you all seem to be perfectly comfortable and perfectly safe. Freedom of thought and speech enlarges the circle of one's understanding and leads to progress and unity. . . ."

The First Speech

The meeting at the City Temple is a landmark in history, for it was there that the flood of Abdul Baha's utterance was unloosed upon the world. Let us then continue reading the article of "A. D". By means of his description, we shall transport ourselves over the years and take our places in the vast congregation at that evening service. While all are joining in the hymn which precedes the sermon, a venerable figure in Persian robes slowly ascends the stairs of the pulpit; then, the Rev. R. J. Campbell, Pastor of the City Temple, introduces his distinguished guest, saying:—

This evening we have in the pulpit of the City Temple the leader of one of the most remarkable religious movements of this or any age. . . . The Bahai movement, as it is called, in Hither Asia rose on that soil just as spontaneously as Christianity rose in the middle territories adjoining, and that faith—which, by the way, is very closely akin to, I think I might say identical with, the spiritual purpose of Christianity—that movement stands for the spiritual unity of mankind; it stands for universal peace among the nations. These are good things and the man who teaches them . . . must be a good man as well as great. Abdul Baha is on a visit to this country—a private visit—but he wished to see the City Temple; and I think I am right in saying, for the first time in his life he has consented to lift his voice in public. He does not address public meetings, he does not preach sermons; he is just a religious teacher. He spent forty years in prison for his faith, and from his prison directed the efforts of his followers. There is not much in the way of organization, but simple trust in the Spirit

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of God. We, as followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is to us and always will be the Light of the World, view with sympathy and respect every movement of the Spirit of God in the experience of mankind, and therefore we give greeting to Abdul Baha—I do not know whether I could say in the name of the whole Christian community—that may be too much—but I think in the name of all who share the spirit of our Master, and are trying to live their lives in that spirit. Abdul Baha, I think, intends to say a word or two in response to this greeting that I address to him in your name.

"A. D.," the English correspondent, continues his article as follows:—

Abdul Baha then advanced to the front of the pulpit and addressed the congregation. He spoke for eight minutes in Persian with considerable animation, his voice rising and falling as in a rhythmic chant. Towards the close he placed the palms of his hands together as in prayer. The translation was read afterwards by Mr. W. Tudor Pole, as follows:—

. . . This is a new cycle of human power. All the horizons of the world are luminous, and the world will become indeed as a garden and a paradise. It is the hour of unity of the sons of men, and a drawing together of all races and all classes. . . . The gift of God to this enlightened age is the knowledge of the oneness of mankind and the fundamental oneness of religion. War shall cease between nations, and by the will of God the Most Great Peace shall come; the world will be seen as a new world, and all men shall live as brothers. . . . There is one God; mankind is one; and the foundations of religion are one.

Mr. Charles Mason Remey, who had been called to join Abdul Baha in Europe, gives an account of the meeting in a letter published in *Star of the West*, October 16, 1911. He also describes the Master's method of teaching. We will quote a portion of this letter:—

He spoke for several minutes with an increasing forcefulness. . . . Then a stillness and a quietness fell over the assemblage and as Abdul Baha raised his hands in prayer and benediction, we were all conscious of the Omnipresent Spirit of God, for every soul seemed to vibrate in unison with the soul of Abdul Baha, who is God's servant here upon earth today. . . .

(Abdul Baha's) methods of teaching are positive in the extreme without the slightest suggestion of negation. In meeting people of all manner of thought from orthodoxy to atheism, his one object is to strike a positive sympathetic chord with the individual.

Through accentuating and dwelling upon the ground of common thought, spiritual chords of Unity are extended from him to many souls, and through ignoring the differences, those destructive, negative forces, finding nothing to set them in vibration, are as non-existent.

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From this we can learn a valuable lesson in teaching. It is not only unnecessary but also very harmful for one to attempt to dislodge religious beliefs from the mind of a truth-seeker by any other method than that employed by Abdul Baha.

Thousands of Speeches

That first eight minute speech was the mother that gave birth to thousands of other speeches—bright, happy children which tramped forth from the mind and heart of Abdul Baha to bless mankind with their messages of goodwill and fellowship. A percentage of these speeches have, since 1912, been brought together and published in book form, but many more, in the possession of Bahais throughout the world, are not yet in print. The following is a very incomplete list of the published works that contain the texts of the speeches:—

1. *Abdul Baha in London. Addresses and Notes of Conversations, 1912.*
2. *Talks of Abdul Baha Given in Paris, 1912.*
3. *The Wisdom of Abdul Baha, 1911-1912.*
4. *Abdul Baha in New York, 1912.*
5. *Abdul Baha on Divine Philosophy, 1918.*
6. *The Promulgation of Universal Peace, Vol. I, 1922, Vol. II, 1925.*

There are besides other works which carry, either in part or in whole, the words of Abdul Baha and extracts from his conversations and talks, as recorded in the diaries kept by his secretaries or other individuals. A list of these may assist the student of Bahai literature:—

1. *Compilation, Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha, 1918.*
2. *Bahai Scriptures, 1923.*
3. *The Divine Art of Living, Abdul Baha, 1926.*
4. *The Oneness of Mankind, Baha-U-Llah, Abdul Baha, 1927.*
5. *Foundations of World Unity, Abdul Baha, 1927.*
6. *Abdul Baha in Egypt, 1929.*
7. *The Baha'i Peace Program, From the Writings of Abdul Baha, 1930.*

Besides the above books, I have in my library a precious Manuscript which contains textual translations from the original Persian copies of his talks delivered in Europe and America. The translations, made by a well-known East Indian Bahai, were approved by Abdul Baha himself.

Thus, it is evident that the great speeches delivered by Abdul Baha during his sojourn throughout Europe and America, from 1911 to 1913,

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have resulted in the creation of a library of information on the Bahai Cause which is a treasure-house of knowledge and inspiration. From the day when he set foot on the soil of the Western continent, *The Star of the West*, *World Order* and other Bahai publications in Asia, Europe and America have dedicated their pages year in and year out to the reproduction of his public talks. He arrived in England, September 10, 1911. After a sojourn in that country, he visited France and then returned to Egypt, from whence on March 25, 1912, he sailed for America. Reaching New York on April 11th, he journeyed throughout the United States and Canada until December 5th. On his homeward trip, he visited England, Scotland, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary and Egypt, and arrived in Haifa, Palestine, on December 10, 1913. During all this time, Abdul Baha was occupied in teaching the Cause and expanding the boundaries of the movement, and as we can see, he provided the Bahai world with a supply of timeless literature that is applicable to all conditions and circumstances and appears to be almost inexhaustible. All this within a period of two years.

Picking up the February, April and May copies of *World Order*, of this year, 1942, we, to our delight, come across three, until now unpublished speeches of Abdul Baha delivered in Baltimore and New York in the year 1912. Their titles are not only suggestive of the vitality of the message but also of the hopes and aspirations of the speaker. *All are servants of God* rings assuringly in our ears; *Be Ever Ready* lifts us out of our sluggishness; *The Happiness of Mankind Will be Realized* puts us on our mettle and sets us to work with hope and confidence.

Although Abdul Baha's physical presence has for long been removed from our midst, his marvelous speeches, like an omnipresent army, have been assisting us by day and by night; gaining for us victories without number. They have been used in a variety of ways, and are absolutely essential to Bahai work.

(1) There exist today many excellent compilations of extracts and quotations (published and unpublished) selected by individuals out of the never-ending mass of Abdul Baha's talks.

(2) The talks have supplied fitting texts for speeches delivered during all these years by Bahai teachers and non-Bahai scholars.

(3) Few Bahai meetings are considered complete without reading some suitable parts from the talks for the edification and enlightenment of the audience.

(4) Numberless general articles have been published by Bahai writ-

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ers and others in which the authors try to prove their points and clinch their arguments by quoting from Abdul Baha's talks.

(5) These talks have provoked creative discussions and have suggested collateral and useful ideas to many authors, speakers and writers.

(6) The Editors of the Bahai Publications have for years made suitable and interesting selections out of these speeches and published them monthly under various titles. The bound volumes of the *Star of the West*, 1922, 1923, 1924, 1925, 1926, 1927, 1928, 1929 contain many such selections which, at a glance, give us the variety of subjects dealt with by Abdul Baha. Here are some of the titles:—*The Progress in Religion—the question of Evolution. The Morn of Unity. Two Kinds of Education. Education must include the Spiritual ideas of World Peace and Brotherhood. Reality is One. Ideal Brotherhood. The Story of Baha-U-Llah's Life. What is Faith? If Persia and America Co-operate. The Brilliant Star—Christ. The Divine Perfections of Jesus Christ. The Spiritual Foundation of Education. Religion the basis for an enduring Civilization. The divine Phase of Economics. How to Make Life Successful. The two Natures of Man. God's Perfect Laws. The Existence of God. Equality of Man and Woman. Immortality. What is Death? The Accident of Color. The Elemental Atom and its Composition. Is Disarmament Possible? Communication with the other World.*

The above titles were not chosen by the Master, for he never entitled his speeches; but were selected later as descriptive of the topics dealt with in the various talks. The titles are interesting in themselves for they indicate the broad field of subject matter covered by Abdul Baha before his Western audiences.

This listing of records applying to the Master's European and American journeys would not be complete without a mention of newspaper accounts. I have in my library over twenty large clipping books containing news and feature articles, mostly illustrated, which appeared in the press of England, Scotland, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Switzerland, the United States, Canada and Egypt. These articles and interviews show the impression made on the spot by Abdul Baha and will be exceedingly valuable in the hands of future historians.

The Inhabitants of the World are Ready to Hearken

On his return from his Western tour, Abdul Baha, in a Tablet written in Haifa, continues to accentuate the virtues of teaching. In part, he says:—

In short, although Abdul-Baha considers himself as a drop, yet

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this drop is connected with the Most Great Sea. Although he looks upon himself as an atom, yet this atom is related to the world-illuminating sun. As it is said: "The Originator of all these voices is the King himself;" or in other words: "It is through His assistance."

Unquestionably this physical body and human energy would have been unable to stand this constant wear and tear, and were it not for the support of the angel of Providence even the bones of this servant would have mouldered away. But the aid and help of His Highness the Desired One was the Guardian and Protector of the weak and humble Abdul-Baha. Through the many annoyances and inconveniences of the journey, physical exhaustion was produced in the nerves and the various indispositions caused poor health, but the Spirit was so energized that this great weakness and excessive feebleness disappeared in a short period of time, and ere long Abdul-Baha will be occupied again with reading and writing. . . .

Consider, that the Apostles of Christ were few in number, but because they were filled to overflowing with His Graces, and the essence of His Advice and Commandments were circulating, like unto the spirit, through their veins and arteries, to such an extent that one could find nothing else throughout their beings save His Love, and they girded up the loins of endeavor to convey the Message. Now it has become manifest what a tremendous effect and result their services produced! We must also act accordingly and follow in their footsteps.

O ye divine believers! Today any soul who is a teacher of the Cause is confirmed. The Teachers are in the front rank, are favored at the Threshold of the Almighty and helped from the Kingdom of ABHA! The believers of God must exercise the utmost love, respect and consideration towards the teachers;—so that in whatever place they may enter, joy and happiness be obtained. But regarding the qualifications of the teachers, they are revealed in the Divine Tablets. They must adorn themselves with those attributes. I declare by God, beside whom there is no God, that if today a weak mosquito is characterized with the qualifications of the teachers and summons the people to the Divine Kingdom, it will become a soaring falcon of heaven and the ephemeral moth will be changed into an eagle of the apex of the Merciful; the drop will be transformed into a surging ocean and the atom will emit the brilliancy of the sun. From every part the cry of, "*Where are the teachers?*" is being raised, and from the Kingdom of ABHA, the voice of, "*Where are the attracted ones. Where are the severed ones? Where are the sanctified ones?*" reaches to the ear of intelligence. The inhabitants of the world have attained to a most astonishing capacity and are ready to hearken to this Call.

O ye friends of God! Show ye an effort, put ye forth an extraordinary exertion—so that this Candle may become the witness of

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every congregation, and this lay or strain be the Cause of happiness to every human soul. . . .

from "*Trumpet Call to the East and West*". Tablet by Abdul-Baha Abbas, translated on Mount Carmel, Haifa, Palestine, Sept. 22, 1914—in *Star of the West* Vol. V, November 23, 1914, No. 14.

September in England

On page 79 of *Abdul Baha in London*, we find a chapter in which is described the Master's stay at the Clifton Guest House in Bristol during the week-end of September 23rd to 25th, 1911. This is as lovely an account of the Master as one could read anywhere. One sees him talking with his British friends, attending a general reception in his honor, driving along the countryside and walking on the downs; finally, we have a picture of him gathering together the servants of the Clifton Guest House and thanking them for their care of him as he speaks on the dignity of labor and gives to each a tangible remembrance of his visit. Let us hold in our consciousness this scene in a suburban English town, with Abdul Baha as the central figure, the while noting the date: *September, 1911*.

Thirteen years have rolled into the lap of eternity, and, taking a mental trip back to England, we find ourselves once more in the month of September. It is 1924.

We do not see the Master; that gracious presence is no longer on the earth, but his place is not vacant. A youthful figure is standing before a British audience, instead of that so familiar, patriarchal one; an untried voice is raised, substituting those rich, powerful tones, yet the message is the same. Let us then focus our attention on Ruhi Effendi, a young man of twenty-four years, as he steps to the front and takes up his grandfather's work. This is his maiden trip to the West and he comes as personal representative of the Guardian of the Bahai Cause.

The occasion is *The Conference of Some Living Religions Within the British Empire* which held sessions in London from September 22nd to October 3rd, 1924. The official report by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of Great Britain, signed by its joint secretaries, E. J. Rosenberg and G. P. Simpson, is published in *The Bahai World*, 1926-1928, Vol. II, p. 225. It reads as follows:—

The British Empire Exhibition at Wembley in 1924 afforded opportunity for holding a number of conferences on many subjects of imperial interest. Amongst these was one on "*Some Living Religions Within the British Empire*," organized by the School of Oriental Studies and the Sociological Society, the purpose of which was to

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render more widely known the Faiths now prevailing in the Eastern and Western Dominions of the British Commonwealth. With this object in view it was decided by the Executive Committee of the Conference that the papers to be presented should be contributed by adherents of each religion, who, while touching lightly on creed and dogma, should treat chiefly of the everyday results of the teachings as evidenced in the personal and social life of its followers.

It was originally intended that the Conference should be held in one of the halls at the Wembley Exhibition, but owing to difficulties which arose with regard to accommodation, it was held at the Imperial Institute, South Kensington, from September 22nd to October 3rd, 1924.

Amongst the twelve or more living religions dealt with, the Bahá'í religion naturally found its place, both because of its own inherent importance and because of its widespread range throughout the Empire, covering as it does not only Eastern but also Western countries.

The Bahá'í paper to be presented to the Conference was written, at the express wish of the Guardian of the Cause (Shoghi Effendi), under the supervision of a committee of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada, by Mr. Horace Holley—the other members of the committee being Mr. Mountfort Mills and Mrs. Parsons. It was subsequently revised by some member of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Great Britain, and was read at the meeting on September 25, 1924, by Mr. Mountfort Mills, the chair being taken by Dr. Walter Walsh, the leader of the Free Religious Movement.

The Assembly came to the conclusion that it would be desirable to bring out more fully the practical results obtained through the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, and a short supplementary paper was therefore written by Ruhi Afnan with the direct advice of Shoghi Effendi, and was read by the author at the above mentioned meeting.

These two papers are now published in a separate edition for the benefit of Bahá'ís especially, but they will find their place also in the memorial volume of *Transactions of the Conference*, issued by the Committee and published by Messrs. Duckworth & Co., Ltd.

Of the Bahá'í talks above-mentioned, it is the second that we are concerned with, and this I would like to reproduce in full, did space allow. However, I am forced to content myself with quoting the opening remarks made by Ruhi Effendi before the Congress, after which I will skip over to the conclusion of his speech.

Speech of Ruhi Effendi Afnan

The speaker who preceded me gave you a sketch of the history of the Bahá'í Movement as well as a statement of some of its fundamental principles and teachings. It now rests with me to explain

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briefly the significance of those principles and teachings and to describe the profound changes they have wrought in the lives of their followers.

At a time when the spirit of materialism was spreading all over Europe, when internal revolutions, diplomatic intrigues, political strife and economic rivalries were darkening the horizon of an agitated and suffering world, Baha'u'llah, from the prison city of Akka, addressed a number of Epistles to the monarchs and rulers of the world to whom He declared His teachings and principles.

To the Baha'is these teachings stand out as the only remedy for the divers ills of the present age and the only solution of its manifold problems.

Baha'u'llah saw the world like the surface of a glacier hopelessly divided by innumerable fissures and dark and deep crevasses. The development of modern science had opened the eyes of men to the bigotry and prejudice that existed in religion and had so alienated them from it that even its pure and fundamental truths seemed, to their minds, to be darkened. The gulf existing between man and God was widening and agnosticism was the fashion of the day.

The spirit of nationalism, embittered by fierce economic and political rivalries, had so widened the chasms separating the nations, that nothing less than a great world war could be foreseen.

Within the individual nations also, new lines of cleavage accentuated the divisions and differences of man, and class hatred and economic unrest were spreading fast over the European continent.

Baha'u'llah conceived the glorious vision of the Oneness of Mankind and set before Himself the task of healing, by aid of His fundamental principles, every sore that afflicted the body of humanity. He knew well that unless all the crevasses were bridged over and all the differences removed, unity and universal peace would not prove enduring, nor even attainable.

To bring back man to God and at the same time to enable him to appreciate the advantages which science provides, He declared that true religion and science cannot possibly be antagonistic. For both, in their essence, are truths, and between truths there can be no conflict. Moreover, to reconcile the religions, he laid it down, as a guiding principle, that the purpose of Religion is to provide a social bond, to create a new force in man's life, to infuse in him the love of his neighbor. If, therefore, a religion, which He likened to a medicine, should aggravate the disease, it is far better to be without it.

In adjusting international difficulties He did not advocate political methods. He knew that war is only the result of a state of mind, a spirit of blind and narrow nationalism inherent in man's heart. He, therefore, dealt His first blow by declaring that "Glory is not his who loves his country, but glory is his who loves his kind." All men are the sheep of one fold and God the divine and loving Shepherd. Why, therefore, slay each other?

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As one of the sources of misunderstanding is multiplicity of languages, He called upon the members of the International House of Justice, either to create a new auxiliary language or to choose one of those already existing and to have it taught in all the schools of the world, so that ideas might be more easily diffused and the risk of grave misunderstanding lessened. He then laid down the broad lines that should direct the formation of the International House of Justice, a supreme and all-inclusive body whose members shall be fully accredited representatives of all the peoples of the world. They shall assemble, and after mature deliberation, arbitrate on all questions, social, political and economic, which may lead to war.

In order to eliminate the root cause of all forms of class hatred He proclaimed, "Do ye know why We have created you from one clay? That no one should exalt himself over the other. Ponder in your heart how ye were created. It behooveth you, since We have created you all from the same substance, to be even as one soul, in such wise that ye may walk with the same feet, eat with the same mouth and dwell in the same land; that from your inmost being, by your deeds and actions, the signs of oneness and the essence of detachment may be made manifest. This is My counsel unto you, O ye concourse of Light! Heed ye this counsel, that ye may obtain the Fruit of Holiness from the Tree of Wondrous Glory."

Thus by taking away all the causes of differences Baha'u'llah sought to establish the Oneness of Mankind and to abolish definitely international and class war. . . .

* * * *

In conclusion, it will be generally agreed that it would be far from God's infinite mercy to give His helpless creatures the freedom to tread on dangerous ground, and whilst knowing the solution of their problems to stand aside heedless of their sufferings and deaf to their constant prayers. It is in accordance with His divine attributes to give them guidance when need arises, to send them a Messenger with the necessary laws and commandments to put them on the right path of safety. And now that the social unrest is becoming a real menace to civilization itself, when world problems in their acuteness and multiplicity are baffling the minds of men, we, a small yet determined band, fired by the unquenchable enthusiasm of the promise of a New Day, firmly believe that the sea of divine compassion has surged, that the Lord has sent His Messenger with the necessary solution of those intricate problems. The Baha'is on their part have tried their utmost, have sacrificed their well-being, their property, their all, to diffuse this spirit far and wide. Is the world willing to answer their call, or at least to deem it worthy of attention?

—The Baha'i Magazine, *Star of the West*, April, 1925, Vol. XVI; also reproduced in *The Baha'i World*, Vol. II, 1926-1928, pp. 239-242.

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Bahai News of December 1924 gives an account of the conference. In it we find a glowing tribute to Ruhi Afnan who spoke in faith and wisdom, his youth and enthusiasm winning all hearts to a close attention to the Baha'i teachings. Following is the report in its entirety:—

Since the return of Shoghi Effendi to Haifa, the most important news of the Cause outside this country has been the great interest with which the two papers on the Baha'i Cause were received by the audience attending the Conference of Some Living Religions within the British Empire, held at the Imperial Institute, London, from September 22nd to October 3rd. Quoting from a general letter from the Spiritual Assembly of London, dated November 12th:

"The paper which presented the Baha'i Message was the product of consultation and cooperation and was read by Mr. Mountfort Mills, the delegate from the Canadian Baha'is, in clear and reverent tones reaching every part of the large hall, and was listened to with wrapt attention. Through the guidance of Abdu'l Baha the text was clearly inspired by his spirit, which was felt by all the believers.

"Ruhi Afnan then spoke in faith and wisdom, his youth and enthusiasm winning all hearts to a close attention to the Baha'i teachings he gave with sincerity and conviction. The power of the spiritual Presence was like a baptism. We felt the outpouring which Abdu'l Baha foretold would awaken the world with the Divine Message, and this must have been reflected in all hearts who were praying with us for the illumination of the world on that day of great opportunity."

—*Baha'i News, December, 1924.*

The Clock that Marked the Hour

We have observed the interesting fact that England was the setting of the initial public appearances of both the Master and his young grandson. Abdul Baha, emerging from life-long confinement in the East, faced his first audience in London. Ruhi Effendi, leaving the protective restrictions of his native Haifa, made his debut as a public speaker in the same city. That talk of Abdul Baha, compact with celestial meaning, was the first note in a symphony of speeches delivered throughout Europe and America. It opened a new era in the Bahai Cause; while the talk of Ruhi Effendi was likewise the starting point of fruitful journeyings in the interest of the movement. Naturally talented, well educated, endowed with a most sympathetic personality and, above all, possessed of a high sense of responsibility, this young man, then and there, embarked on a career which promised to be of incalculable value to the Cause. We can only guess how far he might have gone and what impetus the movement might have derived through him; we can only regret that he was never given wings to develop his mission

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to its fullest capacity, and can only mourn the cutting off from the Cause of this, its most living branch. For, in November, 1941, after nineteen years of service to the Baháí Movement and the Baháí Administration, Ruhi Effendi, together with his family, was excommunicated by order of his cousin, the Guardian; at the age of forty-two, this gifted exponent of the Teachings of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha was cast out from the Cause and placed in *spiritual quarantine*.

And now, one wonders: Shall it be that this bright light is snuffed out permanently? Is this sacrificial spirit wounded beyond recovery? Can this son of mighty lineage concur in his own disinheritance? Only time will answer these questions; but, in the meanwhile, we are conscious of the fact that Ruhi Effendi arose to follow in the footsteps of the Great Speaker, and remember that there are precedents for those who determine to hold to their missions, in the face of official disapproval:

Baha-O-Llah had made certain contracts with God; and Church and State combined in order to stifle his sense of obligation.

Abdul Baha had accepted responsibilities at the hands of his Father; and governments and their agencies combined in order to stifle his sense of obligation.

Did temporal power succeed? The years settled that question; history recorded the answer, and the world bears testimony to the result.

And now comes the young branch grown from the Mighty Tree! He alone in the Master's large family responded to Abdul Baha's call for speakers; and the winds of adversity are blowing heavily upon him. Will they stifle *his* sense of obligation? The same clock that marked the hour when the responses of his great Forebears were sounded will strike out the answer of Ruhi Effendi Afnan.

Chapter VI
THE WRITER

*They come with their laws and their codes to bind
me fast; but I evade them ever, for I am only waiting
for love to give myself up at last into his hands.*

—Rabindranath Tagore
Gitanjali, Stanza XVII

Chapter VI

THE WRITER

Style

Abdul Baha was a master of words through the mediums of Persian, Arabic and Turkish. He spoke in these three languages with utter fluency; he wrote in them with simplicity and art. There is no obscurity in his method, never a shadow of the superior attitude, no pedantry, no oratorical flourishes. He went straight to the point, rejecting everything superfluous. His style is free, and balanced as wings bearing on them grave reflections; his sentiments are as sunbeams, condensed and burning.

The Master's eloquence, his rhythmic style, his warm poetic outpouring, his prophetic explanations were as much part of him as was his physiognomy, his stature, the throbbing of his pulse, the action of his will; thus, the writings that he has left behind are fraught with himself—they are Abdul Baha in person.

An author's manner is the reflection of his mentality. If he wishes to write with lucidity, he must first of all let light take possession of his mind; if he aims at writing in a grand style, he must live in a grand consciousness. The mind of Abdul Baha was a center of radiance; his consciousness was wide-spread and heroic. Therefore, his writings are like unto the clear, swift current of a river that flows fresh and unconstrained, beautifying the countryside and bringing life to the farmlands of the neighborhood.

It is said that some authors write nonsense in a clear style, and others sense in an obscure one. Some can reason without being able to persuade; others can persuade without being able to reason. Some dive so deep that they disappear from our view; while others soar so high that they lose their own bearings. Again, there is the type that employs sarcasm and irony in order to cover the dry bones of dead idealism. Meanwhile, the poet, the inspired teacher writes simply of things that he knows, logically of things that he understands, warmly of things that he feels and convincingly of things that he believes. The difficult is easy for him; the beautiful is familiar to him and the miraculous is part of daily life.

Collections of Tablets

Abdul Baha is author of few books but he wrote thousands upon thousands of Tablets. These were addressed to Bahais and non-Bahais: men,

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women and children of all nationalities and races, in every country of the world. I can imagine that there never will be a time when *all* the Tablets of Abdul Baha will be collected and published in a series of volumes. The task is well-nigh impossible, for they are scattered throughout the cities and hamlets of the earth and add up to an incredible number.

From the earliest days of the Cause, the Babís and later the Baháís in Persia, Iraq, Palestine, Turkey, Egypt, India and other parts of the East made individual collections of the Tablets of the Bab, Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha. These collections were, and still are to be found in practically every Bahai family; the size depending entirely upon the opportunities and the industry of the owners. Copies of the Tablets had to be gathered from near and far, written in longhand and later bound in volumes. The teachers on their travels often carried along rich and varied collections of Tablets. Immediately upon their arrival in whatsoever city or village, the eager and spiritually hungry residents borrowed these precious documents and applied themselves to the copying of them. If the teacher's sojourn in a particular place was short, the Baháís would forego food and sleep in order to reproduce as many Tablets as was humanly possible. Occasionally, they offered all kinds of inducements to the teacher so that he would prolong his stay in their midst.

After the introduction of the Bahai Cause in the United States, the same procedure was established here, and for a like reason; there being practically no printed booklets or books of the Writings available. Thus, the early believers gave much time to the copying and distribution of the Tablets. With typewriter and mimeograph machine at hand, these American Baháís had at their disposal a far more simplified method for the dissemination of the teachings than did their Oriental brothers; and they made full use of it.

Mr. Charles Everett Sprague, a pioneer Bahai was indefatigable in making copies of the Tablets of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha and in sending them out broadcast. *Star of the West*, March 2, 1913 contains two interesting obituary notices on the life and work of Mr. Sprague, signed respectively by Major Honoré Joseph Jaxon and Edna McKinney, which bear testimony to his far-reaching work. To quote one of them:—

Those who have been in the Cause for a number of years will remember how the copies of Tablets from both Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha, which Mr. Charles E. Sprague sent broadcast over this country during the early days of the Cause in America were appreciated. From the moment of his entering the Cause, his main thought was "service," and the spread of the Glad-tidings to all. It was largely

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through his efforts that the first edition of the small book of prayers revealed by Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha was published.

I have in my library five volumes of these early Tablets which Mr. Sprague mimeographed and distributed amongst the seekers; also ten mimeographed collections of rare Tablets put out by Mr. J. H. Hougen, an active member of the Bahai Assembly of Seattle, Washington, who rendered a similar service to the Cause.

One of the most enthusiastic collectors and distributors of the Tablets of Abdul Baha was Miss Juliet Thompson. In those days, I lived in Washington, D. C., as secretary to the Persian Legation, and inasmuch as I received from the Master weekly packages of his Tablets, I made the habit of regularly sending the translations to Miss Thompson in New York who, on her part, made numerous copies and disseminated them amongst the believers. Her Friday night meetings were generally thronged with seekers who listened with rapt attention to these constantly arriving communications from Abdul Baha.

Practically every Bahai gave some of his or her time to the copying of the Tablets and to the sharing of their contents with others, and almost all of them had their individual collections. These were constantly being compared in order to find out which was most complete, and then the owners would fill in the gaps and bring their own collections up to the last minute. Amongst those who rendered conspicuous service in this field of spiritual education were Mr. and Mrs. Joseph H. Hannen, Mrs. Harlan Ober, Mrs. Edward Kinney, Miss Harriet Magee, Mr. Charles Mason Remey, Miss Gertrude Buikema, Mr. Albert Windust, Mrs. May Maxwell, Mr. Arthur Pilsbury Dodge, Mr. Hooper Harris, Mr. Carl Scheffler, Mrs. Mary Lesch, Mr. Howard McNutt, Mrs. Isabella Brittingham, Mrs. Louise R. Waite, Mr. Roy C. Wilhelm, Mrs. Corinne True, Dr. Zia M. Bagdadi, Mrs. Helen S. Goodall, Mrs. Ella G. Cooper, Mr. Thornton Chase, Miss Mary Rabb, Mrs. Ella Rice-Wray, Miss Henrietta Wagner, Miss Berthelin Lexow, now Mrs. Frederick Allen, and Miss Ella M. Roberts. The last named was editor of the *Magazine of the Children of the Kingdom*, and she achieved excellent results in the new field of child education from the Bahai point of view. I could go on with this list, adding many more names, did space allow; for I have only touched on this subject and the work that was accomplished through the dissemination of Tablets.

Collections Published

Finally, many of these partial, individual efforts were crystallized into

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a whole; for, in a general circular letter dated March 21, 1908 and sent out by the Bahai Spiritual Assembly of Chicago, the believers were requested to submit to the Assembly copies of their Tablets from Abdul Baha for preservation and eventual publication.

Thus, with the consent of the recipients and the permission of the Master, the first volume of the *Tablets of Abdul Baha* was published in 1909; the second, in 1915 and the third, in 1930. These three volumes, containing altogether 730 pages, present a glorious selection from the thousands upon thousands of Tablets written by Abdul Baha to his followers in this country. They are treasure-stores of spiritual knowledge and an invaluable section of Bahai literature.

While the American Bahais were engaged in copying, disseminating and, finally, in publishing the Tablets of Abdul Baha, the Spiritual Assembly of Cairo, Egypt, was addressing itself to the same task. A volume of Tablets, in Arabic and Persian, containing 488 pages appeared in 1910 and a second in the same languages, consisting of 336 pages, came out two years later. These books brought to light some very early and little known Tablets of Abdul Baha written to the Mohammadan, Jewish and Zoroastrian Bahais; and they reveal to us an angle of the Master's encyclopedic mind which was packed with knowledge of the religions and philosophies of the East.

My Own Collection

From early childhood, I have been inclined toward copy-keeping (a very useful form of activity, especially when a writer is concerned) and this inclination developed into a passion in regard to the talks and letters of Abdul Baha. Therefore, in the early years of my service to the Cause, when the Master began to send to me for translation his Tablets addressed to the American Bahais, I invariably made copies of these documents in handwriting, and thus started my own collection which in time became very large indeed. It is now bound in two volumes; the first consisting of 1477 pages and the second of 1522 pages—in all 2999 pages.

Apart from these most precious volumes, I have several books that contain Abdul Baha's Tablets as dictated to me, and also as dictated to my fellow-secretaries while I was in his service; for after the Tablets had been written in Persian by others, the Master would allow me to keep the copies as spiritual gifts and reminders of the days when I was in his presence. These last collections are the gems of my Bahai library, for all the tablets carry the Master's corrections made by his own hand.

THE WRITER

As I stated in the beginning of this chapter, Abdul Baha wrote few books, as such. However, two books of which he is the author exist and are available in English. The first is *A Traveller's Narrative*—a history of the appearance of the Bab. It was written about 1886, when the Master was 42 years old. Professor Edward G. Browne of Cambridge University, London, England translated it from the Persian in 1891. The second work is *The Mysterious Forces of Civilization*, written in 1887 and translated by Johanna Dawud. The first edition was published in 1910.

Having sketched herein a picture of Abdul Baha as a tireless writer, a master of language and a prophetic exponent of Truth, it will be appropriate to present a few extracts from the collections of his Tablets. At the same time, I suggest that the reader bear in mind the fact that the translations are far from perfect and do not give a completely satisfactory rendition of the Master's inimitable style.

The Follies of the Old World

Look thou with seeing eyes at the world about thee and at the inhabitants thereof. Upon the stage of this immense theatre, most spectacular plays are being enacted. On one side thereof thou wilt see the victorious and the vanquished legions of profit and loss. On the other side thou wilt observe the waves of the sea of folly rising and falling. Cries are being raised on every side and the agonies of revolution, revolt and unrest reach unto the ears of progressive men. There is a tremendous strike and clash between capital and labor, and the war between the aristocrats and democrats is carried on relentlessly with bow and arrow, sword and javelin. The phalanxes of a great army are drawn in battle array, each division taking its position. Armed troops and artillery are to be found in every part of the field. The flash of the swords of enmity blind the eyes from even the most remote distance, the lightning effect of breast-plate and lance, and the sparkle of the bucklers of hatred light up the night and bewilder the sight. In short: strife, battle, slaughter and war are prepared in organized perfection.

On the other hand thou wilt hear that from every house strains of music are raised, and confusing melodies of harp, lyre, cymbal and flute are heard, and mad revellers are dancing to the tunes, while they are inebriated with the wine of vanishing pleasures. In one place thou wilt behold the wanton and soiled decorations, and in another the flimsy shows of the gilded class of creatures. On the one hand is to be seen the embellishment and luxury made possible through illicit wealth, and on the other hand, the ravishing of this mortal world of its beautiful appearance.

From different parts are to be heard sighs of anguish, lamentations of poverty, cries of agony and misery,—and the calls for succor.

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have reached to the gate of heaven. One hears the weeping of the hopeless, the appeals of the oppressed, the trembling murmurs of the helpless and the harrowing wails of the ship-wrecked in the sea of persecution. The heat of the conflagration of separation spreads on all sides, the fire of longing is raging with great intensity and the tongues of the flames of calamity leap forth in every direction. Here one sees the oppression of kings and the thoughtlessness of cabinet ministers; there one sees conflict on the battle field of thoughts and ideals by ambitious generals, statesmen and administrators of the nations and countries. They consult, scheme, plot and exchange views; they organize falacious and superfluous companies and make false the established values; and thus do they lay and destroy the foundation of their political careers.

In short: when thou observest these things with the eye of reality, thou wilt see that the outcome, result and fruit of all these theatrical performances are mirages, and their sweetness is bitter poison. A few days the earth shall roll on its axis, and these fleeting visions will be completely forgotten.

When thou shuttest thine eyes to this dark world and lookest upward and heavenward, thou wilt see light upon light stretching from eternity to eternity. The reality of the mysteries will be revealed. Happy is the pure soul who does not attach himself to the transient conditions and comforts, but rather seeks to attach himself to the purity, nobility and splendor of the world which endures.

—Abdul-Bahá Abbas

Star of the West, Vol. IV, No. 16, p. 273 Dec. 31, 1913

The New Year

O ye children of the Kingdom!

It is New Year; that is to say, the rounding of the cycle of the year. A year is the expression of a cycle (of the sun); but now is the *beginning of a cycle of Reality, a New Cycle, a New Age, a New Century, a New Time and a New Year*. Therefore, it is very blessed.

I wish this blessing to appear and become manifest in the faces and characteristics of the believers, so that they, too, may become a new people, and having found new life and been baptized with fire and spirit, may make the world a new world, to the end that the old earth may disappear and the new earth appear; old ideas depart and new thoughts come; old garments be cast aside and new garments put on; ancient politics whose foundation is war, be discarded and modern politics founded on peace, raise the standard of victory; the new star shine and gleam and the new sun illumine and radiate; new flowers bloom; the new spring become known; the new breeze blow; the new bounty descend; the New Tree give forth new fruit; the new voice become raised and this new sound reach the ears, *that the new will follow the new*, and all the old furnishings and adornments be cast aside and new decorations put in their places.

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I desire for you all that you will have this great assistance and partake of this great bounty, and that in spirit and heart you will strive and endeavor until the world of war become the world of peace; the world of darkness the world of light; satanic conduct be turned into heavenly behavior; the ruined places become built up; the sword be turned into the olive branch; the flash of hatred become the flame of the love of God and the noise of the gun, the voice of the Kingdom; the soldiers of death; the soldiers of life; all the nations of the world one nation; all races as one race; all national anthems harmonized into one melody.

Then this material realm will be Paradise, the earth Heaven, and the world of satan become the world of angels.

—Abdul Baha Abbas

Star of the West, Vol. IV, No. 16, p. 266, Dec. 31, 1913

Resurrection Day

This period of time is the Promised Age, the assembling of the human race to the "Resurrection Day", and now is the great "Day of Judgment." Soon the whole world, as in spring-time, will change its garb. The turning and falling of the autumn leaves is past; the bleakness of the winter-time is over. The new year hath appeared and the spiritual spring-time is at hand. The black earth is becoming a verdant garden, the deserts and the mountains are teeming with red flowers; from the borders of the wilderness the tall grasses are standing like advance guards before the cypress and jessamine trees; while the birds are singing among the rose branches like angels in the highest heavens, announcing the glad tidings of the approach of that spiritual spring, and the sweet music of their voices is causing the real essence of all things to move and quiver.

O my spiritual friend! Dost thou know from what airs emanate the notes sung by those birds? They are from the melodies of peace and reconciliation, of love and unity, of justice and security, of concord and harmony. In a short time this heavenly singing will intoxicate all humanity; the foundations of enmity shall be destroyed; unity and affection shall be witnessed in every assembly, and the lovers of the love of God at these great festivals shall behold their splendor.

Therefore, contemplate what a spirit of life God hath given that the body of the whole earth may attain life everlasting! The Paradise of El-Abha will soon spread a pavilion from the Pole-star of the world, under whose shelter the beloved shall rejoice and the pure hearts shall repose in peace.

—Abdul-Baha Abbas

Star of the West, Vol. VII, March 21, 1916, No. I, p. 169.

New Writers Come into the Field

With the departure from this life of Abdul Baha, an era in Bahai teaching came to an end. The great River of Explanation, which had been

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set in motion by him, continued on its way and flowed into the Sea of Truth, on the margins of which mankind is refreshed and invigorated. Its waters added to the volume of the sea, but the river itself was no more. Thus, the *Tablets of Abdul Baha* dropped out of the field of current literature and became Holy Writ.

Meanwhile life continues; it must be so. When the Master has withdrawn, the followers must take hold; and so a few of the Bahais engaged themselves in writing with very creditable results. Among these was Ruhi Effendi Afnan.

Ruhi Effendi is not a poet. If he owns a pair of poetic wings, he keeps them well tucked under his shoulder-blades. He does not soar in the rarified atmosphere of imagination, but keeps his feet firmly planted on the ground of logic and experience. His mysticism does not resolve into the mists of metaphysics and speculation, but inclines toward a practical solution of our mundane problems. He follows the deductive rather than the inductive method of reasoning, although it must be admitted that he does not dismiss the latter as unsound and that he wields it with good effect on certain occasions. Schooled through the scientific system of the West as taught in the American University at Beirut, he has the humanistic outlook; yet his humanism is not lacking in spirituality. He is neither a dry intellectualist nor an emotional religionist. His explanations of the Bahai Cause are sane, logical and convincing. He calmly and dispassionately reasons with his reader, taking nothing for granted and trying to persuade him without offending his intelligence. He does not possess the fire and warmth of Abdul Baha, but I think that he has his humility and patience. His scholarship is simple, profound and searching, without the pomp and circumstance of ambition or presumption. In a word, he is no theological swashbuckler, but a thorough modern in training, attitude and approach.

Writings of Ruhi Effendi

During the years 1924, 1925 and 1926, three classic articles by Ruhi Effendi, which dealt with various aspects of the Bahai Movement, appeared in Bahai publications. Much later, in 1934 the Baha'i Publishing Committee, with the approval of the Reviewing Committee of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada, brought out his remarkable monograph on *Mysticism and the Baha'i Revelation—a Contrast*. Incidentally, the authorities were so much interested in this monograph and in circularizing it as widely as possible that they printed two advance announcements concerning it in *Baha'i News* of May and No-

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vement, 1934 and, finally after publication, inserted an advertisement of the booklet in the January 1935 issue of the same publication. This advertisement reads:—

Publishing

Mysticism and the Baha'i Revelation: A Contrast

by Ruhi Afnan, a scholarly discussion of the "path to God" as expounded by Christian and Muslim mystics, with an exposition of the spiritual teaching of Baha'u'llah. The contrast is between doctrines which would make man independent of the Manifestation and the Baha'i doctrine of the Manifestation as source of Reality.

Paper covers\$0.50

This work, covering eighty pages, contains a brief and highly satisfactory introduction and then is divided into the following sections:—

- Mysticism and the Baha'i Revelation**
- I. The Trinity**
 - The World of the Divine Essence**
- II. The Prophets**
- III. The World of Creation**
- IV. The Dualistic Aspect of Being**
 - The Mystic Interpretation of the doctrine of Incarnation**
- V. The Circling Course of the Divine-Life Process**
 - The Mystic Path**
 - Purgation**
 - Illumination of Self**
 - Divine Presence**
 - Union—the Goal of the Mystic Quest**
- VI. The Seven Valleys of Baha'u'llah**
- Conclusion**

In the introduction to his essay on the above listed highly controversial and metaphysical topics, the author makes a very modest acknowledgement as follows:—

I have undertaken this task to clarify in my own mind the points of difference between Baha'u'llah and this other interesting conception of the spiritual life. My approach is therefore that of a student who seeks knowledge rather than a teacher desiring to impart his learning.

Passing to the last pages of this illuminating booklet, we find the quietistic philosophy of mysticism contrasted with the practical idealism

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of Baha-O-Llah. Here, the author's tendency toward humanism is clearly revealed; he exalts social responsibilities and recommends a healthy, practical spirituality. His treatment of the subject is very satisfying and is distinctly worth quoting:—

Mysticism and the Baha'i Revelation—a Contrast

... Mysticism similarly fails to present a solution for the baffling social and international problems that seem to threaten our very existence. How are the international problems to be solved? How are the excesses of poverty and wealth to be eliminated? How are wars to be replaced by arbitration? Should a super-state be advocated? Man cannot be divorced from his environment. In such an environment that breeds war, hatred, distrust, jealousy and destitution, our spirit can never find an atmosphere in which it can progress. A fortunate person with all his material needs well secured can give up the trammels of the world and in an environment all his own, seek an inward peace; but the mass of the people are not so favorably situated. World conditions are vital problems to them, they can find no other sanctuary than their slums, they are forced to go to war and slaughter their brethren; they are taught to hate their fellow-men that happen to reside across the frontier. How can they in such an environment obtain peace and help the development of their soul?

Mysticism, especially in its extreme forms, tends to be blind to these facts. Its attitude is to give up hope in earthly life and seek instead spiritual poise. If outward life is hopelessly muddled, seek the inward. It applies a spiritual palliative rather than faces the real occasion. It is the philosophy of man who has lost hope in ever bettering his earthly life rather than the attitude of a soul alive to the evils of the day and fully prepared to face them and conquer them.

This latter is in fact the attitude of Baha'u'llah. He knows the world problems, is conscious of their magnitude and fully provides for their solution. At least he sets forth the guiding principles that if applied in their entirety will make the world a better place to live in and a more suitable atmosphere in which to develop our spiritual life. The more the mystic discards the quietistic tendencies of his philosophy and becomes attuned with the reforming and socializing spirit of the Prophets, the more he will become a real force, active in the betterment of the group to which he belongs . . .

The Baha'i conception of the goal of our spiritual life, therefore, is to bring into actuality those divine powers inherent in our souls, it is to attain an unlimited perfection, it is to secure an ever growing of our personality. To become the likeness of God by acquiring His attributes, Abdu'l-Baha says "is the supreme goal of the world of humanity." God has treasured in our souls pearls of ineffable beauty, it is our task to produce them . . .

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This goal is not imaginary, it is no mere psychological experience. It is not the privilege of the few. The door of this heaven is open to all. It is the salvation that all humanity can seek and attain. Through it a spiritualization of the whole race can be achieved without in the least impairing the social and intellectual progress of man. In fact, the social, moral, intellectual and spiritual factors are so vitally connected that we cannot help one without enhancing the operation of the others. These factors are the environment in which our personality is to develop. They form the air it breathes, and the food it consumes. Let us have this form of spirituality permeate our life and we shall see how our civilization, even its material aspect, will leap forward and achieve miracles . . .

What He (Baha'u'llah) demands is not a renunciation of the world, but a healthy life as active member of society—a task to begin at the very start, and not after attaining the stage of Unity. For it is only by being active and healthy members of society that we can achieve spirituality. He asks us to enjoy the beauties of the world but not to be attached to them; to seek them but not to let them retard our moral and spiritual development. Salvation is not the life of renunciation but of healthy participation in our social duties. While living in this world we are meant to be human.

—*Mysticism and the Bahai Revelation— A Contrast* by
Ruhi Afnan, pp. 76-80

This essay, so much heralded by the Administration, is at present unobtainable at the Bahai Assembly in New York, and it goes without saying that the other Assemblies throughout the country have also been stripped of it, although it is still advertised as follows:—

Mysticism and the Baha'i Revelation, by Ruhi Afnan. An essay which analyzes in the light of the teachings of Baha-u'llah the mystical tradition of the soul's union with God: demonstrating that the Prophet or Manifestation is the intermediary between God and man. 80 pp.

In section of Baha'i Bibliography

The Baha'i World, 1938-1940, Vol. VIII, p. 717

Fortunately however, the New York Public Library at 42nd Street and 5th Ave. is in possession of a copy, and it is to be found under the serial No. *OAC, p. v. 182. There, the discriminating student might spend a profitable afternoon or evening examining the contents of the booklet and taking notes; after which he may wonder about the Guardian's reasons for excommunicating from the Cause a writer of such brilliance and acumen, because obviously this discriminating student would not have taken seriously the flimsy charges made against the writer in the cables which came from Haifa.

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Three Articles by Ruhi Effendi

Between the years 1924 and 1926, Ruhi Effendi, as I have already stated, wrote three articles on the Bahai Cause; and his scientific outlook and spiritual sanity are well demonstrated in these works. Now these articles cannot be withdrawn from publication for they are incorporated in *Star of the West*, where anyone who possesses the old numbers can read them at will. The first article entitled: *The Relation of the Baha'i Cause to Modern Progressive Movements*, published June, 1924, must have been highly thought of by the *Guardian* and the National Spiritual Assembly, for it is reproduced in the *Baha'i Year Book*, Vol. I, 1925-1926, pp. 139-141. The second under the title: *Religion and Our Modern Social Problems* appears in February, 1925 while the third, propounding the question:—*What is New in the Baha'i Teachings?* is published April, 1926.

I wish that it were possible to reproduce herein these articles in their entirety. They are well worth the printers' ink and the space, if space there were. Possibly, some fair-minded and generous person will some day come forward and collect all the available writings of Ruhi Effendi to be published in one volume. This would be a distinct service to the Cause. The work of this author is valuable intrinsically, and valuable historically, as expressing the thoughts of the first and, thus far, the only descendant of the Master who has accepted the mission of teaching. In this light alone, the writings of Ruhi Effendi are inextricably part and parcel of the Cause.

I consider that the case of Ruhi Effendi arises before every Bahai to be decided in the arena of his own conscience. He has been condemned without a hearing; he has been cast out of the Bahai community, here and in all parts of the world; he has been designated for the contumely of coming generations. Is this acceptable to the followers of Abdul Baha? Is this acceptable to free Americans, or to Persian Bahais who are acquainted only too well with the horrors of martyrdom? I do not think so!

I have faith in the innate goodness of human nature and in the increasing enlightenment of minds and hearts everywhere; and I know of a certainty that no humane mortal, and not even an immortal whose being is kneaded with the quality of divine patience, can wish to hush up the case of the Bahai authorities versus Ruhi Effendi. I go on record as saying that it will be adjudicated before the Court of Baha-O-Llah and the tribunal of mankind.

I will now close this chapter with an extract from each of the three articles by Ruhi Effendi, published in the *Star of the West*:—

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The Relation of the Baha'i Cause to Modern Progressive Movements

. . . The Divine Power is behind all progressive movements. Baha'u'llah's teachings would have remained a utopia, never to be realized, if His spirit, that is God's hand, had not stirred some souls to establish new movements and work, although in apparent independence, yet for similar aims. These souls are the enlightened teachers who have been showing the world that material prosperity should not be the aim of life; that through appropriate taxation and education the rich can help the betterment of the social and economic conditions of the poor; that war should cease; that nationalism should give way to a higher and nobler policy of internationalism; that a League of Nations should be established to settle international disputes; that an international language should be created to become a universal medium of communication and eliminate misunderstandings.

In a word, these progressive movements which have sprung up during the nineteenth century have been instruments used by God to make the world more receptive to His Cause. They have been like the plowing and harrowing by which the farmer prepares the ground for his crop. And we can measure the extent of this preparation if we take the pains to find out *how much nearer now are the popular views to the Teachings of the Cause than they were at the beginning of the last century*. Since Baha'u'llah first proclaimed His Principles, the world has, through the work of these progressive teachers and the various societies they have founded, advanced so much towards the Baha'i teachings that we would not be in the least astonished, if from now on people would join the Cause in whole groups rather than as isolated individuals. As some one aptly said, "if the Baha'is do not make the world Baha'i, it will through its natural development, become so." . . .

In publishing the above illuminating article, the Editor of *Star of the West* makes the following generous and appreciative comment:—

The world is full of wonderfully progressive movements. In every direction the mind of man, responding to the stimuli of necessity and of desire for bettered conditions, is creating new solutions to old evils. One by one the outer enemies of man are being conquered and subdued. One by one the guardians of his inner citadel of self are being better disciplined and marshaled. Myriads of clubs, associations, new sects, are taking birth and growing to vigor in the fruitful soil of modern tolerance, spirit of research, and ardent world desire for an ideal civilization.

What part does the Baha'i Movement play in this rivalry of beneficent institutions? Is it but one of the many claimants for attention? Or can it be seen as an all-inclusive movement which contains

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not only the complete and ideal pattern for the coming world civilization, but also a dynamic power capable of putting into effect the remedies which it projects? And if the Baha'i Cause is so universal, so all-embracing, and so perfect in winning, as it never fails to do, the sympathy of all open-minded men and women to whom its great teachings are presented, why does it not at this time gain adherents by the thousands?

These are questions which are bound to arise in the mind and heart of every person looking newly into the Baha'i Movement, and seeking to adjust themselves and their past beliefs or cherished causes to its all-embracing appeal. Nowhere to our knowledge have these two important questions been better answered than in the article in this number by Ruhi Afnan, grandson of Abdul'l-Baha,—*"The Relation of the Baha'i Cause to Modern Progressive Movements."*

—*The Baha'i Magazine—Star of the West,*
Vol. 15, June, 1924, No. 3, pp. 39-40

Religion and Our Modern Social Problems

During the last century religion gradually lost ground before the progressing material civilization and weakened its hold upon the life and action of man. Through the many centuries of ignorance and priestly domination, its fundamental principles and underlying spirit were neglected and only the external rituals and practices emphasized. As science progressed, and as man's critical power developed, religion, due to this misrepresentation at the hands of its superficial adherents, failed to stand the attacks and vindicate its old, yet deserving position. The era of irreligion and agnosticism was thereby ushered in, and the cause of religion as a whole was weakened.

At present, however, we can detect certain signs of religious revival and the beginning of a definite reaction toward religion. Science has come to the conclusion that the material body of man cannot function without the help and assistance of some invisible power, which we may call spirit or soul. It has learned that from such infinitesimally small premises provided by science we cannot deduce a conclusion. So infinitely great, as what God is. Man's intellect and experience are too limited to deal with such a problem and attain such a truth. It suffices us to know that His Spirit permeates all things, that he is the Cause of Life and the Creator of man. The heads of the different religions on the other hand are opening their eyes to the truth of science and beginning to interpret religion in its true and spiritual significance. Thus religion and science are gradually unravelling each other's truth and uniting in the pursuit of their common aim . . .

The past century of agnosticism, though it has created a general apathy towards religion, was fraught with important consequences.

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Before that time most of the people were fettered with superstitions. Religion to them, was in many cases, a series of outward practices to be observed at different times and places. If they were to become Baha'is they would bring most, if not all, of those cherished, but outgrown ideas with them. The Cause would become a conglomeration of religious beliefs, rather than religion purified. It would become a dumping place of all sorts of ideas. This spirit of agnosticism has demolished those antiquated institutions and left the hearts free to be influenced only by the teachings of Baha'u'llah and the spirit of 'Abdu'l-Baha.

What is New in the Baha'i Teachings?

... At the advent of every prophet the world undergoes a great social, intellectual, religious revival. At the time of Christ, for example, the old religions of the Romans and Greeks had lost their hold on the minds of their adherents. They could not shape the conduct of man or keep him within the bounds of moral law. Abandoning religion, therefore, the people turned to philosophy, hoping that thereby the rules of ethics would be more strictly adhered to. They thought that through learning alone the moral life of the individual could be improved. But this hope was also frustrated. The people remained in search of a remedy until Christianity came to the rescue and saved the soul of the seekers. Meanwhile by this continuous and faithful search the people had come independently very near to the truth which was later propounded by Christianity. The teachings were so to say, "in the air", every one unconsciously absorbed them, so that when they came in touch with those teachings they did not have much to change, or many new principles to adopt.

Such is the case today. The intellectual people of the eighteenth century, weary of the narrowness and dogmas of the church, confused it with true Christianity. They tried to seek salvation in other fields, they were absorbed in research and philosophy, hoping again that through knowledge they might attain to the solution of their problems, to the establishment of peace, to the security of moral integrity. How successful humanity will be this time we cannot say and the theme, interesting though it be, is beyond the subject of our discussion. The point is that through this constant and sincere search the world has come to truths very near to those proclaimed by Baha'u'llah

We may well compare the advent of the different prophets of God to different stations on a long royal road. What a traveler needs is a new spirit, an encouragement to follow the road, a word of guidance to save him from dangers and difficulties. Likewise, so society, on its way to progress has come across these prophets of God these stations of divine power who have urged man to the attainment of his purpose, endowed him with a new spirit, restored his power

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by their word of encouragement and assurance. The student of the Baha'i Movement, therefore, should not consider it as a mere source of original ideas but rather as one of those dynamic powers which are successively sent by God to push society onward. He should look at the spirit which it creates in its followers and the solution which it advocates for world problems.

Chapter VII
RUHI EFFENDI AFNAN'S
VISIT TO THE UNITED
STATES

*You took my hand and drew me to your side, made
me sit on the high seat before all men, till I became
timid, unable to stir and walk my own way; doubting
and debating at every step lest I should tread upon
any thorn of their disfavour.*

I am freed at last!

*The blow has come, the drum of insult sounded, my
seat is laid low in the dust.*

My paths are open before me.

*—Rabindranath Tagore
Fruit-Gathering, Stanza X*

Chapter VII

RUHI EFFENDI AFNAN'S VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES

A Distinguished Guest

The visit of Ruhi Effendi Afnan to this country in 1927-8 was a signal event in the Bahai world for it gave the American believers their first opportunity of seeing a member of Abdul Baha's family. It is true that some persons had made the journey to Haifa and there had met or come to know the ladies of the household and the Master's grandchildren, but these fortunate ones were comparatively few. Consequently, the Assemblies throughout the country were on the *qui vive* to welcome this young man who not only was a descendant of Baha-O-Llah, but who came as representative of the Guardian of the Cause.

The preliminary plans for the reception of the distinguished guest are incorporated in an article entitled *Ruhi Afnan Will Visit America*, which appeared in *Baha'i News*, June 1927. It reads as follows:—

The good news has been received that Ruhi Afnan, grandson of Abdu'l Baha and cousin of Shoghi Effendi, will arrive at New York on or about June 17. We are informed that his purpose in coming is to attend the sessions of the Green Acre Institute of World Unity to be held at Green Acre from August 1 to September 3, and it is announced that he will also be at Green Acre during July.

A Committee has been appointed by the National Assembly and the Spiritual Assembly of New York to meet him on his arrival and to arrange with him the details of his visit. Until the committee has consulted with Ruhi Afnan, no definite arrangements can be announced.

However, the Committee has taken the privilege of arranging a Baha'i reception for our distinguished guest at St. Marks Hall, St. Marks Church, East 10th Street at Second Avenue, New York City on Saturday, June 18. This will consist of a feast in the hall so frequently placed at the disposal of the friends by the rector, William Norman Guthrie. A special notice of this event has been mailed to nearby Assemblies, extending a cordial welcome to all Baha'is to attend. The Committee will appreciate acceptances in advance, in order that the feast may be suitably arranged. Dinner will be served at 7 P. M.

The believers will also have an opportunity to meet Ruhi Afnan on Saturday, June 25, at the Annual Souvenir of Abdu'l-Baha to be held during the afternoon and evening at Evergreen Cabin, on the estate of Mr. Roy C. Wilhelm at West Englewood, N. J.

None of the friends will overlook the inestimable privilege of

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receiving this visit from a member of the Holy Family. Since the historic journey of the Master in 1912 many great souls have come to this country reflecting the Bahá'í spirit, but until now none has been of the sacred lineage.

The two receptions above scheduled took place in localities which during many years have been settings for Bahai reunions. St. Mark's-In-The-Bouwerie, through the generous hospitality of its rector the Rev. Dr. William Guthrie has, both before and since this occasion, been identified with Bahai work; and Evergreen Cabin, at West Englewood, N. J., on the estate of Mr. Roy C. Wilhelm, a member of the National Spiritual Assembly, likewise holds historic import. The latter, a lovely country place within easy access of New York City, was the scene of a memorable picnic conducted under the supervision of the Master; and that event made such a deep impression upon the Bahais that they have repeated it every spring. How well I remember that first picnic and the preparations made for it!

Plans for the Picnic

It was in 1912, during the month of June, that Abdul Baha decided to give a feast in the country to which all the Bahais would be invited; and, on hearing of the plan, Mr. Roy C. Wilhelm suggested that his country place be used as picnic grounds. The offer was accepted and the date set; then the Master began to make his arrangements.

One morning, I found him walking back and forth in his room at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Edward J. Kinney, 780 West End Ave. where he was stopping. As was his habit on occasions, he gave me a fairly sharp slap on the cheek and then began to speak. Naturally, I cannot quote him exactly, but his words were something along this line and the subject was cooking:—

Abdul Baha was a cook. In the past, he had prepared delicious dishes for Baha-O-Llah, as well as for the believers when they were ill or in trouble. Now, he was to be host, at a feast; all the Bahais had been invited and he was in need of a cook. Would I take charge? He had heard that I was quite an artist along this line, and was ready to put me to the test. Therefore, he continued, I was to prepare for his friends a Persian luncheon, seasoned not only with the mysterious condiments of the East but perfumed with an added touch of Bahai love. I had to produce such dishes as: *Polow*, *Chelow*, *Adas-Polow*, *Bagali-Polow*, *Zafaran-Polow*, *Morgeh-Mosamma*, *Fessenjan*, *Khoresh-Badinjan*, *Tass-Kabab*, *Abgousht*, *Koukou* and *Sharbat*. The believers of God probably were angels, but they had good appetites too. Consequently, I must exert myself and spread for them a royal table

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that would fulfill their requirements and, at the same time, do him credit as host. What did I think of the idea?

"My Lord," I answered, "your commands are my law; but I will need your assistance."

Abdul Baha laughed. "Assistance! Very well. I will be your assistant, and together we shall prepare a feast that the believers will long remember. We will lay the foundations of an everlasting Feast; and we are beginning right now." Then, he placed in my hands a few bills of fairly large denominations and sent me on my way.

Mrs. Kinney's Kitchen

Mr. and Mrs. Kinney could tell the rest of the story. How they placed their spacious kitchen at my disposal; borrowed charcoal stoves of various sizes, and procured a staff of willing workers. At the proper time, the culinary angels set themselves to shelling peas, to cutting tomatoes, to peeling egg plant, potatoes and even onions; and how they did weep as they applied themselves to the latter! Presently, aromatic condiments of the East were being combined with meat and vegetables and, when the mixtures arrived at the boiling point, the scent of Oriental spices spread abroad into the streets. Our nervous excitement kept pace with the preparations as they neared the point of perfection and, through it all, our great Assistant looked in on us now and then, made suggestions here and there and kept us in a condition of hysterical delight.

Having worked practically all night, the morning of June 29th dawned on the exhausted cooks who had provided sustenance for close to three hundred guests. Then, the ticklish task of transporting the food from New York to West Englewood, New Jersey, in a state to be served hot and appetizing, absorbed our attention. We tackled the problem in this manner: first we waited in Mrs. Kinney's kitchen until the arrival of a telephone call from West Englewood which appraised us of the fact that the guests were practically assembled; then we took from the fire the steaming cauldrons and capacious containers, wrapped them in newspapers and quilts, and piled them into automobiles which were ranged in file, waiting to be dashed at break-neck speed to the picnic grounds.

The Picnic

Luncheon was served by dozens of Bahai waitresses on a smooth cloth of pine needles. The guests sat on the ground, while the incomparable

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Host, his face beaming with satisfaction, walked among them. The day was perfect; the mood of everyone at top notch and, wonder of wonders, the food was piping hot.

Let us then take part in the pastoral scene and, all of us who are reading this account, become for a few minutes guests of Abdul Baha. We know that his hospitality knows no bounds and that he would welcome us in spirit regardless of space and time.

The Master, attired in a long cream-colored robe, his white turban on his head, is moving to and fro. He is affability personified, and his words are addressed now to this group, now to that. He is saying:—

True Bahai meetings are the mirrors of the kingdom wherein images of the Supreme Concourse are reflected. In them the lights of the most great guidance are visible. They voice the summons of the heavenly kingdom and echo the call of the angelic hosts to every listening ear. The efficacy of such meetings as these is permanent throughout the ages. This assembly has a name and a significance which will last forever. Hundreds and thousands of meetings shall be held to commemorate this occasion and the very words I speak to you today shall be repeated in them for ages to come. Therefore be ye rejoiced for ye are sheltered beneath the providence of God. Be happy and joyous because the bestowals of God are intended for you and the life of the Holy Spirit is breathing upon you. . .

How many blessed souls have longed for this radiant century, their utmost hopes and desires centered upon the happiness and joy of one such day as this. Many the nights they passed sleepless and lamenting until the very morn, in longing anticipation of this age, yearning to realize even an hour of this time. God has favored you in this century and has specialized you for the realization of its blessings. Therefore you must praise and thank God with heart and soul in appreciation of this great opportunity and the attainment of this infinite bestowal; that such doors have been opened before your faces, such abundance is pouring down from the cloud of mercy and that these refreshing breezes from the paradise of Abha are resuscitating you. You must become of one heart, one spirit and one susceptibility. May you become as the waves of one sea, stars of the same heaven, fruits adorning the same tree, roses of one garden; in order that through you the oneness of humanity may establish its temple in the world of mankind, for you are the ones who are called to uplift the cause of unity among the nations of the earth.

—*The Promulgation of Universal Peace* Vol. I,
pp. 209-10

Many pictures were taken that afternoon, notably a snapshot of a group with Abdul Baha, an enlargement of which appears in *The Baha'i World*, Vol. VI, 1934-1936, p. 628. It is not very distinct, yet one can

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recognize many faces. The Master stands near the extreme left; behind him, close to the margin of the picture, is Seyyed Assadullah Gomi. Then, looking from left to right, one sees two ladies close to Abdul Baha; the second looks to me like Mrs. Kinney. Afterwards comes Mirza Mahmoud Zargani and then myself, a humble and happy cook.

That feast under Mr. Wilhelm's pine trees left an impression upon the minds of all those present and, as the years roll around to its anniversary, I, at present an outsider and an untouchable, can very easily live again those joyous hours and find myself cooking for, and serving my friends of long ago.

Star of the West gives an account of the picnic, continuing the description on into the evening:—

Abdul Baha gave a Unity Feast in West Englewood, N. J. on Saturday, June 29 to the Bahais of New York and vicinity. About three hundred were present. In addition to the seven Persians in his party there were guests from Philadelphia, Buffalo, Green Acre, Me., Washington, D. C., Pittsburgh, San Francisco and Portland, Ore.

There in the fragrant pine grove, on a bright June day, Abdul Baha himself the host, smiling joyously and radiating the spirit of good-will, welcomed the happy friends. It was indeed a picture, and one of the utmost spiritual significance. Christians, Jews, Mohammedans and white and black races represented. Abdul Baha's very presence seemed to fill every soul with love. The bountiful meal was a Persian Feast, the delicious dishes being prepared by members of his Oriental party . . . After the dinner, Abdul Baha passed around . . . and himself blessed each guest, placing rose perfume upon their foreheads.

In the evening a meeting was held on the lawn of the Wilhelm home, Abdul Baha speaking from the veranda to some one hundred and fifty Englewood guests, who were seated in camp chairs. After this meeting questions were answered while he walked up and down the country road in front of the house. He remained with the Wilhelm family until Sunday morning when he left to fill an engagement in another part of New Jersey.

—*Star of the West*, August 1, 1912, No. 8, Vol. III, pp. 16-18

The Master's Grandson Attends Bahai Picnic

The Feast given by Abdul Baha in 1912 has been celebrated by the Bahai community every year at the same season and in the same place; and it was on one of these occasions that the young grandson of the Master was entertained nine days after his arrival in this city. In an article printed in *Baha'i News*, the late Mrs. Keith Ransom-Kehler writes of the significance

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of the feast and then goes on to describe the picnic at which Ruhi Effendi was present:—

Each year on this anniversary, Mr. Roy C. Wilhelm and his mother lovingly welcome as guests of Abdu'l-Bahá the Bahá'is and their friends from all over the world.

Several hundred gathered on June twenty-fifth 1927 to commemorate the founding of the Feast and the visit of Abdu'l-Bahá fifteen years ago . . .

The feature of outstanding importance at the Souvenir meeting was the presence of Ruhi Effendi Afnan, who but a few days before had arrived from Haifa, Palestine. The most striking characteristics of this pleasing young man are sanity and modesty. Gifted with exceptional clarity of thought and native penetration, he brings to the work of the Cause a true spiritual ardor, that usually does not accompany the attitude of the student.

To the average man an ideal is something wistful, elusive, withdrawn, impractical. To the social benefactor and man of vision the ideal is not the antithesis of the practical: the ideal and the practical go hand in hand; the antithesis of the ideal is the brutal. The only distinction between the ideal and the practical is a difference of tense: the practical is present; the ideal is the future. And if today's ideal does not become the practice of tomorrow, then it was not an ideal at all, but a phantasy, a chimera, a vagary.

It is with the definite assurance that today's teachings will become tomorrow's action that Ruhi Effendi Afnan continually speaks of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. To his enlightened eyes "the glory of the coming of the Lord" is already existent, and the government of Bahá'u'lláh already established, through that leap of the mind that sees the present order of brutality and chaos replaced by the "healing of the nations."

In his brief speech he developed a very interesting theme on the reconciliation of science and religion. . .

At the evening session, Mr. Hooper Harris of New York, one of the most impressive and informed speakers in the Cause, gave a brief survey of some of the fundamental Bahá'í teachings, followed by Ruhi Effendi Afnan, who, with his marked lucidity and restraint, set forth our most important principles.

—*The Bahá'í Magazine, Star of the West*, August 1927
Republished in *The Bahá'í World*, Vol. II, 1926-1928,
pp. 263-264

Now in this year 1942 we may, if we are able, realize the fact that if this one-time honored guest were to set foot on the property of Mr. Roy C. Wilhelm at the next Souvenir Anniversary, he would immediately be asked to withdraw, otherwise the entire group would melt away, shivering

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and sighing, like so many terror-stricken sheep at the sight of a ravening wolf.

Green Acre

The third place visited by Ruhi Effendi, of which we have record, is likewise an historic spot in American Bahai history. The late Miss Sarah Farmer founded a colony at Green Acre, Maine, as a center for expounding the teachings of the great religions of the world; and on her death the property came into the hands of the Bahai community. A book could be written about this gallant enterprise and the memorable incidents that were enacted at the Green Acre Summer School. I was there under the Persian Pines, when the great scholar, Mirza Abul Fazl gave courses of lectures on Bahai teachings, and later accompanied Abdul Baha when he spent a few days with Miss Farmer. For two summers, I interpreted the talks of Janabe Fazel Mazandrani given before Green Acre audiences and finally did some lecturing myself on those same grounds. It was to be expected that Ruhi Effendi's first summer in America should have been spent at the Bahai Summer School and, according to *Baha'i News* of August, 1927, his visit was a rare occasion:—

As mentioned in the last News Letter, Ruhi Afnan is spending July and August at Green Acre, after which he will visit as many local communities as possible before returning to Haifa in October.

The privilege of meeting this profound student of the teachings and devoted worker will not be overlooked by the friends in planning their stay at Green Acre this season.

An item in a later issue reads:—

At this time it is sufficient to inform the friends that the Institute of World Unity carried out its remarkable series of courses as announced . . . in addition to the series of Sunday morning talks delivered to some of the largest audiences in the history of Green Acre by Ruhi Afnan.

—*Baha'i News*, November, 1927

Again, in an article by Mr. Louis G. Gregory entitled: *Amity at Green Acre*, we learn of Ruhi Effendi's treatment of the race problem:—

Ruhi Effendi Afnan, scion of the noblest family of earth, mingled in joyfulness with the people of all races and in his formal address drew a striking picture of the entire lack of racial consciousness among people in the Orient who were awakened and taught human solidarity by the Holy Ones of God.

—*Baha'i Magazine, Star of the West*, August, 1927, Vol. 18, No. 5, p. 160

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Trans-Continental Tour

The next step, and a long one at that, was a journey athwart the country. It is a course that I know well, having followed it through to California with Abdul Baha in 1912, and personally lectured as far as the state of Washington in 1920; after which I went over the same itinerary with Janabe Fazel Mazandrani in 1921, and again in 1922-23. Other Bahai teachers likewise, have crossed and recrossed the continent, expounding the principles of Baha-O-Llah; and each one has made a dent in the American consciousness and a place for him or herself in countless groups.

I can therefore well imagine the effect produced by Ruhi Effendi as he followed the well-trodden highway to the Pacific coast. As flesh and blood of the Master and personal representative of the Guardian, this gifted speaker must have made a profound impression on audiences well-keyed up to meet him. His crowded program is outlined in *Baha'i News* of November, 1927.

Ruhi Afnan Visiting American Assemblies

The teaching work will be greatly reinforced during the next few weeks by Ruhi Afnan, who at the request of the Teaching Committee, has arranged to extend his visit in this country. The following schedule has been planned, subject to minor changes:

Geneva, New York, October 24 and 25; Buffalo, October 26 and 27; Cleveland, October 28 and 29; Detroit, October 30; Chicago, October 31 to November 3.

Ruhi Afnan will then proceed to California, where speaking appointments have been already assured in prominent educational institutions. Returning to Chicago after a stay of perhaps two weeks in California, he will then visit Baha'i Centers in the Middle West and proceed to New York via Washington, D. C., Baltimore and Philadelphia.

During his stay at Green Acre, Ruhi Afnan prepared and delivered a series of addresses developing the social significance of the Cause. These talks attracted many who are seeking a religion capable of improving the world and not merely offering a new mysticism. It is hoped that each local Assembly in the above cities will arrange as many meetings as possible for Ruhi Afnan during his all too brief stay, particularly at colleges and before liberal groups whose adherence would prove a valuable asset to the Faith.

Rufi Effendi's journey throughout the United States was a period of hard and exacting work. This fact is attested to in an article entitled *Ruhi Afnan's American Visit*, from which we get an idea of the many en-

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gements that were filled by the young speaker; and although this account applies to California, it unquestionably is an example of the manner in which his time was spent in other states. The article reads:—

Since October last, Ruhi Afnan has been engaged without interruption in most effective services to the Cause in North America, journeying from New York to the cities of the Pacific Coast in a teaching trip which recalls the mighty work accomplished by the beloved Janabe Fazel. A little time will be required in order to gather together the details and present a complete record of Ruhi Afnan's public addresses and innumerable meetings with groups of friends. Local Secretaries and others in touch with his program are cordially urged to send detailed accounts to the Teaching Committee of the National Assembly, through Mrs. Maxwell, so that this important event may be shared with Baha'i communities throughout the world.

Meanwhile, letters from Berkeley and Visalia, Calif., convey the spirit of enthusiastic appreciations and gratitude, and indicate accurately, if briefly, the results secured through this generous and self-sacrificing cooperation given the American friends by a member of the Master's family.

Among the audiences addressed by Ruhi Afnan in Berkeley and vicinity were: the student body of the College of the Pacific, Stockton; Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley; Brotherhood of Races, Y. M. C. A. Berkeley; Student's Lyceum and Berkeley Civic Unit; Epworth League; Colored M. E. Church; Y. W. C. A., San Francisco; High School, Visalia; Taylor Memorial Church; Hillel Foundation; Y. M. C. A.; Y. W. C. A.; Fellowship; Pacific Unitarian School; Mills College, Oakland; Montezuma School, Los Gatos; Unitarian Church, Palo Alto; First Congregational Church, Berkeley; Theosophical Society, San Francisco; Faculty Club, Berkeley; in addition to many meetings with the Baha'i communities of Oakland, Berkeley and San Francisco.

This extensive program was carried out between November 11 and December 13.

An interesting program forwarded from Chicago announced a Baha'i Public Conference in New Masonic Temple on Friday, February 13: Mr. Carl Scheffler, Chairman; Invocation by Mr. Albert R. Vail; Address "Binding Power of Truth" by Dr. Fred Merrifield of University of Chicago; and Address on "Unity of Mankind—The Social Idea of Religion" by Ruhi Afnan.

—*Baha'i News*, March, 1928

That Ruhi Effendi not only followed in the Master's footsteps across the continent, but that he also used the Master's method of teaching is a fact which is brought out in the following interesting comment:—

In the words of Abdul Baha: "The unique accomplishment of Baha'u'llah in this day is the reconciliation of Science and Religion." Shoghi Effendi has indicated a desire that the Baha'is as teachers make

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an appeal to all classes, moreover he says that in order to do this we will have to make many changes in presentation and use of our subject matter. He has impressed upon us the importance of a working knowledge of science and sociology, for example, as an aid to advancing the Baha'i viewpoint to students and leaders in the world of progressive thought.

As a brilliant exemplar of the adaptation of this phase of the Cause to an important class of people not adequately reached before, Ruhi Effendi in his trip across the continent interested thoughtful people everywhere by a colorful tie-up of the Baha'i teachings with the discoveries of advanced thinkers in the modern world.

Baha'i News, October, 1928

Finally, when the time came for the National Teaching Committee to evaluate the effects of Ruhi Effendi's tour in the United States, it embodied the following tribute in its official Report:—

The depth and power of Baha'i teachings in this country has been a steady growth since the Master impregnated this land with his Holy Essence and quickened this continent through the Breaths of the Holy Spirit. The teaching has passed through many phases and last year culminated in its first national expression through the visit of a member of the Holy Family when Ruhi Effendi visited some thirty-five centers and through the mutual cooperation of the National Teaching Committee and Local Assemblies made many public addresses and penetrated more widely the cultured and educational groups than had heretofore been possible.

—Report of National Teaching Committee,
Baha'i News, October 1929, p.6

This series of quoted passages, dealing with Ruhi Effendi's services as a teacher in this country, would not be complete without an extract from a letter written to the National Spiritual Assembly by the Guardian himself. Here we learn of Shoghi Effendi's appreciation of the work that had been accomplished by his cousin:—

The warm hospitality accorded by the National Spiritual Assembly and the American believers to my dear cousin and collaborator, Ruhi Effendi, has deeply touched me, particularly as I realize from the appreciative reports I have recently received that by his radiant and earnest spirit of service he has deserved well of his dear fellow-workers in that continent, and contributed substantially to their better appreciation of the Teachings of the Cause. Much as I desire him to work by my side here in the Holy Land, I very gladly concur with your wish to further extend his sojourn with you, trusting that he will prove of great assistance to you all in the discharge of your noble task.

—*Baha'i News*, January, 1928, p. 8; also
Baha'i Administration, p. 135

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Bahai Convention

Convention time is an important period in the yearly program of the Bahai Administration, and the 20th Annual Convention conducted in the auditorium of the Temple at Wilmette, Ill., from April 26th to April 30th, held special significance in that it was signalized by the presence of Ruhi Effendi, who shortly afterwards returned to Palestine. *The Star of the West* of June, 1928 states:—

Of unique importance also was the attendance of Ruhi Effendi Afnan (grandson of Abdul Baha) of Haifa, Palestine, who participated vitally in all the proceedings.

Each of these lines carries much significance. Obviously, it was a unique experience and a rare privilege to take part in a convention which was made different from any other by the exhilarating presence of the Master's grandson. So much for the first line; now for the last: He *participated vitally in all the proceedings*. Here we catch the inference that Ruhi Effendi not only took part in the big public meetings, but that he also attended the private sessions of the National Spiritual Assembly. Of course, he would have done so; but the word *vitally* suggests that his attitude was completely satisfactory to the authorities. Undoubtedly, the Bahai officials had intended to make use of their distinguished guest's prestige in order to back up their practices; and, apparently, the guest in his turn had fallen in with their plans. The following cable from the Guardian shows that Ruhi Effendi was definitely in line:—

Overjoyed delegates spontaneous, most generous response. Praying for sustained effort by entire body (of) believers . . . Congratulate Ruhi.

**(Signed) Shoghi, Haifa, Palestine, May 2, 1928
—Baha'i News, June 1928**

Baha'i News of June, 1928 makes the following description of some of the proceedings:—

The Spiritual blessings consisted in the chanting of the Holy Words, the reading of beautiful Tablets and letters, the addresses of pilgrims recently returned from the White Spot, and the remarks of Ruhi Effendi Afnan.

The actual impression made by Ruhi Effendi at the Convention is shown in an article which appeared shortly afterwards in *Baha'i News*. Here we find evidence that his talents were thoroughly appreciated and observe that stress is laid on the fact that he placed himself under the

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shadow of the Guardian. How little did Ruhi Effendi know that, with the passing years, the shadow would deepen and thicken; and that one day, it would descend upon him and crush the heart out of him!

Following is the article in question:—

The report of the Teaching Committee related the increasing capacity of souls and the ease of reaching those who are now eager for the message. It especially featured the great and unusual services rendered during the past year by Ruhi Effendi Afnan . . . Ruhi Afnan addressed the Convention several times and was always listened to with profound attention. In one of his talks he gave a detailed account of his teaching work in America which covered a wide area. He pointed out the great possibilities of this work and the special need of reaching the youth with the glorious message. He stressed the need of holding before them high moral standards not only as ideals but exemplified in the conduct of the teachers, also the need of presenting the teachings in a modern and rational way. His frank and manly expressions brought the light of wisdom to the consultations of the friends and his placing of himself under the shadow of our blessed Guardian evoked much love—

*"Rich in saving common sense,
In his simplicity, sublime."*

These words of the Victorian poet might well have been written about this youthful, devoted and eloquent servant of God . . . The culmination of the Convention teaching effort was the one great public meeting held in Chicago . . . At this great meeting, which filled to overflowing one of the most spacious auditoriums in the new Masonic Temple, the committee was favored in having the services of Dr. John Herman Randall and Ruhi Effendi Afnan who from the respective standpoints of West and East gave the message and teachings of Bahá'u'lláh with eloquence and power.

—Bahai News, June, 1928

A Champion of Administration

I have sketched Ruhi Effendi's first trip to the United States from the material available to me; however, more detailed records are unquestionably to be found in the archives of the National Spiritual Assembly. Some day, these records may be studied in their order and certain conclusions arrived at; yet, for the present, a few obvious facts which I have set down in these pages are sufficiently clear:—

Ruhi Effendi is the first, and thus far the only descendant of Abdul Baha who has arisen to promote the Cause. He is the first, and thus far the only member of that distinguished family who has been seen in this country.

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Consequently, his place in the annals of the movement is unique and of historic importance.

Ruhi Effendi was a faithful and zealous champion of the Guardian and of his instrument, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada. In spite of his liberal tendencies and of his scientific approach to the problems of the day, he yet threw in his weight, with apparent and probably with actual sincerity, on the side of the fast-growing orthodox and reactionary elements in the movement; and it is certain that he rendered yeoman's service to the Bahai authorities. We cannot wonder at this: organizations have a powerful effect upon their memberships, while the influence of religious organizations is compelling to the extreme. Besides, it must be remembered that Ruhi Effendi held a key-position in the administrative structure and that his sense of responsibility toward the Guardian must have been great. Doubtless, there were a *good many times* when he had to close his eyes to what was going on; yet, he held firm to his duty as he saw it. Through everything, he was the loyal servant of Shoghi Effendi.

Now, for reasons as diaphanous as gossamer, Ruhi Effendi has been expelled by the Guardian from the organization which he had served so devotedly; while this institution, lifting up its metallic hands, has made resounding applause. Here again we cannot be surprised, for organizations are machines, devoid of soul; and he who makes a god of the machine will be crushed by the very god that he has worshipped. A fictional character by the name of Frenkenstein centered all his hopes upon a machine-man who in the end destroyed him; while many a person, known and unknown to history, has been slave to temporal power to his disillusionment and loss.

Although Ruhi Effendi is at the height of maturity, I may compare him to Cardinal Wolsey who, if history quotes correctly, said:—"Had I but served God as dilligently as I have served the King, he would not have given me over in my grey hairs;" for, what do a few years, or the exact color of the hair amount to when the parallel is sound!

Biblical Allusions

In upholding the Guardian's action against Ruhi Effendi, the National Spiritual Assembly was unable to find any modern or reasonable arguments; therefore, it dived to the very depths of the sea of legend and, in an article published in *Baha'i News* of December 1941, emerged with the story of the first family quarrel, namely that of Cain and Abel. For no reason what-

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soever, Ruhi Effendi is supposed to be Cain; although, who was the victim and where lies the corpse are questions that remain obscure.

Secondly, he is likened to a son of Noah, called Ham, who saw his father in a state of drunkenness and shared the news with the family circle, although he let it go no further. Personally, I think that Ham was rather discreet; but that is beside the point, the problem being: how does the story apply to Ruhi Effendi and his cousin the Guardian?

Thirdly, he is paralleled with the brethren of Joseph who in order to get rid of their little kinsman threw him into a well; and again we cannot see the point, for it would seem that Ruhi Effendi more resembles Joseph who was so drastically disposed of.

It is suggested that we compare Ruhi Effendi with Aaron, the brother of Moses, who was misled by his wife; and here we catch an allusion to Zahra Khanum, Abdul Baha's grand-daughter. Naturally, we have no means of knowing anything about the conversations which passed between Ruhi Effendi and his wife; but just the same, we do not think it likely that *this young girl, brought up in the most restricted manner, had the power to dominate such an experienced and resolute husband.*

As a final case in point we are offered the four brothers of Jesus; and now our scrutiny of the charges grows distinctly awkward, because, if we are to study the parallel on its merits, we must place Ruhi Effendi in the composite role of the four brothers, and Shoghi Effendi in that of the Christ. We are willing to strain our mental muscles and make an attempt to view the picture as it is presented by the National Spiritual Assembly; yet, try as we will to be complaisant, we find that so little is known about *these four brothers that we are left balancing in mid-air.* All that we have to go on is that, according to the Gospels, they are not numbered among the devoted followers of Jesus during his lifetime; and here we suddenly realize that we have gained a foothold, nay rather, we are on solid ground and from this point of vantage can deny the charge squarely and unequivocally. Ruhi Effendi was a staunch and loyal supporter of the Guardian during nineteen years of service, as can be proven by the records of the official Bahai publications.

So much for Biblical allusions put to bewilder an all too docile flock!

I Am Thy Companion

The above analyzed literary effort, printed in extenuation of an act of injustice perpetrated upon the Master's most brilliant grandchild, will take its place in the annals of the Cause as a *bizarre and totally unfounded*

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bill of accusation; while, other documents, written in an altogether different spirit, may be referred to as applying to the subject of Ruhi Effendi in a more direct manner. Let us then listen to Abdul Baha as he addresses a follower in his hour of trouble:—

Be thou not unhappy; the tempest of sorrow shall pass; regret will not last; disappointment will vanish; the fire of the love of God will become enkindled, and the thorns and briars of sadness and despondency will be consumed! Be thou happy; rest thou assured upon the favors of Baha', so that uncertainty and hesitation may become non-existent and the invisible outpourings descend upon the arena of being! . . .

If the friends and relatives are keeping themselves at a distance from thee, be thou not sad, for God is near to thee. Associate thou, as much as thou canst, with the relatives and strangers; display thou loving kindness; show thou forth the utmost patience and resignation. The more they oppose thee, shower thou upon them the greater justice and equity; the more they show hatred and opposition toward thee, challenge thou them with great truthfulness, friendship and reconciliation.

Praise be to God, thou art near the Kingdom of ABHA! Rest thou assured. With all my soul and spirit, I am thy companion at all moments. Know thou this of a certainty!

—Tablets of Abdul-Baha, Vol. III, pp. 557-558

Chapter VIII
GUIDE, PHILOSOPHER
AND FRIEND

*The child finds its mother when it leaves her womb.
When I am parted from you, thrown out from your
household, I am free to see your face.*

*—Rabindranath Tagore
Fruit-Gathering, Stanza X*

Chapter VIII

GUIDE, PHILOSOPHER AND FRIEND

The Young Advisor

Ruhi Effendi Afnan was guest of honor at the 20th Annual Bahai Convention held in Wilmette, Ill., from April 26th to April 30th, 1928; and there he delivered an address before the delegates which is a masterly resumé of his teaching campaign in the United States. Many were the impressions which had been made on his mind by the Bahai Assemblies and the outside world. He describes his reactions to both; points out where there is room for improvement in methods of teaching, and gives an encouraging report on the receptivity of the public mind.

To a great extent, the world has outgrown the sectarian concepts of the past, he explains, and is now ready for a scientific religion. Such a religion has been set up by Baha-O-Llah and the time is ripe for the propagation of his teachings. Now the question is: Can the Bahais take hold of this great opportunity?

He speaks of the American student and of his open mind, but specifies that youth should be approached by youth. He emphasizes the need of mingling with all peoples, with all groups: Go to them, he advises. You will sit forever if you wait for them to come to you. He mentions the fact that, upon his arrival in this country, he had been urged to speak on the principles of the Cause without mentioning its name or the names of its great Founders. Although unfamiliar with American ways, he had put aside this suggestion and had come out frankly as a Bahai; later he was glad that he had made no compromise. He felt that the straight-forward attitude was desirable in every way and was the least that should be expected of a follower of Baha-O-Llah.

He accentuates the necessity for a teacher to live up to the standards formulated by Abdul Baha. If he cannot do this, he had better give up teaching the Cause. A pure life is even more important than prayer; and modern youth is wide awake; it does not endure hypocrisy.

Then he expresses his desire to see the Bahais achieve three things: break the shell which in some places they have created around themselves; pursue a form of adult education which would show the position of the Cause in society, and administer to the needs of youthful but seeking souls, through their teachers.

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In this talk, Ruhi Effendi maps out a chart for the future and he tells his listeners how to address themselves to it. We find no vague remarks, no generalizations; but keen analyses and practical plans. We see him as the young advisor, directing his colleagues of far more mature years; and we feel again, as many felt at the time, that if his visit could have been prolonged indefinitely, the benefit to the Cause would have been extreme.

The convention speech of Ruhi Effendi is a forthright and courageous document, a guide for teaching and an evangel of initiative and resourcefulness; and feeling that his advice applies to all of us, I have chosen a few generous extracts for reproduction in these pages.

Convention Speech of Ruhi Effendi

A little study of the progress of religion in this country, especially in the light of the books and periodicals that are coming out, will show every unprejudiced mind that on the one hand there is a dying out of the spirit of sectarianism and, on the other, a gradual creeping in of the desire for true religion. Man is becoming too broad along every line to be kept narrow in his religious views, but he has at the same time learned that without the value religion gives to life and the outlook it creates in the individual, science cannot proceed very far without at the same time opening up new channels for destruction. Science is gradually learning to value the importance of religion and drawing nearer to it.

At such a juncture the Baha'i Movement exists on the field, with the full equipment in principles and in spiritual dynamics, to provide the world with the necessary religious views. Is it going to avail itself of this wonderful chance, or is it going to let it slip away? It all depends upon us, the Baha'is, for ever since 1844 we have been trained for this purpose!

What I wish now is to say how we can do it, how we can arise to the occasion and spread this great Cause of ours. During these last few months, as you already know, I have been travelling around in this country and the experiences I have had in the field of teaching have led me to certain conclusions. I do not maintain that these views are beyond reproach, for after a few more experiences, I may modify them to a great extent. But maybe, if expressed frankly and clearly, these experiences will prove of some use to that body which will undertake the task of arranging for the teaching work during the coming year.

First, let us consider the condition of the Cause at present. Except in a few centers, such as New York, Portland and various other small centers, the Cause is not spreading rapidly. The friends do attend their meetings, they hold their feasts most regularly, but, as far as I can make out, they are not satisfied as to the progress they are making in attracting new individuals . . .

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. . . Many times I have been brought by Baha'is in contact with certain individuals who have heard me most diligently, perhaps even asked me a question or two, but who before leaving said "this is all interesting, but we are satisfied with what we have." It is useless to talk to people who are satisfied, unless we can first create in them a dissatisfaction and then a desire for some reformed ideas. Consequently, the proper persons to approach are not necessarily those who conform to certain religious views. Sometimes a person who is agnostic and has left religion in the pursuit of some other reformative movement is far easier to reach. There are millions of people in this country, who are craving for some religious views that would satisfy their reason as well as their spiritual longing, and it is these that we want no matter in what walk of life they may be. These are naturally broad-minded and ready to accept whatever satisfies their reason. Among teachers, educated people, club people and those who interest themselves in humanitarian services, there are throngs who would accept the Cause if approached in a broad way. Students of some philosophic or mystic cults are not generally so receptive . . .

Then our mode of approach should be exactly like that of the Master. I believe there are few who appreciate the great change the Master made in the method of teaching when he came to this country. Previous to that, in the East at least, the only way they proved the importance of the Cause was by referring to prophecies concerning the Cause that had been mentioned in the Holy Scriptures or the Qu'ran. The Master, when He undertook His trip to the West, saw the futility of such a method; he saw that if the people are not ready to comply with the authority of the Bible, surely they will not listen to what its prophecies prove! So he set aside that method and began to emphasize the social teachings of the Cause. Take the Paris or London talks, or the discourses he delivered in America and find for yourself how he emphasized primarily the social aspect of the Movement. My point is merely to follow His example, if we desire to succeed.

But though the Master laid for us the best form of teaching the Cause, He wants us to modify it to suit the occasion. Moreover, what He gives are certain generalizations: it is for us to prove them. 'Abdu'l Baha speaks of a graduated Income Tax as the only form of taxation; it is for us to prove its use. He mentions the Unity of Science and Religion; it is for us to find out how the movement is to be brought about. He advocates stronger family ties, it is for us to find out how the measures he advocates concerning marriage and divorce fit in with the family problems we have at present. In short, we have to study the historical background to find out the significance of what 'Abdu'l Baha advocates. It is only by doing that, that a newcomer can find out the true importance of the Cause and be attracted to it. Moreover, supposing the world were suddenly to awaken to the truth that only the Baha'is have the true solution for the world problems, and

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were to give us the reign of administration to adjust society according to our ideals, would we be able to undertake the task?

We have to prepare ourselves for this task in two ways. First by mixing more with the world outside. One unfortunate thing I have found in many centers that I have visited is that Baha'is, enchanted by the wonderful treasures they possess, do nothing more than sit down, count them and admire them. Baha'u'llah did not desire to attract us away from society, he definitely says, mingle with all the peoples of the world and share with them the fruits of your endeavors. A true Baha'i, therefore, is the one who lives as a member of society, alive with its activities. He should be a leader of society and a source of inspiration to it, always busy to apply in its life the precepts of the Cause. Mix with your fellow Baha'is, so as to keep in touch with the source of inspiration and then go out into the world using that spirit which you have obtained in quickening the world and solving its impending problems . . .

But to be able to do real service to humanity and appreciate the significance of the Movement, we should also try and educate ourselves. As far as my experiences go, the more books I read the more I appreciate the Cause . . .

One important conclusion that I have come to, while travelling throughout this country speaking about the Cause, is the method of presenting it. I was told on my arrival in this country, that the safest way to attract individuals is by avoiding the name of the Cause and its founders. I was even told that the name of the Cause is a handicap to it. Unfamiliar with the condition of the country, I almost believed it. The only reason why I did not subscribe to that idea was because a little knowledge of Christianity had taught me that the same thing was told about the early Christians. They called them Christians and jeered at them. But they did not change their name to satisfy the idiotic public, so I thought we should not give way to their prejudicial sentiments and commit a most humiliating act to the Cause and its founders.

Time and experience, however, have proven to me that such is not the case. I have not as yet found anyone who heard me mention the Cause and was prejudiced by its name. In fact, when on certain occasions the subject given to me was such that it did not necessitate a direct reference to the Cause, I have had people come to me later and ask why I did not mention the Movement and speak of it more exhaustively. The better the group, the more freedom I have had in mentioning the Cause. In a hall, on the grounds of Cornell University, I spoke on the work of the prophets and on Baha'u'llah as the manifestation of God to this day and no prejudice was manifested. Similarly did I speak to groups in Stanford University, University of British Columbia, Pacific School of Religion, in Vassar College and Mills College and to almost the whole student body of Howard University and many other groups.

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What I believe is the reason for the prejudice is the sentimental or sectarian way some people present it. When all the talk is about certain personal experiences in Haifa, or in the Cause in general, only few individuals who are already familiar with the Movement find it inspiring, others are not interested. Why should a college student or teacher care to know about the wonderful life of the people in Haifa? What he is interested in is the way they propose to help the betterment of the world.

Secondly, we sometimes are apt to speak of the wonderful teachings of the Cause, as if they are rival teachings with those of Christianity and far superior to them. Such an attitude would undoubtedly arouse a great amount of justified ill-feeling towards the Cause. In fact, it shows a lack of understanding on the part of the speaker. Baha'u'llah has not come to the world to create a religion to rival with Christianity, with a different set of teachings, all the time be on the alert to deprive others of their religion and bring them into His own fold. Baha'u'llah has come to reform different religions, to make Christianity true and pure Christianity, Islam true and pure Islam, and so on. In other words, our belief is that all these religions are the renewals of the ancient and the same religion. They are the different fruits that the same ancient tree produced at different seasons. All the religions, in their true form, are religions renewed, and not new religions to rival with the existing ones.

Thus, whenever any prejudice is found against the Cause, you can trace it back to some misconceived statement made to that individual, and not an inherent handicap due to the name of the Cause. In fact, the names of Baha'u'llah and the Master bring with them a spiritual power that operates as the dynamic force behind the teachings . . .

At the beginning of my work around the Bay Region, a great friend of the Cause, who had obtained for me some wonderful openings, told me "I would like to give you two advices. First, get to people of your own age, for those of my age are too hard-boiled; then, do not try to get the people to you, go to them." "There is always," he said, "a class of people, who go habitually to lectures as a form of entertainment. They will listen to you, but they will never take what you say seriously." . . .

On the subject of the young people, also, my friend was right. Out of the many groups I spoke to, college students were the most receptive. They are considered at present, by their elders, as irresponsible and irreligious individuals, but the truth is that they are too broad to conform to any sectarian form of religion to which their parents subscribe. Moreover, being free from dogmas and trained to use their reason, they are unwilling to accept anything on mere faith. They want a religion that would conform to their reason and, at the same time, satisfy their spiritual longings. Moreover, religion has always been the source of ideals for man. The early Christians became Christians because they found in it the hopes and ideals they

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craved for. The only reason why the Churches at present do not attract man is because they do not provide the intelligent individual with those ideals society needs at present. Religion is meant to be always in the vanguard; when it begins to drag behind, society will set it aside, rather than be encumbered by it. The only reason why the young students do not go to Church is because there is nothing the Churches can give them. The Churches do not stand any more as the source of ideals and inspirations, and that is the reason why the students do not frequent them. If we Baha'is come to the front and, in their own language and without exuberant emotionalism, show them that we have the breadth of outlook they crave to see in religion, if we show that our belief is that science and religion have to go hand in hand, and that they are both based on reason and faith; if we then present them the social ideals the Baha'i movement advocates, then they will run to its support and manifest the energy that is so characteristic of the young people as a whole.

But only young people can appeal to young people. With older people, they will have a lack of confidence and mutual understanding and, therefore, will not come out with questions so freely. With one of their own age, the case is however different. Moreover, only a young person can appreciate the problems of another young person. I was, one day, mentioning to a grown-up friend of mine some questions put to me by a Baha'i youth. I soon found that this friend of mine, instead of sympathizing with the problems that the youth had, began to scorn them. To me, however, the case was different; having had those problems to solve myself, I could show greater sympathy and leniency in the matter. Just as a young person cannot appreciate the difficulties of his elders, so grown-up people cannot appreciate the problems of the youth . . .

What I desire to see achieved along that line is that ten young and competent individuals, who are ready to sacrifice two years of their life, should prepare themselves for the work. These should be put under a rigorous course of study for one whole summer. During this time they should, under a competent teacher of the Cause and also a competent Professor of Social Science, obtain a general view of the Cause in a scientific way and also go deep and specialize along one of the phases of the teachings. Then prepare an essay, showing their competence in presenting the Cause. Once this is achieved, they should be sent from one College to another, to establish centers and study classes. They should not stay, however, for more than two weeks in any center, they should keep on moving and let others come in their place.

During this period, the Teaching Committee should also see that they are keeping up their study. For, unless they read outside books constantly, they are apt to become stale and incapable of standing up to the mark in winning their point while discussing the Cause with the students. . .

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Now we Baha'is should be on our guard lest the Baha'i teachings lose their purity. The Baha'i Movement is not a conglomeration of all sorts of religious ideas plus the beliefs of some mystic cults. It is religion purified, it is the ancient religion freed of the debris of human imaginings. If we desire to be true Baha'is we have to experience one of the greatest revolutions in our very soul. We have first to set aside old conceptions, we have to cleanse our slate from ancient outgrown, human imaginings, from those beliefs that have degraded the other religions into their present condition and then usher in the Baha'i ideals and beliefs and give them the complete and uncontested reign in the kingdom of our soul. We have first to "ring out the old" and then "ring in the new." . . .

Aside from this report, I would like to avail myself of this great opportunity where I am facing the representatives of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada, to express my heartiest thanks for all the kindness that has been showered upon me. Without the constant help and inspiration that was given me by the teaching committee, through its secretary, I would have never undertaken such a trip all alone or obtained any one of the wonderful openings that were arranged for me. My experiences along that line have proven to me definitely that, being under the shadow of Shoghi Effendi, and keeping in touch with the National Assembly, through its proper committees, put us in unity with the source of spiritual power which is absolutely indispensable for success. We individuals are infinitesimal in our influence, it is that source of energy which makes us what we are in achieving success, in serving the Cause.

Then, I would like to thank all those individuals that took me into their homes and sheltered me as a son and brother. As I have often remarked, the world would be a different one from what it is at present, if every individual were to find as many homes in foreign lands as I have found in this. Thank you for all you have done for me. I will try to repay you if you come to Haifa.

—*Baha'i News*, June and July, 1928 issues

Return to Haifa

A farewell dinner to Ruhi Effendi was given by the Bahai community in the Hall of St. Mark's-In-The-Bouwerie, where he had been welcomed on his arrival in this city. Being included in the large assemblage of guests, I had the opportunity of looking into the face of this Bahai brother of mine whom I had not seen since youthful days in Haifa, and of hearing him speak with the charm and assurance of which I had heard much in recent months. A day or so later, I spent the lunch hour with him in an uptown restaurant where we discussed methods for propagating the teachings. All my talks are derived from the Master's, he said to me; I simply sowed a

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few of those very seeds, here and there. I have done my duty to the best of my ability. Baha-O-Llah will take care of the rest.

On his way to Palestine, Ruhi Effendi stopped in Geneva, where he addressed *The Conference of International Peace Through the Churches*; then he resumed his work in Haifa as secretary to the Guardian.

Short Shrift for The New History Society

It was in the following spring that The New History Society came into being, becoming a subject of controversy from the very start. The point at issue was that I would not place this new movement under the control of the National Spiritual Assembly or accept the unconditional authority of this body. Willing as I was to work in full cooperation with the Administration, I yet could not prostitute my conscience and my spirit to a religious dictatorship; consequently, after the passage of an agitated year and four months, The New History Society and its founders were expelled from the Bahai administration.

Throughout this proceeding, voluminous correspondence passed between New York and Haifa, most of it being attended to by Ruhi Effendi; and here we see the young secretary as a staunch advocate of the Administration and the passionate protector of its prerogatives. The fact that The New History Society received short shrift at his hands has never affected my high regard for him personally, for I realize that agents of organizations are cogs in the wheels, or, if very highly placed they are wheels in themselves and the machines are dependent upon their remaining in place. It can be said that throughout his active career, Ruhi Effendi fulfilled to the letter his obligations to the Administration; while at the same time, and I concede that his adjustive processes must have been rather complicated, he continued to uphold the Cause itself in all its universality and grandeur.

During the early Thirties, *Baha'i News* occasionally refers to Ruhi Effendi. The April issue of 1930 carries some teaching suggestions made by him; and the May issue of the same year includes an account by Dr. Walter B. Guy of his stay in Haifa, in which he repeats a prayer offered by himself at the Shrine on Mount Carmel in the sympathetic presence of the young secretary. In April 1931, Ruhi Effendi is referred to as being member of a committee in Palestine, together with his brother Soheil Effendi Afnan and Miss Effie Baker, engaged in collecting data for publication in Vol. IV of *The Bahai World*. The following July he is again mentioned, this time by Mrs. Keith Ransom-Kehler who, after a long time,

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yet recalls his speech given before *the Congress of Some Living Religions Within the British Empire*. Mrs. Kehler writes:—

Ruhî Afnan said in his paper before the Congress of Living Religions that when we see the teachings and principles of this Revelation at last stepping down out of the cold empyrean of idealism and becoming part of the everyday working order of the world, we cannot but agree with Abdu'l-Bahá that the "pulse of this mighty message of Baha'u'llah is beating like an artery through the five continents of the world."

—*Bahá'i Magazine*, July 1931

A Unique University

The American University of Beirut is an institution of incalculable value in the Near East. It has moulded the characters of countless young Oriental men and women, and stands as a beacon of tolerance and broad thinking upon the educational horizon of the world. Abdul Baha offered his most eloquent tribute to Dr. Bayard Dodge, President of the University, when he sent his own grandsons to be educated under his auspices; and he further recommended that the Persian Baháís enter their sons as students on this campus. An article by Dr. Dodge entitled *Education as a Source of Good Will*, which is published in *The Baháí World*, 1930-1932, gives the reader an idea of the spiritual attitude that has made the American University of Beirut unique among *Alma Maters*.

It is with a sense of deep appreciation that I reproduce herewith a few passages from this article. Dr. Dodge writes:—

The word "university" implies something broader than the use of education to nurture a specific influence or propaganda. It suggests an effort to set forth the ideas of the world as a whole, so that a student may seek the truth through broad horizons and be free to choose for himself. It is this conception that underlies the work of the American University of Beirut. An effort is made to prevent all forms of propaganda, except for a consistent pressure to promote good will and friendship.

During the past year there have been representatives of fourteen nationalities and twelve major religious sects on the teaching and administrative force of the University. . .

During the year 1930-1931 there have been 812 students in the University proper, 33 in the Institute of Music, and 697 in the elementary and secondary classes of the Preparatory School. These students represented twenty-two important religious sects and thirty-

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nine countries. They have come from places as far apart as India and the Argentine; Russia and Zanzibar. . .

As the University at the foot of Lebanon has given an interpretation of the gospel of Jesus and the teachings of the prophets which is similar to that proclaimed by the great Bahá'í leaders at the foot of Carmel, there has naturally been a bond of sympathy between the colony at Haifa and the American University of Beirut.

During the past year there have been three Bahá'ís on the staff of the University and twenty-six enrolled as students. The following is a list of the Bahá'ís who have graduated and become a great credit to their Alma Mater. . .

Dr. Dodge presents a list of twenty-six names which includes those of Shoghi Rabbani, Ruhi Afnan and his brother Soheil Afnan.

After mentioning the qualifications which mark the Bahai students at the Beirut University, some of which are refinement and courtesy, clean living, honesty and intuitive internationalism, President Dodge concludes thus:—

Centuries ago shepherds, who were watching their flocks in the fields of Bethlehem, heard heavenly voices singing of "Goodwill to all mankind." Today this same song is being chorused from Carmel and Beirut. May the whole world catch the spirit of the music, that harmony may take the place of discord and enmity be turned to peace.

—*The Bahá'í World*, 1930-1932, Vol. IV, pp. 368-371

The Attentive Host

I have striven to present a composite picture of Ruhi Effendi, drawn from published records, together with some printed items of more or less worth, which show him as guide, philosopher and friend to the Bahai Community. Now, I will close this chapter with a few lines having no historical importance whatsoever, but which give us one more glimpse of him in the modest role which he filled so long and so successfully—that of the attentive young host on the slope of Mount Carmel.

After landing, some of us chose to walk through the narrow crooked streets with Ruhi Afnan, grandson of Abdul Baha, and cousin of Shoghi Effendi, who was at the dock to greet us.

—In an article entitled: *Glimpses of the New World Order* by Mabel and Sylvia Paine, *Bahá'í Magazine*, March, 1933

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And men, who contemptuously treat their own brothers and sisters as eternal babies, never to be trusted in the most trivial details of their personal life,—coercing them at every step by the cruel threat of persecution into following a blind lane to nowhere, driving a number of them into hypocrisy and into moral inertia,—will fail over and over again to rise to the height of their true and severe responsibility.

**—Rabindranath Tagore
Creative Unity, pp. 139-140**

Chapter IX

BAHAI STATESMANSHIP TRANSCENDENTALISM AND APOLOGETICS

A Decisive Event

Eight years after Ruhi Effendi's fruitful journeyings in this country, a second visit took place which was counted as of extreme importance, judging from the Annual Report of the National Spiritual Assembly, printed after his return to Haifa. Here, under the caption *Decisive Events of the Year 1935-1936*, we find, among other items, the following:

6. The second visit made to America by Ruhi Effendi Afnan.
Baha'i News, May, 1936

This visit although short was a repetition of the first, in that the time of the distinguished guest was kept very full indeed. *Baha'i News* announces in the following article:—

Ruhi Effendi Afnan Makes Second Visit to America

The National Spiritual Assembly is privileged to announce that Ruhi Effendi Afnan, great-grandson of Baha'u'llah, has come to America and with the Guardian's approval can remain until November in order to take part in the National Meeting at the Temple on October 26 and 27, and visit local Baha'i communities to assist in teaching on his way to and from Chicago.

The following itinerary has been arranged:—

September 8 to 22, Upper New York State.

September 25 to October 4, New England.

October 6 to 13, New York City Metropolitan area.

October 14 to 20, Washington, D. C. area.

October 21 to November 6. From Washington to Chicago, stopping at Pittsburgh en route.

November 7 until his departure from America. From Chicago to New York, stopping at Detroit and Cleveland.

Due to important work which requires his presence at Haifa in November, Ruhi Effendi Afnan regrets his inability to extend his visit to include a journey to Assemblies in the West.

From reports already received, the friends are making every effort to take advantage of this unique opportunity to have the Message presented publicly by so distinguished a believer, and the center already visited are enthusiastic and grateful for the results achieved.

Baha'i News, October 1936

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A Second Home

During this second visit, Ruhi Effendi was on familiar ground. The majority of those he came in contact with had met him before, and to most of these persons, the joy of renewing so rare an acquaintanceship was intense. Besides, some actual friendships had been formed on the first trip, and not a few men and women had come to look upon him as a guide when difficult problems came up. Therefore in many ways, the United States was to Ruhi Effendi a second home.

A characteristic of his, which was discomfoting to some but which, nevertheless, won for him universal respect, was his charitableness toward those who were absent. Gossip died in his presence, or else slunk fainting away to be revived when the coast was clear; and the example of his forbearance and kindness produced a definite impression, one as useful perhaps as were his explanations and teachings. A most lovely injunction of the Master is this: *The Bahais must possess the sin-covering eye*. It seems to me that Ruhi Effendi exemplified this teaching.

Bahai Statesmanship

A notable step forward on the second trip was the fact that this time Ruhi Effendi gave a talk on one of the great national networks. He spoke on W. A. B. C., of the Columbia Broadcasting System, on October 11, 1935 and presented the Cause in a manner that was highly satisfactory to his Bahai listeners. His voice is well suited to broadcasting and his delivery was remarkable, considering the fact that he was a novice along this line.

I am including this entire radio speech in my sketch of Ruhi Effendi, for in it he addresses himself to the subject of universal civilization from the Bahai point of view. It is an attitude that must be adopted by the world statesmen of the future. The title of his address is:

The Contribution of the East to World Civilization

It is venturesome to maintain that the mind of an Easterner is essentially different from that of a Westerner; that there are inherent qualities and capacities that distinguish them one from the other; but the fact still remains that whereas Western development has been in the direction of material civilization, the contribution of the East has been more along the spiritual line.

The expert knowledge, technique and specialization that has been produced in the West, especially in these latter days, is a reality that

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will for ever stand to its credit and characterize its civilization. The discoveries of the laws of nature, the progress of science in all its different branches, the development of industry and its mass production, the perfection that is achieved in business methods, all are arresting to an Eastern visitor in a Western land, arouse his admiration and awaken his hope that some day the same forces may permeate Asia and Africa.

There is no reason why such potentialities residing in nature and in man should not be developed and manipulated to serve the peoples of the East. All they have to do is to enter the centers of learning in Europe and America and partake of the knowledge accumulated there. To develop man has to follow in the footsteps of those who have advanced farther on the road to progress, and for a period of time, acquire knowledge from them. Only by emulating the West, in its physical and economic development, can the East start to evolve, and gradually reach a point when it can turn back and begin to contribute its share to world civilization. The material development of Japan is a decisive proof confirming the efficacy of this process.

But just as the East has to acquire from the West industrialization, technique and the specialized branches of learning, so the West must turn to the East for the spiritual element that will lift its civilization, balance it, make it perfect and raise it to the rank of a culture.

It is idle to theorize on the reason why the great cultural movements of the world, the great revealed religions, such as Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, have all sprung from the East and form the sources of the different cultural movements history records. I hesitate to suggest that the Eastern frame of mind makes it more susceptible to revelation, that the people of the Orient are a better channel through which God can express His Divine Will, that they are the chosen medium for regenerating mankind. But the facts are too glaring to be denied that all the cultures existing in the world today have sprung from revealed religions invariably born in the East.

Consider how the Christian spirit and teachings form the cultural background of Western civilization. The mode of thought, the basic moral principles that distinguish the European and American nations from the other peoples of the world, trace their source back to Jesus Christ; and this is a fact admitted by most students of Western culture. Jesus Christ introduced into the world a universal consciousness and outlook on life that permeated Roman thought and gradually remoulded its culture, as well as its legal system and institutions. It was the Christian spirit that balanced the Roman civilization and provided its true cultural element. There is much ground for doubt whether the influence of Rome upon the world and later civilizations would have been so great if the cultural and spiritual elements brought in by Christianity had been withheld; if Pagan

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Rome had not been conquered and refashioned by the spirit of Jesus Christ. Westerners, however, often fail to remember that Jesus was a Jew, born and bred in Palestine which is an integral part of Asia. *Because Islam supplanted Christianity in the Near East and drove it into Europe, we are often apt to identify Jesus so closely with Europe as to forget that He was an Oriental.*

Even more outstanding and irrefutable is the influence of Muhammad and the Qur'an upon the culture that developed in the Near East and gradually spread its influence into Western lands. Not only did that religion start a new civilization of its own, and in the tenth and eleventh centuries, give rise to centers of learning such as Khorasan in Northern Persia, Baghdad and Spain, but also the Persian, Arab and Moorish culture, that had obtained their spirit and basic teachings from Islam, exerted a cultural influence upon countries that were purely Christian in Faith. *The more we follow, with an unprejudiced mind, the study of Islam and the Renaissance, the more we find the influence the religion of Muhammad exerted upon European culture. Many of the earliest leaders of Renaissance pursued their studies in Muhammadan countries and were infused with the spirit of Islam. Among them was St. Thomas Aquinas, who spent his early days in Spain learning philosophy from Moorish scholars. Spinoza was greatly influenced in his thought by the Jewish philosophers who flourished in the atmosphere of a Muhammadan culture. Many of the unbiased students of history today maintain that if the French had not actually won the battle of Tours, Europe would have not gone through the period called the Dark Ages. This shows the importance of the cultural influence of Islam when its spirit was still young and virile.*

The progress of modern science is a glowing example of what human intellect can achieve when freed from the fetters of outgrown dogmas and superstitions. *The more man disentangled himself from medieval conceptions, the more he advanced and discovered the methods whereby he could use physical forces for his social and individual development.*

But as our civilization is more along material and industrial lines, as its drift has been increasingly away from true religion and spirituality, that cultural element has shown itself to be disturbingly lacking. The attention of the world has been directed towards the development of industry and commerce, towards the growth of technique and specialized study that is conducive to human well-being upon this earth. Much less importance has been attached to cultural values and the unfoldment of the spiritual faculties of man. *Can a civilization be considered a true culture when the spiritual destiny of man is ignored, when values are distorted and perverted? Can a truly cultured humanity perpetrate international crimes and cause the death of millions as we are doing?*

Science has laid at our disposal great forces that may be used

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for the betterment of humanity, but they are actually employed to destroy life and impoverish peoples. The curse of mankind in this day is that material civilization has progressed by leaps and bounds while spiritual culture has been dragging behind. We have obtained a detailed and accurate knowledge of many of the forces that operate in our physical universe but have not reached a true and proper understanding as to the goal of our moral and spiritual development, as to the purpose for which we were created and the direction in which we ought to develop. These are aspects of a true cultural life that is still unborn.

Again can the East come to the front and contribute, as on previous occasions, its cultural element to world civilization. It is only by acknowledging and accepting this worthy contribution the East can make in this day, that Europe and America will be able to perfect their material civilization and give it a cultural and finishing touch.

Being too near to the origin of the Baha'i Faith, which arose during the middle of the last century in Persia, we are apt to underestimate its value. In time we may obtain a better perspective and a more accurate method to appraise its importance. But even now it can be taken into consideration and its value recognized. It undoubtedly possesses a rich cultural value for all the civilized world.

Consider, for example, the goal of the oneness of mankind which it establishes as an ideal for all the peoples of the world. Baba'u'llah, the founder of this new Faith that has arisen in the Orient, proclaims: "Do we see your kings and rulers lavishing their treasures more freely on means for the destruction of the human race than on that which would conduce to the happiness of mankind. . . This strife and this bloodshed and discord must cease, and all men be as one kindred and one family. . . Let not a man glory in this that he loves his country; let him rather glory in this, that he loves his kind. . ."

With such a cultural ideal before us, with such a universal spirit to stimulate our inner emotions, narrow nationalism and its devastating influences can be overcome. Then the forces of nature harnessed by man, which now are employed for purposes of destruction and self-aggrandizement, can be used to strengthen the bonds that unite the human family. These forces could then be made to operate for furthering the conception of world unity and the brotherhood of man.

If this cultural movement (again sprung from the East), should be employed as the ideal of Western material civilization, as the spiritual force that is to animate it and direct its course, then, instead of dissipating our life along unworthy pursuits we will build up a nobler home in this world and make ready for the worlds to come. This is a practical idealism which will absorb youth and guide its footsteps.

We are born in this world with a spirit that is a store-house

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of infinite potentialities; with the capacity to develop these potentialities and reflect the rich and glorious attributes of God. Should we bear this cultural principle in mind, should we recognize the fact that we have more than a physical being, should we become conscious of the fact that the purpose of all creation is the spiritual development of man, then we will take life more seriously and joyously and concentrate our attention upon things vital and uplifting.

If the East and the West should each contribute its share along these lines destined by God; should they bear in mind that they are indebted and in need one of the other, then they would build up the future civilization in such a manner that both the material and cultural elements would be incorporated—elements indispensable for the richness and beauty of the whole. Then we will behold the true Kingdom of God, foretold by all the prophets, which constitutes the ideal world state the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh tries to establish upon earth.

—*World Order*, December, 1935

Bahai Transcendentalism

During this same year and the following one, much of Ruhi Effendi's writings were included in Bahai publications. A certain article, appearing in *World Order*, November, 1935 deserves the study of those who are interested in metaphysics, theology and religion. Here, the abstruse topics of the Divine Essence, of the Logos, of incarnation, re-birth and resurrection are handled with learning and acumen, his knowledge of these transcendental subjects being directly derived from the New Testament, the Koran and the writings of Bahá-O-Llah and Abdul Baha. This Paper, under the lengthy title: *A World Faith—Studies in the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh—The Oneness of the Prophets*, gives the author standing as a Bahai transcendentalist.

A beautiful section of the article, dealing with the potentialities of man and the continuing influence of the Prophets, reads thus: —

Man is born in this world endowed with latent and infinite potentialities with the object of developing them to the full. In this process of training he needs the counsel and guidance of a loving teacher who is above the prevailing social conceptions, who is not carried away by the trend of social influences, who is able to create his own environment as well as the environment for the whole world, and at the same time is himself guided by an inner and unerring Divine Light.

God who has created us loves us, and because He loves us desires our progress. Hence He has sent us His Prophets and given them the necessary power to raise us above our environment, overcome the forces of evil and set before us the true path of salvation and

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spiritual upliftment. But the Prophets do not act as spiritual educators only in this world, in all the worlds to come through which the human spirit passes on its road to progress, Prophets appear and help the development of man.

A new religion, therefore, comes into being whenever the previous one becomes too old to exert any appreciable and healthy influence upon society, whenever, in the words of Jesus, it becomes like a salt that has lost its savor. In one of His Tablets 'Abdu'l-Baha says: "This bounty and great opportunity shall end and this brilliant morn shall fade away into dark night. When you find the world in this condition know and be sure that the day of certainty has neared, that the light of the merciful God shall soon shine upon the horizon and the Lord shall appear upon the dark clouds."

In referring to the principle of the finality of revelation and of absolutism in religion, Ruhi Effendi has this to say:—

How foolish, therefore, is the principle maintained by the generality of the followers of the different religions that with the advent of their Prophet revelation has ceased; that their religion is the "absolute religion," the final word uttered by God to man. According to Baha'u'llah it is blasphemy "to believe that all revelation is ended, that the portals of divine mercy are closed, that from the day-spring of eternal holiness no sun shall rise again, that the ocean of everlasting bounty is forever stilled, and that out of the tabernacle of ancient glory the Messengers of God have ceased to be manifest."

Speaking of religion as *spiritual atmosphere*, embracing all life, he strikes a very high note:—

If we take religion to mean that spiritual atmosphere which embraces moral and social laws as well as beliefs and motivating emotions that God creates for the spiritual development of man, then all that the Prophets do, is to renew that atmosphere and make it more healthy and invigorating. The Prophets do not come into the world to establish rival institutions and to rob one another of their adherents. They are all servants of the same Cause, revealers of the same ancient religion of God, which, at the hands of man, is constantly corrupted and obscured. This is why Jesus said: "I have not come to destroy but to fulfill." He did not come to abolish the religion of Moses but to infuse it with a new life and spirit, to make it more effective in changing and uplifting the human heart.

To him all the Prophets have one and the same mission, namely, to help in the spiritual development of man:—

We have thus seen that all the Prophets are the manifestation of the Word of God, that they all come to the world for the same purpose, namely to help the spiritual development of man. Their

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mission is to renew the ancient religion of God, and so they all accept the Prophets who appeared before them and foretell the advent of the future ones. Hence, we should admit that they constitute members of the same race of spiritual and moral educators, destined by the hand of Providence to help the upliftment of man in this and in the myriad worlds to come.

Bahai Apologetics

A second article by Ruhi Effendi, written during this period, is published in the April 1936 issue of *World Order*. The author addresses himself to the subject: *Institutionalism and Religion*, a choice undoubtedly provoked by the existence of The New History Society and by its silent stand against the administrative theology of the National Spiritual Assembly. Here, writing at his own inclination or else at the bidding of those higher up, Ruhi Effendi tries his very best to discover the rational justification for the institutions of the Faith. He describes two manners of approach to religion: the *mystical* and the *revelational*—the first, emphasizing the inner feelings of man; the second, the necessity for institutionalizing the Faith in order to insure its life and continuity. The latter belief was held, as every one knows, by Christianity and Islam; and it is now the cornerstone of the Bahai Administration. Yet, was it the belief of the Founders of these religions? If I remember correctly, the great Prophets to whom I refer opened the vials of their condemnation upon the religious institutions of their day; while they built their movements on the untrammelled hearts of brave men who made themselves free to follow them. That institutionalizing did take place after their departure from this life is quite another story, and a very sad one, as far as my own views are concerned.

I now return to the explanations of Ruhi Effendi, who addresses himself to his subject as follows:—

Modern thought is inclined to consider any form of organization as detrimental to the spirit of true religion, and it bases its reasoning upon the belief that whereas religion requires a freedom of the spirit, laws and institutions force it into a groove and subject it to a definite and preconceived mould. How could the spirit soar and attain its full stature if restrained by the dictates of an organization?

The next paragraph contains a dart that is levelled straight at me. Instinctively, I want to duck my head; and then I change my mind and plead guilty.

BAHAI STATESMANSHIP

To denounce the administrative aspect of the Faith of Baha'u'llah, or in a general form, maintain that religion cannot and should not be organized, betrays a lack of understanding of the philosophy of the spiritual life. Only mystic movements can logically maintain that organization weighs down upon the spirit, that it retards its progress. The followers of the revealed religions, be they Christians, Moslems or Baha'is, on the other hand, cannot with any justification maintain such a theory.

Having carried his argument up to this point, the writer must have thought it incumbent upon him to make some note of the disastrous effects produced upon all the religions by ecclesiastical organizations, for he says:—

It is true that at times organization becomes a handicap to a spiritual movement, but that is only when its function is over-emphasized, when the organization becomes an end in itself rather than a mere means provided by God for the spiritual development of man.

In reading the following statement, I can only smile at the two words *after ages*:—

The administration of the Faith of Baha'u'llah is still in its infancy, it has to grow and mature, to fulfill its mission in the world; but after ages of activity and useful service it will become subject to corruption.

In spite of the fact that the *pros* on institutionalized religion are not my pet subject, but rather the *cons*, I yet consider this apologia of Ruh Effendi as a very clever piece of writing. It should have been appreciated by those for whom it was drawn up, and I do not doubt but that it was judging from the prominence that was given it; however, according to the documents that are in my possession, this article is his swan song for, following this date, I do not find any more of Ruhi Effendi's writings in Baha publications.

The Order of Bahai Apologists

The religion of Bahai Institutionalism is headed by Horace Holley known very simply as Mr.; although with time, an appropriate title such as Monsignor or the Right Reverend is likely to be added to him. Below stands an order of hierophants and prelates, acting as advocates and protectors of rights, rites and privileges. Some of them are men of erudition and learning; and these are occasionally called upon to explore the domain of philosophy, sociology, science, economics, church and state in order

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to find plausible arguments and sophistic explanations for the introduction of institutionalism in the Bahai Cause—all this to prove to the rank and file of the faithful, the logical necessity, the *raison d'être* and the divine origin of the said institution.

In Professor Glen A. Shook, the Bahai Administration has found a valuable exponent and interpreter of its institutional ideology. The May, June, July and August issues of *World Order*, 1936 carry four scholarly articles from his pen, entitled respectively: *Man as an Organic Unit*; *Society as an Organic Unit*; *The Divine Plan—A Creation* and *Elements of the Divine Plan*. A second series of articles by the same author appears in the March, April, May and June issues of this publication, under the general title: *A Study of Church Organizations*; while again, in 1938, we have in the January, February, March and April issues of *World Order* a third series of articles by Professor Shook, entitled: *Philosophy and Revelation*.

Mr. Mountford Mills has devoted his legal talents and experience to the establishment of the Bahai organization. As a former president of the National Spiritual Assembly, as most trusted agent of the Guardian and as a widely loved and respected personality, he has made notable contributions to the administrative system which he ranks, at the least, on a par with the Teachings. Three articles of his entitled *The World Crisis* which, in 1928, are published in the February, March and April issues of *World Order*, give his views on the subject.

Another consistent advocate of organization within the Cause is Mr. Kenneth Christian. His essays: *Education in a World Order*, published in *Baha'i Magazine*, March, 1934 and *Peace Realists*, appearing in *World Order*, October, 1937 rationalize the need of a Bahai administration.

In this campaign of apologetics, mapped out by the authorities, many American women have played prominent parts. The late Mrs. Keith Ransom-Kehler, a fine writer and speaker, as well as a dynamic and utterly devoted servant of the Cause and of the Administration, has cooperated whole-heartedly with the National Spiritual Assembly; her writings having consistently been featured in Bahai publications. The *Baha'i Magazine* of August, September and October 1933 carries a series of her articles under the title: *A World at Peace—Baha'i Administration as Presented to a Group of Free Thinkers*. In one of these, Mrs. Kehler praises the system of voting as conducted by the Bahai Administration. Her description is as follows:—

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The manner of voting is unique. There are no parties, no candidates, no nominations. Canvassing and electioneering are strictly forbidden. . . The elections have now been accomplished without contest, majorities or minorities. . . In advance of the election not only have no names been mentioned, no preferences asserted . . . but since no one is nominated previously there can be no platform.

I have said it before, when the subject of Bahai voting has come up, but I still can find no parallel to this conduct of affairs outside of the totalitarian systems as practiced in Europe. These elections are as different from the Democratic ideal as is *Mein Kampf* from the Constitution of the United States.

The World Order of Baha'u'llah is the title of another series of articles published in *World Order* of February, March, April, May and June of 1937. In them, the author, Mary Collison pays her own tribute to the Bahai system of elections.

Hussein Effendi Rabbani, brother and secretary to the Guardian, has, since 1932, been a consistent contributor to Bahai publications in America; and, his writings have helped greatly in moulding the thoughts of the community along reactionary and institutional lines. His articles in the *Baha'i Magazine* are: *The Social Emphasis in the Baha'i Revelation*, November 1932; *The Baha'i View of Authority and Organization*, January and February 1933; *The Baha'i Faith and the Forms of Government*, May, 1933; *Church and State in the Baha'i Social Order*, July and August 1933.—Appearing in *World Order* are:—*The Church and the World*, February, 1938 and *Religion and Society*, April 1940.

Another Cause

It was in the middle Twenties, only a few years after the Master's departure from this life, that the Bahai community first became aware of the fact that an administrative system was about to be fastened on to the Cause. The majority did not take the idea very seriously; yet, when lectures on the subject were announced, many attended because it was understood that this was Mr. Holley's hobby. A little later, when the existence of The New History Society had become an issue, the thoughts of all Bahais were directed toward the newly created administrative order; and presently the Bahai Cause, to all intents and purposes, drifted into the discard.

This substitution of *another* cause for the Cause itself necessitate some explanation, and it was to meet this requirement that the Baha

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apologists were set to work. That they did a good job of it is unquestionable. The believers have been induced to take a detour, on the understanding that it will eventually turn back to the great highway; and they are forging ahead at top speed on a road that leads into the dim and distant past.

In their own times, the *stately apologists* of Christendom accomplished their mission most satisfactorily. The tomes of their Jesuitical writings may be heaped with the dust of centuries, yet their influence still goes on. It was in appreciation of the complicated structure of the Catholic Church, and with the ambition of gaining an even greater measure of temporal power, that the Bahai authorities converted the Ark of the Lord into a Theological Fortress, in the dungeons of which the living teachings of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha are conserved as archives.

The Crucial Choice

There is a time in the life of nation and of man when a crucial choice has to be made between slavery and freedom. The American fathers made that choice on the soil of this continent; the Democracies and would-be-democracies of the entire world are making that choice right now. On the other hand, there are masses of people whose mental and spiritual equipment does not warrant even a consideration of liberty; to them, the goose-step is rhythm and the voice of officialdom law, while the locked door makes home:—

A tame bird was in a cage and a free bird was in the forest.

In due time they met as a decree of fate.

The free bird cried: "O my love, let us fly to the wood."

The caged bird whispered: "Come hither, let us both live in the cage."

Said the free bird: "Among bars, where there is no room to spread one's wings?"

"Alas," cried the caged bird, "I should not know where to sit, perched in the sky."

—Rabindranath Tagore

Chapter X
THE CASE AGAINST
RUHI EFFENDI AFNAN

The cowardice of the weak; the arrogance of the strong, the greed of fat prosperity, the rancour of the wronged, pride of race, and insult to man—

Has burst God's peace, raging in storm.

*Fruit-Gathering, Stanza LXXXIV
—Rabindranath Tagore*

Chapter X

THE CASE AGAINST RUHI EFFENDI AFNAN

My Purpose

The narrative of Ruhi Effendi, as I have presented it, was written with the purpose of preserving the memory of this man in the literature which is growing around the Cause. This was necessary, because those who have incurred the displeasure of the Bahai organization are expunged from the record wherever possible, so that with time even their shadows are practically obliterated. It is true that on occasions, the names of these persons do come up in a mass listing, under a direful heading; but their achievements and good works are totally forgotten and, of course, their stories are never told.

Now, I have not attempted to tell Ruhi Effendi's story from his point of view. Such an effort would have been presumptive for, although I knew him well in his youth and have since observed his development with interest, the barriers of distance and separate channels of activity have intervened between us. Likewise, I could not comment on the events which led to his excommunication, for these are shrouded in mystery; yet, one thing I could do, and have done—this was to state his standing in the Cause which was won on his own merits, and to offer a picture of him based on his writings, for the benefit of the Bahai public of today and of the years to come.

Needless to say, I have not received a sign of approval from him, for excommunicated persons do not place themselves in one category, to make merry or lament on the same ground. Of this order, there are definite grades which are recognized not only by the Bahai community but by the outcasts themselves. Consequently I, who am close to black on the tone chart of untouchability, cannot expect to communicate with those who are listed under the greys; although, for my part, I confess to being rather color-blind in this respect and feel myself fundamentally involved with all shades of God's children, however different their opinions may be from my own.

The writing of a biographical sketch on a living person is not an easy task. In praising, one tries to be restrained; in implying a criticism, one hopes to be inoffensive. Through it all, truth is of first importance;

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otherwise, it were best either to lay down the pen or else devote one's time to fiction.

These difficulties were apparent to some of my friends within the Bahai organization and to the others outside of it. It was said that I had enough trouble on my hands, and that I should not go hunting for more. Also, I was reminded that my readers had small interest in the internal disputes of the Bahai organization and that they might lose patience with me altogether. This latter was sound advice and I realized it; nevertheless, an inner voice insisted that it was incumbent upon me to pay a tribute to his grandson of Abdul Baha, which task I have discharged to the best of my ability.

Reasons in Toto

The excommunication of Ruhi Effendi was a totally arbitrary act as can be estimated from the Guardian's cablegrams, passages of which I quote. The reasons given, and all of them, are as follows:—

- Reason I:—** Ruhi's sister married covenant-breaker Fayzi.
- Reason II:—** (The) flagrant disloyalty (of) Ruhi's family compels me (to) disclose information so long (and) patiently withheld (from) American believers concerning his failure (to) obtain my approval (of) his second visit (to) America.
- Reason III:—** His subsequent conduct regarding his marriage which I refrained from revealing (to) anyone except your Assembly, as well as Foad's departure (to) England without my knowledge should now be made known to believers.

Reason I

The First Reason applies to the marriage of Ruhi Effendi's sister to the son of Furighyyeh Khanum, daughter of Baha-O-Llah.

Now, I happen to have known the two elder brothers of this young man, the late Hussein Effendi Afnan when he was *aide-de-camp* to Fayzal, King of Iraq, and Nayyar Effendi Afnan who was Commissioner of Parks in Cairo, Egypt. Both of them were noble Bahais, who had achieved distinction in their respective fields; yet the Guardian has chosen to stigmatize this entire family, which incidentally was greatly cherished by Abdul Baha, with the name of covenant-breaker, and he therefore is displeased with the marriage which has taken place between these two cousins of his.

However, this is a story in itself and does not apply to Ruhi Effendi.

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He did not marry into the honorable family above-mentioned; therefore, I claim that the First Reason given for his excommunication is entirely beside the point and cannot be taken seriously.

Reason II

The Second Reason is on the grounds that Ruhi Effendi failed to obtain the Guardian's approval of his second visit to America.

It happens that my readers have seen the advance announcement of this visit, published in *Bahai News* by the National Spiritual Assembly, in which it was stated that *Ruhi Effendi was expected in this country and that he was coming with the approval of the Guardian*. Now, we can say with certainty that the National Assembly had been in communication with the Guardian in regard to this visit; that this announcement was made following his instructions, and that the warm welcome accorded to, and the series of meetings arranged for the distinguished guest were in conformance with Shoghi Effendi's wishes. It seems incredible that the printed words of the National Spiritual Assembly should now be flouted to so great an extent; yet, such is the case. The Guardian in his cablegram of excommunication goes back on his trusted administrative organ and brands it with untruth; an action which is unwise, for hereafter no one can put much weight on the statements made by the National Spiritual Assembly.

Let us suppose that Ruhi Effendi's visit to this country was made *without* the Guardian's approval, but with his *permission* which we know had to be granted. If such were the case, there was an excellent precedent for it which we will now review:—

Shortly before the Master's departure from this life, Shoghi Effendi determined to go to Oxford, England, to continue his education. He had suffered a disappointment at the University of Beirut, having failed to obtain the degree of M. A. upon which he had set his heart; and the fact that his fellow Bahai students had won this honor made the situation all the harder. Now, Abdul Baha was disappointed too, but he did not make a point of it. He felt that his grandson had derived much benefit from the University and that a degree was not absolutely essential. He wished Shoghi Effendi to remain in Haifa to take up the work of the Cause at his side. Undoubtedly, he needed him; also he probably felt that his time on this earth was not to be very long. So, Shoghi Effendi stayed in Haifa for a few years.

Now, Shoghi Effendi has a very strong scholastic leaning and he could not give up the desire for further education; consequently, the time at

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rived when a definite issue arose in Haifa: Shoghi Effendi insisted on going to Oxford, and the Master insisted that he should remain at home.

To make a long story short, Shoghi Effendi won his point, for the ladies of the household were so sympathetic to his distress that they interceded for him with Abdul Baha. Thus, Shoghi Effendi finally went to Oxford, without the Master's *approval* but with his *permission*. He was there when Abdul Baha passed away from this life and was unable to return until more than a month after the funeral services.

Naturally, the Master did not excommunicate his grandson for this determination to have his own way; therefore, by the same token, if Ruhi Effendi came to America without the Guardian's *approval* but with his *permission*, he likewise should not have received punishment. Also, in view of the fact that the National Spiritual Assembly had gone on record as saying that the visit was made with the Guardian's approval, the statement should have been honored. Consequently, I claim that the Second Reason given for the excommunication of Ruhi Effendi cannot be sustained in a court of ethics or of law.

Reason III

The Third Reason is in regard to his marriage, although nothing is told us of this event other than the fact. It would seem that Ruhi Effendi had a right to pick out his own wife, and as his choice fell within the family circle it is obvious that he did not marry outside of his class or of the Cause. This excuse of marriage brings to mind an event of world-wide importance which took place in the first family of England, which has a similar aspect to the one with which we are dealing, although it cannot be called a parallel.

In the case of Edward VIII there existed certain disadvantages: the lady was an American; she was divorced; she was not of royal birth. However, in view of prevailing modern conditions, an adjustment could have been made if the Tory element in England had so wished. Yet, the tragic break occurred; the King was deprived of his rights and sent into exile. Why was this? The answer is well known: Edward VIII was too liberal, too progressive, too democratic; the stand-pat dignitaries of the Empire thought him dangerous and longed for his downfall. So, the abdication was consummated and the idol of the nation became *persona non grata*. Thus, the royal house of England lost its most gifted and decorative representative, and the nation, a valuable asset which could not be replaced or supplemented.

Those who have studied the talks and writings of Ruhi Effendi can

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see very clearly that this material could not have been pleasing to the Administration, for it contained an inherent liberality and tolerance which did not fit into a totalitarian pattern. Doubtless, this descendant of Baha-O-Llah caused a good deal of anxiety to the authorities. He seemed to be of the old order of Abdul Baha, which is synonymous with being of the new order of a world society; and he constituted a threat to the system which had chosen to forget the universality in the Cause, which was its heritage, and its destiny. Consequently, reasons for his elimination from the picture had to be worked out; and one of the excuses was his marriage.

Now, I claim that the outworn method of excommunication applies to heresy in religion, having nothing to do with the private life of an individual, and that the Third Reason for the excommunication of Ruhi Effendi is totally invalid.

We have examined in their order the excuses given for the expulsion of Abdul Baha's grandson from the Bahai community; and can accept them as just, reject them as unjust, or pass on to other matters with a sigh of relief, finding the whole subject outside of our line of interests. However that may be, the case of the Guardian of the Bahai Cause against Ruhi Effendi, in which the extreme penalty was exacted on grounds that were not legal, nor logical, nor ethical, nor moral, must stand before history as one more example of the overriding irresponsibility of Fascism as expressed in this abnormal age. Let us however expect that, in the perspective of the future, organized terrorism will appear as but a phase of the great day of transition which will have developed into the day of Universal Democracy—the Day of Baha-O-Llah.

Foad

"But, who is Foad?" This question was asked of me by some Bahais who had noted the name in one of Shoghi Effendi's cables of excommunication. It is included in the Third Reason, as quoted in this chapter.

Foad is the youngest brother of Ruhi Effendi; but he is not merely part of a family that has been placed under *spiritual quarantine*. He is a wrongdoer in his own right. Quote:—*Foad's departure (to) England without my knowledge, should now be made known (to) believers.*

It is questionable whether this action was better or worse than was that of his brother. The latter went to England without the Guardian's approval; the former, without his knowledge. It seems to me that Foad Effendi was wise; he intended to go to England (I surmise, to pursue his

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studies), and, not wishing to run the risk of being forbidden to do so, he simply took French leave. I hope he got what he wanted out of his sojourn in that country and, certainly, I think no less of him for having conducted his private life as he saw fit.

I remember Foad as a baby of a year or so at the time when I left Palestine in 1918. Since then, I have not returned to that country, so the little knowledge I have of him is derived from the writings of the pilgrims. This actually is not knowledge, but rather a few glimpses of a child as seen through the eyes of visitors to Haifa. It appears that he was an independent little personality even at the age of three, and I have heard that he was a delight to his grandfather who found much amusement in his precocious ways.

In *The Light of the World* by William H. Randall, published in 1919, we read a description of *An Afternoon with the Household*. In the above-named chapter, on page 132, Foad makes his appearance as naturally as would any child in any ordinary family:—

At this point little Foad entered the room breathlessly and began speaking very fast and excitedly. It seemed that his pet donkey had a fever and he was asking Abdul Baha to pray for it. Earlier in the afternoon he had given two oranges to Abdul Baha. The Master now gave him one to eat. When he had finished, the other was given to him with the instruction: "Give this to the ladies." He firmly refused, saying the gardener had said that no one but Abdul Baha should eat the oranges, and no amount of persuasion could make him give it to the ladies—but he had already eaten one himself.

In the same book, on page 86, we find the children at the supper-table, in the presence of the ever-loving and indulgent Host:—

At supper, Foad and Riaz, the two three-year old grandchildren of Abdul Baha, were both seated at one end of the table, their faces shining with joy and happiness for this privilege. We learned that before dinner, the Greatest Holy Leaf had told Foad that as he had been there all the day, it were better for him to go home for dinner. He quickly left the room, going direct to Abdul Baha and complained of this. He replied with loving kindness: "Of course, you can stay with me for dinner." Immediately Foad returned triumphant to the rest of the family, saying:—"Now you see, the Master wants me to stay with him."

In an article by Miss Genevieve L. Coy printed in *Star of the West*, October 16, 1921, page 198, we come across the irrepressible Foad offering his services as protector to Abdul Baha:—

In a short time the Master came from around the eastern corner

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of the Tomb, followed by little Foad. The Master was radiantly beautiful. He wore a dove-colored overcoat or wrap, for the wind was cool on the mountainside. Foad was dressed in a stiffly starched white dress, and made a staunch little bodyguard for the Master. (Someone told us that one night Foad went up to the Master after supper and said, "You go to bed now and rest. I will take my gun and lie across the threshold. If any thieves come, I will scare them away!")

These simple anecdotes give a picture of Foad Effendi Afnan as he figured in Abdul Baha's household at the start of his life. Now at the age of twenty-five years, he has been excluded from the one-time happy family circle and from the Bahai community in all parts of the world. He will forever be classed as an enemy of the Cause and be relegated to the limbo of forgotten things, if the Bahais continue to agree that the punishment of excommunication fitted the crime, which was, I blush to remind my readers, that of traveling to England without permission.

Conclusion

The above digression from the account of Ruhi Effendi is not actually such, for his family is an inextricable part of the sad story which I have felt called upon to write. My task is now completed and I leave it for whatever it may be worth, happy in the fact that my tribute is paid and is on record. In this work, I have had no *arrière pensée* of any kind, and especially no expectation that Ruhi Effendi should, at any time, lend his talents to the aspect of Bahai endeavor for which I strive. The world is large; our pathways will probably never cross, but the Light which we follow is the same. It falls on us without distinction and will guide us to the same goal. I trust that his journey will be fruitful in the future as it has been in the past; that his name will continue to shine on the records of the Cause and that he, descendant of the Bab, Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha, will fulfill a glorious destiny as a man, the ramparts of whose spirit are unbreached.

Meanwhile, I must express my very ardent hope that the evaluation of an excommunicated person, as set down by the National Spiritual Assembly (*Baha'i News*, No. 134, March 1940, page 2), will seem as ridiculous to Ruhi Effendi as it does to me. This statement reads:—

... his expulsion or excommunication from the Faith, which can be effected by the Guardian alone, in his capacity as the supreme spiritual head of the community, has far-reaching spiritual implications affecting the very soul of that believer.

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And a little further in the same article:—

But in case he is excluded from the body of the Cause by an act of the Guardian he ceases to be a believer, and cannot possibly identify himself even nominally with the Faith.

I know that Ruhi Effendi is far too intelligent to take such an argument seriously; besides, he has had his instructions long since—instructions from Baha-O-Llah himself. They read:—

Verily God hath made it incumbent upon every soul to deliver His Cause according to his ability. Thus hath the command been recorded by the Finger of Might and Power upon the Tablet of Majesty and Greatness.

—Bahai Scriptures, p. 257

Again:—

Be as the blowing wind of the Merciful to the trees of the created world, and rear them up in the name of thy Lord, the Equitable, the Learned One.

—Bahai Scriptures, p. 189

These teachings cannot be abrogated; they are there to stay, as is the promise:—

Whosoever quickens one soul in this Cause is like unto one who quickeneth all the servants and the Lord shall bring him forth in the Day of Resurrection into the Rizwan of oneness, adorned with the Mantle of Himself.

—Bahai Scriptures, p. 258

And now comes the burden of Abdul Baha's message, delivered on earth. It is his message now, received according to our understanding; and, dare anyone doubt, conveyed at this time to his grandson with peculiar emphasis:—

Abandon silence and seclusion and solitary nooks and go forth into the arena of explanation. Convey the Message of thy Lord with clearest speech and most complete elucidation. This is better for thee than solitude.

—Tablets of Abdul Baha, Vol. III, p. 520

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HAJI SEYYED ZEINEL-ABEDIN
Poet-philosopher and Bahai leader of Esphahan.
Uncle of the author.

BROKEN SILENCE

The Story of Today's Struggle
for Religious Freedom

by

MIRZA AHMAD SOHRAB

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BY THE SAME AUTHOR

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Renaissance

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Religion is a subject on which I have ever been most scrupulously reserved. I have considered it a matter between every man and his Maker, in which no other, and far less the public, has a right to intermeddle.

—THOMAS JEFFERSON.

The love of religious liberty is a stronger sentiment than an attachment to civil or political freedom. That freedom which the conscience demands, and which men feel bound by their hopes of salvation to contend for, can hardly fail to be attained. Conscience in the cause of religion, and the worship of Deity, prepares the mind to act and suffer beyond almost all other causes.

History instructs us that this love of religious liberty, a compound sentiment in the breast of men, made up of the dearest sense of right and the highest conviction of duty, is able to look the sternest despotism in the face.

—DANIEL WEBSTER.

The Way of Freedom is opened! Hasten ye! The Fountain of Knowledge is gushing! Drink ye! Say, O Friends: 'The Tabernacle of Oneness is raised; look not upon each other with the eye of strangeness. Ye are all the fruits of one tree and the leaves of one branch.

Truly, I say: whatever lessens ignorance and increases knowledge, that has been, is and shall be accepted by the Creator.

—BAHA-O-LLAH: *Bahai Scriptures*,
Pages 132, 133.

Praise be to God! you are living upon the great continent of the west enjoying the perfect liberty, security and peace of this just government . . . for in this human world there is no greater blessing than liberty. You do not know. I who for forty years have been a prisoner, do know. I do know the value and blessing of liberty. For you have been and are now living in freedom and you have no fear of anybody. Is there a greater blessing than this? Freedom! Liberty! Security! These are the great bestowals of God. Therefore praise ye God!

—*The Promulgation of Universal Peace*,
Vol. I, page 49.

Words of ABDUL BAHA from an address delivered
before the Metropolitan African Methodist
Church, M Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.,
April 23, 1912.

THE TRUMPET LIES IN THE DUST

The trumpet lies in the dust.

The wind is weary, the light is dead.

Ah, the evil day!

Come, fighters carrying your flags, and singers, with your
war-songs!

Come, pilgrims of the march, hurrying on your journey!

The trumpet lies in the dust waiting for us.

I was on my way to the temple with my evening offerings, seeking for a place of rest after the day's dusty toil: hoping my hurts would be healed and the stains in my garment washed white, when I found thy trumpet lying in the dust.

Was it not the hour for me to light my evening lamp?

Had not the night sung its lullaby to the stars?

O thou blood-red rose, my poppies of sleep have paled
and faded!

I was certain my wanderings were over and my debts
all paid, when suddenly I came upon thy trumpet lying in
the dust.

Strike my drowsy heart with thy spell of youth!
Let my joy in life blaze up in fire.
Let the shafts of awakening fly through the heart of night,
and a thrill of dread shake blindness and palsy.
I have come to raise thy trumpet from the dust.

Sleep is no more for me—my walk shall be through
showers of arrows.
Some shall run out of their houses and come to my side—
some shall weep.
Some in their beds shall toss and groan in dire dreams,
For to-night thy trumpet shall be sounded.

—RABINDRANATH TAGORE,
from *Fruit-Gathering*.

FOREWORD

This is an amazing book even for our amazing generation which has become shock-proof. The strident march of totalitarian modes of thinking, here as well as abroad, has so changed the shape of the world we used to know that a momentous invention of science leaves us indifferent and the assailing of man's cherished liberties creates but a ripple of stir and commotion.

It is fitting and proper that citizens of a self-governing State voluntarily impose upon themselves certain restraints in the exercise of political rights when a crisis is impending. One may or may not agree that the crisis facing the United States of America has been serious enough to necessitate the introduction of peace-time conscription. One may or may not agree that preparedness for violent offense and defense is the best way to meet the worldwide crisis. But no one can question the right of the American State—which is but another term for the American people banded together for political purposes—no one can question the right of the American State to impose upon its citizens certain denials of freedom involved in conscription.

Political rights—rights to life, liberty, property and the pursuit of happiness—are derived from the State. They are conferred upon the citizens by the State. But there are *certain rights that inhere in man as man*—rights that are not subject to the jurisdiction of the State, rights that de-

rive from an authority higher than the State, from the dictates of one's conscience; from the still small voice within, which is the voice of the Most High.

Let us then distinguish between the *political rights of man* and the *human rights of man*. Political rights are conferred upon the citizen by the State and may be withheld from him by the State; but human rights can neither be conferred upon man nor withheld from him by the State. Limitations upon human rights are imposed by the State at its own peril. And the history of man testifies to the fact that *in every combat the State has had to give way ultimately before human rights*. The most striking illustration is the triumph of the Christian Church over the Roman State.

What the State cannot do in the matter of curtailing *human rights* no man or association of men is competent to do. For, the State, by definition, is an association of all "members" who become citizens by the fact of association for political purposes. The State, in other words, is the most inclusive and the most powerful association in every human society.

Every State, tyrannical, oligarchic, absolutist, dictatorial or democratic, of necessity comprehends within itself various associations for the enrichment of man's enjoyment—politically, economically, physically, intellectually, socially, spiritually. The characteristic of a democratic State is that it encourages all types of voluntary associations whereas the other forms of State merely tolerate voluntary associations—and that, too, on condition that their functioning does not undermine the authority of the State.

Among the most cherished human rights are:

- (1) Freedom of Conscience;
- (2) Freedom to Seek Truth;
- (3) Freedom to Experiment with Truth;
- (4) Freedom to Follow the Inner Light;
- (5) Freedom to Give Allegiance, unto Death, to whatever Cause one's Conscience Believes to be Right;
- (6) Freedom to Worship God in one's own Way.

Religious associations and institutions—churches, temples, synagogues, mosques, hierarchies, congregations, parishes—arise to help man in the enjoyment of his basic human right, namely, freedom to worship God in his own way, in terms of his inner light. Unfortunately, even religious associations and institutions, creations as they are of human beings, tend to go the way of all flesh; in course of time they develop their peculiar rites and rituals and prescribe structuralized forms of behavior, rendered hallowed by time and tradition.

Institutions are accepted ways of doing things—with a tendency toward structuralization. Man cannot live without institutions, neither can he live with institutions. An institution arises as an instrumentality to subserve a given end. Soon the end becomes subordinated to the maintenance of the institution. This then is the supreme dilemma of the human race: Man unknown to institutions is less than human; man dominated by institutions is also less than human; and yet, man eternally strives, as he must,

by means of institutions, to realize his worth as a citizen, his dignity as a child of God.

Eternal vigilance, it has been said, is the price of political freedom. Eternal vigilance, it may be said, is also the price of freedom from the tyranny of institutionalism. I venture to submit that every generation of free men is called upon to be on the alert in evaluating whether an institution is functioning as what it was intended to be, namely, as an instrumentality, or whether it has arrogated unto itself the role of the end. And if the generation as a whole is incompetent, as it may well be, to make proper evaluation, it is imperative that each generation be blessed with free souls, with men and women of vision and courage, who shall proclaim: "The Sabbath is made for man, not man for the Sabbath."

Democracy, broadbased upon the Bill of Rights, not only guarantees political rights but also very wisely makes ample provision for full enjoyment of human rights. The U. S. Constitution most explicitly guarantees freedom of conscience, freedom of religion, and in no uncertain terms restrains Congress from "prohibiting the free exercise thereof." The Courts have faithfully safeguarded the rights embodied in the Bill of Rights. And the Executive branch of the U. S. Government, far from interfering with freedom of religion, has from time to time championed freedom of conscience and religion for all mankind.

So long as the U. S. Constitution remains vital in the affairs of this nation, so long is the enjoyment of human as well as political rights of man assured. Indeed, this living example of the virtues of American democracy should act as a beacon-light to the rest of mankind.

II

In this book we have an interesting case history of man versus institution. The facts in the case are simple. In the last century there arose in Iran (Persia) three modern Prophets of the new dispensation—The Bab (1819-1850), Baha-O-Llah (1817-1892), Abdul Baha (1844-1921).

Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha taught, among other things:

- (1) Oneness of mankind—no racial prejudice;
- (2) Harmony of all religions—each religion is a divine revelation and, therefore, worthy of respect;
- (3) Reconciliation between science and religion;
- (4) Universal religion—to foster appreciation of all faiths;
- (5) Universal peace—through the establishment of a World Organization, through international arbitration and an international Parliament, through the removal of artificial customs barriers, through universal disarmament;
- (6) An international (auxiliary) language, to be created and adopted for international communication.
- (7) Independent investigation of truth;
- (8) Non-institutionalism;
- (9) Universalism.

"You cannot organize the Bahai Cause," said Abdul Baha. Bahaism, literally the Religion of Light, is meant to act as a leaven that leaveneth the whole lump. It is intended to reinforce and reinvigorate the eternal truths and ancient wisdoms embodied in the different religions of mankind. The Bahai teaching is, in a sense, a new tool of spritual insight, calculated to help humanity realize the age-old hope of peace on earth and goodwill among men.

Along with his own teachings and his vital interpretations of the message of Baha-O-Llah, Abdul Baha left a Will appointing his grandson Shoghi Effendi as the "Guardian" of the Bahai Cause and leaving directions for the election of an International Council which should in the future guide the development of the movement and co-ordinate the activities of its followers in accordance with the principles of Baha-O-Llah.

The four thousand odd followers of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha in the United States and Canada and some thousands of others scattered abroad seized upon Abdul Baha's Will as their fulcrum around which to organize the activities of the new cause, which was meant to be universal in scope and non-institutional in character. At once Bahai Assemblies, here as well as abroad, became like unto fraternal orders if not like unto secret societies with their unique rituals and paraphernalia.

The guardian, hierarchies, assemblies, rituals, taboos, rules for membership, approved forms of behavior, committees on publications, boards of censors, causes for excommunication—all the elaborate ramifications of the institutional pattern conspired to banish the soul of universalism from the Bahai teachings.

Professing Bahais soon became the prisoners of their own institutions. Against this travesty of the universalism of the Founders, against this imprisonment of the spirits of these great Prophets of our age, a few brave souls, devoted disciples and true, raised their protest. Among these protestant voices the most effective have been those of the author of this book, Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, and of his co-worker, Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler. They have been insistently calling upon the Bahais to go back to the original, pure teachings of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha—indeed, to the original, pure teachings of all the Teachers of mankind.

And the high priests of Bahai institutionalism have rewarded these two free souls with excommunication. It is a strange story—one could hardly believe such sacerdotal authoritarianism would be exercised or accepted by any group of persons in the twentieth century. And yet, enlightened American citizens have been accomplices in this nefarious business!

The story of man versus institution, of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab versus the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, finally culminates in a lawsuit. Excommunication on the religious plane was now to be buttressed with political and civil disability, with a restraint to Sohrab and his co-workers from the very use of the word Bahai!

The clear-cut judgment of the United States Courts in favor of man as against the institution heartens every champion of freedom of conscience.

This fresh triumph of the human rights of man over

the organizational rights of hierarchies should lead all free spirits the world over to offer their thanks to the Most High from whom derive the human rights of man. This judicial vindication should encourage our generation to cherish all the more reverently the political as well as the human rights of man.

HARIDAS T. MUZUMDAR.

New York City
Sept. 25, 1941.

AUTHOR'S STATEMENT

The Bahai Cause had its inception in Persia, being inaugurated in 1844 with the declaration of the Bab (Arabic word for *gate*) which was to the effect: that a New Era had dawned, and that he, the Bab, was the Announcer of the imminent appearance of a World Teacher whose Message was to revolutionize the concepts of men and nations. The ministry of the Bab was of short duration, terminating in martyrdom—historic fate of the Forerunner. Meanwhile Baha-O-Llah, scion of a noble house of Persia, had renounced his position and estates to cast his lot in with the followers of the Bab (known as Babis). Persecution and death were the price paid by these devoted men for faith in a new Cause of human brotherhood, and Baha-O-Llah was imprisoned with the rest. It was at this time, in an underground dungeon in Teheran, that he received the revelation that he himself was the One whose coming had been foretold by the Bab; it was here that he was commissioned with the task of making out of the old barbaric world a *New World* of reason and justice.

Baha-O-Llah was not intended to die at the birth of the movement. More than twenty thousand persons who believed in the Bab, and later in him, sacrificed their lives for their Faith; but he, safeguarded by fate, was, with his family, banished to Turkey and then to Palestine. There, the prison walls of Acca, which, in their twenty foot depth, had withstood the cannon of Napoleon, crumbled, figura-

tively speaking, before his dynamic Message. To all parts the Word went, East and West, North and South, and when, at an advanced age, Baha-O-Llah departed from this life, the Cause was already firmly established in countless loyal hearts throughout the Orient.

Abdul Baha was nine years old when he went into exile with his illustrious father, Baha-O-Llah. Release came to him at the age of sixty-four when, in 1908, the Young Turks overthrew the Ottoman Empire; and he immediately made use of his freedom by setting out on a journey, which led him throughout Europe and North America, to deliver the Message to the Occident. In 1921, he passed into the world beyond from his home in Haifa, Palestine, leaving behind a Will and Testament in which his eldest grandson, Shoghi Effendi, was designated as Guardian of the Cause.

II

Here, I wish to affirm my conviction that the Will of Abdul Baha is valid and that his appointment of Shoghi Effendi as the Guardian of the Bahai Cause is unchallengeable. Nevertheless, I take exception to certain policies and methods initiated by Shoghi Effendi and the Bahai Administration established under his leadership.

The teachings of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha are liberal to the nth degree, and broad beyond the outposts of human thought. It was the intention of the Founders to establish an unorganized movement, so all-inclusive and free as to be immune to the natural proclivities of men to restrict and limit. The fact that restriction and limitation

have already set in and are fast gaining ground, at this date, only twenty years after the removal from our midst of Abdul Baha, is a matter of profound concern to all those who, labels apart, believe in promoting Universal Religion.

The Bahai Cause, as founded by Baha-O-Llah nearly a century ago and as interpreted by his son Abdul Baha, was and still is a **UNIVERSAL RELIGION**. Its principles were intended to safeguard the conscience of man from interference by any hierarchical organization; to spiritualize society and to socialize religion; to unify the fundamental ideals of the World Faiths; to bestow upon every child of God the precious gift of liberty and to harmonize the conflicting interests of nations, races and peoples of the earth with the power of spirit. However, the present day Bahai Administration under the title of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada has, through its dogmas and creeds, frustrated the aims of the Founders of the Bahai Faith.

For over twelve years, I have followed the advice of philosophers and poets who eulogized silence, and held my tongue and pen in leash, the while witnessing the daily crucifixion of the movement which I love and believe in. At the same time, I continued to spread the Bahai Teachings through the medium of The New History Society, which I had formed for that purpose in conjunction with Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler. Then suddenly, the Bahai authorities brought suit against me and Mrs. Chanler on the ground that the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada had made a trade-mark of the word *Bahai* and that conse-

quently this name was their exclusive property. The legal action broke the chains of silence and resulted in a frank setting forth of the issues involved.

Thus, while the litigation was under way, *Broken Silence*, little by little, came into being. Appearing in the form of articles, published consecutively in *New History*, monthly magazine of The New History Society, it became the expression of innermost thoughts, pent up and stored away during the passage of years. I had never expected to strip my mind publicly; I had not dreamed and, especially, I had not wished to share my anxieties with others. I had meant to proceed on my own way, serving the Cause of Baha-O-Llah according to my light, the while leaving a clear passage for the Bahai Administration to do likewise.

This course of action came to a full stop with the institution of court proceedings. Overnight, the matter, which for so long had been treated with the utmost discretion, was brought into the public domain, and the time for ignoring the fundamental differences that existed between the liberal Bahais and the National Spiritual Assembly was at an end. Consequently, *Broken Silence* represents the lifting, under duress, of self-imposed restraint.

With the appearance of the first article in *New History*, copies of this little magazine were mailed to all the Bahais listed in the office of the Society. This was done, partly, because it was certain that the Bahai authorities would not give a full account of the legal proceedings to its membership; and, partly, because discussion of the lawsuit led to discussion of the Administration as it stands today, and

this, now that the barriers were down, seemed to be in order.

Personally, I value the democratic principle, being assured that affairs are safest in the hands of the people; therefore, I felt that I was not overstepping the lines of propriety in making available to my fellow Bahais the conclusions which I had reached, supported as they were, in every instance, with documentation. Neither I nor my associate, Mrs. Chanler, was perturbed at being, from time to time, pictured in Bahai publications as *enemies, adversaries, foes, betrayers and covenant-breakers*, for these were only opinions, or simulated opinions; and we felt that there were links yet unbroken between the body of the believers and ourselves. We thought it possible that, on the whole, we were being given credit for sincerity; even as we gave credit on this score to the majority of the Bahais.

In order to cope with the disturbance created in the minds of Bahais by the challenging articles appearing monthly in *New History*, the National Spiritual Assembly advised its membership as follows:—

In response to inquiries from many believers who wish to know what they should do with the literature received unsolicited from The New History Society, the National Assembly advises the friends to mark the envelopes "refused" and drop them in the nearest post box or post office for return to the sender.

—Bahai News, May, 1941, Page 6.

When the returned magazines were received at the office,

the names appearing on the envelopes were removed from the files, and no further literature was sent.

In a letter from the Guardian's secretary, appearing in the July 1941 issue of *Bahai News*, which is addressed to the National Spiritual Assembly, reference is made to the fact that Shoghi Effendi *has received the material sent to him regarding the legal action taken against The New History Society, as well as copies of their monthly publication*. Actually, ever since this problem was first dealt with, the editors of *New History*, on their own part, sent to the Guardian every issue of their magazine. We believed that this was the just thing to do and considered that, in a controversy which had entered the realm of the courts, the subject-matter should be at the disposal of both the authorities and the people.

Abdul Baha taught that everyone should work out things for himself. He said:—

God has given man the eye of investigation, by which he may see and recognize truth. He has endowed man with ears, that he may hear the message of reality and conferred upon him the gift of reason, by which he may discover things for himself. This is his endowment and equipment for the investigation of reality. Man is not intended to see through the eye of another, hear through another's ears nor comprehend with another's brain . . . Therefore depend upon your own reason and judgment and adhere to the outcome of your own investigation; otherwise, you will be utterly submerged in the sea of ignorance and deprived of all the bounties of God.

**—Promulgation of Universal Peace,
Vol. II, page 287.**

III

To the students of the origin and growth of religion, *Broken Silence* puts a number of searching questions:—

Can religion become a dominant factor in the lives of the people without the paraphernalia of creeds and dogmas?

Is it possible to preserve in religion the essential simplicity of the spirit with the emergence of a monopolistic, ecclesiastical order?

Can true spiritual democracy function alongside of a totalitarian hierarchy?

Which should become the test of fellowship: moral, ethical principles or theological, sectarian doctrines?

Is religion a quickening, an illumination, a fraternity, or is it a close corporation with exclusive privileges?

Can every man approach his Maker directly, or is it necessary to do so through the intermediation of authorities approved by a constitution and by-laws, together with various other fetters forged upon the anvil of commercial greed and priestly ambition?

Is religion freedom of conscience, or is it subservience to any individual or group of individuals, no matter how highly placed and outwardly respected?

What is religion? Is it communion with the soul of the universe, or strict adherence to fossilized and crystallized theologies? Is it the trumpet of the spirit, or the voice of materialism? Is it the Infinite Heaven and the expanse of the earth, or a temple built in a certain locality? Is it the leadership of God or the domination of man?

Is religion the lifting of the standard of universal brotherhood, the unveiling of the mysteries of cosmic consciousness, or is it the maintenance of a clan and of tribal consciousness?

What is the mission of religion in our modern age? The Prophets have postulated a world community—undogmatic, super-racial and non-partisan. Do we find it in our hearts and minds to take them seriously?

Is it our task to carry out their intention?

IV

In a letter recently received from a prominent Bahai of long standing, I come across these lines:—*For a believer like you to differ with Shoghi Effendi is a great sin, an unpardonable sin.*

This dogmatic assertion of my fellow Bahai brings to my memory experiences of long ago which apply to the same subject—difference of opinion; and I will close this introduction with a little story about Abdul Baha which I herewith relate for the first time.

Once in a while, I disagreed with the Master. In such instances, he would sit and listen to my arguments on some project or other and, after ten or fifteen minutes, would rise to his feet. I also would be standing. Then, he would twist one of my ears, slap me forcibly on the cheek, and thunder:—

Mirza Ahmad, you have courage! We shall do as you suggest.

Occasionally, having started to move away, he would turn around and, with a twinkle in his eye, would add:—

Mirza Ahmad! Next time, display more courage.

Impressed, bewildered, I would be left alone to marvel at the human and divine miracle that was Abdul Baha.

In these pages certain Persian words and names will be found spelled in more ways than one—Bahai, Baha'i; Baha-O-Llah, Baha-U-Llah, Baha'u'llah; Abdul Baha, 'Abdu'l-Baha, etc.

When Bahai writings were first translated into English, Baha-O-Llah's name was, for instance, spelled as Baha-O-Llah. Later, the central letter O was replaced by U, making Baha-U-Llah. Again, in these latter years, The New History Society found it advisable to return to the original spelling because it produces a more correct pronunciation of the word.

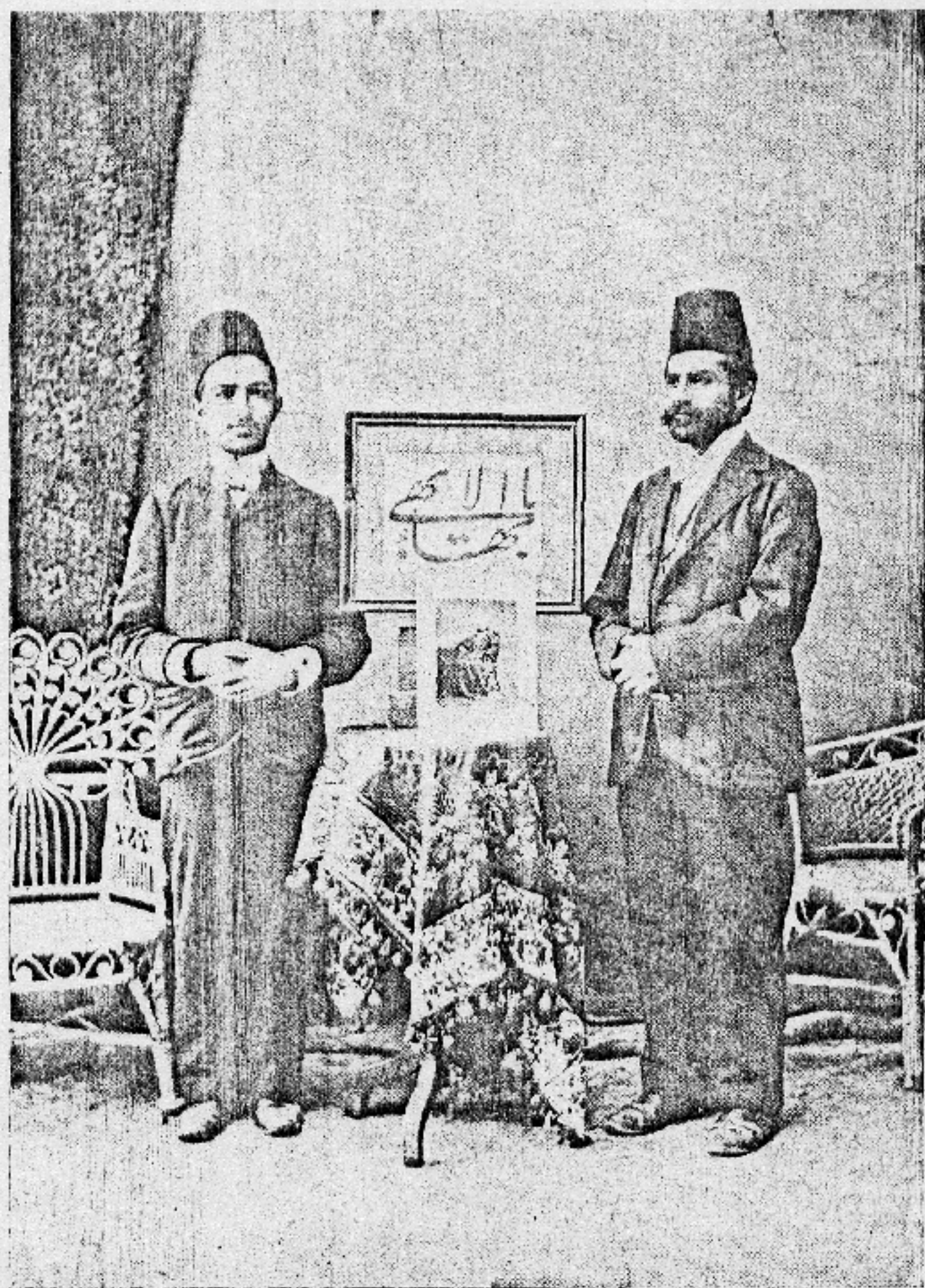
In the publications of the "Guardian" and the Bahai Administration certain apostrophes are used as well. These are in accordance with the rules established by the Orientalists of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, England.

Throughout this book, the quoted extracts carry the spelling exactly as adopted by an author or editor at the given time.

In Bahai literature, letters and communications from Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha are referred to as Tablets.

MIRZA AHMAD SOHRAB.

New York City
Sept. 24, 1941.



MIRZA AHMAD SOHRAB

While he was working as clerk in the store of Mirza Ahmad Yazdi
in Port Said, Egypt.

PART ONE

EARLY RECOLLECTIONS

- 1. I Am A Bahai**
- 2. Bahai Odyssey**

*I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills
from whence cometh my help.*

—Psalms, Chapter 121, Verse 1



POST

CORRESPONDENCE

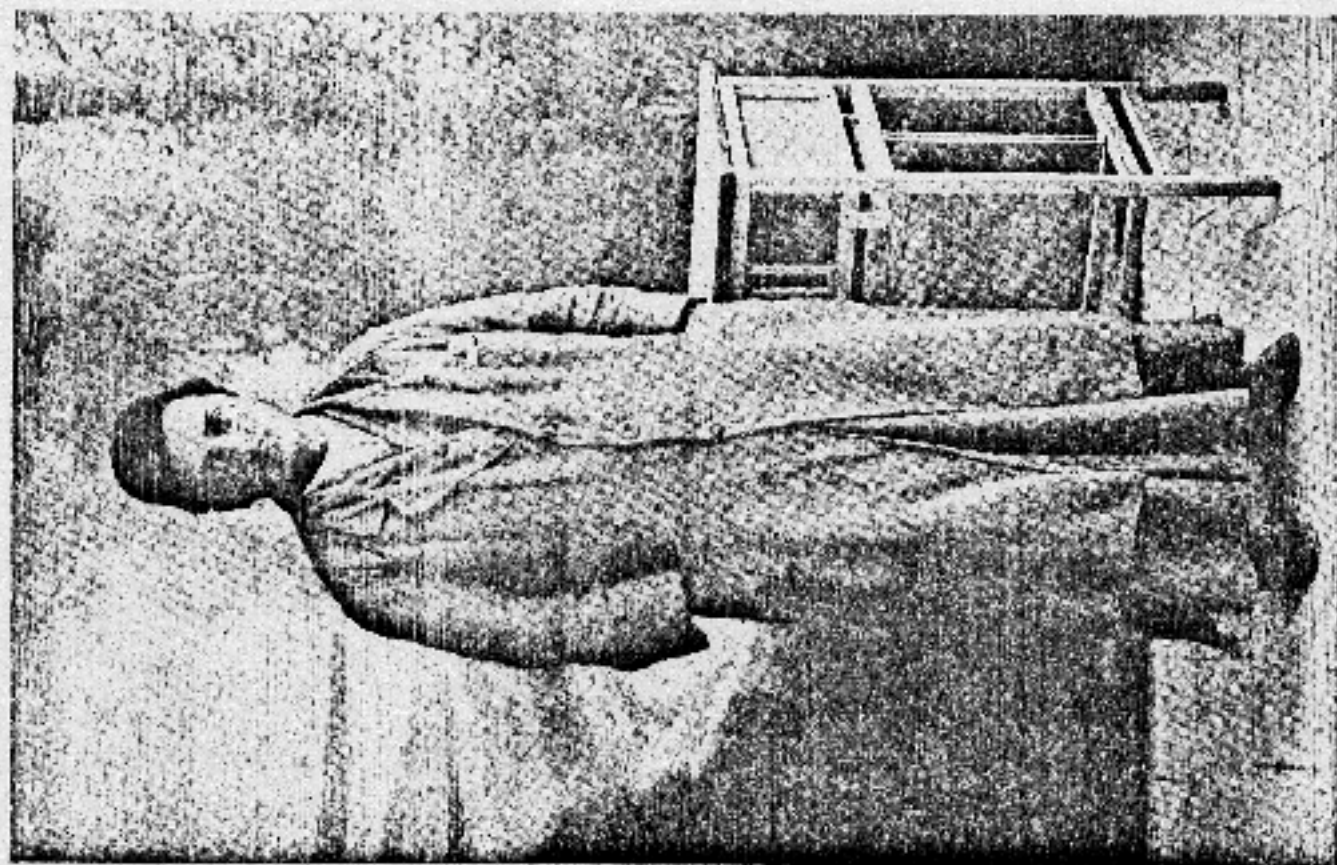
Mirza July 13, 1919
Dear Ahmad!



Dear friends! The friends
all tenderly
remember you at the
sumptuous feasts & ban-
quets that are being
held on Mount Carmel!
Beloved is in excellent
condition. Awaiting
your news personally & tenderly. Shoghi

Mirza Ahmad Soliman
to Mr. J. S. Hammen
1252 - 8th St. N.W.
Washington
D.C.
U.S.A.

Letter to Mirza Ahmad Sohrab written by Shoghi Effendi on reverse side of postcard.



Postcard picture of Shoghi Effendi, grandson of Abdul Baha, taken in 1919. At present, Guardian of the Bahai Cause.

CHAPTER I

I AM A BAHAI

My Home in Esphahan

I am a Bahai. My grandmother, my mother, my two maternal uncles and my brother were Bahais. From the earliest days, our home in Esphahan was a center for the promotion of Bahai teachings and, although the activities of my family were conducted in secret, as far as was possible, the hour arrived when it became a target for the fanatical fury of the Mohammedan Mullahs. I well remember the last meeting held in our garden; the familiar group, the peaceful chanting of Tablets; then suddenly, the muffled sound of advancing feet, the dispersion of the guests to safety and the violent intrusion.

My uncle Haji Seyyed Zeinel-Abedin, poet-philosopher and a very rare and powerful personality, was the chief prize to be gained by this raid; but he managed to make his escape although at the price of a broken leg, and the intruders, after pillaging the house and stables to their hearts' content, took me off as their only captive.

My retention among the enemies of our Faith was a brief one. A few questions as to the names and whereabouts of our Bahai friends were addressed to me. These were accentuated by the powerful persuasion of the bastinado but, fortunately, I made no revelations. Then, my unconscious body was carried back and left at the door of our dismantled house.

A few days later, in the early morning, my uncle and I, both well bandaged up, were lifted to the back of a very

small donkey, and I turned and looked for the last time at my childhood's home. For some weeks, we hid and wandered among the hills, bearing southward, and on reaching Shiraz my uncle placed me in the care of a travelling Bahai teacher named Scyyed Assadollah, and we separated from each other. So, the tutelage of the philosopher of Esphahan was exchanged for the tutelage of a devoted personal follower of Abdul Baha; and in the company of Seyyed Assadollah I journeyed, by way of India, to Palestine.

I was about twelve years of age when I passed through the gates of Acca and came into the glorious presence of Abdul Baha, and I felt then, as I know now, that I was standing before the first of all teachers and the best of all masters. After that meeting I dedicated myself to his service for the duration of my life.

I Go to Work

When, after a short 35 days' stay in his household, Abdul Baha sent me to Ahmad Yazdi, at Port Said, Egypt, my heart had already become a garden in which the flowers of his love grew and flourished. As he embraced me at the hour of departure, he placed in my hand a letter. It was my first Tablet from him, written by his own blessed hand. After boarding the steamer, I opened the envelope. The words danced before my eyes. It is only now that I partially understand their meaning, but certainly those radiant words were an inspiration, and acted as an impetus to me as I started off on my uncharted future. Let me share with the reader a section of that Tablet.

Two Tablets from Abdul Baha

O thou heavenly youth! Although in the path of the True One, thou art homeless and a wanderer, nevertheless put thy trust in Him and seek His Confirmation. Ponder over the affairs and reflect . . . Because thou art at the Threshold of thy growth and development, thou must acquire poise and assurance, and gain firmness and steadfastness.

In Port Said, I worked in daytime as salesman in Ahmad Yazdi's store, and in the evenings I sat at the feet of Mirza Abul Fazl, foremost among Bahai Teachers, learning from him the spiritual lessons that caused me to *ponder over the affairs and reflect*, that made available the master-key to *poise and assurance* and disclosed the secret of *firmness and steadfastness*.

While I was thus working and studying, Abdul Baha did not forget me, for after a few months I received my second Tablet from him. He wrote:—

O thou my perpetual companion! I beg of God that in the spiritual rose-garden thou mayst become a merciful tree, conducive to the joy, exhilaration, attraction and happiness of the heart of humanity; that thou mayst become a most great gift to all the nations and a high bounty to all people.

Spiritual Apprenticeship

From that moment, I did not try to plan my life, for I realized that there was *One*, endowed with heavenly wisdom who was planning it for me. Each event led to another and, after the passing of about three years, I

حسب زوری که سر آمد به عهد و پیمان

بپای

در حلقه حریفان سر آمد به عهد و پیمان
در حلقه حریفان سر آمد به عهد و پیمان
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در حلقه حریفان سر آمد به عهد و پیمان

TABLET FROM ABDUL BAHÁ IN HIS OWN HANDWRITING

This is the first of over a hundred Tablets addressed to
Mirza Ahmad Sohrab by the Master.

found myself in Washington, D. C., serving Mirza Abul Fazl. On the return of this beloved teacher to the Orient, I took up work in the Persian Legation as secretary to the Minister. When, in 1912, Abdul Baha paid his historic visit to the United States and Canada, I became part of his entourage, travelling with him, and translating his words. This American tour having terminated, I continued with him as he journeyed, disseminating the ideals of Baha-O-Llah, through England, Scotland, France, Austria-Hungary and Germany. From Europe we sailed to Egypt and finally reached home in Palestine. During the World War, I was beside the Master by day and by night, and it was at that period that he dictated to me the *Tablets of the Divine Plan* which, at his bidding, I carried to the United States on a Japanese cargo boat, shortly after the close of hostilities. These Tablets were unveiled and read before the Eleventh Annual Bahai Convention at Hotel McAlpin, New York, in April 1919.

Thus, in the course of those many years of priceless opportunity, I tried to assimilate in my mental and spiritual consciousness as much of the spirit of Abdul Baha's teachings as was possible to me. I not only listened to his words but also took them down at formal times and at informal times, and these words and the intention back of them became part of me, closer than the breath of life.

My Treasure

During my long association with the Bahai Cause, whether in the immediate vicinity of the Master or at a physical distance from him, I did my very best to serve the Bahais throughout the world; and Abdul Baha re-

warded me with his confidence and with the blessings of numerous Tablets. These latter are my treasure and my stronghold, for which I would not accept the wealth of empires.

Ere I bring to a close this personal recital (the object of which is to establish my identity, for whatever it is worth), I will reproduce herein, in all humility and gratitude, the contents of yet another Tablet from Abdul Baha written to me in about 1910.

My Spiritual Charter

Oh Thou who dost attract the hearts of the favored ones toward the Manifest Horizon!

Verily Thou art witness to the fire which is ablaze in the breasts, to the tears which are streaming from the eyes, and Thou knowest that the period of patience and silence has come to an end. The sight of the dear ones, Oh my God, is dimmed with weeping; the hearts of the yearning ones, Oh my Beloved, are wandering in the desert of Thy mercy; the souls of the attracted ones, Oh my Desire, are parched with longing for Thee.

Verily, Oh God, they have heard Thy universal proclamation, and that which Thou hast revealed in the Koran: "*Travel ye over the earth so that ye may behold the signs of the mercy of God.*" Thereupon, after Thine ascension, the people of faith have arisen, voyaging to distant lands, and hastening to remote regions to cry out Thy Name; to remind the souls of the arrival of Thy days; to lead the minds to the fountain of Thy signs; to show to all humanity Thy truth and Thy faith; to guide the seekers to the right path, and to indicate to the workers the straight highway.

اللهم باعاد عن غروب الفجر من اني الا من السجود اليك انت لري
 يا صليهم النار في الصدور واسم الله سميع واعلم الضرر ان يكون
 من راحة ما الهى فاجبه بالمراس وطول الشايقين يا محمدي يا
 في الطوار وبقدر المسحوقين يا مقصودي وانه من العرفان في السكوت
 قد سموا حطاك يا الهى ومما ابرته في الفرائض فليسر الى الارواح
 ما طرد الى آثار مرارة عند ذلك فام اهل الوفاء واغفر لواعده
 الضمير الى سائر الاعمال وسرعو الى اقبالهم شانه الارباب يا ذا
 الجلال وكره التوسل اليك وبتوا العفول الى ايمانك و
 منه الكل الوري محكم ورايك وهدوا الطالبين الى الصراط المستقيم
 وبتوا المحادين الى المسحوقين وسمهم عندك امة الناس على امة
 اعظم المختب من اهل الحكيم النار من ما سجين المخرج من صها
 طاعة من الكاسر الذين لغزك المواقف وودع الاقارب
 وودع الزانية والرعاء واحار الهامسا والضرأ وسرع الى عزة
 المولى منصرفا اليك منوكلها عليك ساديا يا صليمت منكر كرك
 مني ما الى حماك منصرفا نجات قد كنت ما طفا فتاك ساديا
 اسكت قد كنت سبأ لبرياك معينا كتحك القاطنة موصفا
 لراحتك القاطنة مجبال كل سائل سبأ لكل ذاهل رات
 انه قد تحمل كل منة في سسلك وصر على الناس والضرأ في تحك
 وما بعد من راحة ولا دعه من راحة ولا يمكن في الدنيا

انك كلنك العبد المسبح الكريم ماشح النجوم سراغا ، والثرى ههنا ، والسموات
 طمانا ، روحه ارفع صبحه في المحامل ، وبلوذا في المحاسن ، فالطالون
 البرهرون ، والمستشرقون الى صين سباز سرعون ، يا ابا الهى عصفك ،
 حرك واحسانك والظلمت رت اهد ، ملاك كنقره بن ، واهل
 من الملا اهل بن العالمين ، واحل مصباح الهدى في ملك الله ، واهل
 دكوكب الزهرة ، الزهر آ ، في مطلع الوفا ، حتى يجم غنة قدسك وكن
 على التراب ساعد اشكر العسلك ، وكرامك حاد الموابك مشدود
 الاذ ، على مد منك فوني الطهر على عبادك ، رب رب قدر
 كل جبري علمك ، واجل آية المواب بن طلعك ، وارمى واهل
 واکرم لي ، واهل سبنا ، في مدانه ، وشه بخار في صدمانه ، واهل
 ربي ملوانه ، انك انت الموقد الموقن العزيز الکريم ، استر
 الرزق الزم مع

A SPIRITUAL CHARTER

Tablet from Abdul Baha to Mirza Ahmad Sohrab

Among these is Thy servant Ahmad, who is firm in the Ancient Covenant, fleeing from the people of darkness, drinking from the water of eternal life, intoxicated with the wine that is overflowing from the divine cup. In truth, he has left his home, waved the hand of farewell to his relatives, and, forsaking ease and comfort, has turned his face toward unknown lands, accepting adversity and hardship while heralding Thy Name and commemorating Thy glory. Attracted to Thy beauty, stirred by the perfume of Thy holiness, he speaks Thy praises, proclaims Thy Cause, guiding men to Thee, proving Thy religion, demonstrating Thy irrefutable truth, and so becoming an answerer to each questioning one and a guide to each straying one.

Oh my Lord! Oh my Lord! Verily he has endured every affliction in Thy path, and patiently has borne every difficulty for Thy love. A breath of rest has he not breathed, nor has he sought any habitation or favor in this world. Rather he has walked in the footsteps of Christ, Thy most exalted Word, taking the earth as his bed, the herbs as his food and the stars as his lamps. Notwithstanding, his cry was raised in the assemblies and his voice was heard in the meetings. The seekers surrounded him and the thirsty ones drank of the water of his utterance. Oh my God! This indeed is through Thy generosity, Thy beneficence, Thy mercy and Thy favor. Oh my God! Help him with the hosts of Thine approximate Angels; support him, amid Thy creatures, with the cohorts of the Supreme Concourse; make of him, in that distant land, a lamp of guidance and a sparkling luminary from the dawning-place of faith, so that he may serve Thy holy threshold, falling prostrate on the ground, thanking and praising Thee

for Thy liberality to him; girding up, in Thy service, the loins of endeavor, and becoming reinforced and empowered in adoration of Thee.

Oh my Lord! Oh my Lord! Assign for him every bounty and suffer him to become the sign of Thy gifts among Thy people. Then have pity upon me, forgive me, show me Thy mercy—make me a sharer in his service, a partner in his adversity and a companion in his loneliness.

Verily, Thou art the Confirmer, the Helper, the Mighty, the Generous, the Compassionate!

—*A translation of this Tablet was published by Bahai Publishing Committee, New York, 1930. It is to be found in "Tablets of Abdul Baha," Vol. III, pages 485-7. .*

Ascension of Abdul Baha

In November 1921, while I was living in Los Angeles, California, the Bahai world received the overwhelming news that Abdul Baha had departed from this life. It was a stunning blow to all those who had loved and served him, but to me, especially, it was catastrophic. For days I sat lifeless, in an agony of despair. Then, with this new baptism of desolation, I began to re-read his words and, as I did so, I felt clearly that I was encompassed by the spirit of the Beloved and realized that now, more than at any other time, I must arise to magnify his Cause and strive to fulfill his promises, all the while demonstrating that *poise and assurance, firmness and steadfastness* which he, in his first Tablet, had enjoined upon me to acquire in my boyhood.

Will and Testament of Abdul Baha

Abdul Baha left behind him his Will and Testament, in his own handwriting. The authenticity of this document is beyond the shadow of doubt. In it, he appointed his eldest grandson, Shoghi Effendi, as the Guardian of the Cause.

The transference of leadership is always a test, and especially must this be so when the first leader is incomparable in every respect; nevertheless, the Bahais rallied gallantly to the call of the Master, giving their whole-hearted allegiance to the newly appointed Guardian. I will quote from a talk delivered by myself at a conference held from November 24th to 26th, 1922, in San Francisco, California. A report of the conference, which I made at the time and which included my address, was entitled *A Bird's Eye View of the First Teaching Conference of the Western States*. It was later circulated among the Bahais in type-written form. A copy was sent to Shoghi Effendi. This talk shows my ardent desire, expressed in terms of very youthful enthusiasm, to serve the young Guardian.

Extract from My Talk at the Conference

The Youths of Baha were summoned to enlist in the army of the new General of the Kingdom, the Guardian of the Cause. There is a new spiritual King sitting at the head of "the Round Table." This is the age of heavenly chivalry. The Call is sent forth for a celestial tournament. The valiant Knights and the fair ladies are being invited from the four corners of the earth. The bugle is blowing and the flag is unfurled. It is the

time when the Bahai Knighthood might blossom and be adorned with the flowers of service and sacrifice. Where are the undaunted heroes to pledge themselves to the New King and then to go forth to redeem the wrong and gain victories deathless?

It is the day of Youth, of energy, initiative and fearlessness. The significant fact that the New King of the Kingdom of Abha is young, of the same age as the Bab—must fire the imagination of the youths of Baha all over the world. It is their day, their opportunity. They must rise in concert and assist their youthful General with every means at their disposal. There is no other salvation for the Bahai Cause save through this unanimity of thoughts and opinions.

A new order is issued from the general headquarters of the Kingdom of Abha. It calls to the young blood to arise and register their names in the new book. Recruiting stations are being opened in every corner of the earth. Lo and behold, we must muster a new Army—boys and girls—full of hope, aspiration, intrepidity and grit. Let them enter the training camps, take intellectual and spiritual exercises and, when fit and hardy soldiers and soldierettes, go out into the world and fight the good old fight against sham, hypocrisy, intolerance and prejudices. A new battle cry was raised and from that banquet, it was sent out over the wires ringing round the world to echo and re-echo in the halls of memory for all the succeeding ages and cycles. What was that battle cry? Here it is—*To Beheyeh Khanoum [Sister of Abdul Baha], Haija, Palestine, Love, Greetings, Western States Teaching Conference affirm loyalty Shoghi Effendi. Beg divine confirmations.*

Reference to this talk was made in the following words

by the late Mrs. Shahnaz Waite of Los Angeles, California, in her report of the Teaching Conference.

Next, our brother Ahmad spoke, and he called upon all the Juniors and young married Bahais to arise, and they did so with joyous faces. After they were seated, Ahmad drew a wonderful picture of our Juniors, as a band headed by their Young Captain—Shoghi Effendi—marching onward to Victory. He said that you Juniors were the Celestial Army that must carry on the work—the Great Work of spreading the New Civilization throughout the world. It was a most inspiring moment, and we older ones felt the deep significance of it all. We could see a mighty Army, headed by this Divine Youth—the Standard bearer of GOD'S Cause today, and so appointed by the Center of the Covenant, Abdul Baha—and we could hear with the mind's ear the songs of Peace and Love which you were singing as you went marching on. GOD speed you on your way—you the "Children of the Kingdom" of EL ABHA.

An Old Accusation

Practically, from the departure of the Master from this life until today, it has been charged against me by the Bahai Organization and by the members of the Community that I deny the Will of Abdul Baha and refuse to accept Shoghi Effendi as Guardian. Therefore, I take this opportunity to make a plain and unequivocal statement: Never in thought, word or writing have I questioned the authenticity of the Will, nor denied the validity of the appointment of Shoghi Effendi. Let us now hope that, once and for all time, this fact has been made clear and manifest.

Association with Shoghi Effendi

Let me state also that for several years (1913-1919), while acting as secretary and interpreter to Abdul Baha, I associated with Shoghi Effendi in Haifa and in the University of Beirut. We worked together; we served the same Master, he as a member of the family and I as a devoted follower; we discussed frankly and joyfully the past, present and future affairs of the Cause and in time, so far as I could judge, a genuine friendship was established between us. This friendship was continued, for when, in December 1918, Abdul Baha sent me to the United States with the Tablets of the Divine Plan, I requested Shoghi Effendi to take up the work which I had carried on for about seven years, that of reporting, in Diary Letters, accounts of the daily activities and of the talks given by the Master. Through these Diary Letters, the Bahai world would be kept fully informed, as it had been in the past, of what was going on in the life and in the vicinity of Abdul Baha. Consequently, beginning with December 23rd, 1918 (the very day that I left Haifa), Shoghi Effendi started to write interesting Diary Letters, describing the daily life of Abdul Baha and quoting from his conversations with guests and pilgrims. These were mailed to me regularly. Besides the letters, I received from him numerous postal cards giving lovely little glimpses of his own life. These Diary Letters and post cards I have treasured all these years as tokens of a friendship founded on the love of the Master.

The Diary Letters of Shoghi Effendi were at that time copied and distributed among some of the members of the Bahai Assemblies and a few of them were published in

The Star of the West (see Bound Volumes of *Star of the West*, Vol. X, pages 216-220 and Vol. XI, pages 48-52). Incidentally, the very first photograph of Shoghi Effendi that reached the United States was on the back of a post card addressed to me and dated July 13, 1919, which photograph I sent to the editors of *The Star of the West*. It is reproduced in Vol. X, page 210, with the following caption: *Shoghi Effendi, Grandson of Abdul Baha, Translator of recent Tablets to, and letters from, Bahais of the United States and Canada. Writer of Diary Letters beginning in this issue of The Star of the West.*

Rules, Regulations and a Lawsuit

After the ascension of Abdul Baha in 1921, certain reactionary and dogmatic forces began to make their appearance in the Cause. Almost unnoticeable at first, they, little by little, gained ground until at present, this movement, which was the most universal and liberal of all movements, past and present, has been reduced to a sect, while its spirit is all but extinguished. The principles of Baha-O-Llah are forgotten and in their stead we see nothing but a mass of rules and regulations that duplicate, to say the least, the ecclesiastical paraphernalia of previous organized religions.

Realizing the state of affairs and my inability to alter it, for years I kept clear from involvement with the organizational aspect of the Cause. At the same time, I gave my services whenever they were wanted and, more often, offered them when they were not wanted. Later, I associated myself with Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler and founded The New History Society. Through

this medium I have been enabled, during more than eleven years, to disseminate the Bahai teachings in their purity, as I had learned them from Abdul Baha.

The story is a long and diversified one—human and dramatic—which culminated in court proceedings brought by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada against Mrs. Chanler and myself. In the application for an injunction, which was served on April 27th, 1940, following some legal correspondence which took place in December 1939 and January 1940, appeal was made to the court to prevent Mrs. Chanler and me from teaching the Bahai Cause and using the Bahai name.

A Reversal of Attitude

This bringing before the public of a controversy, which on our side had always been kept strictly to ourselves, has forced me to reverse my attitude on the whole issue. Seeing that matters had reached this point, reserve was no longer appropriate. I therefore resolved to review the activities of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada. If, in the course of my writing, I have occasionally disagreed with the policies of Shoghi Effendi, it is not because I, in the least, contest the genuineness of the Will of Abdul Baha or question the appointment of Shoghi Effendi to the Guardianship, but because, as a Bahai, I maintain my freedom of conscience and hold to the injunction of Baha-O-Llah: *Independent investigation of Truth*. Citizens of the United States feel themselves at liberty to freely discuss, to agree or disagree with the policies of the President.

This does not imply that they question his right to occupy the White House, nor that they are planning to overthrow the government. On the contrary, it is an expression of their love for this country and of their desire to contribute toward its safety and betterment.

I believe that things should be reasoned out. In the Old Testament this question is very well emphasized: *Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord.* (Isaiah, Chapter I, 18). Now, if God invites us to *reason* with Him, it seems that reasoning with Shoghi Effendi and the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada should not be completely out of place.

In my discussion of the topics to be dealt with, I shall try my best to be fair and sane. I will be scrupulously fearless. I will not make statements without proving them. The Teachings of Baha-O-Llah, Abdul Baha, the letters of Shoghi Effendi, the writings of Bahai teachers, *Bahai News*, Bahai publications, and the laws and legislative procedure laid down by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada will be the sources of my authority. I will give exact references to pages in books, magazines, pamphlets, etc., put out by the Bahai Publishing Committee. I will show from the writings of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha that the Cause that they had envisaged and for which they suffered is quite different and totally at variance with the one that is being taught today. One is divine revelation, the other is human authority; one is universal and all-inclusive, the other is restricted and separative; one is dignity and freedom of conscience, the other is subserviency and blind loyalty; one is wings outstretched, the other is feet enchained.

A Voice in the Wilderness

In assuming this rather unwelcome task, I hope to render a distinct service to the Cause in which I was brought up, in which I will die, and for which I would at any time make any sacrifice. I do not claim to be a leader. I do not seek followers. I have no wish that my name should be even remembered. I am simply a voice in the wilderness. Lastly, farthest of all from my thoughts is the idea of being destructive, for my aim is to re-discover the original spiritual teachings of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha, which were and are for the establishment of a divine civilization. Should I succeed in this, I know that my Master's smiles will be upon me.

CHAPTER II

BAHAI ODYSSEY

It all happened like this:

1919

Bearing the Tablets of the Divine Plan, revealed by Abdul Baha in Palestine during the World War, I landed in New York on March 18, 1919, from the S. S. Yeboshi Maru, after an adventurous trip through the Mediterranean and the Atlantic Ocean. At the 11th Annual International Bahai Congress which was held in the McAlpin Hotel, from April 26th to 30th, the above Tablets were successively unveiled and read, copies of the same in a booklet of 82 pages, entitled *Unveiling of the Divine Plan*, being distributed at the last session among the delegates and guests.

1919-20

Immediately after the close of the Bahai Congress, I made an extensive tour throughout the United States and Canada, speaking before churches, schools, colleges, universities, clubs, numerous civic institutions and Bahai Assemblies. These lectures were principally on the Cause and on the implications of the Divine Plan; some of them related to my seven years' sojourn in Palestine in the service of Abdul Baha.

I was back in New York by April 1920 and spoke at the Twelfth Annual Bahai Congress and Convention held in the Aldine Club from the 24th to 28th of the same month.

1920-21

Here, in New York, at the Bahai Congress, I was most happy to meet for the first time Janabe Fazel Mazandrani, a Persian Bahai teacher and philosopher sent to America to promote the principles of Baha-O-Llah.

Then, after a few days, I received the following cablegram from Abdul Baha:

Haifa, June 21st, 1920

Be in important cities with Fazel.

Abbas.

Likewise, in a Tablet from Haifa, written June 25th, Abdul Baha wrote to me, giving further instructions on a lecture trip in which I was to accompany Janabe Fazel. Having just returned from my own tour, during which I had established many valuable connections both with the public and the press, I was in a position to help with the program and get it into fairly good shape without loss of time. Then we started off.

During our pilgrimage, which lasted nearly sixteen months, Janabe Fazel and I visited practically all the important cities of the United States, travelling as far as Seattle and Portland. A complete record of this journey is available in a collection of newspaper clippings; in my Diary Letters, published and circulated by the Bahai Teaching Committee of Washington, D. C.; in a series of articles written by myself under the title *Persian Pilgrim's Pen Pictures*, published weekly in a newspaper of Portsmouth, N. H., and in a large volume which embodies some of the lectures delivered by this brilliant teacher.



ABDUL BAHÁ

1922-23

After Janabe Fazel had sailed homeward, I returned to Los Angeles, where, in order to become self-supporting, I set myself to the preparing of a number of lectures on Persian poetry and the great Faiths of the East. My studies having been completed, I had two leaflets printed, the first on literary and religious subjects, the other on the Bahai Cause, this latter to be given free and without charge. When these circulars had been distributed, I found that the churches, societies and clubs in the vicinity showed especial interest in the second circular, and I was kept busy delivering lectures on the Cause. This circumstance made me very happy, but did not add to my income; and my condition became distinctly precarious, as my audiences were scattered far and wide and I was forced to walk for miles in order to appear before them. I will here mention the fact that the allowance which Abdul Baha had provided for me since my arrival in this country had now stopped, owing to the departure of the Master from this life. Therefore, living as I did in the vicinity of Hollywood, I was tempted to visit the Studios, and presently I was working as *extra* or *atmosphere* in this or that picture. This industry fascinated me and through it I met many delightful people; so, while in the day time I portrayed pirates, or Oriental princes or beggars, at night time, dressed in my Persian robes and turreted with a gorgeous turban, I lectured on the Bahai Cause before distinguished and urbane audiences or recited the quatrains of Omar Khayyam for the relaxation of actors, artists, scenario-weavers and playwrights. In this way, I drifted into the founding of *Firdousi Salon*, a Wednesday evening



JANABE FAZEL MAZANDRANI
Bahai philosopher and teacher sent by Abdul Baha to the
United States.

club attended by a colorful non-descript crowd, which developed into a center of considerable notoriety.

By this time I had become barely self-supporting, although I still chiefly engaged myself in activities, such as scenario and playwriting and amateur clubs, which led me nowhere. Then, out of a clear blue sky, I received a cablegram from Haifa, dated April 11, 1923. It read:

Sohrab

Your active collaboration with Fazel at convention and teaching heartily desired.

Shoghi

In this manner, and through subsequent letters from New York and Boston, I was apprised of the fact that Janabe Fazel had returned from the East for another teaching campaign and that he was awaiting me in Washington, D. C. So, I set aside my lecture engagements and multifarious forms of relaxation and took the train for the nation's capital.

Once more we started off on a tour, which this time led us through the cities and towns of the Middle West. Everywhere the much loved teacher was greeted by friends, old and new, and noticeable interest in the Cause was engendered. Then, when the tour was brought to a conclusion I turned my steps once more toward my adopted home, Los Angeles.

During the years of 1922-23 I did a prodigious amount of work, writing, lecturing, acting as extra and running the *Firdousi Salon*. As I now look back upon those years, from March 18, 1919, when I landed in New York to January 16, 1924, I literally gasp at the mileage that I

covered, the number of Bahai and non-Bahai lectures that I delivered, the amount of writing that I both used and discarded and the variety of occupations that kept me on the jump from morning to night. But, why do I stop at January 16, 1924? Because, on that day something happened that turned the current of my life from one direction to another. Because, on that day, through a chance circumstance (and I have to wonder if it really was a chance circumstance) I took hold of a chain of events which ultimately led to the establishment of The New History Society and to my expulsion from the organized aspect of The Bahai Cause.

January 16, 1924

On the evening of this day, I was speaking before the Bahais of Los Angeles on the life of Abdul Baha and, in the course of my talk, I brought in some stories about Mary Magdalene as I had heard them from the Master, himself. At the close of the lecture, a tall and very striking woman approached me and, without any preliminaries, asked: *Can you write me a scenario on the life of Mary Magdalene?* Of course, I answered, *I certainly can. Then meet me tomorrow at the Biltmore Hotel and we will discuss the details at lunch. Whom shall I ask for?* I stuttered weakly. Oh, and a twinkle came into her eyes, *ask for Valeska Surratt.*

Now, on Broadway this had been a name to conjure with, but to me, poor Bahai teacher and moving picture extra that I was, it meant nothing. Nevertheless, a meal at the Biltmore was not to be scoffed at, so the next day found me in a very luxurious dining room seated across

the table from a lady, as glamorous as any I had ever seen, even from a distance. That I didn't do the courtly thing and pay for the lunch goes without saying, for I had at that moment exactly fifteen cents in my pocket, this sum representing my worldly possessions in their entirety; but, just the same, I managed to hold the interest of my companion to the extent that, when I returned to my little room in about three hours' time, I was carrying a contract for the writing of a scenario on Mary Magdalene together with advance payment in the form of a single bill of \$100. That night, about thirty of my cronies, extras and vagabonds of various descriptions, had a feast, the like of which they had seen only in pictures.

Valeska Surratt left Los Angeles the next day, but during six months she regularly sent me \$150 a month and many kind letters, while I, as an initial step in my task, made a coast to coast trip to study, in the main libraries of the country, whatever material was available on the subject of the proposed scenario; after which, having retired to a cabin in a secluded canyon about thirty miles from Los Angeles, I devoted myself to reflection and composition on the life of the great woman whose love had played no small part in the founding of Christianity. On June 19th, five months after the signing of the contract, I mailed to Miss Surratt in New York the typewritten manuscript of Mary Magdalene in 443 pages.

1927

This scenario went through many vicissitudes, and did not reach the screen, although I still consider it one of the best pieces of work that I have done; and it happened

that in the early part of 1927 I was sent for to come to New York in connection with some complications that had arisen concerning it. On the night of my arrival, Miss Surratt took me to dine with Mrs. Raymond Little, and it was there that I met Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler.

Now, Mrs. Chanler was a Bahai of but two years' standing and very deeply in love with the Cause. She had just completed a translation of Baha-O-Llah's *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf* from the French of Hyppolite Dreyfus and was ardently hoping to find some other avenue of service. Therefore, at this meeting, which I owe exclusively to Valeska Surratt, the idea came to Mrs. Chanler that my talents, as she graciously called them, could be put to better use in New York than in Hollywood; and a day or so later Mr. and Mrs. Chanler proposed that I should deliver a series of lectures at their house the following winter. The lectures were to be on Persian poetry and literature and would serve as a means of support until something else developed. Being a vagabond by nature and always ready to try something new, I accepted this offer; and the next autumn, having meanwhile returned to California for the summer, I opened a course of afternoon lectures in Mrs. Chanler's drawing-room before a group of her friends.

1928

This series of lectures led to others, and toward the middle of the winter it was arranged that I should speak every Wednesday evening for twelve weeks at the Bahai Center. Mrs. Chanler rejoiced exceedingly over this plan and the meetings started out very successfully, drawing

large numbers of people which increased week by week. Now, as a result of my sometimes casual and unorganized way of speaking, in the middle of the seventh lecture I digressed from the subject, which was *A Universal Bible*, and started to philosophize on the attitude that would be shown to Christ were he to come to New York during these days. He would certainly not be welcomed or appreciated; in fact, I continued rather facetiously, he would probably be arrested under the Volstead Act for turning water into wine. Now, it happened that a newspaperman, whom Mrs. Chanler had arranged to have present, reported the meeting in the next day's paper, featuring that single phrase out of my whole talk; and this article brought about my downfall from the platform of the Bahai Center. The following Wednesday evening, my place was taken by another speaker.

1928-29

Toward the close of that year, Mrs. Chanler made arrangements for me to give a series of eight studies on the vital and mystic problems of modern life. These took place on Sunday evenings, from November 18, 1928, to January 6, 1929, at the little Florentine Room in the Park Lane Hotel, the course ticket of admission being \$25.

It was a difficult step for Mrs. Chanler to take, because she had never sponsored anything in a public sense; and she was at this time pretty much alone as her intimates among her Bahai friends had drifted away after the fiasco at the Center. However, fortune favored us and we were able to carry on during the eight weeks of these philosophical lectures, speaking to audiences that filled our miniature hall to capacity.

Toward the end of this series of meetings at the Park Lane Hotel, Mrs. Chanler decided to take me into her confidence. *The people are asking for more spiritual food than you are giving them*, she said, *they want the source of your teachings*, and then she went on to suggest that, on the closing date, we announce three lectures on the Bahai Cause to be held in the same place and without charge.

What innocence, I thought to myself! Does she really imagine that I, as an individual, could teach the Bahai Cause, unmolested, in New York City or anywhere else for that matter! I did not give voice to this thought, believing that it would be difficult for her to understand it; so, in order to hide my embarrassment, I answered as lightly as I could, saying that the time had not yet come to teach the Cause in public.

While making this lame excuse, I caught a glimpse of Mrs. Chanler's stricken face and felt anything but comfortable. Who knew better than I that her sole object, during these two seasons of intense exertion, had been to establish me in New York so that I could apply myself to my Master's work in this city? And here I was letting her down in this ungrateful and brutal manner! My spirit was at a very low ebb as I sought my bed that night; yet I was convinced that I was acting in her interest as well as my own, and I laid my head on the pillow determined to return to Hollywood as soon as my departure could be arranged.

That night in a dream, I found myself in a little room in the hotel at Tiberias where I had often been with Abdul Baha. I was turning over the pages of my diary

and, as I did so, I noticed a fragrance coming in through the window. The Master must be near, I said to myself and I went out, continuing in my mind: I will look for his footsteps in the sand and if I find them, I will place my own feet into them. I walked by the Sea of Galilee which was in a state of great commotion, and rising from the waves, I saw Abdul Baha in white turban and gown, which were wet as were his hair and beard; and Abdul Baha advanced over the water and joined me, standing at my side, and his hair and beard had become dry.

The Master said: *Khayli Khoub, Mirza Ahmad*, and slapped me on both cheeks, as he used to do; then, *We will walk together*. We began to walk, and the Master asked, *Are you happy? Very happy*, I answered. He went on: *This will be a most significant year for you. You have much for which to be grateful to Baha-O-Llah; and to show your gratitude, you must do what she wants, you must teach the Cause. Great blessings will follow*. He then withdrew over the sea, which had become as smooth as glass, and disappeared in the waters.

Next day, when I informed Mrs. Chanler that I had received my orders and was ready, I was surprised to learn that she also had had a dream that night. This was her dream as she related it to me:

She was in mid-sky, climbing upward on a slippery pole; and her endurance was ebbing fast. On her shoulder, warm and light, she felt the presence of her daughter, Elsie; and she realized that if she should fall, her daughter would fall with her. (Incidentally, Mrs. Chanler often told me that Elsie was a tower of strength to her during that difficult period, and that without her, she hardly knew how

she would have gotten through.) As she clung with hands and body to the pole, in a state of complete exhaustion, she observed that, just above her, the pole was no longer perpendicular but made a complete loop; and she realized that, in order to continue, she must depend on her hands alone. This is too much for me, she thought; and yet she attempted it, swinging out into the air—and then, a sense of great ease possessed her, and a power supported her, lifting her around the loop to safety at the top.

We taught the Bahai Cause in the Florentine room on eight Sunday evenings to very interested audiences. Many Bahais came and took satisfaction in the work; Miss Bertha Herklotz, secretary of the New York Assembly, sold the standard Bahai literature at an improvised book table. Others, however, notably some members of the Local Center, were in a state of considerable unrest over the whole proceeding, and conditions became so difficult that Mrs. Chanler conceived an idea of serving the Cause in a manner that would be less controversial. So, at her request, I wrote to Shoghi Effendi concerning her plan, which was to the effect that I should leave immediately for the Orient, there to make research on the personal life of Baha-O-Illah on the terrain of Persia. I hoped, during the period of a year or two, to gather material and to prepare a book that would be unique and most useful for the furtherance of the Cause. Our thoughts were, therefore, running in this direction when I received the following cablegram from Haifa, dated March 7, 1929:

Teheran undertaking official history. Your travel East unnecessary.

Shoghi.

This cablegram was supplemented by a letter from the Guardian's secretary, dated the same day, in which he wrote: *Shoghi Effendi would prefer to see you active in the field of service, teaching the Cause.*

This decision, coming from Haifa, was a great disappointment to both Mrs. Chanler and me; but I immediately relinquished all thought of the proposed journey and made up my mind to remain in New York. The lectures had, by this time, been transferred to Mrs. Chanler's house, and there, when the close of the season had arrived, a handful of persons, from among the many that had listened to the Teachings, asked if they might form a group so that they could hold together during the summer months. We readily complied and arranged for a meeting to take place on April 5, 1929. When the guests arrived on that night, a name for the group had not yet been chosen. Mrs. Chanler wanted it to be The New History Society; I had another idea. Finally, at the very last moment, we agreed on the name; and The New History Society was founded then and there with a membership of twenty-eight men and women, which number comprised several Bahais of long standing.

Our public work had, since the very beginning, been looked upon with suspicion both by the Bahai officials and by various members of the Bahai community and, upon the founding of The New History Society, the opposition became very threatening. My policy, which I have held to throughout our Bahai partnership, was to let Mrs. Chanler reason things out by herself. I had my own conviction, which was a simple one—namely: that each Bahai was under definite obligations to Baha-O-Llah to teach the

Cause; and that he must have freedom, and be unhampered in so doing. With the exception of my uncompromising attitude on this one point, I was ready to fall in, to co-operate with any group of Bahais, to receive advice, to talk things over, in other words to work in common. This of course was not sufficient, and Mrs. Chanler was subjected to an argument which lasted day in and day out, year in and year out, and which was extremely wearing to everyone concerned. All the while, as I mentioned before, I did not try to guide her, but left her free to make up her mind for herself as to the direction in which Truth lay.

I will not dwell on the methods that were used by individuals to try to break up my association with Mr. and Mrs. Chanler. I was called a charlatan, a money-grabber, a traitor to Abdul Baha. It was even said that I was afflicted with a disease, loathsome and infectious, which made of me a menace to society. Mrs. Chanler considered all these accusations, made up her mind as to their validity and went on with her work. Then, as the barrage of official communications began to descend upon her, she faced the opposition, met it and fought it with such faith and determination, such vision and spiritual logic, that I wondered then, as I wonder even now, at her courage and endurance. It would have thrilled the heart of any experienced spiritual warrior to note the supreme firmness and insouciance with which she held her ground, all the while suffering very deeply under this gallant exterior; but that is another story, and her own.

During that time, a great deal of correspondence was carried on between Shoghi Effendi and Mrs. Chanler. His sympathy regarding her work was, at the outset, most marked; and his consideration of her was expressed in very

generous terms up to August 1930. Since that date, no letters have passed between the Guardian and Mrs. Chanler.

PART TWO

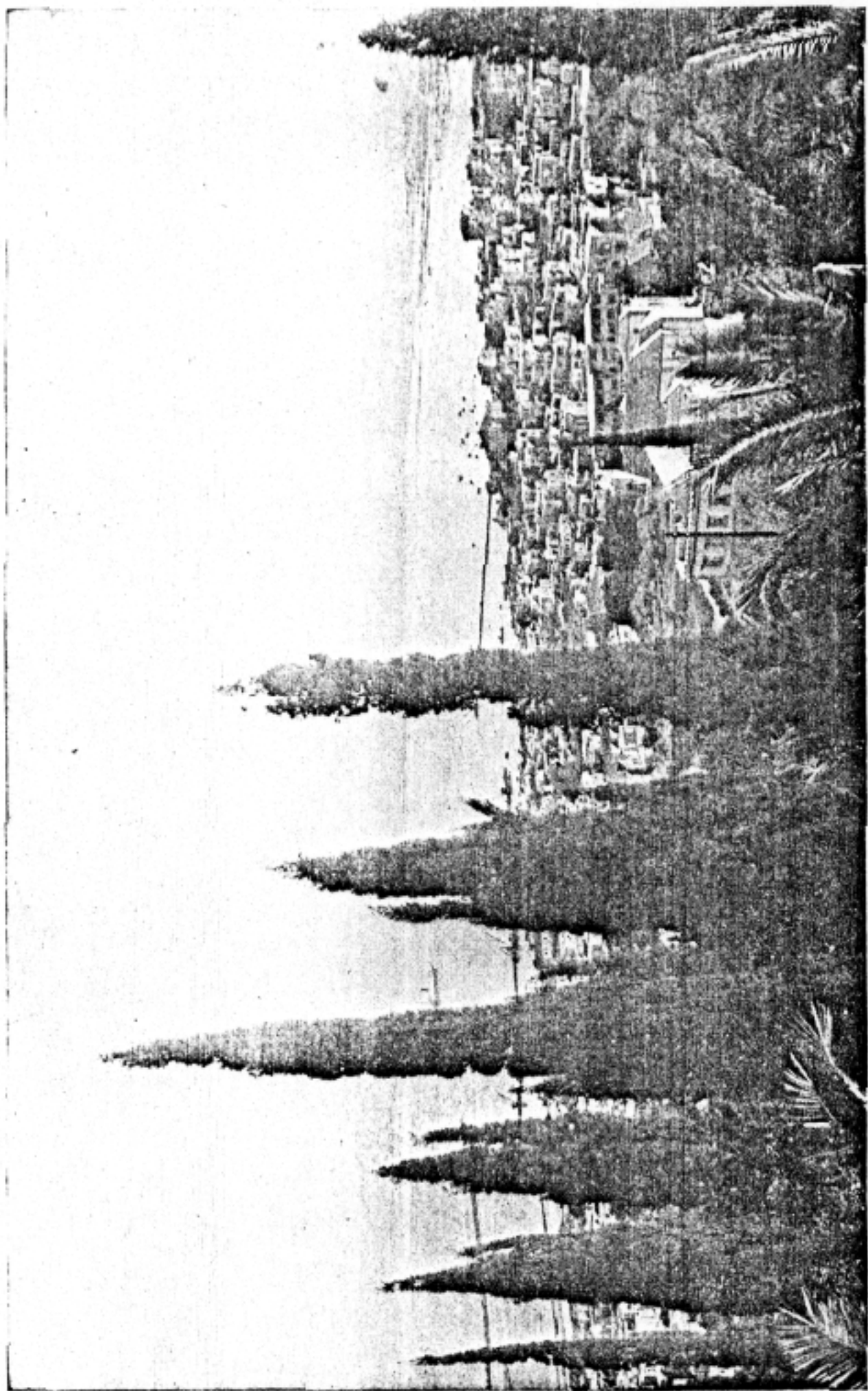
THE PARTING OF THE WAYS

3. A Danger Signal

4. At the Fork of the Road

*For the day of the Lord is near in the
valley of decision.*

—Joel, Chapter 3, Verse 14



Haifa. View taken in the direction of Acca from the slope of Mount Carmel.

CHAPTER III

A DANGER SIGNAL

Conservatism and Liberalism

The history of mankind has been dominated by two forces—conservatism and liberalism. These have played their parts side by side, in politics, in education, in the arts and in religious practice, producing the illogical civilization that is apparent today. Traditions, folklore, customs and the instinct for self-preservation, all have co-operated toward placing the institutions of our society in the camp of the conservatives; and these have taken advantage of our weaknesses to consolidate their privileges and establish themselves on the throne of impeccable authority. Having on their side the solemnities of inherited sanctions and controlling the machinery of civilization, they have, through the centuries, made practice of stilling the voice of the liberals, of banishing them beyond the pale of society, of incarcerating them in prisons, of destroying their lives and, finally, when it was all but too late, of incorporating in their systems some of the ideals and principles that had been made available at so high a price to others. Thus, the vested interests of conservatism have ever been challenged in spite of perils; they are being challenged now, and will continue so to be, as long as the world remains imperfect and man aspires to something better than has yet been known and practiced.

A Strange Occurrence

Baha-O-Llah was the great spiritual and political revolutionary of the 19th century. His teachings tolled the death-knell of conservatism in these two domains. Consequently, when Abdul Baha, rising with unexampled majesty and power, dispensed his Father's message of liberty to the four corners of the globe, the reactionaries of all classes ridiculed this new system of thought and took violent exception to it. Then, a very strange thing occurred. A handful of men and women, from among these very reactionaries, took it into their heads to file into the precincts of the Cause. It was not the Teachings that moved them to acceptance; far from it! It was the personality of Abdul Baha that impressed and drew them irresistibly. So, these persons from the opposite camp, having penetrated the ranks of the rising rival movement and taken possession of its key positions, functioned as if in a dream during the lifetime of the Master, until, at the stroke of 1921 when Abdul Baha was removed from their midst, they suddenly awoke from the spell, rallied their forces and hoisted their old standard of staid conservatism above the unsuspecting forces of the insurgent Bahai Movement.

The Point under Discussion

The appearance of The New History Society on the Bahai horizon, in 1929, constituted a danger signal in the eyes of the conservatives within the movement, the more so in that a large percentage of their own membership looked with favor and much hope on this new effort to teach the Cause. This latter group, which included a number of the finest and most responsible of the older Bahais, saw in

The New History Society a means whereby to combat the reactionary tendencies *within* the organization, and during two years they championed our effort with great courage and determination. So, a flood of letters, coming from both camps, was let loose upon the Guardian of the Cause in Haifa; and Shoghi Effendi considered these conflicting views with a great deal of patience and made continuous attempts to bring harmony and unity into the feverish New York Center.

The point under discussion was a very clear cut one. The Local Assembly of this city wished to supervise our activities. I, on the other hand, owing to long experience with the Assemblies, was convinced that such supervision implied a complete domination and would lead to the total destruction of the work itself. We looked upon The New History Society as an independent effort to teach the principles of the Cause, and we needed freedom in so doing. Afterwards, when the initial interest had been created, we were ready to guide our new found friends to the Center, to arrange classes under the direction of its own Bahai teachers and to strive in every way toward the co-operation of the two groups. Such a plan was not too inconsistent with my principles, because at that time the Administration, while it manifested an exaggerated sense of authority, had not yet encumbered itself with many of the limitations that restrict it today. In fact, my personal opinion is that The New History Society, itself, is largely responsible for this accumulation of rules and regulations, for, as we continued to function in liberty, more and more did the National Spiritual Assembly wish to set itself up as something totally different, with the result that this body

has grown out of all resemblance to the Bahai order as envisioned by Baha-O-Llah.

Bahai Meetings

During the winter of 1929-30 we held Bahai Meetings in the Oak Room of the Ritz Carlton Hotel. The lecturers in the first series were alternately Mr. Solon Fieldman, a good Bahai friend from Chicago, and myself. In the second series, we presented as our weekly speaker Mrs. Beulah Storrs Lewis, an experienced Bahai lecturer from Los Angeles. These remarkably well-attended meetings constituted our public work; while, at the same time we carried on Bahai classes, one group at Mrs. Chanler's house being under the direction of Mrs. May Maxwell, and a larger one in the Park Central Hotel, conducted in conjunction with Mrs. Maxwell, which was under the direction of Mr. Edward J. Kinney. In March 1930, we ventured again within the precincts of the Bahai Center taking with us our own new, yet fairly well-knit group, but at the close of this series of lectures we were not permitted to continue, as we would have liked to do, on account of a newspaper article that had appeared, regarding an imaginary building for our youth group *The Caravan*, which by this time had come into being.

Invitations which were Declined

The season of which I speak was packed full of activities, and very fruitful ones too; while simultaneously the undercurrent of argument with the Assemblies was going on at full tilt. It was repeatedly required of me that I should appear before the Local Assembly of New York

and the National Spiritual Assembly, but I looked on these bodies as Religious Tribunals (which appellation they themselves did not use at the time but have used since) and believed that I would be trapped into making admissions, regarding my opinion of the organization, which would be used against me. Consequently, while I was at all times willing to discuss any and all matters with individual members of the Assemblies, I consistently refused to appear before their official groups.

The Final Word

These things are now long passed and one can look back to them with equanimity, but at the time they were harrowing in full measure. The question was this: Would Shoghi Effendi yield to the importunities of the National Spiritual Assembly and disown us, or would he, as Mrs. Chanler so ardently hoped, give us a chance to be useful? The axe was poised above our heads, held by a thread.

The whole story can be told best through extracts from the correspondence between Mrs. Chanler on the one hand and Shoghi Effendi and the National and Local Assemblies on the other; the correspondence, in typewritten form, is contained in a book entitled *The New History Society and the Bahai Administration*.

Plans for First Series of Bahai Lectures

To Shoghi Effendi from Mrs. Chanler, dated December 24, 1928.

. . . We have rented the room for eight more meetings. We are planning to send many, many announce-



MRS. LEWIS STUYVESANT CHANLER
in 1932

ments and to advertise in the papers. I know that we must do this thing, and we will do it to our utmost ability. Whether that ability is sufficient to make a mark in New York I cannot say, but everything in us both will go towards doing it well, and one thing is certain—the Bahai Cause will be spoken of in New York publicly, not behind closed doors. This will be good. . . .

I wouldn't take your time on such a long letter were it not that I wished for your sympathy in what we are trying to do. I want to assure you of Ahmad's and my love for you and tell you that our lives are concentrated in an effort to serve you.

Answer from Ruhi Afnan, dated January 19, 1929.

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your very kind letter dated December 24th, 1928. He was very glad to hear that Mr. Sohrab is doing good service in New York in the way of public speaking. He surely knows the Cause very well, being for such a long time with the Master, translating his letters and talks. All those who have been with the Beloved during his lifetime should feel the responsibility they bear and do their utmost, shouldering it, especially those who were, we may say, nurtured by him. . . .

Shoghi Effendi very much appreciates the wonderful service you have rendered the Cause and is always waiting to see what the next will be. . . .

Postscript added by Shoghi Effendi:

My dear and precious co-worker:

I wish to add a few words in person as a token of my keen appreciation of your past services and of my fervent hope and prayer for the future extension of

your manifold activities. I welcome Mirza Ahmad's collaboration with you, in such an open and direct manner, for a wider diffusion and a better understanding of the purpose and the principles of the Bahai Faith.

I will pray for the success of your efforts from the depths of my heart.

Account of First Series of Bahai Lectures

To Shoghi Effendi from Mrs. Chanler, dated March 4, 1929.

. . . Ahmad put his whole heart into this work. I can say that at the lectures and in the time intervening, he has consecrated himself wholly and he has always spoken beautifully. I think the people have been impressed with his modesty and simplicity and his real depth of feeling, and he has made something of a name for himself, but this is only incidental. . . .

It will take time to show if we have really taken a step forward, but I think that we have, and the word "Bahai", as I wrote you in the beginning, is really known in New York very, very much more than before. . . .

Now that the lectures are over, I can just thank God that they went through without any hitch. Mrs. Maxwell has been very kind and encouraging and Juliet Thompson has surrounded me with an ocean of love. . . .

When I realize how much there is to be done, I think that we have accomplished almost nothing, but this year's experience will help us in the future, I am sure, and Abdul Raha knows how much I long to serve Him.

Answer from Soheil Afvan, dated March 28.

I am directed by Shoghi Effendi to thank you very

much for your letter of March 4th with enclosure.

He is indeed very much pleased to learn that your meetings at the Hotel have been successful, and if they at least directed the thought of the better classes in New York to the teachings of the Movement and a study of its writings, it is in itself a great service.

He wishes me, however, to assure you that no matter what measure of success attends your efforts, he feels he must express his deep appreciation of your eagerness to cooperate with him in the service of the Cause, and of the sincere spirit that has animated your endeavors. Indeed, were you to do what a New York paper alleged, namely, "to make God fashionable," you would not only be conferring a blessing to the fashionable, but a great service to all those who follow the fashionable. . . .

Postscript added by Shoghi Effendi:

My dear and precious co-worker:

Your manifold services, past and present, are truly worthy of praise and admiration. I deeply appreciate your high endeavors and will continue to supplicate for you at the holy Shrine. . . .

The National Spiritual Assembly Expresses Itself

During this time, the National Spiritual Assembly was watching our activities very closely, and now the first letter from this body was sent to Mrs. Chanler, the theme of which was an offer of co-operation.

March 25, 1929.

. . . The National Assembly, therefore, is anxious to make it clear to you that its members unreservedly desire to assist and cooperate in every possible way to as-

sure the complete success of the public meetings held under your auspices and announced as Bahai meetings.

We realize of course that you have not requested this cooperation, but this very fact makes it the more essential that we offer you at this time an explanation of what we conceive to be, from the writings of Abdul Baha as well as from the letters of Shoghi Effendi, the conditions essential to successful Bahai service in the teaching field. . . .

Thus, to take a specific instance, when an individual Bahai desires to serve the Cause by holding public meetings under the Bahai name, the general plan and arrangements are reported to the local or National Assembly beforehand. . . . The local or National Spiritual Assembly is only concerned with two facts: whether the meetings in question give the Bahai teachings correctly, and whether the meetings involve any conditions that might detract from the dignity, nobility and sacred character of the Cause. . . .

Our hope, therefore, is that you will consult personally or enter into communication with the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of New York in the matter of your present and future plans which involve the Bahai name and teachings, in order that these activities may be blessed with the confirmation of Abdul Baha, spread in this city, which He termed "The City of the Covenant," the very essence of the teachings of Baha-U-Llah, and create for you an honor and glory that will endure in the history of the Cause.

Now, Mrs. Chanler knew that *co-operation* meant supervision of our programs and of everything that was said on our platform. It implied endless discussions and certain interruptions of the work. We felt that we could not risk

surprise and real disappointment. It really seems inexplicable that any devoted and sincere student of the teachings of Baha-U-Llah and Abdul Baha should claim for the Bahai Cause a universality, in terms of complete freedom of action for individuals, in direct contradiction to the teachings themselves. The National Assembly would fail in its loyalty to you as well as in its responsibility for upholding the Cause if we did not emphasize this essential point. . . .

As I tried to make clear before, the anxiety of the National Assembly to see your Bahai services established upon a firm and enduring foundation is not an expression of any claim to arbitrary authority on the part of the Assembly, but is entirely a matter of obedience to the authentic Bahai writings.

An Appeal for Protection

After midnight, on April 5th, Mrs. Chanler wrote to Shoghi Effendi giving a description of the founding of The New History Society at her house, at 132 East 65th Street. She realized that something of importance had just occurred, and she looked overseas to Haifa for the safeguarding of this new-born effort to serve the Cause.

April 6th

. . . I have just passed an evening that has made me very happy. The people have gone home only a little while ago. We have been having meetings here, as I wrote you; meetings which had a wonderful spirit. They numbered about forty-five or fifty people, the last three times.

Lately, we decided to draw up a plan of Universal

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is rolling now. It will grow very large," and I, who seldom dare to be hopeful, believe that a wonderful CHILD has been born.

Beloved Guardian, I place it under your protection!

Mrs. Chanler's Right to Vote Questioned

Letter from the Local Assembly of New York to Mrs. Chanler, dated April 15, 1929.

Wishing to inform us of the status of your teaching work, the National Spiritual Assembly has spread before us the joint correspondence covering this point. Although the question has passed to a higher administrative division of the Cause and your answer has been directed to them rather than to your Local Assembly, as suggested in their letter of March 25th, nevertheless, the vital question of your voting in the Cause must be settled through the Assembly in your Community.

Will you kindly let us know, so that our records may be accurate and correct, whether you wish—in the words of Abdul Baha—to "obey with heart and soul" the bidding of the Assembly "and be submissive unto it," or wish to withdraw from its divinely appointed authority.

In deep earnestness we pray that your really great activities, so sincerely appreciated not only by the members of your local group but by our dear Guardian, will be pursued as directed by him in his latest published letter and also as requested of you by the National Spiritual Assembly. . . .

Will you kindly let us know as soon as possible what status you choose?

Mrs. Chanler was conscious of the fact that she would be lost if she answered this question directly. She was now sparring for time. Her reply was as follows:—

April 17, 1929.

. . . In my service this winter, I have made use of an instrument prepared for this work by the Master himself. In view of the fact that when this instrument was in their hands, the Local Assembly did not find it in their hearts to allow the Cause to profit by it, and being convinced that it should be used, at this time when instruments are few, I, with the help of God only, brought the Bahai Cause before the public of New York with an effectiveness unequalled since the days of Abdul Baha.

Now, since these services have, in the estimation of the Local Board, made me undesirable as a voter, I will, in conformance with their suggestion, absent myself for the present from the Bahai Center.

A second letter to Mrs. Chanler from the Local Assembly of New York continues:

April 19, 1929.

Every member of this Spiritual Assembly hopes, desires and prays that you may continue as a voting member of this Cause, but the principles of Bahai Administration are clear as to the qualifications of a voter. . . .

The question already submitted to you in our previous letter is whether or not, according to the qualifications quoted above, you consider yourself a member of this Assembly and are willing to comply with these requirements. This is a choice *you alone* can make, you cannot shift the responsibility of making this choice to the local Spiritual Assembly.

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On the day of election, Mrs. Chanler, wishing to demonstrate the fact that, as far as she was concerned, she still was a member of the Bahai Assembly, presented her vote at the Center, by proxy, through Mrs. Margueritta Smythe. Her vote was refused.

Problems

Now, Shoghi Effendi wrote to Mrs. Chanler, through his secretary, on the problem which the founding of The New History Society had brought into the Cause.

April 30, 1929.

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your very interesting and kind letter dated April 6th. I cannot say that it is an easy task to comment upon such a letter, for one is inevitably caught between two difficult problems, neither of which can be overlooked.

This last year, it has been a source of delight for Shoghi Effendi to see you come to the front, earnestly and courageously advocating the Cause and its principles. . . . The work you have been able to do, he hopes, will, through God's help, bear abundant fruit. He conceives it therefore a crime to throw cold water on such a burning zeal which may be a part of God's plan in spreading the Cause in America. In fact, he wishes me to assure you of his prayers and best wishes that you may succeed in your ardent labors. .

On the other hand, he feels the responsibility of suggesting to you certain points that may ultimately add to your success and meantime be more conformant with the wishes of the Master.

The objective of the Cause, as explained by the Master, is unity. What then would happen with the Cause

if, from its earliest days, different groups and societies are created within it. No matter with what spirit a certain group may come together, once it tries to create an independent identity for itself, it immediately becomes an organism seeking its own individual growth. This organism can never again merge itself with the mother organism. . . .

Perhaps by not labeling yourself as a separate group and cooperating more fully with the Assemblies you could teach the Cause and also obviate these difficulties that may ensue. . . .

The present Assemblies are surely imperfect, but they are the seeds from which this great administrative body is to grow. . . .

From Paris, Mrs. Chanler wrote to the Guardian giving a resumé of the situation.

May 11, 1929.

It is a grief to me that my attempts to serve the Cause should have brought this controversy before you and taken any of your time. Even now I am going to write about inharmonious things. I am sorry.

You know that I brought Ahmad back to the Organization last year. He had resisted my desires for weeks, but when he came to them, he came with his whole heart and like a child. They knew that they needed him, yet, in spite of this, they gave no friendliness, no cooperation. I saw many instances of this. Life is a game and they have backed him to lose, and by now it is a question of pride. You remember when he was in the West, occupying himself with his own interests, they said that he was faithless to the Cause; when he worked in the Organization last year, they expelled him, and

when he works outside the Organization, they are dissatisfied. So, if he doesn't work for the Cause, if he works in the Cause, or if he works outside the Cause for the Cause, all are wrong. There seems to be no way out, and this is a devoted servant who has proved himself useful. I don't understand it, but it must be for a reason—beautiful things happen too that one doesn't understand. . . .

The Organization in New York has had a long opportunity to serve. Someone brought me the list of members the night that my vote was rejected. It numbered 179 people. This is the result of all these years and of much money. I think that they don't know how to teach the Cause. They talk of commands, submission, autocracy. They don't talk of love. I don't think that they know what love is. If someone were lucky enough to bring in new members of capacity, I believe that they would consider it an intrusion, and would fear that the comfort of their little club might be threatened. Abdul Baha said that the Cause might become extinct in America. I think that these people can't save it. . . .

I would like, under the auspices of The New History Society, to teach the Bahai Cause publicly next winter. I may, by that time, be able to get other speakers too. We would not be breaking the rules of the Organization if we were separate. I think that it would look so well on invitations and announcements to say: "The New History Society presents So and So, speaking on the Bahai Cause." As time goes on, I would make an effort to influence those who accept the Faith to identify themselves with the Organization.

Let us try to serve you in this way. I can answer for our loyalty if for nothing else. I would like to work

under your protection, but if this is too much, then I ask you to withhold your condemnation. Give us a chance to be useful, and if at the end of a year or two you are pleased, then perhaps you will give us your approval. . . .

In the autumn of 1929, we made arrangements for the activities of the winter, and Mrs. Chanler wrote to Shoghi Effendi regarding our program, which included Mr. Solon Fieldman of Chicago.

October 26, 1929.

I enclose to you our program for the coming winter and you will see that there are now three of us engaged in your service. . . .

I pray that this combination will be blessed. We are all three beginning the winter's work with much love and confidence in each other and looking to Baha-U-Llah for his presence and his help. It is in the hands of God.

Answer from Ruhi Afnan:

December 21, 1929.

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your very kind letter dated October 26th. He fully appreciates the earnest spirit and deep conviction that you have put in your work and sincerely prays for the realization of your ideal. But he cannot consider the work of The New History Society except as another experiment to spread the movement. May God make it successful and of a brilliant future! To him you, with your devotion, sacrifice and perseverance mean more than any such society. His interest in it is only to see

the way your noble qualities are going to find an expression in its working.

We have lately heard from New York that soon absolute unity will be established and full cooperation between the Assembly and yourself will be obtained. Shoghi Effendi hopes that this is true and that you will not deprive your society of the inspiration that such a unity will bring to it. Such a unity, however, should not be by winning them to your cause, but rather by raising its banner on your front.

Shoghi Effendi, in his moments of prayer, will remember you and ask for you divine guidance. He wishes me to assure you of all his interest in your work, of all his appreciation for your endeavors, and of all his hope that you will attain your ideal and goal, namely, the service of the Cause and the spread of the Divine message of Baha-U-Llah.

CHAPTER IV

AT THE FORK OF THE ROAD

A Bahai Trio

The meetings of 1929-1930, conducted in the Oak Room of the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, were very successful. Mr. Solon Fieldman and I alternately held the platform and, as we were very different types, the audience found much interest in comparing our approaches to the Bahai teachings. Mr. Fieldman was an orator of the old school, very dramatic and impassioned, while I am apt to speak in a more matter of fact way. We believed that we made a good team and when, in midwinter, Mrs. Beulah Storrs Lewis, a beautiful and expert teacher, travelled all the way from Los Angeles to take part in our work, we were conscious of the fact that we were offering to the New York public a presentation of the Cause that was very colorful indeed. Throughout these meetings, we sold a great deal of literature provided by the Bahai Center, and the Message of Baha-O-Llah penetrated to many circles and touched countless hearts.

A Recruiting Station

By this time, large numbers of the members of the Bahai organization had actually joined The New History Society. This membership with us in no wise affected their loyalty to the Center, for all of us looked on the new movement as a sort of recruiting station, and we often termed it as such.

In a letter addressed to Mr. Roy Wilhelm, member of the National Spiritual Assembly, Mrs. Chanler brought up this point and stressed the urgent need of teaching the Cause without loss of time.

Feb. 11, 1930.

I myself have not the conviction that the Bahai Cause will be accepted by the world. Its principles and ideals will be; already they are spreading far and wide, but will the name of Baha-U-Llah go with them? This to me is uncertain.

I believe that Christ would not have been called the *Man of Sorrows*, if his greatest suffering had not been concern over the success of his mission, and that Abdul Baha would not have labored so unceasingly, if his accomplishment had been beyond the realm of doubt. Also, I think the burden of Shoghi Effendi would be lighter, if the establishment of the Kingdom of Baha-U-Llah were unquestionable. I know that in this I differ from many, but I believe that the WORD which God gives is dependent upon the people who receive it for its ultimate realization.

Feeling as I do, I don't want to waste any time. The Cause has had a start in New York and *I will not abandon IT*.

Ahmad and I alone came before the public last year. The Bahais weren't with us, neither were my own friends, yet the results were miraculous; for God worked through us to His own ends.

Now that I see how much the people want this Cause *I cannot refuse it to them, but will go on teaching*; and if you want us to work for you, we will do so with all our hearts. We will send people to the Center hoping

that they will be well received. We wish to be a Recruiting Station for you. . . .

As no answer to this letter was received, it is legitimate to try to imagine the reaction that it caused. *We wish to be a recruiting station for you.* This phrase brings up a picture of what might have happened if Mrs. Chanler's plea had been granted, namely: The New History Society, from time to time, opening its flood-gates and allowing a stream of immature Bahais to filter into the precincts of the Assembly. So far so good; but how about the voting season? Would it not be likely that these fresh, untrammelled minds would pick out some *new* officers to represent them, and that within a few years a large part of the administrative personnel would be changed? This supposition brings up a serious point, applying to both National and Local Assemblies, the former having been functioning since time out of mind with practically no change of officers.

An Occasion for Rejoicing

Toward the middle of the winter, Mrs. Chanler conceived the idea of conducting our group to the Center and of teaching from there, in an effort toward reconciliation. She discussed this plan with Mrs. Maxwell and Mr. and Mrs. Kinney, and these friends of ours enthusiastically agreed to do all in their power to bring it into effect. Consequently, through their good offices, we were enabled to start a course of lectures at the Center, with Mr. Solon Fieldman and myself speaking alternately as we had done at the Ritz.

The opening evening was an occasion for much rejoicing

to all those who had wished to bring about unity between the two groups. Mrs. Chanler described the meeting to Ruhi Afnan, Secretary to the Guardian, in the following letter.

March 6, 1930.

Last night, Ahmad took a considerable part of The New History Society to the Bahai Center and there, after my husband had left, presided over the rest of the evening with much love and sweetness. There was a radiancy of happiness there and a gratitude to God, on the part of many, too deep for words.

Ahmad has proved himself a power of inestimable value to the Cause, as I saw in the beginning without need for proof; and now we are looking to a future full of promise, with a rapt hope.

It is needless to dwell on how much we have suffered during these two years. Our nerves are nearly broken and some of us are ill. Our darling Juliet Thompson couldn't be present last night as her health has been affected, following the long strain.

In answering, Ruhi Afnan says:

March 26, 1930.

I had already heard through Mrs. Harris of the wonderful spirit that prevailed at the meeting that The New History Society had held at the Bahai Center. Shoghi Effendi sincerely hopes and prays that this friendship will wax stronger every day and that the petty differences and misunderstandings will fade away.

Through the circular letters of Ahmad and the various other channels, I have been following up the

work of The New History Society with great interest, and even though I objected to various things I could not but admire some of the work achieved.

A Ghost in the Attic

It will be noted that throughout this correspondence, I figure as a strange character, sometimes praised but for the most part ignored. I am a sort of skeleton in the cupboard or ghost in the attic, casting a baneful influence on the thoughts of everybody, yet unmentionable, as far as possible, to the truly well-bred. Mrs. Chanler assumed full responsibility as defendant of The New History Society, using the pronoun *I* pretty consistently. Knowing, as she did only too well, that I was distrusted by the Administration, she felt that the work would have a better chance to get by if she claimed it as her own exclusively. In the following cablegram, sent to Shoghi Effendi, when The New History Society was just one year old, I affix my signature for the first time.

Cablegram

We, The New History Society, with a membership of 341, are celebrating, this April 5th, our First Anniversary Festival in the Persian Garden of Ritz Carlton.

We send you our heartfelt love and devotion.

We beg you to supplicate for our confirmation in the service of mankind at hallowed shrines of the Bah, Baha-U-Llah and Abdul Baha—the three Great Lights of the age.

Pray for us that, with the increase of our membership, we may add to our zeal in freeing our fellowmen



BERTHALIN LEXOW

At present Mrs. Frederick Allien, taken in the days of Abdul Baha.

from the chains of past prejudices and fanaticism, and upraise the flag of the Oneness of the World of Humanity in the kingdoms of the hearts.

The New History Society,
Julie Chanler
Ahmad Sohrab.

Aftermath

On the morning following this birthday celebration, one of the New York papers gave much space to The New History Society, featuring in flamboyant terms a building which our youth group, The Caravan, hoped to build in the far-flung future. We did not have one cent reserved for this project, yet the reporter devoted almost a column to a description of the *idea*; at the same time, four hundred thousand dollars had just been raised for the construction of the Bahai Temple near Chicago and the *actual news* pertaining to this enterprise, as contained in a release put out by Mr. Holley, was included in this article, compressed into a few lines.

This publicity did not in the least please us; in fact, it caused us much distress, but by this time we knew enough about newspaper methods to realize that their writers featured what they wished, and that there was nothing to be done about it.

On the same day, Mrs. Chanler wrote to the Local Assembly expressing her thanks for the hospitality that had been accorded our group during the preceding weeks, and asking permission to continue the meetings at the Center one night a month throughout the spring and summer. This request was refused on account of the above

mentioned publicity. Thus, our second attempt to work at the Center was brought to a sudden halt in exactly the same manner as the first one had been—through a newspaper article. These two incidents show, as well as anything could, the fate that would have befallen The New History Society had it been irrevocably delivered into the hands of the Assemblies.

Cablegram

On April 9, 1930, The New History Society received an answer to its cablegram addressed to the Guardian:

My prayer at holy shrines for History Society is that its members may increasingly realize that the efficacy and permanence of their endeavors lie in unreserved acceptance of teaching of Baha-U-Llah and Abdul Baha. May they be blessed and guided to identify themselves wholly with the Faith. Reciprocate your loving greetings.

Shoghi.

Ordeal by Fire and Firecrackers

During the progress of her public work, Mrs. Chanler had formed many new friendships in the Bahai Community, and these associates had given her great moral support throughout the long encounter with the Assemblies. All the while, the point at issue was: What would be the ultimate decision of Shoghi Effendi? Should he throw in his weight against The New History Society, these Bahai sympathizers would be forced to accept his verdict and sever their connection with us; on the other hand, should he, as they so earnestly hoped, give wings to this experi-

ment, it was certain that a new era of enthusiasm and activity in the Cause would ensue. The period of uncertainty was very trying, bringing nerves to a breaking point and, as signs became more and more ominous, insistent pressure was brought upon us to make some sort of compromise.

I remember an amusing incident which took place at that time. One of the older Bahais, who had never met Mrs. Chanler, came to call and, when the visit was drawing to a close, this lady presented her hostess with a lovely white rose, saying that it was her custom to give white roses to all persons who were ill. Mrs. Chanler was about to protest that she was in perfect health, when she suddenly realized that the implication was on the grounds of *spiritual illness*; so she simply thanked her guest with a smile.

Another humorous experience returns to my mind. There was a Bahai from New Zealand, spending some weeks in New York, who used to drop in at our meetings from time to time. One evening, learning that he was in a bad state financially, I took him to my room to spend the night. Then, in the morning he speeded to the Center, and this is the story that he told:—

After some hours of rest, he had awakened and, looking over at me, had seen me lying in the unconsciousness of sleep, revealed in my true colors:—two horns had made their appearance on my forehead!

This account of my night with the New Zealander circulated among the Bahais, some of whom believed that this young man had had a flash of second sight; while I, when it finally came to my ears, only wished that the season had been summer when no blankets are used, for in that

case, the story would doubtless have culminated in a long, sleek, curling tail!

Representative members of the Bahai organization did their utmost to make us understand the laws of the Administration. Out of the goodness of their hearts and in their devotion to the Guardian, they explained the importance of obedience to the Central Authority but, although we would have liked to meet them more than half way, we were convinced that this young movement would not long survive the ministrations of the Assemblies. Mrs. Chanler's soul questionings during that winter were continuous and intense, for they centered around the possibility of doing permanent injury to the Cause. She was in a state close to collapse when she sailed for Europe in the spring of 1930.

Little Regiment for Shoghi Effendi

Before her departure, classes for The New History Society under the direction of Mr. Edward J. Kinney had been opened at the Park Central Hotel. Mrs. Chanler expected that this teaching work would bear fruit. In the month of June she sent a cablegram to Mr. Kinney.

Overjoyed wonderful meetings. Believe you will collect little regiment for Shoghi Effendi. May the Master help you.

One More Chance

In July, I received a visit from Mr. Alfred Lunt, member of the National Spiritual Assembly, who carried in his pocket the draft of an article destined to appear in *Bahai News* of the following month. In this statement, The New

History Society was disowned by the authorities, and it constituted, therefore, the long dreaded break with the Administration.

I read the typewritten pages very carefully, realizing that I was being given one more chance, and then I told Mr. Lunt that, as far as I was concerned, the paper could go to press. *However, I continued, if you put your signature to this, the day will come when you will wish that you had cut off your right hand instead.*

This prophecy of mine was never fulfilled, for a few years later Alfred Lunt died, to the grief of the Bahai community. He was a talented and warm-hearted man, a devoted servant of the Cause and a definitely liberalizing influence on the National Spiritual Assembly.

A Thunder Clap

And now the inevitable, which had been warded off for so long, happened. It electrified the Bahai community in this city; while The New History Society, which had always been kept in utter innocence of what was going on regarding it, went on its own light-hearted way in complete unconcern.

The first pronouncement against The New History Society was published in the pages of *Bahai News* of August 1930 under the ominous title: *The Case of Ahmad Sohrab and The New History Society*. Here are a few quotations:

The National Spiritual Assembly finds it necessary to make a definite statement to the Bahais of the United States and Canada concerning the relations of The New History Society and the Cause.

This Society was started in New York City early in 1929 by Ahmad Sohrab, one of its avowed purposes being to spread the Bahai teachings. Neither the Local nor the National Assembly was consulted in the matter, and the meetings and activities of The New History Society have been maintained apart from the principles of consultation and Assembly supervision which today, under the Will and Testament of Abdul Baha, form the basis of Bahai unity and protection of the Cause. . . .

Under these conditions it becomes the obvious responsibility of the National Spiritual Assembly to inform the friends that the activities conducted by Ahmad Sohrab, through The New History Society, are to be considered as entirely independent of the Cause; as outside the jurisdiction of the Local and National Assembly, and hence in no wise entitled to the cooperation of Bahais. . . .

In clarifying this difficult situation for the body of believers, the National Assembly urges an attitude which shall express full loyalty to Bahai administration and also unfailing kindness and good will to individuals. . . .

Every believer must take to heart this lesson, that individual Bahai effort, without due consultation, is foredoomed to failure.

A Volunteer

When Mr. and Mrs. Chanler received the news, in Paris, that The New History Society had been severed root and branch from the parent tree, they were not shaken in the least. Even now, I smile as I recall Mr. Chanler's cablegram to me. In it, he offered to open the lectures himself during the coming winter, speaking on the Twelve Bahai Principles.

Now, in the past, Mr. Chanler had been a speaker of note, having been Lieut.-Governor of New York State and a distinguished criminal lawyer; but he had retired long ago, and besides he had never studied the Bahai teachings. This generous suggestion, therefore, implied a great effort on his part, but he was willing to make it, in order to stand by the work; and I accepted his offer gratefully and without a qualm.

In the Hands of the Master

In the year 1926, shortly after she had come into the Cause, Mrs. Chanler had made a pilgrimage to Haifa, Palestine, to visit the Holy Shrines. There she had the inestimable happiness of spending an hour with The Greatest Holy Leaf, daughter of Baha-O-Llah, and the ladies of the household. It happened that Shoghi Effendi was not feeling well that day, so she did not have the privilege of meeting him.

I believe that Mrs. Chanler's reaction to the break with the Bahai Administration could be no better described than in a letter written by her, at the time, to Rouha Khanoum, daughter of Abdul Baha. It reads as follows:

September 8, 1930.

The evening before I left Paris, your letter came to me and I took it out to Versailles where we were going, and there I read it many times. As I looked at the beautiful trees and listened to the orchestra, my eyes were full of tears, and my heart full of love for you and infinite gratitude. This message of friendship, coming at a time when my life had so changed, affected me very much, and I felt that on this new path I was taking a

jewel of your giving; and even if I do not see you again, and even if you feel you cannot write to me again, I will always count on your love and every day give you mine.

I have never talked to you about the trouble which has passed, but today I will say a few words about it. Often in the past, I have heard the Bahais say (Mr. Mills, Mr. Holley and others): "If only a way could be found to spread the Cause!" Just by chance, because the Organization would not use Ahmad, we stumbled on the method of The New History Society. This has proved a very effective one, and the chief reason for its success has been that it was *free*. Here, without obligation to any one, the people hear about the Bahai Cause and gradually absorb it.

We cannot, with a free conscience, sell these people behind their backs to *any* Organization, much less to an Organization, orthodox, cruel and unsuccessful. Just the same, we tried to serve this Organization. We never spoke against them. We brought them the results of our efforts. When I left for Europe, Ahmad, with all his resourcefulness and enthusiasm, was directing the course of The New History Society straight toward the Administration. Surely many, many dozens would have joined then; and they would have set a precedent which would have been followed by the very best souls in their ranks, month by month, year by year.

The Bahai Cause is almost dead in America; what is left of it is pitiful and ignoble. I believe that Abdul Baha is tired of this situation, and before him I say that I believe that he is using us to start the Cause once more. Where he will lead us, I don't know. The National Assembly has turned the course of The New History Society away from the Administration, and it

would seem just about impossible to turn it back. We are in the hands of the Master and we are not a bit afraid. Wonderful Berthalin is with us. It makes a lot of difference.

Beloved Rouha Khanoum, every hour I turn my face to the Master and I do not feel his displeasure. I only feel his love and I am very happy.

A Higher Court

When Mr. and Mrs. Chanler reached New York in the early autumn, they learned that the Guardian had endorsed the action of the National Spiritual Assembly through the following cablegram, published in *Bahai News* of September 1930.

Approve action regarding History Society. Deeply appreciate loyalty (of) believers.

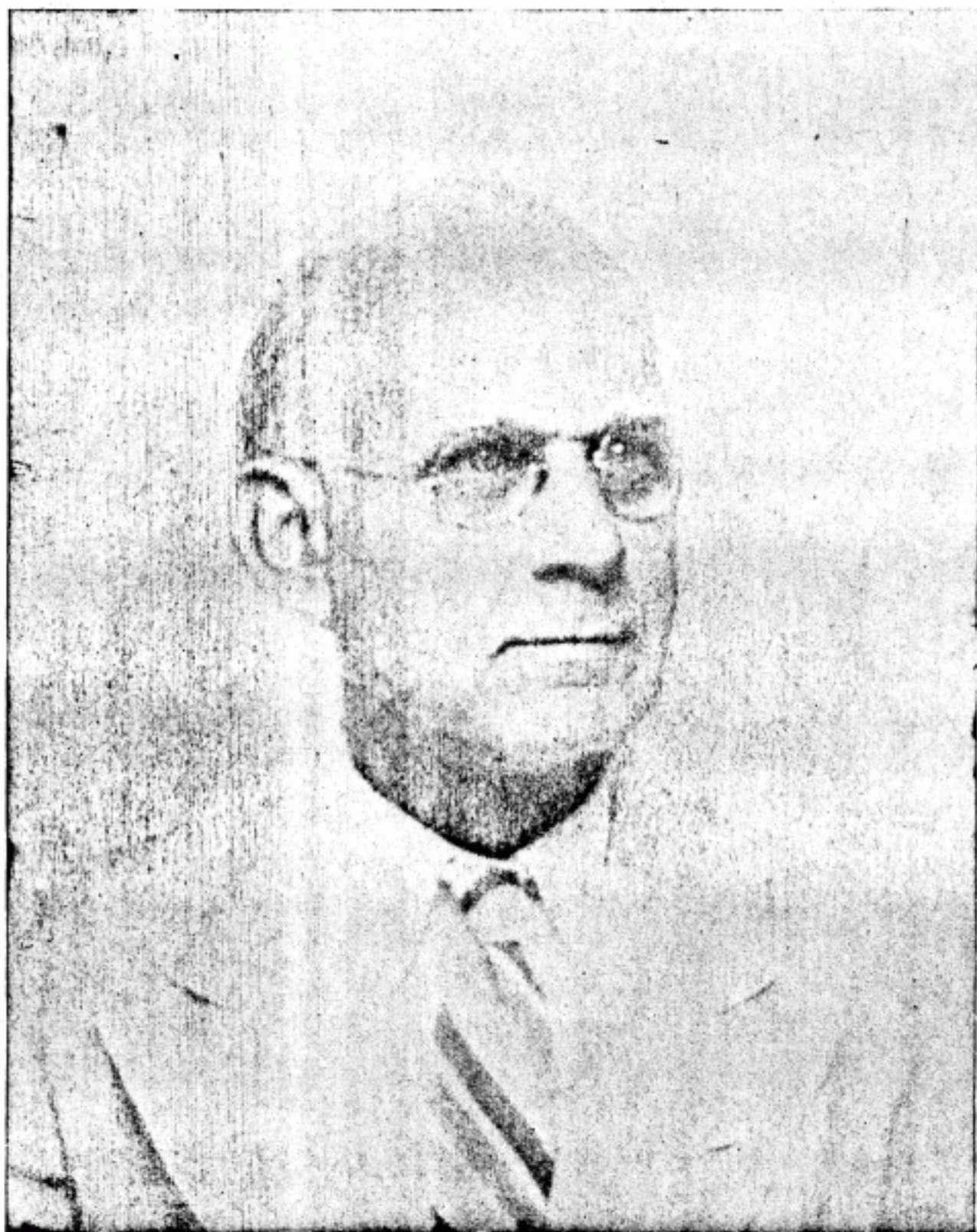
Shoghi.

Then, a few days after their arrival, Mr. and Mrs. Chanler, to their surprise, received a communication from the National Spiritual Assembly:

September 25, 1930.

The National Assembly is meeting in West Englewood, N. J. on October 10th, 11th and 12th, 1930. They would like very much if you both could accept their warm invitation to meet with them informally and talk over the various matters which are common to our hearts.

They feel that association and a better understanding of each other and the welding of acquaintance and friendship will be of the greatest value in forwarding



MR. O. J. HANKO
A Bahai of the days of Abdul Baha.

and advancing the ideals and purposes for which we are all striving.

They sincerely hope you will accept this sincere invitation in the spirit of love and friendship in which it is sent.

Anytime convenient for you can be arranged for—whether during the sessions or dinner or lunch.

Looking forward to the happiness of meeting you.

It may be remembered that in the National Spiritual Assembly's pronouncement against The New History Society my name alone was mentioned. Therefore, without much reading between the lines, one can judge that the purpose of the above letter was to dissociate Mr. and Mrs. Chanler from a lost cause—in other words, it implied a suggestion to leave the sinking ship.

It took next to no time for Mrs. Chanler to answer this invitation and, within a few hours, her letter was on its way. To my mind, this is a great document, and posterity can judge its contents according to its own standard:

Dear Friends in the Cause of Baha-U-Llah:

I was touched by your kind letter of September 25th which I received this morning and I believe with you that a sincere friendship between us all would not be impossible, even after the difficulties which have passed. I do not feel any pride or any stubbornness, and if you will allow me to say so, I have a little love for all of you, which may or may not be acceptable.

Last year, although I jealously guarded this work of ours, my purpose was only, and entirely, to bring the fruit of it to your doors. I would not have liked to miss one sincere soul among our members, but wanted to

bring all of them to strengthen your forces at your center. This was my heart's desire, and without this aim I would have had no inspiration in the work. Nevertheless, circumstances were against us and the tide of The New History Society was turned afield. Neither Ahmad nor I could turn it back now, because the people have lost confidence.

I have always believed in the unification of forces and I do believe in an Administration, although I cannot make of it an article of faith. I think that the guidance of the Assemblies should be something to be desired, not something to be submitted to, and that the sanction of the Publishing Committee should be an asset to be intensely hoped for, not an obligation.

Last summer, I found myself unexpectedly in Rouen and there I visited the tower room where, in the year 1431, Jeanne d'Arc was tried. As I leaned against those very walls where she had leaned, and as the questions and answers of her trial which were hung up on the wall, were read to me, my eyes filled with tears for her, and my heart with grief. She had been asked to believe in the row of priests before her as instruments of God to be submitted to, and when, after repeated questioning, she still insisted that she could not, they declared her to be outside of the Church and sentenced her to what they called the minimum penalty, which was only burning. Two Members of the Court went on record as thinking the punishment too lenient. So, forsaken by her King, whom she had served for nearly two years and loved so much, but with her confidence in her God and in her Cause undiminished, she gave up her life on the market place and withdrew to her eternal glory.

Today, it is not a woman, but a man who stands be-

fore the Bar of the Church, and after the passing of exactly five centuries to the very year, the question asked is still the same.

I myself am nothing in this, except that I see Truth in this man, as I believe that I would have seen it in Jeanne d'Arc, had I been there.

That same day in Rouen, I visited the Shrine where her memory is glorified by the same Church which condemned her, and I lit a candle before that Shrine, for the Cause of Baha-U-Llah.

After nearly two years, the question of The New History Society has passed out of your hands and out of ours. The Guardian has confirmed your action and there the matter must rest.

In a letter received (*by a mutual friend*) two days ago from Ruhi Effendi, post-scripted by the Guardian, he says:

"Anyhow, by the attitude the National Spiritual Assembly has taken considering the History Society outside the Cause, and the advice they have given the friends to dissociate themselves from it, we hope that the problem is solved." And again in the same letter—"Anyhow, thank God that the die is cast and the final decision is taken."

The problem which has absorbed too much time already has been decided by a higher Court. I cannot question that decision. Therefore, a meeting between us, even though unofficial as you so considerately suggested, would be useless. The whole matter is now disposed of and we must all accept.

I want to thank you many times and send you all my best wishes. It is possible that in the future we may meet in a personal way. I should be most pleased,

Continued Unrest

It appears that the article concerning The New History Society, as published in *Bahai News* of August 1930, and the later cablegram from the Guardian were not sufficient to allay the unrest in the Bahai Community. The anxiety and dissatisfaction continued unabated, the reason being that many looked upon our work as the only hope of freeing the Cause from the reactionary influences that had oppressed it for so long. Therefore, *Bahai News* allotted more than three pages in its November issue to a further discussion of the problem, in a section entitled *The Principle of Bahai Freedom. A Statement Concerning the Episode of The New History Society*. I will give a few extracts:—

Because of certain misunderstandings that still prevail among a few believers, the National Spiritual Assembly feels it advisable to issue this further statement, supplementing and confirming the statement published in *Bahai News* for August 1930, regarding the episode of The New History Society.

The desire of the National Assembly is to so clarify the matter by recording the various steps leading to the adoption of the previous statement that no doubts may remain in a single Bahai heart. It will be understood by every believer that the following quotations and brief explanatory remarks are intended to deepen our collective unity within the institutions of the Cause, and The New History Society is referred to merely as an episode in our Bahai experience.

It is devoutly believed that careful consideration of the matter as here presented will remove these definite

sources of misunderstanding and, consequently, sources of disunity among the believers. The New History Society itself is relative to the discussion only as having occasioned a temporary test to a number of Bahais. The definite sources of misunderstanding to be removed are, first, that the Guardian has ever or will ever sanction any activity as "Bahai" which stands in opposition or indifference to the permanent general principles of administration given us under the Will and Testament of Abdul Baha; second, that the Guardian could ever conceivably be so misled by false or inaccurate communications from any source that his instructions are subject to personal interpretation; and third, that the guidance or inspiration felt by any group of believers possesses a superior spiritual validity to the deliberations of a duly elected Spiritual Assembly and thus justifies opposition to the Assembly in relation to any given situation.

Cablegram from Shoghi Effendi included in above article:

Feel strongly Ahmad Sohrab should uphold unconditionally authority Local and National Assembly.

Quotations from letters written by Shoghi Effendi included in above article:

Attendance Ahmad meeting conditioned upon Ahmad's unquestioned acceptance to conduct meetings on lines fully sanctioned by National Spiritual Assembly. True unity can only be preserved by maintenance paramount position National Spiritual Assembly.

Ahmad Sohrab's activities should be watched carefully, lest a weak handling of this extremely delicate situation may confuse the minds of the friends and

cause a split in the Cause. The Cause has already triumphed over such cases which flare up for a time, then recede into the shadows of oblivion and are thought of no more. The case of Khyrullah, Fareed, Dyer, Mrs. White and others testify to this truth.

Quotations from two letters written by Ruhi Effendi, Shoghi Effendi's secretary, included in the same article:

In none of the Guardian's letters to Mrs. Chanler has Shoghi Effendi approved of her attitude toward the Local and National Assemblies. One of those who was over-zealous about The New History Society wrote Shoghi Effendi that the members of the New York Assembly are gradually becoming milder and perhaps drawn to the History Society. This is to solve the problem in the wrong way. It is not the Assembly that has to be won to the cause of some rebellious person, but that person brought back under the authority of the Assembly.

Some persons in the (United) States feel that the History Society was badly represented to Shoghi Effendi. The source of all our information is the writings of Ahmad and the publications of that group. In all his circular letters he harped on the note of freedom and denounced the red tape that characterizes organizations.

I have to thank Ruhi Effendi for so concisely summing up my characteristics in the above statement. I could not have done it better myself. An almost religious belief in freedom for all men, and a dislike for the red tape that applies to organizations (especially supposedly spiritual ones) are strongly developed in my consciousness. On this basis, I have always functioned and always will.

Tainted Money

The main activity of the Bahai Administration has been, and still is, centered about the building of a great Temple in Wilmette, Illinois. In 1929, Mr. Chanler made a considerably large contribution to the Temple Fund, which was graciously accepted; and again on January 2, 1930, Mr. and Mrs. Chanler and I sent in comparatively modest donations for the same purpose. Now, one of the fixed rules of the Administration is that no money may be accepted from non-Bahais for the building of the Temple. Therefore, these latter checks were retained uncashed in the administrative files for more than ten months, and on November 6, 1930, after my expulsion from the organization, a letter was written by Mr. Alfred Lunt to Mr. and Mrs. Chanler stating that the checks could be *used for Bahai purposes in the discretion of the National Assembly* and asking that they be made payable to the National Bahai Fund instead of to the Temple Fund.

The mystery of this double standard, regarding moneys received from Bahais and non-Bahais, struck Mrs. Chanler as too complicated for her to deal with, so she asked me to answer in her place. I did so to the best of my ability, closing as follows:

. . . If the money of a man who served Abdul Baha for eight years and who is giving the last drop of his blood to spread this Cause, and if the money of Mr. and Mrs. Chanler, who are devoting *all* their energies in the same direction, is not good enough for the Temple, then, I believe, and I assert before the world, that all the hundreds of thousands of dollars that have been given by others have been given uselessly.

I lament and weep over the conditions of today. Not only do I do so, but Baha-U-Llah himself, and Abdul Baha himself lament and weep for that which, within a few short years, has been done to their universal spiritual Cause.

In your official pronunciamento of August of this year, you state emphatically that the activities conducted by Ahmad Sohrab are in no wise entitled to the cooperation of Bahais. How can this statement be squared with this recent communication that you are willing to accept money for *Bahai Activities* from a man whom you have publicly repudiated? Is this consistent? Or, has one standard been chosen for the National Assembly and another for the poor Bahais, standing as so many pawns on their chessboard?

Mrs. Chanler wished to answer your letter to her, but she found that she could not.

The Last Letter

During the winding up of the year 1930, the agitation in the Bahai Community persisted. Although Mrs. Chanler had accepted the decision of the Guardian without hesitancy or question, many of the well-wishers of The New History Society could not bring themselves to look upon the matter as closed. Consequently, as this tempestuous year drew to an end, Mrs. Chanler, with a view to protect these friends of hers from further distress, wrote a final letter to Mr. Alfred Lunt, the one member of the National Spiritual Assembly who had been sympathetic to her work. I reproduce it in full.

December 28, 1930.

In these last days of 1930, I feel that I must make a resolution, difficult as it is, for the New Year.

You, and many of our dear beloved friends, have suffered enough on our account. You have risked your own comfort, you have tried to protect us, you have loved us and showered us with kindness.

Now we want to thank you for all this and to withdraw from your lives. We think this is the wisest thing to do and we beg you to agree with us.

If, at some future date, God wishes to bring us together, He will do it; and in the meantime we will all work for His Cause according to the light that we have, and I am sure, with great understanding of each other.

As Bahais, we know a place to meet that is not in the physical world but somewhere in the presence of the Master, and in these meetings, we will draw great strength and comfort.

I have thought of writing this for a long time and now I know that the moment has come.

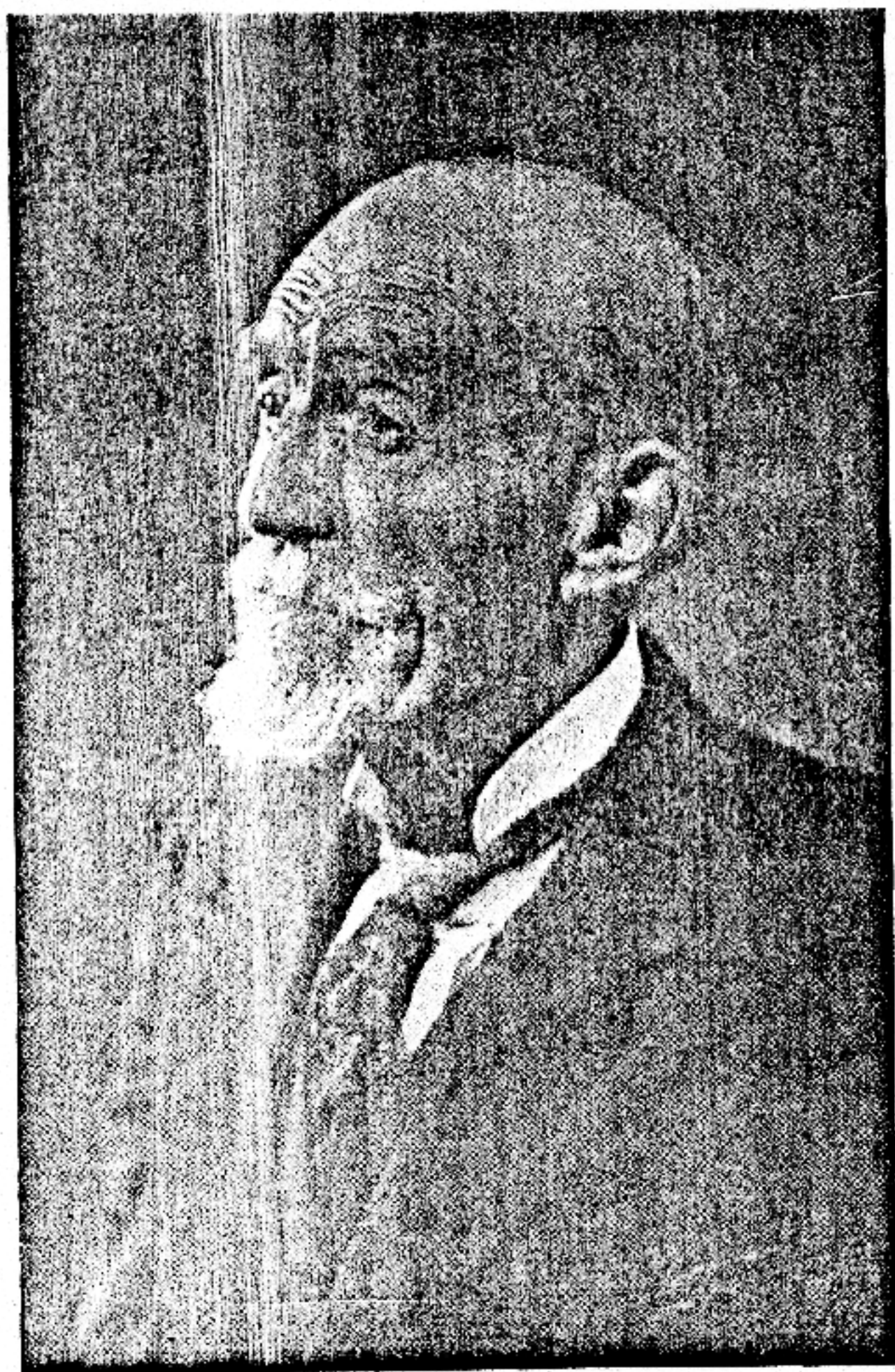
Don't make yourself sad by answering, I will always love you.

P. S. I am sending the same letter to nine of our friends.

The above communication was addressed to:

Mrs. Edward J. Kinney	Mrs. May Maxwell
Miss Juliet Thompson	Miss Jean Silver
Mrs. Audrey Foster	Miss Mae Seabeck
Mrs. Margueritta Smythe	Mrs. Frances Fales

In spite of this letter, our connections with many of the Bahais continued, the affection on both sides being too great to be set aside. Later, however, an order originating either in Haifa or with the National Spiritual Assembly



MAJOR JOSEPH HONORÉ JAXON
One of the earliest pioneers of the Bahai Cause in America.

(which, I do not actually know), brought all association to an end. There was a single exception made to this ruling and, for years, Mrs. Chanler had the joy of seeing her closest friend in the Cause; but, with the institution of the lawsuit, this especial dispensation was cancelled. Thus, the only remaining link between ourselves and the adherents of the Administration was broken.

On the other hand, a few Bahais have openly stood by our work, regardless of consequences. Conspicuous among these is Mr. O. J. Hanko, who has been in the Cause for about thirty years. He was a charter member of The New History Society, and, although he lives out of town, he is ever ready with encouragement and assistance. Also, there are Miss Jane Durand, of Asbury Park, New Jersey, whose kindness has never failed us, and Major Joseph Honoré Jaxon, eighty years old, one of the few remaining pioneers of the Cause in America.

Another, among the earliest Bahais in this country, is Mrs. Frederick Allien, the former Berthalin Lexow. Mrs. Allien has, through the years, identified herself with the work of The New History Society in a very notable way, and has been an example of courage and self-sacrifice.

A Cardinal Principle

The official and unofficial records, contained in the type-written book entitled *The New History Society and the Bahai Organization*, cover a period from December 24, 1928, to November 21, 1931. From many of these letters and statements, I have quoted only a part; from some communications from Haifa, which were addressed to others besides ourselves, I have not felt at liberty to quote at all.

However, through the extracts used, I believe that the points of difference between the Assemblies and The New History Society have been made clear. Throughout those three years, the Bahai Administration made its claims, which undoubtedly it thought just, and tried to impose them; and throughout the same period of time, The New History Society, with at least equal earnestness, struggled to maintain its integrity so that it could look the world square in the face. Here there is a difference in point of view, so fundamental, that no words and no effort can change it, at least as far as mortal vision can perceive. For ourselves, we shall continue along the path that we have chosen so deliberately; we shall teach freedom of conscience, respect for the convictions of others and co-operation between men and women of all systems of thought tending toward a true comradeship of human beings, born and unborn. Then, shall we teach religious liberty? To ask the question is to answer it. The aspiration toward religious liberty has always existed in the consciousness of mankind. It lives in Hindu hearts, in Jewish hearts, in Christian hearts, in Islamic hearts and, after its long leap from the heart of *The Most Great Prisoner in Acca*, it lives in the hearts of people everywhere.

This is a cardinal principle of the New World Order.

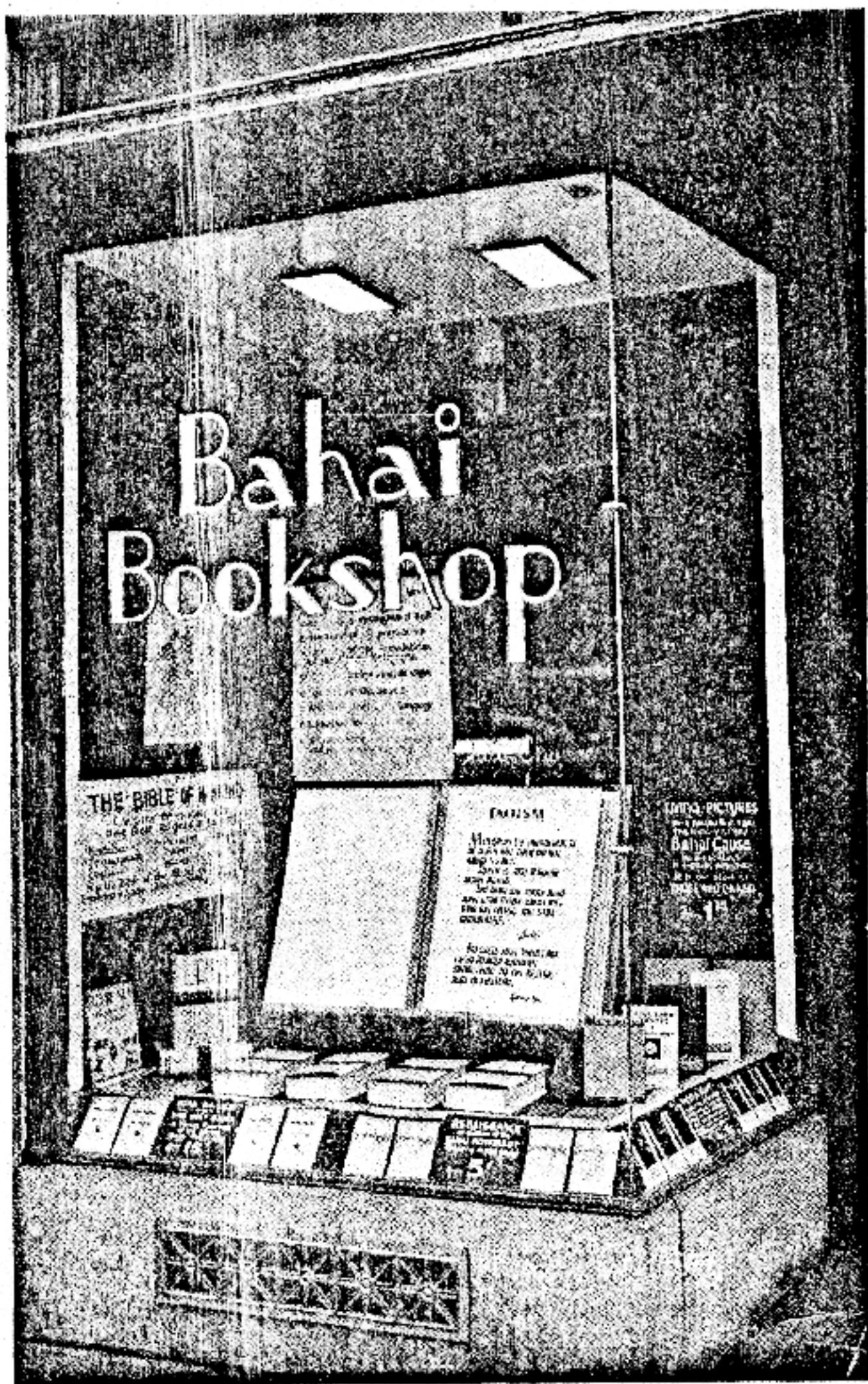
P A R T T H R E E

BAHAI LAWSUIT

5. The Trade-mark
6. The Decision
7. The Name
8. The Appeal

*So speak ye, and so do, as they that
shall be judged by the law of liberty.*

—James, Chapter 2, Verse 12



BAHAI BOOKSHOP

CHAPTER V

THE TRADE-MARK

The New History Society

The movement which was inaugurated in 1929, under the name of The New History Society, had for its object the promulgation of the constructive and universal principles of Baha-O-Llah. This movement came into being and has been supported and sustained up to this date through the initiative and devotion of Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler. My part in helping the growth and progress of this work has been a humble one. I claim nothing for myself, but I claim everything for these two servants of Baha-O-Llah.

During the last eleven years, through the channel of The New History Society, the name and fame of the Cause of Baha-O-Llah have penetrated to the four corners of the earth. By means of public meetings, at which a succession of the intellectual and spiritual leaders of humanity (both Americans and distinguished visitors from abroad) have delivered their messages; through annual Prize Competitions on topics of world peace, world religion, world reconstruction, racial amity, etc.; through the publication of books and leaflets (some of which have been translated into 30 languages); through its monthly and quarterly organs respectively *New History* and *The Children's Caravan*; through The Caravan, a young people's movement, with more than 200 Chapters in 27 countries; through the

holding of classes and numerous other methods, these two souls have rendered unparalleled services to the Cause of Baha-O-Llah.

The annals of Bahai history in the Western world contain few records of such personal dedication. Mr. and Mrs. Chanler have consecrated everything—their name, their house, their possessions and, last but not least, their privacy to hold aloft the sacred name of Baha-O-Llah and to make his teachings better known to young and old in the continents of Africa, Asia, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, South and Central America, Canada, Mexico and the Islands of the Seas. Seldom has such a missionary work been undertaken; seldom has it been formulated and carried into execution with such enthusiasm, energy, forethought and utter disregard to personal comfort and rest.

Their Reward

And now comes recognition from the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada! But, before I mention this recognition, let me state that during the last eleven years this body of men and women have set themselves to oppose the work of The New History Society, to attribute to its founders and members all sorts of unworthy motives; to publish in *Bahai News* articles of a most crude character and to countenance stories and rumors that have no foundation in fact and no relation to reality. In taking this attitude and in systematically following a course of enmity and persecution, the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada have been free and untrammelled; one may assert that they have used (or in my

opinion have abused) their constitutional right of free press, free speech and free assembly. I am the last man to blame them for what they have written! Praise be to God that in these United States the citizens are free to relieve themselves of their opinions about any one, be he a humble laborer, a political leader or a one-time friend.

But, all I have to state here is this: For eleven years Mr. and Mrs. Chanler have kept a dignified silence; for eleven years they have never, on the platform nor in print, met these attacks, and for eleven years, serene and undisturbed, they have heeded the advice of the Great Teacher by meeting evil with good.

Serene and undisturbed! I am probably exaggerating a little, for there were times when the darts of the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada and the Local Assembly of New York did hurt; yet one glance backward to the martyrdoms of the early Babis and Bahais who suffered at the hands of the enemies of freedom and progress was sufficient to restore their equanimity and their confidence.

This radiant acquiescence would unquestionably have continued for the rest of their lives had the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada confined themselves to periodic insinuations in *Bahai News* and to the setting afloat of their fanciful stories and rumors; but something happened that has made the writing of this book imperative.

In 1939, The New History Society exhibited its works and literature in Science and Education Building at the New York World's Fair, and during these months an idea came to the mind of Mrs. Frederick Allen, one of the first

Bahais in this country, who had been called *Berthalin* by Abdul Baha and who has used this name ever since. The idea was that it would be a valuable service to the Cause if, after the closing of the Fair, our exhibit could be transported to the city. After some consultation, it was decided to take this step as a purely temporary activity, and on November 7th, 1939, *Bahai Bookshop* was opened at 828 Lexington Avenue, a lease having been signed for the duration of six months. I admit that we were fully conscious that, in all probability, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada would resent this further heralding of the Bahai name and teachings. However, we were prepared, as in the past, to meet opposition in silence.

Then—

On December 5, 1939, the postman delivered the following letter to Bahai Bookshop:

(Letterhead of)

WATSON, BRISTOL, JOHNSON & LEAVENWORTH
6 East 45th Street
New York

December 5, 1939.

By registered mail to
Mrs. Julie Chanler,
Bahai Bookshop,
828 Lexington Avenue,
New York, N. Y.

Dear Madam:

We are instructed by our client, National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Can-

ada, to communicate with you with reference to your unauthorized use of the trademark BAHAI in the trade name BAHAI BOOKSHOP, and on books, leaflets and advertisements which are not published by our client.

The word BAHAI has been used for about forty years by our client and its predecessors as a trademark for magazines, printed books, and other publications, and is registered in the United States Patent Office in the name of our client, registration No. 245,271. The word BAHAI is substantially the same as the registered trademark BAHAI, and your use of the former in the ways we have mentioned constitutes trademark infringement and unfair competition.

Probably you were not informed as to the trademark situation and it will not be necessary for our client to do more than bring the facts to your attention. In order to comply with the formalities, however, we must and do demand on behalf of National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada that you discontinue immediately the use of the word BAHAI in the name under which you are conducting a book shop, and upon books and other publications not published by our client, and we hereby notify you that upon your failure to do so our client will hold you responsible for profits, damages and costs of litigation.

Will you please give the matter immediate consideration and advise us of your decision.

Yours truly,

(Sgd.) Watson, Bristol, Johnson
& Leavenworth.

A few days after the receipt of this letter, Mrs. Chanler placed the matter in the hands of Mr. Fred J. Bechert,

of the firm Mitchell & Bechert, and the following correspondence ensued.

(Letterhead of)
MITCHELL & BECHERT
420 Lexington Avenue
New York, N. Y.

December 21, 1939.

Messrs. Watson, Bristol, Johnson
& Leavenworth,
6 East 45th Street,
New York, N. Y.

Re: Bahai Book Shop

Gentlemen:

This is in reply to your letter of December 5th, receipt of which we acknowledged under date of December 12th.

We have conferred with Mrs. Chanler and examined a great deal of literature relating to the Bahai Cause. Through our investigation, we have learned that in about the year 1863 Mirza Hossain Ali, a Persian nobleman, felt that he was inspired by God and that it was his duty to bring a message of light and glory to a harassed world. He adopted as a spiritual name "Baha-U-Llah". This name was to signify the "light" or "glory" of God. Prior to 1863, there were followers of the Bab and the individual followers were known as Babis. The Babis later became followers of Baha-U-Llah, who carried on the cause, and the followers of Baha-U-Llah became known as Bahais. Long prior to the year 1900, the word "Bahai" had become a well known descriptive word to identify a follower of Baha-

U-Llah in precisely the same way as "Christian" would describe a follower of Christ.

It is our opinion, therefore, and we have so advised Mrs. Chanler, that Bahai, long prior to the year 1900, became and now is a word of common speech necessary for use in aptly describing a follower of Baha-U-Llah. In our opinion, therefore, the word "Bahai" cannot legally be exclusively appropriated by your client.

Mrs. Chanler advises us that she is a Bahai, and that her Bahai Book Shop specializes in Bahai books, pamphlets, and literature in general for the dissemination of the Bahai teachings.

It is our understanding that Mrs. Chanler, far from competing unfairly with your client, is engaged in the work of furthering and spreading the Bahai cause, which, we take it, is also the purpose and effort of your client.

Yours very truly,

B/S

Mitchell & Bechert.

(Letterhead of)

WATSON, BRISTOL, JOHNSON &
LEAVENWORTH
6 East 45th Street
New York

December 22, 1939.

Re: Bahai Bookshop

Messrs. Mitchell & Bechert,
420 Lexington Avenue, New York, N. Y.

Dear Sirs:

We are in receipt of your letter of December 21 in answer to ours of December 5.

You state that in your opinion the word Bahai "is a

word of common speech necessary for use in aptly describing a follower of Baha-U-Llah." You do not state, however, that the word is descriptive of the goods on which our client uses it as a trademark, namely, magazines, printed books, and other publications, and it is obvious that such is not the case. The use of this word by your client on publications not published by our client and in the trade name Bahai Bookshop constitutes trademark infringement and unfair competition.

Moreover, the use by your client of the trade name Bahai Bookshop is a misrepresentation and a deceptive use because it gives the erroneous impression that the book shop is operated or sponsored by our client, the official Bahai religious organization, and the use of the name Bahai Bookshop without our client's authority and consent also infringes our client's property right in the name Bahai.

We believe you may want to reconsider your opinion in this matter, and request that you do so.

Yours truly,

(Sgd.) Watson, Bristol, Johnson
& Leavenworth,

(Letterhead of)

MITCHELL & BECHERT

420 Lexington Avenue New York, N. Y.

January 2, 1940,

Messrs. Watson, Bristol, Johnson
& Leavenworth,

6 East 45th Street, New York, N. Y.

Re: Bahai Book Shop

Gentlemen:

This is in reply to your letter of December 22, 1939.

Points Involved and My Reactions to Them

A partial study of the contents of the above correspondence between the two attorneys-at-law will reveal several interesting facts:

1. The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada have made a trademark of the name *Bahai*.
2. According to the text of application filed March 10, 1928, Serial No. 262,923 the Bahai Organization is a corporation.
3. The word *Bahai* is a *trademark* as actually used by applicant upon *goods*, and requests that the same be registered in the United States Patent Office. . . . The trade-mark has been continuously used and applied to said goods in applicant's business since 1900.
4. The goods or merchandise that the applicant sells and which are protected by a trade-mark are the words of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha.
5. Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha lived in prison, suffered and gave their teachings *free* for the religious unification of mankind in order that, in 1928, these spiritual heavenly teachings be monopolized, and sold under trade-mark to an unsuspecting public as so much *goods*, similar to *Blue Sunoco*, *G. Washington coffee*, *Twenty Mule Team Boraxo* or the new, blended with *Havana*, *White Owl Cigar* (it's milder)!
6. The members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, like their expanding sister monopolists, are reaching out to stifle all *unfair competition*, holding Bahai Bookshop re-

sponsible for profits to which, incidentally, they are welcome if they are willing to meet the losses as well.

7. The Bahai organization is not a religion, nor a spiritual renaissance, nor the spirit of the age, but is a full-fledged corporation which, while it engages itself in marketing the principles of Baha-O-Llah for the establishment of Universal Peace, through its various branches in the United States, Canada and in other parts of the world, has protected these goods by taking out a trade-mark on the very name which more than twenty thousand Persian men and women claimed at the price of their lives. This is the first instance in the history of religion where the privilege of calling oneself a follower of a certain Prophet, were he Buddha or Christ, or Mohaminad or any other, has been involved with the interests of a trust or corporation.

What, for instance would have happened to Christianity if, added to the difficulties of establishing a new religion, the early Christians had had to contend with property rights on the name and teachings that they were ready to die for? It is certain that such a liability would have stifled the movement in its infancy and that, before the passing of a hundred years, the words of Jesus would have been heard of no more. The Cause of Baha-O-Llah is no different. Strong as it is, commercial interests and the lust for power are stronger yet if allowed to operate unopposed; and this new-born child, the hope of the ages, will unquestionably cease to breathe if its neck continues to be weighted with the steel links of an international chain store.

Back to The New History Society

General membership in The New History Society is free. Sustaining membership consists simply of subscription to our monthly magazine, *New History*. The society is composed of a band of volunteers and free souls who have come together with the desire to help in the formation of the *new history* of the world and to promulgate the constructive and universal principles of Baha-O-Allah. These men and women are not tied to any formula. They are the children of the New Age and the heralds of the New Civilization.

More than 99 per cent of all expenses of The New History Society and its manifold activities have, during the past eleven years, been paid quietly and unassumingly by *Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler*.

Bahai News

The Feb. 1940 issue of *Bahai News* on page 3, in an article signed by the National Spiritual Assembly under the title of *Vigor and Spiritual Health of the Community*, directs its attack, without mentioning any name, to Mr. and Mrs. Chanler, The New History Society and Bahai Bookshop. We quote:

The believers in all lands are under the supreme favor of guidance from on High. They strive to uphold, day by day, ideals and principles which relate to their own development and the illumination and harmony of mankind. But on the other hand, to aid the endeavors of those who outwardly claim allegiance but secretly try to destroy the Divine Edifice through enmity to its leader, would manifestly be the most grievous of errors.

Historically such disloyalty, synchronizing with the expansion of the Faith, had its appearance when some who were professedly loyal to the Bab, disobeyed His Covenant by refusing to accept Baha'u'llah as the expected One of the *Beyan*. They were urged on by a sordid ambition which brought them ignominy, oblivion and loss. Later the same condition became apparent after the ascension of Baha'u'llah when a few corrupt people violated His solemn Covenant by refusing to accept its Center, Abdu'l-Baha. Again, a diminishing few, urged on by vaulting ambition and an obvious desire to organize within the Cause a group that would circle around themselves, have refused to acknowledge the station of our beloved Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, and the New World Order of administration called into being by the Will of Abdu'l-Baha.

Under the authority of the Guardian, the time has now come to act against these "insidious adversaries" who have even gone so far as to flout the Beloved's Will and Testament, the very pillar of our unity, by claiming the right to use the term "Baha'i" to designate their personal activities. The matter is therefore being taken to the courts, and as soon as possible their excuses will be made a matter of public record. It will be seen whether the present enemies of the Faith can succeed any better than those enemies who have preceded them: Subhi-Ezel, Mohamet Ali, Kheirella and their like, whose denial of the Truth became historic facts beyond recall.

In connection with this legal action, we have this message from Shoghi Effendi in his cablegram of January 23: "Praying victory similar (to the) one recently won (over) Covenant-breakers (in) Holy Land be achieved

by American believers over insidious adversaries (in) City (of the) Covenant."

For Bahais Only

Before answering some of the accusations contained in the above extract, I will point out one peculiar aspect of *Bahai News*. Every copy, in recent times, carries on its front page the inscription: *For Bahais Only*. Why for Bahais only, if the Bahai Cause is intended for the whole world? Why for Bahais only, if there is nothing to hide? Why for Bahais only, if this periodical is a credit to those who prepare it? Abdul Baha on many occasions said that in the Bahai Cause there is no secret doctrine, and that there should be no secret society nor secret meetings. He never thought of specifying the point that there should be no secret publication: *For men only, For members of the Klan only, For Bahais Only*.

Referring to Mr. and Mrs. Chanler and the members of The New History Society, the article states that a *diminishing few urged by vaulting ambition and an obvious desire to organize within the cause a group that would circle around themselves. . . .* At this point, I am close to becoming profane, but I will continue to hold the reins of my patience as far as I am able. The above statement is a mendacious falsehood, and the fraudulency of it is as evident to those who wrote it as it is to those of whom it was written.

Vaulting ambition! My soul! A man and woman giving their hearts, minds and all that they possess in this world to spread an unwanted, though much-needed, cause!

Vaulting ambition! Two persons bidding farewell to

their associates and friends to champion a movement that had been dragged, by its votaries, to the level of a narrow sect!

Vaulting ambition! What did Mr. and Mrs. Chanler have to gain! They had everything to lose. Yet in spite of all kinds of obstacles, laid by their fellow Bahais and others, they arose with such power and self-sacrifice to spread the Cause of Baha-O-Ilah that it is difficult to measure or comprehend the height and depth of their love and devotion.

I praise heaven that I was allowed the privilege of assisting them in their disinterested enterprise; and so, I doubt not, do those who have held by them through thick and thin and who thus have exposed themselves to this dishonest attack.

Insidious adversaries! The insidious adversaries are those who hold office in the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada. They are the ones who, through their legalistic verbiage, have stopped the circulation of the blood of life through the arteries of mankind; they are the ones who have banished love from their midst and enthroned the Veiled Hatred which is more dreadful than the unveiled one; they are the ones who have spread the pall of subtle fear and suspicion over the Bahai Community, exiling confidence and self-respect; they are the ones who, through political manipulations before and during annual Bahai Conventions, are re-elected to the same offices year after year—thus, keeping a stranglehold on the activities of the Cause and directing those activities according to their own good-pleasure.

The founders of The New History Society never, dur-

ing the eleven years of the existence of the movement, have tried to organize within the Cause a group that would circle around themselves. Those who are within the Bahai administrative structure have been emasculated to the point where they are not worth organizing; and then, The New History Society is not an organization. It sees the result of these tactics, and it remembers that the Bahai Cause was not intended to be an organization.

The New History Society has marched across the longitude and latitude of the earth, sowing the seeds of the creative words of Baha-O-Llah without let or hindrance, and it has not withheld those who love organization to follow organization. In other words: *Let the dead bury the dead!*

The writer of the article in *Bahai News* reaches the height of his slanderous vilification when he likens Mr. and Mrs. Chanler and their Bahai friends to those enemies that preceded them: Subhi-Ezel, Mohamet Ali, Kheirella and their like. God Almighty! Is it possible that a human mind could have framed this sentence! Is it conceivable that a community, calling itself Bahai, can allow it to go unchallenged!

I address the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, and ask: How did you dare, in the presence of Baha-O-Llah, to print such blasphemies upon the pages of *Bahai News*? Who drew up this article, and how did it come about that you put your signature to it?

This you call *Bahai News*! It is a yellow sheet, a scandalous germ carrier! No wonder that it is *For Bahais Only*!

Construction of the Word "Baha-O-Llah"

Baha-O-Llah is a compound Arabic word consisting of Baha and Allah, literally meaning the *light* or the *glory* of God. Baha is an ordinary Arabic word which has been used in the literature and poetry of Arabia for innumerable centuries, and, of course, the word Allah is as ancient as Arabia itself. The word Baha is so well established that, when the Arabic translators of the Old Testament came to certain passages in that book, they rendered the words *glory of God* as *Baha-O-Llah*, and *the glory of Carmel* as *the Baha of Carmel*. See Isaiah, Chapter 35, verse 2; likewise Isaiah, Chapter 40, verse 5; where *the glory of Carmel* is translated into *the Baha of Carmel*, and *the glory of our Lord* is rendered into *the Baha of our Lord*. This can be verified by reference to any Arabic translation of the Old Testament.

From this point of view, any Arab, knowing nothing of the Bahai Cause, can open a shop under the name: *Bahai Foodshop* or *Bahai Drug Store* or *Bahai Bookshop*, because the words *light* and *glory* are current words in his language and he is at liberty to use them as have been his ancestors for centuries past.

Historical Origin of the Name Bahai

The Bahai Cause, as the movement is known today, was inaugurated in 1844 by Mirza Ali Mohammad, who adopted the title of the *Bab*, an Arabic word meaning *gate*, by which he implied that the gate to a new civilization was opened wide. A follower of his became known as a Babi, the addition of the letter *i* signifying in Persian

being of, or adhering to. Just as a native of the city of Tabriz is called Tabrizi or a native of Esphahan is called Esphahani, so an adherent of the Bab was called Babi.

When Mirza Hossein Ali, a disciple of the Bab, realized that he was inspired by God and that he must bring the message of *light and glory* to a harassed world, he adopted the title of *Baha-O-Llah*, by which he implied that the age of darkness, superstition, prejudice and ignorance was about to pass away and that a new era of understanding, harmony and union was dawning. The spiritual power of Baha-O-Llah was so tremendous that the majority of the Babis at once recognized in him the fulfillment of the prophecies of the Bab, which were to the effect that after him a yet greater personality would arise and take leadership. Therefore, these disciples gave their allegiance to Baha (Baha-O-Llah often in his writings refers to himself simply as Baha) and automatically they became Bahais. Likewise, the Babi Movement, from this time on, more and more became known as the Bahai Movement.

The Bahai Cause Is Not an Organization

Many years ago, when the Bahai Cause was guided by Abdul Baha, the great son of Baha-O-Llah, it was taught as a free, non-sectarian Revelation, its door open to all mankind.

The earlier Bahai booklets, now out of circulation but still to be found in the Public Library of New York, 5th Ave. and 42nd Street, carried a significant statement made by Abdul Baha. This statement may be found in a booklet entitled *No. 9*, which was widely circulated in former years.

Now, this statement was so significant and far-reaching in its implications that it was continuously referred to by the Bahais in their speeches and writings; and today there are many yet alive who, on numerous occasions, have heard Abdul Baha himself repeat it. Let us listen to the Master as he spoke:

The Bahai Movement is not an organization. You cannot organize the Bahai Movement. The Bahai Movement is the spirit of the age. It is the essence of all the highest ideals of this century. The Bahai Cause is an inclusive movement. The teachings of all religions and societies are found here. Christians, Jews, Buddhists, Mohammedans, Zoroastrians, Theosophists, Freemasons, Spiritualists, etc., find their highest aims in this Cause, Socialists and philosophers find their theories fully developed in this movement.

Mr. Horace Holley

Mr. Horace Holley learned of the Cause during the lifetime of the Master; after a meeting with Abdul Baha in Switzerland and a deep study of the teachings, he applied himself to the service of this nascent movement. His writings, work of those early years, present the Bahai Cause in a masterful and moving manner, and his later monumental tome *Bahai Scriptures*, published by Brentano's in 1923 (at present out of circulation), is an invaluable compilation. Likewise, the successive year books, entitled *The Bahai World*, prepared under his direction, and containing a wealth of interesting material to be found nowhere else, bear witness to his remarkable editorial talents.

Since the departure from this life of Abdul Baha in

1921, Mr. Horace Holley has been the most dominant and outspoken champion of the Bahai Administration; step by step, he has developed and refined this organism to the point where he now holds in his hand the threads of all the activities of the Cause in the East and in the West. Since 1921, with the exception of a single year, if my memory serves me right, he has been elected year after year as the all-powerful secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada. I can call to mind but a single other instance where the occupant of so unpretentious an office as that of secretary maintained supreme and undisputed sway over the minds and lives of his community. This was in the case of Joseph Stalin, who also heads a movement which likewise is supposed to stand for social reform, and who, at the very pinnacle of power, retained the modest title of Secretary of the Communist Party.

Mr. Horace Holley is a most efficient organizer; he has been, and still is, the editor of various Bahai publications and as such he charts and canalizes the mental and spiritual life of the Bahai Community. As an influential member of the Bahai Reviewing Committee, he censors the writings of the Bahais and sees to it that no liberal or anti-organizational ideas penetrate the minds of the members of the various committees. In the exercise of this function, he always has the right and apt quotations, gathered here and there from the writings of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha, (writings which had been given out by these Great Teachers during an approximate period of sixty-five years and which applied to every condition imaginable, both universal and local) and that is enough to prevent any objec-

tion or discussion. Under such circumstances, thought is paralyzed and no one dares to follow Baha-O-Llah's injunction, ever repeated by Abdul Baha: *Independent Investigation of Truth*.

Going back to the early years, we find a book, entitled: *Bahai—The Spirit of the Age*, written by Mr. Horace Holley and published by Brentano's in 1921. Abdul Baha was still in our midst and, although the forces of organization were gathering and the thin clouds of recurrent ecclesiasticism were becoming visible on the horizon of the Bahai Cause, these were not ominous. Mr. Horace Holley was slightly affected, but he was as yet a free soul—the charm and vision of Abdul Baha still held sway over his writings, as can be seen in the introduction to the above-mentioned book where he gives six remarkable interpretations of the word *Bahai*. Let us for a moment commune with the departed spirit of Mr. Horace Holley:—

'The new translation of an ancient classic contains one very significant change. A prophetic passage formerly interpreted "the end of the world" reads now "the end of the age."

In this sense, the world has indeed come to an end in our day—the foundations of a new age, a new civilization, a new science and a new faith have visibly been laid. The inspiration of this new age, for many people in all parts of the world, has one source, one password, one mystery: the name Bahai.

The word Bahai is like a jewel with many facets, a fountain with many pitchers, a mansion with many rooms.

For some, it means a set of principles necessary for

the peace of the world, for economic stability, for the true progress of the sciences and the arts.

For others, Bahai means the privilege of belonging to an active movement already spread throughout the United States, Canada, Europe and large portions of the East; a movement spreading the ideals of fellowship and service irrespective of race, creed, nationality and class.

Still others feel in the word Bahai the reality, the consummation of the Sermon on the Mount, the return of the Divine Love for the purpose of raising mankind from its animal condition to the level of conscious spirituality.

Behind this word for many there stands also a glorious Presence, a Divine Being whose title this word is: The Glory of God. These persons feel this Presence as the controlling force behind every event of this time. Thus is Bahai the cause of a new spirit of reverence and devotion, written as it is upon a Bible, a World Bible, revealed in cosmic utterances which gather together those who seem to be a nucleus of the future spiritual race.

Still others, having heard Abdul Baha during his travels through Europe and America immediately preceding the War, see the word Bahai in terms of his wisdom, his graciousness, his untiring efforts to awaken the slumbering soul to realize the opportunities and responsibilities of life in this age.

Behind this word Bahai, finally, there is one of the most astonishing chapters History has ever had occasion to record. From its beginnings in the glorious Bahi martyrdoms which occurred in Persia only about eighty years ago; to that forty-year exile and imprisonment

suffered by Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha, with seventy faithful followers; witnessing then the renaissance of the Holy Land as the "Mount of Revelation," and arriving at the present hour with Abdul Baha's unique mission made fruitful by the commencement of work on the Bahai Temple at Chicago, by the deeper comprehension of the meaning of this Cause awakened by the nationwide journey of the "Great Teacher," Jenabe Fazel Mazandarani, and the rapid spread of the Bahai Message throughout the East—the historic importance of these events can only be judged at some later date, when from this seed the fruitful tree shall have grown to its maturity.

This was in 1921.

Seven years have rolled into the lap of eternity.

The curtain is lifted on 1928.

The stage is set!

There is our old friend Mr. Horace Holley, urbane, subtle, conscious of his powers—the arbiter and controller of the destiny of the Bahai Organization and Bahai Communities throughout the world. Yes, yes, he has done a good job! With evident satisfaction he displays some papers. What are they? Let us approach and examine them. Our attention is caught by one paper—is riveted on it. We read:

Registered Aug. 7, 1928

Trade-Mark 254,271

United States Patent Office

**National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the
United States and Canada of New York, N. Y.**

Application filed March 10, 1928. Serial No. 262,923.

B A H A ' I STATEMENT

To the Commissioner of Patents:

*National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the
United States and Canada, a common-law corporation,
organized and operated under declaration of trust and
doing business at . . .*

As we read and re-read the statement, we are lost in a sea of amazement. We rub our eyes, we fidget, we feel restless; we wonder whether all this is not a nightmare—impossible, incredible. We stagger, and search in our consciousness for an explanation; then, completely baffled, we look up into the face of Mr. Horace Holley. Maybe he will tell us what this means! He smiles, triumphantly pointing to the signature, and we read:

National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the
United States and Canada

by HORACE HOLLEY,
Secretary.

And as we turn our eyes from this document, we glimpse Mr. Horace Holley's fingers still tenderly patting his own signature!

Well, friends! It is accomplished!

There is a stake on the *source* of the Bahai Cause and its owner-proprietor is the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada.

The *password* given to mankind by Baha-O-Llah, to be used for the regeneration of nations, is in the possession of the Bahai administrators.

No one on the face of the earth can fathom the *mystery* latent in the name *Bahai* except these interpreters of the law, these esteemed members of the all-powerful Bahai hierarchy.

The *jewel with many facets* is boxed and locked, and the key is in the velvet pocket of Mr. Horace Holley.

A concrete wall is raised around the *fountain with many pitchers*. Who cares? Let the world die of thirst.

The door of the *mansion with many rooms* is closed! What if the children of God knock and knock! What if they perish from punishing cold and hunger; *I*, Mr. Horace Holley; *we*, the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada; *we* who follow the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, *we, we, we* are living in the mansion of Baha-O-Llah; we partake of his delectable food and roam in his spiritual garden.

The *set of principles necessary for the peace of the world, for economic stability, for the true progress of sciences and arts* are registered and trade-marked, and woe unto those who dare to speak or write on these subjects!

The remedy given by the Great Physician for the healing of the sick body of the world has been made up into a patent medicine, and no one is allowed to avail himself of its restorative powers except by permission of these parochial pharmacologists.

We, the members of the Bahai Organization, have a priority right on *the ideals of fellowship and service irrespective of race, creed, nationality and class*, and those who put these principles into practice are our *insidious enemies*.

Let the whole world know that we are the custodians of *the reality, the consummation of the Sermon on the Mount*. It is, of course, true that the Apostles of Christ did not copyright the Sermon on the Mount; but, in those days, America was as yet undiscovered and there was no Commissioner of Patents in Jerusalem. It is likewise true that the later Christians did not copyright the Sermon on the Mount, but in our opinion, some of them might have had the foresight to do it, thus preventing its circulation throughout the world except through authorized channels. Man lives and learns! This word *Bahai* is *the reality, the consummation of the Sermon on the Mount*, and the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada are heirs to it; they possess it, they have seignioral rights over it.

Let us go back again to the early years, just for a breath of fresh air! In another part of the already-mentioned book, *Bahai—the Spirit of the Age*, Mr. Horace Holley writes as follows on pages 27-28:—

The slightest appreciation of this Revelation, however, leads one to realize that the spirit of the age cannot be thus conveniently confined. The slight Bahai Organization which exists is, in comparison with the Revelation itself, only as body in comparison to soul. Obviously, the cosmically conscious person of today cannot accept any arbitrary limiting classification. The basic principle of Abdul Baha's teaching is: This is the century of spiritual Illumination. Its basic application is: Investigate Truth, Promote Peace, Proclaim the Oneness of Mankind.

As a footnote to page 28, Mr. Horace Holley quotes

these words of Abdul Baha: *The Bahai Movement is not an organization. You cannot organize the Bahai Movement . . . The Bahai Movement is the spirit of this age.*—Abdul Baha.

The above masterful statement of Mr. Horace Holley was the expression of his faith in the Bahai Cause in 1921. It happens to be the expression of my faith in 1941, with one exception. He refers to *slight Bahai Organization*. Apparently, in spite of the clear statement of Abdul Baha that *you cannot organize the Bahai Movement*, he and his associates had already introduced a *slight* organization and then, with the departure of the Master, the steam-roller began to move, gaining momentum year by year—until now . . . (Additional material regarding the Bahai movement, as taught in former years, and the early appearance of orthodoxy and organizational ideas is given in a supplement at the end of this chapter, under the heading: *The Building of Bahai Organization*.)

My Faith

The founders of the religions of mankind, including the Bahai Cause, never intended their teachings to be cornered by a group, a church, a synagogue, a mosque, a temple or an administration. The burden of their message was the abolition of the religious hierarchies of their times. They preached simplicity of faith and the abrogation of all ritual and credal distinctions; but, invariably and without exception, the followers of the Masters fell into the same ditch, one by one.

Baha-O-Llah wished his movement to be inclusive; it was supposed to serve as a golden thread on which the

spiritual jewels of all religions were to be strung. He did not want to establish a new religion, to form another organization. He did not plan to forge another chain, to fabricate another creed, to build another jail.

I was born in a Bahai family; the home of my uncle, in which I was reared from the age of three months, was surrounded by the enemies of our Faith. In time, our house was pillaged and we were forced to leave Persia. Since my boyhood I have been a wanderer, a dervish, a vagabond. I own nothing, I possess no property, I have no bank account. The source of my wealth is my adoration for Baha-O-Llah; the capital of my life is my devotion to Abdul Baha and this capital, no one, mark well, no one, no matter how protected, and no group, no matter how well organized, and no system, no matter how efficiently administered, can lessen or curtail.

I served my master Abdul Baha for eight years in America and Canada, in Europe, Egypt and Palestine. I also served, and served well, the Bahais throughout the world, including those who today have the arrogance and insolence to classify me as an enemy. I have no apologies to offer to these self-styled Bahais. They cannot hurt me. My bones and my flesh are composed of the love of Abdul Baha, and through my veins and arteries the blood of the Bahai Cause runs red. I make no claim for myself; I possess no title and hold no position. I am but a thrall at the Threshold of my Master; and this servitude, pure and simple, is my claim to life and immortality.

I know that Baha-O-Llah is the protector of his own Cause. He guards over the treasures of his teachings. He does not need a board of trustees to administer his prin-

ciples nor to dispense his faith. His arms are outstretched over the wide universe and his spirit penetrates all things. Baha-O-Llah is my portion; organization is the portion of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada. I am satisfied with my portion; I hope that they are satisfied with theirs!

Yes, I and thousands of others have *inherited* the universal, all-inclusive teachings of Baha-O-Llah and we proudly bear his name. These teachings and this name are available to all who wish to use them, and Baha-O-Llah, from the Kingdom, smiles upon these children of his and is glad.

These children of Baha, who are dedicated to his Cause, are like candles of guidance and wisdom which will burn but the brighter, surrounded as they are with a mesmeric gloom exorcised over the horizon by the waving of wands and the incantations of administrative soothsayers and magicians. The soft, lambent rays of these excommunicated souls will, in time, banish the darkness of the Abra-cadabra and Mumbo-jumbo, chaunted by weird sorcerers, cabalistic necromancers, sanctimonious Shamans, puritan witch-hunters, figure-flinger Cagliostros and fee-faw-fum medicine-men.

Unique Distinction of the Bahai Cause

The Bahai Cause, like all the great religions, contains a set of moral and ethical ideals for the spiritualizing of the life of mankind; but, added to this and unlike other religions, Baha-O-Llah has given us clear and distinct principles for the radical improvement of the social, economic, political and educational conditions of our civiliza-



A Meeting in honor of Professor Albert Einstein, held on December
the auspices of The

14, 1930, in the ballroom of the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, New York, under
New History Society.

See page 152

tion. In other words, the Founder of the Baháí Cause was not only a prophet, preaching and reiterating the absolute moral concepts of former dispensations, but was also an *inspired statesman*.

We know that the major changes in our world have been brought about through the application of the three following methods:

1st. Spiritual education. This has been the method of all the prophets, including Baha-O-Llah. The introduction of ballot box and of voting does not belong to this category of teaching.

2nd. Recurrent violent and bloody revolutions.

3rd. Non-violent revolutions and change, through the adoption of the democratic way: ballot box and vote.

The spiritual genius of Baha-O-Llah emphasized the first method; rejected the second and accepted the third, recognizing its supreme value in our modern world.

When we read his writings and those of his son, Abdul Baha, this point comes out very clearly. For instance, in regard to the exercise of our political rights, *through voting*, Abdul Baha says:

Thou hast asked regarding the political affairs. In the United States it is necessary that the citizens shall take part in elections. This is a necessary matter and no excuse from it is possible. . . . As the government of America is a republican form of government, it is necessary that all the citizens shall take part in the affairs of the Republic.

—From the Book: "Tablets of Abdul Baha

Abbas," Vol. II, Pages 342-343; Published by Bahai Publishing Society, Chicago, Ill., 1915.

The above instruction is plain enough and is in accord with essential democratic procedure. Yet in the face of it, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada has taken the liberty of setting it aside.

On the other hand, it has adopted the ballot box and voting for its *own* administrative wizardry, allowing its recognized members to elect national and local officers, while at the same time it deprives these very men and women of the privilege of exercising their rights as citizens in the election of officers in their local, state and national affairs. Furthermore, it forbids all Bahais to retain any political offices whatsoever, or to run for the same, thus abrogating their rights to serve their country and to uphold their democracy.

To support the above statement, let us acquaint ourselves with a few of the regulations imposed upon its general membership by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada:—

1. Recognized Bahais of the United States and Canada must not take part in any local, provincial or national election, conducted by political parties, where votes are to be cast for one or two or more candidates.
2. Recognized Bahais must not run for any public office as candidate of any political party, nor take part, directly or indirectly, in the promotion of any party or party platform.

3. Recognized Bahais must not vote in any election based upon a party system.
4. Recognized Bahais must abstain from association with movements advocating social changes that presume partisan political action.
5. *Recognized Bahais who speak on Bahai platforms* must abstain from making any critical statements about any particular government or national policy.
6. Every Local Bahai Center must be responsible for the carrying out of the above laws by the Bahais in their respective communities. Local membership must include only the names of those who faithfully obey these regulations.
7. Recognized Bahais must not retain or apply for membership in any church or religious group.
8. Bahais failing to give unreserved obedience to the above regulations and to numerous others which are constantly legislated, and month after month spread on the pages of *Bahai News* by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, are expelled or excommunicated from the Cause, and the Bahais are not permitted to associate with these expelled or excommunicated ones, regardless of friendship, no matter of how long standing nor of the depth of their affection or love.

In the light of the above rules, it is not difficult to picture the kind of society that would be ours if the Bahai community becomes widespread under the aegis of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada. Any dictator who might arise in this

country, of whatsoever political hue, red, brown, black or yellow, would take to his heart and cherish these deaf, dumb and blind subjects, utterly servile and subservient, who would never oppose him nor resist his most cruel laws or indeed his slightest whim. The citizenry of these proud United States would become a race of automata, a chain-gang; and our fair democracy would have been converted into a nightmare, more gruesome and frightful than could be imagined by any H. G. Wells in his most despondent mood. All this, in case the affairs of this country are influenced according to the ideology of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada.

(For the details of above regulations from Nos. 1 to 7 read "Bahai News," December 1932 and July 1933. For item No. 8 read article entitled "The Determination of Membership" on page 3, January 1940 issue of "Bahai News.")

The Alternative

My personal opinion is that if some effectual means be not presently adopted to disperse this sacrosanct hierarchy, to nullify its power and destroy its authority, it will ere long reduce the Bahai Cause to the status of a sect, seeing that it has now waxed so exceedingly puffed up with pride as to attack anyone who, before the face of his Maker, calls himself a Bahai. If a method be not devised to check the inordinate ambitions of these administrators of the Bahai Cause, they will, for the establishment of their own un-American, un-democratic ideology, so limit the spiritual potency of the words of Baha-O-Llah that the effect of these words on the hearts of men will be reduced to a whisper.

There are, indeed, men and women within the Bahai Organization, who had the privilege of listening to Abdul Baha and who are fully aware of the changed atmosphere and of the freezing of all spiritual life; but the continuous droning of the black wings of organization and the undulations of the Administrative Python have paralyzed and incapacitated them.

Bandar-log, said the voice of Kaa, at last (according to Kipling), *Can ye stir foot or hand without my orders? Speak!*

Without thy order, we cannot stir foot or hand, O Kaa! Good! Come all one pace nearer to me.

The lines of the monkeys swayed forward, helplessly.

Nearer! hissed Kaa, and they all moved again.

Even so has the incorporated Kaa made *soft, oozy triangles that melted into five sided figures and coiled mounds, never resting, never hurrying*, while his fascinated audience, fearful of excommunication, have listened with rapt attention to every note of his low humming song.

Excommunicated from what? Is the earth indeed flat that they can be pushed off its surface? Is the dominion of Baha-O-Llah so small that it can be reserved for a handful of *respectable* tenants? Let these people awake and realize that humanity is encompassed with the vitalizing breezes of the New Day which refresh and bring joy to all who have love in their hearts!

When this knowledge dawns upon their consciousness, they will once and forever cast away the shackles of slavery and subserviency, and claiming again the Universal Teachings of Baha-O-Llah, will take their places in the vanguard of freedom and progress, crying out:

Ya Baha El Abha!

as if for the first time.

On the other hand, if this group is left to continue in its course of every day devising a new lock, of forging a new chain, of fashioning a new whip for application on the fair body of the Cause, then, I swear by the Almighty that Baha-O-Llah himself will arise in his Supreme Power and shatter these fetters to a thousand pieces, thus freeing his Message and setting it again to flow, like a tumultuous cyclone, through the wide avenues of life!

What Is the Bahai Cause?

The Bahai Cause is a free spiritual Revelation. Baha-O-Llah, as its Founder, prayed that all men may partake of the inestimable blessings of his Message. This Message, in its essence, belongs to humanity, and no individual, no group of individuals, no church, no state, no organization, no administration can lay an exclusive claim to it. It cannot be trade-marked, and it cannot be patented.

The song of the nightingale and the perfume of the rose defy the authority of a monopolistic junta.

The rays of the stars cannot be harnessed to the *throb-throb* of a powerhouse.

The words of God are independent of the sponsorship of a corporation.

The wind of the heavens bloweth where it listeth. It has neither a trade-name nor a trade-mark. It does not belong to a trade-union. It does not lend itself to trading, for it has no trading-post; nor can it be discovered on the card-files of a trade-school. It is nameless and tradeless. Its

traces are lost in the cerulean sky and its traditions go back to the foundation of creation.

The Bahai Cause is a summons to freedom in the realm of spirit. It is a clarion-call for the emancipation of all men from the limitations of the past. It is a lordly invitation to join in the march of the New Civilization.

The Sea of Truth

Like children of a day, we stand in awe and wonder before the boundless sea of the Cause of Baha-O-Llah, and we fill our small pitchers and are glad that God has made us witness to His measureless ocean of Truth. We pass by. Age after age, cycle after cycle, the children of other times and other climes shall stand before the same sea. They also fill their pitchers and pass by. The procession continues, yes, my dear Bahai friends, yes, my dear Bahai administrators, the procession continues on and on, century after century, throughout the eternity of time and space, until all the pitchers of all the children as yet asleep on the lap of God are filled to overflowing, yet the sea, ah me, the sea—the limitless sea of the Truth of Baha-O-Llah—will still be there, untouched and undisturbed, mirroring on its marmorial surface the effulgence of the sun of Truth stationed at the meridian of its glory, and pouring its rays upon a world, the similitude of which cannot be realized by any living soul today.

In the light of the above explanation we dimly, very dimly understand the meaning of the words of Abdul Baha: *The Bahai Cause is the Spirit of the Age.*

Let us then close this chapter with his words which to me are words of truth:—

Attach your hearts to Baha-O-Llah. He is the eternal Glory of God. Then from day to day, you will become more enlightened; day by day your power will increase; day by day your work will become more universal, and day by day your horizon will broaden, until in the end it will embrace the universe.

—*Bahai* by Horace Holley, pages 144-5.

Supplement

THE BUILDING OF BAHAI ORGANIZATION

Abdul Baha's Definition of What is a Bahai?

When asked on one occasion: "What is a Bahai?" Abdul Baha replied: "To be a Bahai means to love all the world; to love humanity and try to serve it; to work for universal peace and universal brotherhood." On another occasion he defined a Bahai as "one endowed with the perfections of man in activity." In one of his London talks he said that a man may be a Bahai even if he has never heard the name of Baha-O-Llah. He added: "The man who lives the life according to the teachings of Baha-O-Llah is already a Bahai. On the other hand, a man may call himself a Bahai for fifty years, and if he does not live the life he is not a Bahai. An ugly man may call himself handsome, but he deceives no one."

—From the Book *Baha-U-Llah and the New Era* by J. E. Esselmont, Published by Brentano's, New York.

(Mr. Esselmont spent two months and a half as the guest of Abdul Baha in Haifa in the winter of 1919-20. His book is well written and one of the few that is still current and distributed by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada.)

The late Mr. Myron H. Phelps, one of the early American pilgrims to Acca, writes in 1903 :

The characteristic of Abbas Effendi, (Abdul Baha), regarded as a religious leader, which is at once the most striking, the most attractive, and the most impressive, is his generous and tolerant liberality. It is disappointing to find that narrowness and intolerance have already shown themselves in the teachings of some of his followers—a perversion and degradation of true religion which is seen to be an almost inevitable tendency of human nature in all ages of the world, and which most religions have suffered in the hands of their adherents. The chief glory of Bahaism is that its true spirit, as exemplified in its Great Apostle, is utterly free from it.

—From the book *Abbas Effendi, His Life and Teachings* by Myron H. Phelps, published by G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, N. Y., 1903.

Mr. Charles Mason Remey, Bahai teacher and world traveler, writes in 1912 :

The method of Bahai teaching is constructive, in every sense . . . argument and dispute have no place in this cause. . .

In order to combat evil the soul should be filled with love and truth. Fear, together with all its attending destructive forces, disappears in the presence of *faith and assurance*. . . .

Having no organization, no ritual, or priesthood after the manner of other religions, the Bahais are opposing the work of no other religious bodies. It is a worldwide movement, the spirit of which is working unhindered

and unbound by confines and barriers of sect and ism. The Bahais see and recognize truth and spiritual beauty wherever found, and through this attitude of love and tolerance for all, they find at every hand, among the people of other religious bodies, the opportunity of sharing the spirit of their faith. . . .

Often people inquire whether affiliation with the Bahai Cause necessitates the giving up of church membership. The advice is always that no human or religious relations should be severed, but that these relations should become as avenues for giving forth the message and the spirit of the Bahai faith. People having church relations continue to mingle with church people. . . .

—From the book *The Bahai Movement* by Mr. Charles Mason Remey published by J. D. Milans and Sons, Washington, D. C., 1912. Mr. Remey is one of the earliest and most distinguished Bahai teachers and writers, and one who met Abdul Baha in person and received these principles from its fountain head.

The above extracts from a most interesting chapter of his book show clearly and most truly the underlying ideals of tolerance and universality that inspired him and others to labor for the Cause of Baha-O-Llah.

The late Mr. Alfred W. Martin, of the Ethical Culture Society, an admirer of the Bahai Cause, writes in 1926:

It is the crowning glory of the Bahai Movement that while depreciating sectarianism in its preaching, it has faithfully practiced what it preached by refraining from becoming itself a sect. Far from endeavoring to convert

all outside its fellowship to such doctrines as are generally held by the members—whether of “theism,” or of “revelation,” or of “intuition” as a criterion of truth—it has assiduously sought to help men and women of all persuasions to realize the highest ideals of religion. Nothing could be more foreign to the spirit of this movement or further from its purpose than the attempt to displace all existing religions by itself. It frowns upon the notion that any one of the existing great religions will ever triumph over all the rest. And, far from bidding any one sever his connection with the religion he has inherited or adopted, the Bahai Movement bids him cling to it, so long as reason and conscience sanction his allegiance. Thus in the best sense of the word it is a missionary movement. Its representatives do not attempt to impose any beliefs upon others, whether by argument or by bribery; rather do they seek to put beliefs that have illumined their own lives within the reach of those who feel they need illumination. No, not a sect, not a part of humanity cut off from all the rest, living for itself and aiming to convert all the rest into material for its own growth; no, not that, but a *leaven*, causing spiritual fermentation in all religions, quickening them with the spirit of catholicity and fraternalism—such I take it is the essence of the Bahai Movement.

Clearly, then, we are dealing with a fellowship, an influence, a leaven, a movement that fights shy of sectarian enthusiasms, that abhors the formation of a close corporation with exclusive privileges, for that has been a greater obstruction to brotherhood than either kingly ambition or commercial greed. This movement has no priesthood, no college, no ecclesiastical hier-

archy, but, on the contrary, is conspicuous for its distrust of organization, constitutions, by-laws, and other familiar fetters of the western world. But I see foreboding signs, I hear disquieting rumors of a tendency among some within this movement to have it crystalized within a sectarian mold, to have it stand explicitly for a certain set of theological ideas, and then make this the test of fellowship. No more serious or fateful calamity could befall this movement than to have it relegated to the limbo of sectarianism. Let it hold fast to its distrust of organization . . . and not only will there lie before it an ever increasing field of usefulness but, forfeiting none of its beneficent power, it will go on from strength to strength in the fulfillment of its invaluable and indispensable mission.

—*Comparative Religion and the Religion of the Future*, by Alfred W. Martin, published by D. Appleton and Co., New York, 1926.

CHAPTER VI

THE DECISION

ALLEN B. MCDANIEL, HORACE HOLLEY, ROY C. WILHELM, DOROTHY BAKER, AMELIA COLLINS, LOUIS GREGORY, LEROY C. IOAS, HARLAN OBER and SIEGFRIED SCHOPFLOCHER, as members of the National Spiritual Assembly and Trustees of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada, and THE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHAI'S OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK, a religious corporation,
Plaintiffs,

against

MIRZA AHMAD SOHRAB AND JULIE CHANLER,
Defendants.

The Morning of April 1st 1941

On April 1st, I as usual left my room at an early hour and, after a walk through Central Park, arrived at the office at 8:30. Presently Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler, my partner in the work of The New History Society, took her place on the opposite side of the desk and we both set ourselves to examining our mail.

At 9:30 the telephone rang. In routine fashion, I lifted up the receiver: "Hello!"



GORDON S. P. KLEEBERG
Kleeberg & Greenwald, Counsellors at Law.

"Mrs. Chanler, please!" It was a masculine voice.

"Who is calling?"

"This is Greenwald, of Kleeberg & Greenwald."

With a slight tremor of excitement, I pushed the telephone over to Mrs. Chanler and narrowly watched her as she took up the conversation.

"No!" A smile had broken over her face. "Is it really true? . . . Really?" . . . Her eyes sought mine and she whispered *Allah-O-Abha!*; then she continued: "Naturally, we'll come down. . . . How could it be any trouble? . . . Haven't we been waiting for this news long enough? . . . Yes, in twenty minutes, and thank you a thousand times."

She put down the receiver and remained silent for a moment. I waited. Finally: "The Court has decided in our favor." Her eyes were shining; mine were already wet with tears. Across the desk, our hands met and gripped each other and I broke out: "Thank God! Baha-O-Llah has freed his Cause!" Meanwhile our secretary, Miss Lilyan Tannen, had stopped her work to listen. No one knew better than Miss Tannen the various stages in the proceedings which had led to this outcome. Hadn't she been sitting in that very place sixteen months before, when we had been served with papers; and, during the long course of litigation, hadn't she felt, as had all our friends, that there couldn't be any other decision? Just the same, confidence and certainty are vastly different. We knew it then; and we were three very happy people on that morning of April 1st, 1941.

Before leaving the house, we shared our news with Mr. Chanler who was very delighted, although he insisted on taking it as a matter of course; then, merrily we started off

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PRICE

BY MR. JUSTICE VALENTE.

McDaniel v. Mirza Ahmad Sohrab

—This is a motion for judgment on the pleadings, dismissing the amended complaint as supplemented by the bills of particulars as insufficient in law.

¶The individual plaintiffs sue as members of the National Spiritual Assembly and Trustees of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada. The Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is of the City of New York, a religious corporation, is a coplaintiff. ¶The complaint alleges that the name "Baha'i" denotes a religion identified with the name of the founder "Baha." The plaintiffs claim to be the authorized representatives of all of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada. They allege that they are publishing books and other publications which teach Baha'i religion. They charge that the defendants, who were members prior to April 5, 1929, of the Baha'i Congregation of the City of New York, have been conducting, without the authority of plaintiffs, meetings, lectures, classes, social gatherings and other activities, and announcing and advertising the same as Baha'i meetings, lectures, classes, &c." They complain that the defendants have been giving these meetings, lectures, &c., a Baha'i appearance and atmosphere by teaching, in connection therewith, a religion described as the Baha'i religion and that they have created an erroneous impression that they are connected with and authorized to represent the Baha'i religion and to solicit contributions therefor. In addition, plaintiffs complain of the opening of a book shop by the defendants under the name of "Bahai Book Shop" and of the listing of the shop in the telephone directory under that name, immediately over the name of "Baha'i Center," which represents the listing of plaintiffs' New York office and book shop. ¶In the court's opinion the complaint fails to state a good cause of action. The plaintiffs have no right to a monopoly of the name of a religion. The defendants, who purport to be members of the same religion, have an equal right to use the name of the religion in connection with their own meetings, lectures, classes and other activities. No facts are alleged in the complaint to indicate that the defendants have been guilty of any act intended or calculated to deceive the public into believing that their meetings,

lectures or book shop are identified with or affiliated with the meetings, lectures, &c., and book shop of the plaintiffs. Defendants have the absolute right to practice Baha'ism, to conduct meetings, collect funds and sell literature in connection therewith, and to conduct a book shop under the title "Bahai Book Shop." ¶The bills of particulars furnished by the plaintiffs admit that the allegations, that the defendants created the erroneous impression that they were connected with the plaintiffs and led the public to believe that their book shop was connected with the plaintiffs, were not based upon any acts of the defendants other than their conducting meetings, lectures, classes and other activities under the name of "Bahai" and their operation of a book shop under that name: listed in the telephone directory immediately above the name of plaintiffs' book shop. The position of the listing is, of course, due to the fact that the telephone directory is arranged alphabetically, so that the name "Bahai Book Shop" naturally precedes the name "Baha'i Center." ¶The motion to dismiss the amended complaint is granted, with leave to serve a further amended complaint within ten days from the service of a copy of this order, with notice of entry. Order signed.

TUESDAY, APRIL 1, 1941

down Lexington Avenue where, adepts at the subway as we are, we took the wrong line, and emerged at Times Square instead of at the Grand Central. We put this slip down to pardonable bewilderment and did our best to catch up for lost time, arriving a little breathless at the offices of Kleeberg & Greenwald, Counsellors at Law, 300 Madison Avenue, at exactly quarter past ten. Mr. Greenwald, who had argued the case in court, was awaiting us and he, most sympathetically, spread before our eyes the *New York Law Journal* of that morning which carried the decision handed down by Justice Louis A. Valente in the Supreme Court, New York, on the suit brought by the Bahai Administration against ourselves. While we were reading the clear-cut findings of the Judge, Mr. Kleeberg looked in and we had the opportunity of thanking our two lawyers who were so well qualified to handle a case of this unusual type; and all the time we were conscious of the fact that we were living a momentous hour—one never to be forgotten in the records of Bahai history.

On the way back, Mrs. Chanler and I, still in a state of pardonable bewilderment, lost each other and we returned by different routes.

The Complaint

On December 5, 1939, Allen B. McDaniel, Horace Holley, Roy C. Wilhelm, Dorothy Baker, Amelia Collins, Louis Gregory, Leroy C. Ioas, Harlan Ober and Siegfried Schopflocher, as the nine members of the National Spiritual Assembly and the Trustees of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, together with the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the City of New York, a religious cor-

poration, brought a lawsuit against Mrs. Chanler and myself. The primary object of this proceeding was to prevent us from using the word Bahá'í in connection with a Book Shop and to restrain us and the group formed under the name of *The New History Society* from holding any meetings in the name of the Bahai Cause or for the purpose of teaching the principles of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha. This action was based on the grounds that the National Spiritual Assembly had registered the word *Bahai* as a *trade-mark* in the United States Patent Office, Washington, D. C.

The Complaint, served on April 25th; the Amended Complaint, presented on June 7th; the Bill of Particulars, produced on August 27th; the Supplemental Bill of Particulars, added on October 30th, and the final Memorandum, submitted to the Court on December 27, 1940, by an array of attorneys, namely: Watson, Bristol, Johnson and Leavenworth of 6 East 45th St., New York, display a shifting of attitude very perplexing to the student of these documents. The lawsuit started out on the basis of the trade-mark held on the word *Bahá'í*, but this definite claim was dropped in the *Amended Complaint* and in all subsequent Papers. The same process of elimination on other claims is followed, more or less regularly, in the series of briefs, showing that the plaintiffs were laboring under confusion of thought and purpose. Baseless assertions and fantastic allegations were advanced as facts; but no proofs were offered. The officers of the National Spiritual Assembly and of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the City of New York, who were intimately acquainted with the questions involved, were able to swear the following before Notary Publics: *I have read the*

forgoing Complaint (or Amended Complaint) and know the contents thereof, and the same is true of my own knowledge except as to the matters therein stated to be alleged upon information and belief, and as to those matters I believe it to be true; yet hundreds of New York's public, knowing the situation but slightly, would have been willing to go on record, stating that some of these charges were obviously not true. At any rate, according to the Court no facts were ever produced and no good cause of action was ever advanced.

As one studies these documents, one comes to the realization that the plaintiffs are obsessed with a single thought and purpose, namely: that Baha-O-Allah came to earth to form an organization and that his teachings are to be monopolized by them. This line of argument, like the ominous undertone of a Greek tragedy, runs throughout all their demands. They believe that our *unlawful* public teaching of the Bahai Cause is *trespassing* upon their rights and privileges and works to their *damage and injury*; and they consider that, if we are permitted to *continue* in these *unlawful acts*, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada and the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the City of New York *will suffer irreparable injury*.

Spiritual and Material Monopoly

To illustrate this point I will quote one from among their many demands of the Court, which is embodied in the Amended Complaint:—

WHEREFORE plaintiffs demand judgment as follows:

(1) That the defendants and each of them, their agents, servants, employees, associates, and each of them be enjoined and restrained, during the pendency of this action and thereafter perpetually.

a. From using, or participating directly or indirectly in the use of, the word Baha'i, or any word deceptively similar thereto, as the name or a part of the name of any meeting, lecture, class or social gathering or as the name or title or a part of the name or title of any book, magazine, or other publication, or as the name or a part of the name under which any book shop or other business is conducted.

b. From representing in any way that either of the defendants is connected with or authorized to represent the plaintiffs or the Baha'i religion or Cause.

c. From soliciting or receiving any form of financial contribution to the Baha'i religion or Cause.

(2) That the defendants and each of them be directed to account for, and pay over to the plaintiffs, the sums received by the defendants, the profits realized by the defendants and the damages suffered by the plaintiffs as the result of the wrongful acts herein alleged, together with plaintiffs' costs herein.

(3) That plaintiffs have such other and further relief as may be equitable.

Here, we have a clear example of both spiritual and material monopoly. The plaintiffs were determined to deprive us (and humanity at large) of claiming to be followers of Baha-O-Llah; they wished to close the doors

of our meetings, to scatter our members and friends, to silence our voices, to haul down our flag, and then to receive, as balm for their feelings, whatever contributions we had received and whatever profits we had made, together with *further relief as may be equitable*.

Off the Record

At this point, I will make a statement which was not included in our defense before the court: The New History Society is not a commercial organization; it is not even a practical organization; neither Mrs. Chanler nor myself are fitted by temperament to conduct a movement based on the material support of its membership or the public. This is a weakness on our part of which I am not proud, but it is a fact, nevertheless. During the eleven years of the existence of The New History Society and the ten years of the existence of The Caravan (its affiliated youth movement), Mr. and Mrs. Chanler have poured in their money freely, joyously, as grist to the mill of their endeavor. Small contributions to the work came in now and then, from our members, some books were sold and the proceeds added to the budget, but ninety-nine and three-quarters percent of the total expended on the maintenance of the work came from the one source—Mr. and Mrs. Chanler. Everybody knows this; and yet the plaintiffs claim *that we have made profits, and diverted to ourselves contributions to the Bahai Cause* which otherwise would have been received by them. All these allegations were under oath. Here, one cannot help wondering at the mental processes which make such claims and oaths possible.

The fact that we never did make money or profits was not made use of in our defense before the Court. Instead, our lawyers claimed for us the right to collect funds for Bahai work, and this claim was granted in the decision.

So, the Court did not confer upon the plaintiffs a spiritual and material monopoly on the Bahai Teachings: the Cause, for which we are ready to sacrifice our lives, was not taken away from us, nor were our possessions (incidentally, mine are nil) confiscated under the guise of *profits, damages, cost of litigation and further relief as may be equitable*.

Complete Assurance

A most incomprehensible aspect of the design of the National Spiritual Assembly was utter confidence in the justice of its plan and complete assurance of victory.

One reason for this apparent confidence was, I suspect, the small weight which its members placed on the guarantee of religious liberty in this country as set forth in the Bill of Rights, together with a minimizing of the effect which this law of tolerance had had on the consciousness of the American people. Even if they were aware of the implications of this principle, they, in all probability, imagined that it could be brushed aside in their case by reason of the authority of the Guardian; and here we come to the basis of their assurance. Believing as they do in the infallibility of Shoghi Effendi, and having pinned all their faith on the validity of his judgment and the efficacy of



JACOB GREENWALD
Kleeberg & Greenwald, Counsellors at Law

his prayers, the cabled messages sent by him in this connection constituted their safeguard.

Here are the texts of the cablegrams:—

Received December 13, 1939,

Praying (for) success (of) legal measures taken by Assembly.

Received January 18, 1940,

Sleepless vigilance (to) ward off subtle attacks (of) enemies (is) first prerequisite (to) sound unfoldment (of the) process (of the) enterprise already operating.

Received January 23, 1940,

Praying victory similar (to the) one recently won (over) covenant-breakers (in) Holy Land be achieved by American believers over insidious adversaries (in) City of (the) Covenant (i. e., New York).

(The above three cablegrams are quoted in the Bill of Particulars in order to prove the fact that the suit had been brought with the approval and authorization of Shoghi Effendi.)

Further, in a letter written from Haifa, Palestine, on April 15th and published in *Bahai News*, June 1940, the Guardian has this to say about Mrs. Chanler and myself:

The subtle and contemptible machinations by which the puny adversaries of the Faith, jealous of its consolidating power and perturbed by the compelling evidences of its conspicuous victories, have sought to challenge the validity and misrepresent the character of the Administrative Order embedded in its teachings, have

galvanized the swelling army of its defenders to arise and arraign the usurpers of their sacred rights and to defend the long-standing strongholds of the institutions of their Faith in their home country.

I don't feel that I can make comment on the above paragraph other than to address myself to the adjective *puny*, which is a quaint word of early English flavor. In looking it up, I find that it signifies *imperfectly developed, pigmy, shrimp, small fry*. Now, I know that Mrs. Chantler, in her modesty, would accept all these terms as descriptive of her, in her service to the Cause, but neither *she* nor I agree to them in regard to our worth as opponents to the system which thinks to be the *unique repository* of the Word of God in this day. Probably, the attorneys of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada give us credit for being adversaries (in a purely legal way), at least, worthy of their steel.

Reasons for Bringing Suit

Shortly after the institution of legal proceedings, the National Spiritual Assembly explains its reasons for bringing action against us, stating that this step represents *a culmination of one aspect of the evolution of the Faith*. I do think that they were right in this respect.

Under the authority of the Guardian, the time has now come to act against these "insidious adversaries" who have even gone so far as to flout the Beloved's Will and Testament, the very pillar of our unity, by claiming the right to use the term Baha'i to designate their personal activities.

The matter is therefore being taken to the courts, and as soon as possible their excuses will be made a matter of public record. It will be seen whether the present enemies of the Faith can succeed any better than those enemies who have preceded them. (Signed) National Spiritual Assembly. *Bahai News*, Feb. 1940, No. 133

The decision to take legal action for the protection of the Sacred right of the Baha'i community represents a culmination of one aspect of the evolution of the Faith in recent years which the newer *believers have had little* occasion to consider or understand. To the older Baha'is, however, the preservation of the basis of the unity and integrity of the community is a matter vital to faith and inseparable from the experience of loyalty and service to the Cause. For they have witnessed actual efforts to deny the validity of Abdu'l-Baha's mission and question the authority of His station. They have realized vividly and poignantly how the very existence of the Faith depends on loyalty to whosoever has received appointment from the Manifestation. They have experienced the *necessity of gathering their forces* in order to assert the truth and preserve the community from destruction. Such an experience is forever unforgettable, for it means that conscious choice has been made between light and darkness in the spiritual world. . . .

The occasion for the legal action is definite and clear: the claim on the part of non-Baha'is that there are no qualifications of faith in this Cause, but any one is a Baha'i who asserts that he is; and that there is no criterion by which to distinguish between authentic Baha'i literature and literature which some one assumes is

Baha'i; and that there is no basis nor foundation in the Revelation of Baha'u'llah for the Baha'i community, with its institutions, its functions and its collective powers and responsibilities grounded in authentic Books and Tablets. In brief, the situation which has arisen is that persons who formerly were believers but who withdrew from the Cause have denied the authority of the Master's Will and Testament. On no other grounds than denial of that mighty Testament can their actions be understood. No compromise is possible. The Baha'i community will assert the truth, and the issue can be left to God. The Will and Testament itself is a victory over those who violated the Covenant in the Master's lifetime, and the Will and Testament invokes divine wrath upon all who seek to destroy what He sacrificed His entire life and being to build.

(Signed) National Spiritual Assembly.

From *Annual Reports*—National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada, 1939-1940.

Actions taken at the meeting of the National Assembly held immediately prior to the Convention include authorizations for continuance of Temple work . . . and approval of the brief prepared by the attorney in connection with the legal suit against the parties misusing the name Baha'i.

The friends are urged to give their careful attention to the passages in which the Guardian refers to the nature of attacks against the Master and His Will and Testament appearing on pages 89 and 90 of the World Order of Baha'u'llah. Here we find the clearest statement in the writings for discussion of the New History publication dated April, 1940, with new believers and

with those attracted to the Faith who have not yet gained the background of understanding and experience to discern the hollowness of any argument and claim based upon the failure to accept the Will and Testament of Abdu'l-Baha. The matter will soon come to trial, and the friends can rest assured that the true nature of the Baha'i Faith and of its Administrative Order will be established in accordance with the power and scope of the written and authentic Teachings.

(Signed) National Spiritual Assembly.

—Bahai News, June 1940, No. 136

Significance of Justice Valente's Decision

The decision handed down in the Supreme Court of New York by Justice Louis A. Valente on April 1, 1941, *is an epoch-making document for, although it refers specifically to the Bahai Administration and The New History Society, its contents have universal application. Eloquent-ly and definitely, Judge Valente has reaffirmed the validity of the Bill of Rights. In the case under review, he denies to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada and the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the City of New York a monopoly on the word Bahai, thus constituting, in the name of the latest revealed religion, a charter of freedom which shall stand as long as this nation retains the character conferred upon it by its founders. I think that will be always—in spite of the perils that menace liberty in these sad times.*

Thus, from now on, any sincere seeker after truth, who has realized his highest aspirations in the Bahai Cause, can term himself a follower of Baha-O-Llah and use his

name without let or hindrance. No one can molest him or try to undermine his service in the movement.

With this decision, the Cause of the Most Great Prisoner of Acca, which, even as he, was always free in spite of appearances, has broken through the walls of material confinement, and emerged as a spirit, a leaven, a consciousness—a gift, free and untrammelled, offered by God to every man on earth. *Affairs are dependent upon means*, said Baha-O-Llah. Through this decision of Judge Valente, the Bahai Cause has been reconferred upon mankind.

Not of Our Own Choosing

Now that the case has been argued before the Supreme Court of New York and a decision arrived at, let it be remembered, as this incident takes its place in the annals of Bahai history, that Mrs. Chanler and I did not seek this lawsuit nor was it instituted by us. The differences of opinion between the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada together with the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the City of New York and ourselves, were brought before the public and inserted in legal records through no desire on our part. It was a test placed in our path. We faced it with some diffidence, albeit, light-heartedly; and surmounted it with a sigh of relief and a deep sense of gratitude.

A Victory for All

The minister of a New York church strikes a universal note in a letter to us:—

I feel that this is a victory for us all, since it involves

the great principle of freedom of religion. Imagine any group arrogantly claiming a monopoly in this great field!

The Editor of a publication in Chicago, Ill., touches on the same theme:—

We rejoice with you at the recent ruling of the Court, for while we see it as a victory giving you further freedom, we recognize that your case involved many more groups and individuals than your own.

The science editor of a New York daily expresses himself as follows:—

I know that the winning of the suit will remove the last shred of hesitation, and that you will launch new efforts for man's enlightenment.

From a lecturer and writer in Chicago comes this comment:—

My most sincere congratulations. I am proud that you had a judge with sufficient wisdom and width of vision to give such a fair judgment.

A Bahai of long standing writes:—

It is not only a triumph and vindication . . . but the great victory for us all is to know that the principles of our beloved Cause are also vindicated and able to function in the future, free of the dogmatic domination of a few fanatics.

A recognized Bahai sends us a few lines:—

Just received the good news concerning Justice Valente's decision. I could hardly hold back my tears.



(By courtesy of Wide World Photos)

SUPREME COURT JUSTICE LOUIS A. VAENTE

Decision Rendered by Justice Valente

THE AMENDED COMPLAINTS, SUPPLEMENTED BY BILLS OF PARTICULARS, ARE DISMISSED AS INSUFFICIENT IN LAW.

Statements made by plaintiffs

1. The individual plaintiffs sue, as members of the National Spiritual Assembly and Trustees of the Bahais of the United States and Canada. The Spiritual Assembly of Bahais of the City of New York, a religious corporation, is a co-plaintiff.

The complaint alleges that the name Baha'i denotes a religion identified with the name of the founder *Baha*.

2. The plaintiffs claim to be the authorized representatives of all of the Bahais of the United States and Canada.

3. They allege that they are publishing books and other publications which *teach Bahai religion*.

4. They charge that the defendants, who were members prior to April 5, 1929, of the Bahai Congregation of the City of New York, have been conducting, without the authority of plaintiffs, meetings, lectures, classes, social gatherings and other activities, and announcing and advertising the same as Bahai meetings, lectures, classes, etc.

5. They complain that the defendants have been giving these meetings, lectures, etc., a Bahai appearance and atmosphere by teaching, in connection therewith, a religion described as the Bahai religion and that they have created an erroneous impression that they are connected with and authorized to represent the Bahai religion and to solicit contributions therefor.

6. In addition, plaintiffs complain of the opening of a book shop by the defendants under the name of "Bahai Book Shop" and of the listing of the shop in the telephone directory under the name, immediately over the name of "Baha'i Center" which represents the listing of plaintiffs' New York office and book shop.

The Court's Opinion:

1. In the Court's opinion, the complaint fails to state a good cause of action. The plaintiffs have no right to a monopoly of the name of a religion.

2. The defendants, who purport to be members of the same religion, have an equal right to use the name of the religion in connection with their own meetings, lectures, classes and other activities.

3. No facts are alleged in the complaint to indicate that the defendants have been guilty of any act intended or calculated to deceive the public into believing that their meetings, lectures or book shop are identified with or affiliated with the meetings, lectures, etc., and book shop of the plaintiffs.

The Five Freedoms

4. (a) Defendants have the absolute right to practice Bahaism,
(b) to conduct meetings,
(c) to collect funds,
(d) to sell literature in connection therewith,
and
(e) to conduct a book shop under the title of "Bahai Book Shop."

5. The bills of particulars furnished by the plaintiffs, stating that the defendants created the erroneous impression that they were connected with the plaintiffs and led the public to believe that their book shop was connected with the plaintiffs, were not based upon any acts of the defendants other than their conducting meetings, lectures, classes and other activities under the name of Bahai and their operation of a book shop under that name listed in the telephone directory immediately above the name of the plaintiff's book shop.

6. The position of the listing is, of course, due to the fact that the telephone directory is arranged alphabetically, so that the name "Bahai Book Shop" naturally precedes the name "Baha'i Center."

7. The motion to dismiss the amended complaint is granted, with leave to serve a further amended complaint within ten days from the service of a copy of this order, with notice of entry.

Order Signed.

The Most Important Point

Although, in its original Complaint, the National Spiritual Assembly asserted that it was the authorized representative of *all* the Bahais in the United States and Canada, this claim was denied by our attorneys in their first Memorandum, and their denial was sustained by the Court. Justice Valente ruled that *the plaintiffs have no right to a monopoly of the name of a religion. The defendants, who purport to be members of the same religion, have an equal right to use the name of the religion in connection with their own meetings, lectures, classes and other activities.*

This is the most important point in question; for, henceforth the National Spiritual Assembly cannot claim, as it has up to this time, that it is the sole representative of all the Bahais in the land. There are now, and will be in increasing numbers, Bahais who would not think it appropriate to be represented by the National Spiritual Assembly, and whom the National Spiritual Assembly would not think it appropriate to represent. The laws of this nation will be the practical guarantee of such Bahais, who will turn their hearts to God in the service of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha, without benefit of clergy.

A Matter of A. B. C.

A subject, which for a whole year has puzzled those interested in the case from this end, has been the strange claim by the plaintiffs, that we *caused* the name *Bahai Book Shop* to be listed in the telephone directory of the Borough of Manhattan, New York City, directly *over* the name *Bahai Center*. This assertion seemed to imply that we had used undue influence with the compilers of this volume, or else that we had selected the appellation Book Shop quite arbitrarily, and for the simple purpose of listing ourselves according to the dictation of our fancy. They apparently overlooked the fact that we actually *were* selling books, and that it would have been unfitting to name our shop, let us say: Bahai Delicatessen or Bahai Dental Supplies, which naming would have placed us under the letter D, and below Bahai Center, but would not have described the contents of the shop.

At the same time, the queerest part of this charge is that, study the telephone book as you will, you can find no

listing of Bahai Center. The headquarters of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the City of New York goes under the title *Bahai Assembly*, and so it appears in the telephone book. Consequently, Bahai Book Shop was, from the beginning, and still is listed in its proper place among the B's, following the A's. This mistake, which was included in the original Complaint, was pointed out by our lawyers in their first Memorandum, yet, for reasons which seem inexplicable, the error was repeated in all the subsequent legal papers coming from the plaintiffs, so that the Court had to deal with it in its decision.

In the Memorandum of our attorneys the subject was explained as follows:—

Before closing, however, we should like to point out with regard to the complaint, that defendants listed "Bahai Bookshop" in the telephone directory over the name of "Baha'i Center;" that not only had they an absolute right to do this, but that as a matter of actual fact, the complaint is in error, for in the telephone book, there is no "Baha'i Center." What we do find is "Baha'i Assembly"; and this appears above and not below "Bahai Bookshop." So that it is not even possible to contend that defendants adopted their title with any view of having it placed before plaintiffs' listing in the telephone book. Assuming the fact of paragraph 16 (referring to the Amended Complaint of the plaintiffs), it is absurd to contend that there was anything deliberate about the listing, for obviously "Bahai Bookshop" would come in no other place than just before "Bahai Center," if alphabetical arrangement is to be preserved.

This matter is a detail and far from important, yet it indicates a type of careless thinking and planning which is

unbecoming at all times, and especially so in a court of law. The National Spiritual Assembly sets itself up to represent the conscience and the mind of its followers in all affairs, great and small; therefore, an instance of glaring inefficiency such as this is less excusable in this body than it would be in persons of more modest claim. We see a picture of the poor Bahais, who had been instructed by Abdul Baha to avoid all lawsuits, being catapulted into the courts, under a leadership which did not even know the name of its own headquarters and was too listless to check on it when its error was pointed out.

Not a Religion

In studying the Complaint, the Amended Complaint, the Bill of Particulars, the Supplemental Bill of Particulars and the final Memorandum, one comes to the conclusion that the plaintiffs are solely preoccupied with the consolidation of their privileges as a *corporation*. They are deeply concerned over the possible diversion from them of contributions and the making, by others, of profits which might have accrued to their budget. They enlarge on the subjects of unfair competition, pecuniary advantages and injury to business, and let loose shafts of accusation on charges of trespassing. It is clear that the Bahai Administration is not a religion, but a great corporation, having *more than one hundred* subsidiary corporations operating in various parts of the United States and Canada. Before the Court, it announces that it is the trustee and custodian of a variety of properties, including a temple under construction at Wilmette, Illinois, upon which more than a million dollars has been expended, to date. Likewise, there

is a trust fund under its control as well as a publishing concern. All these material advantages are possessed by the Bahai Administration, and no competition shall be allowed in the Bahai name and teachings which are the source of its wealth! No, the Bahai Administration is not a religion. The Bahai Cause, from which it derives, was such; but that was long ago. The members of the National Spiritual Assembly, doubtless, feel a warming of the heart, at times, when memories become vivid again, but these emotions must be discouraged and minimized because a New Order has been established in the movement—an order that is altogether different!

Cases in Point?

In attempting to prove their rights of monopoly on the Bahai Cause, the National Spiritual Assembly and the Spiritual Assembly of New York cited a number of cases, in most of which the courts had decided in favor of the complainants whose rights had been trespassed upon. In listing them here, I raise the question as to whether or not these instances are applicable to a religious theme.

American Fire P. Bureau v. Rockwood S. Co.

Rosenblum v. Manufacturers Trust Co.

Lewis v. City of Lockport.

Society of the War of 1812 v. Society of the War of 1812 in the State of New York.

Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks v. Improved Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks.

Thaddeus Davids Co. v. Davids Manufacturing Co.

Waterman Co. v. Modern Pen Co.

Westphal v. Westphal World's Best Corporation.

In this case, New York Courts enjoined Paul Westphal from using the name of Westphal in any way whatsoever on hair tonic.

Dupont Cellophane Co. v. Waxed Products Co.

In this case, the disagreement between the two companies was on the word "cellophane."

Bayer Co. v. United Drug Co.

In this case, the reason for the lawsuit was the word "aspirin."

Kellogg Co. v. National Biscuit Co.

In this case, the cause of contention was the word "Shredded Wheat."

Long's Hat Stores Corporation v. Long's Clothes, Inc.

In this case, one company sold hats; another company by the same name, "Long" sold clothes. There was a disagreement over the name "Long."

Tiffany & Co. v. Tiffany Productions Inc.

In this case, a firm of jewelers—Tiffany & Co.—was granted an injunction restraining a Motion Picture Producing Co. — Tiffany Production Inc. — from using the word "Tiffany" in its advertisement.

Wall v. Rolls-Royce of America.

In this case, an automobile Co. obtained an injunction against Wall for using the name "Rolls-Royce" on Radio tubes.

Vogue Co. v. Thompson-Hudson Co.

In this case, the publisher of a magazine obtained an injunction against use on hats of the so-called "Vogue-girl" trade-mark.

To Which Category?

Now, I venture to ask:—Does the Bahai Cause parallel the Society of the War of 1812; or is it in direct line with the Heroes of 1844?

Is the Bahai Cause similar to a bottle of aspirin, manufactured by either Bayer Co. or United Drug Co., which drives away headache or neuralgia as fast as you want it; or is it the Divine Remedy for the healing of nations?

Is the Bahai Cause like unto a package of Shredded Wheat, tempting and nutritious; or is it the Bread of Life that has come down from heaven?

Is the Bahai Cause comparable to an emporium stocked with suits and hats; a show-window for the display of jewels; a factory for the production of motor cars, or a news-stand heaped with fashion magazines, embellished with the glamorous trade-mark, Vogue Girl?

Where shall we place the Bahai Cause?

Has it properties such as hair tonic, some of which, (according to Gabriel Heater) cause luxuriant hair to grow on a tired scalp; or is it the Truth that vitalizes and sustains the minds of men?

Is it like a piece of cellophane, covering and preserving a package of Lucky Strike cigarettes; or is it, in *itself* the Preserved Tablet on which the fingers of the Almighty have traced eternal words?

Are its goods in the nature of Waterman Fountain Pens or Modern Fountain Pens; or is its treasure the *Supreme Pen* of Baha-O-Illah, from which the gems of wisdom and utterance, and the arts of the contingent beings have appeared and become manifest?

In which of these two departments of enterprise can the Bahai Cause be classified? Kleeberg & Greenwald, our attorneys, expressed themselves on this point in their Memorandum before the Court:—

Most respectfully, we submit that all the cases cited by plaintiffs are immaterial and beside the point.

The Thought of Abdul Baha

In the Defendants' Memorandum, Kleeberg & Greenwald stated:—

Accordingly, plaintiffs, however magnificent and extensive their organization, have no greater claim than defendants, to dominate, supervise or control the Baha'i faith, practices or name. Since defendants are not of their organization, they have no right whatsoever to dominate, supervise or control them. Since religious freedom is a corner-stone of our libertarian concept and fundamental laws, they have no right to say whether defendants are Baha'is or are not Baha'is, nor whether defendants may or may not call themselves Baha'is, nor whether defendants may or may not practice Baha'ism. These questions are not for the plaintiffs . . . The individual and his conscience are supreme in this field.

As was said in *City of Cincinnati vs. Minor*:

Let the state not only keep its own hands off but let it also see to it that religious sects keep their hands off each other. Let religious doctrine have a fair field, and a free, intellectual, moral and spiritual conflict . . . Among the many forms of stating this truth . . . to my mind it is nowhere more fairly and beautifully set forth than in our own constitution . . . It is the true republican doc-

trine . . . It means that a man's right to his own religious convictions, and to impart them to his own children, and his and their right to engage, in conformity thereto, in harmless acts of worship toward the Almighty, are as sacred in the eye of the law as his rights of person or property . . . And although in the minority, he shall be protected in the full and unrestricted enjoyment thereof . . . Constitutions are enacted for the very purpose of protecting the weak against the strong; the few against the many.

And so, on the basis of the above presentation, Justice Louis A. Valente decided to protect the weak against the strong, the few against the many. In so doing, he encircled the Cause of Baha-O-Llah with the protective arm of the *United States of America*, re-affirming the thought of Abdul Baha, expressed before the Central Congregational Church in Brooklyn, N. Y. on June 15, 1912:—

Just as in the world of politics there is need for free thought, likewise in the world of religion there should be the right of unrestricted individual belief. Consider what a vast difference exists between modern democracy and the old forms of despotism. Under an autocratic government the opinions of men are not free, and development is stifled whereas in democracy, because thought and speech are not restricted the greatest progress is witnessed. It is likewise true in the world of religion. When freedom of conscience, liberty of thought and right of speech prevail, that is to say, when every man according to his own idealization may give expression to his beliefs, development and growth are inevitable.

—*Promulgation of Universal Peace*, Vol. I, page 192

TUESDAY, APRIL 1, 1941

Monopoly on Name Denied to Baha'i Group

Can't Keep Religion From Rivals, Court Rules, Dismissing Complaint

In a decision handed down in the Supreme Court today Justice A. Valente ruled that he could not grant a monopoly of the name of a religion. He also held that he couldn't stop anyone from practicing a religion merely because the organized practitioners of the religion objected.

The decision delighted Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanled, the society woman who has been a leader of a group of Baha'i followers in New York and a sponsor of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, a Persian poet, who inspired her to take up the work.

'Erroneous Impression.'

Justice Valente's decision dismissed a complaint brought against Mr. Sohrab and his group, which was a little formal organization, by the organized Baha'is, who sued as members of the National Spiritual Assembly and Trustees of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada in the Spiritual Assembly of Baha's of the City of New York.

The organized Baha'is complained that the unorganized Baha'is were giving an erroneous impression that they were authoritative Baha'is by conducting what purported to be Baha's meetings, lectures, classes, social gatherings, etc., by soliciting contributions with use of the Baha'i name and by listing the Baha'i Book Shop in the telephone book directory over the name of the Baha'i Center, which is the office and book shop of the organized Baha'is.

Equal Rights Upheld.

"In the court's opinion," said Justice Valente, "the complaint

fails to state a good cause of action. The plaintiffs have no right to a monopoly of the name of a religion.

"The defendants, who purport to be members of the same religion, have an equal right to use the name of the religion in connection with their own meetings, lectures, classes and other activities. No facts are alleged in the complaint to indicate that the defendants have been guilty of any act intended or calculated to deceive the public into believing that their meetings, lectures or book shop are identified with the meetings, lectures, etc., and the book shop of the plaintiffs.

Listing Doesn't Enter.

"Defendants have the absolute right to practice Baha'ism, to conduct meetings, collect funds and sell literature in connection therewith, and to conduct a book shop under the title 'Baha'i Book Shop.'"

As far as the listing of the book shop in the telephone directory was concerned, the justice said, that was merely an alphabetical and not a legal matter, for it was a well accepted fact that the letter "B" preceded the letter "C" in the alphabet and therefore the telephone company was quite right in listing the "Baha'i Book Shop" ahead of the "Baha'i Center."

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2, 1941

Court Rules Against Monopoly Of the Name of Any Religion

Justice Valente Rejects Suit of Organized Baha'is Against Baha'i Group Headed by Persian Poet; Says Purported Members Can Practice Faith

Justice Louis A. Valente ruled yesterday in Supreme Court that no one had a right to monopolize the name of a religion and that followers of a religion could not be restrained from practicing their beliefs because of the objections of organized practitioners of the same faith.

Justice Valente's decision dismissed a complaint brought by organized Baha'is, who brought suit as members of the National Spiritual Assembly and Trustees of the United States and Canada, and members of the Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is in New York, against Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, Persian poet, who is director of the New History Society, and his group.

The organized Baha'is contended that they were the truly authorized followers of Baha-O-Llah, Persian prophet who founded an order nearly a century ago with international peace as its principal aim. They asserted that Mr. Sohrab's group was conveying an erroneous impression to the public by conducting meetings, lectures and other activities in a bona fide Baha'i setting and soliciting contributions as organized Baha'is.

Moreover, the so-called authorized Baha'is complained that the others opened a book store under the name of Bahal (without the apostrophe) Book Shop, and that the listing of the shop in the telephone directory was immediately over that of the Baha'i Center, the office and book shop of the organized Baha'is.

Justice Valente held, however, that "in the court's opinion, the complaint fails to state a good cause of action."

"The plaintiffs have no right to a monopoly of the name of a religion," his opinion continued. "The defendants, who purport to be members of the same religion, have an

equal right to use the name of the religion in connection with their own meetings, lectures and other activities.

"No facts are alleged in the complaint to indicate that the defendants have been guilty of any act intended or calculated to deceive the public into believing that their meetings, lectures or book shop are identified or affiliated with the meetings, lectures and book shop of the plaintiff."

Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler, wife of the former Lieutenant Governor of New York under Charles Evans Hughes, and founder and sponsor of the New History Society, said last night that Justice Valente's decision "upholds our guarantee of religious freedom." Mrs. Chanler formed the society after she broke with the organized Baha'is twelve years ago.

"Mr. Sohrab and I started our group after we parted from the other Baha'is on good terms," Mrs. Chanler explained. "We broke away because we felt that they were limiting the movement. But time was short and we felt that the world should hear the principles laid down by Baha-O-Llah."

Mrs. Chanler expanded on her theme, saying that according to the teachings of Baha-O-Llah, "there shouldn't be any organization." However, she added, "Americans love organizations, and little by little the teachings of Baha-O-Llah were being restricted to a choice few." Baha-O-Llah, she said, espoused the principle of "unity pervading all things."

Mrs. Chanler also explained that the organized Baha'is took out a trademark on the name "Baha'i," but that she felt that Baha'is "should not be restricted by a trademark."

The organized Baha'is have ten days to serve an amended complaint.

CHAPTER VII

THE NAME

The Incommunicable Name

The Prophets of every religion have turned to the *Name*, as constituting the chalice of Divinity on this plane. Whether the *Name* was Brahman or Ahura Mazda, Jehovah, the Father or Allah, it was held by the faithful as the ineffable Mystery and the awesome approach to the Most High.

In Judaism, the four consonants, variously written, IHVH, JHVH, YHWH represented the Supreme Being. Each one of these letters was a treasure-house of significance and, when put together, they formed and were referred to as the *incommunicable Name*. The actual pronunciation of the four mysterious consonants was never freely transmitted, and its esoteric meaning was imparted by the teacher only to qualified disciples. Likewise, during the reading of the Old Testament, the *Name* was automatically substituted by the word Adonai, another Hebrew appellation for God.

The Mishnah so severely prohibits the public utterance of the four consonants or *Tetragrammaton* that the pronouncer of it risked exclusion from a portion of the world to come. Consequently, in the early Hebrew religion, substitutes, other than Adonai, for the *incommunicable Name* became current. *Magam*, meaning Place, was used; also *Merciful*, and the *Holy One*.

The *Name* of God, associated as it was with the *being* of God, held transforming powers. The Prophet, who had attained miraculous vision and knowledge, was called *Master of the Name*; while in the older sacred literature of the East, God is Himself referred to as the *Name*. The *Name* was the corner-stone of the Hebrew Faith and of Hebrew morality. To do an act for the *sake of the Name* was to serve without ulterior thought of self-profit; similarly, it was a practice to set slaves at liberty *in the Name of Freedom*—thus from earliest times, *selflessness* and *freedom* were taught as the two essential attributes of the *being* of God.

The Prophets not only emphasized the sanctity of the *Name*, but called on the people to pattern themselves on the *Power* that was back of the *Name*. Hence, we have the text:—

Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy. (Leviticus, Ch. 19, Verse 2.) This injunction had for meaning: Seek to imitate God, be like God. As he is gracious and merciful, so be thou.

Therefore, it was man's highest duty to honor the *Name* and to reflect it in his life; on the other hand, any word or act of irreverence toward the *Name* was held as the most heinous of sins. It was commonly stated that men whose conduct belied their professions were the profaners of the *Name*, and that the hypocrites must be exposed because they profaned the *Name*.

The saints of ancient days realized, through their own intuition, that there were two aspects of sin—the one *personal*, the other *communal*. He, who offended in regard to the *Name*, sinned, not only against his own con-

science, which was the personal sin, but against the public conscience, which was the communal sin. Therefore, from every standpoint, regard for the *Name* was synonymous with the nobility of individual and group.

The Complete Name

From a mystical point of view, the name *Baha* embodies the mysteries of spiritual life; it is the heaven of revelation, the blue expanse of which is studded with the bright stars of knowledge and significance; it is the ocean of divinity, in the depth of which wait the priceless pearls of universal instruction. *Baha*, which word is to be found in the ancient Scriptures, implying Light or Glory, is the *last* name in the succession of the Most Holy *Names*. Including within itself the power of those which have gone before, it is the Alpha and Omega of creation. The letters of the written word and the vibrations of the spoken word—*Baha*—symbolize the *Nameless* and the *Unknown God* whose altar in Athens, with its well-known inscription, was found and witnessed by St. Paul.

In numerical value, the name *Baha*, according to the Arabic Science of numerology, is 9; 9 being the final digit, the greatest and most complete number. The units end at 9; therefore 9 is the total which includes all other numbers. Likewise, in the dispensation of *Baha*, we have the complete revelation which includes all other revelations.

As a personality, Baha-O-Llah is the outward manifestation of the glory of the Supreme Being. He is the *Focus* of the spiritual ideals of past and present and the clear mirror, reflecting the rays of the luminary of Reality. His many titles afford us a key as to his great mission. He was

referred to as *the Blessed Beauty, the Ancient Beauty, the Blessed Perfection, the Manifestation, the Desired One of all Nations, the Sun of Truth*, all of which mean one and the same thing: We have in him the universal and cosmic interpreter of the Spirit of God in this age.

Thus, the names *Baha* and *Baha-O-Llah* and, to an even greater extent, the sacred invocation *Ya Baha-El-Abha!* signify, to an ever-increasing number of men and women in all parts of the world, certain definite and transcendental concepts, certain moral and cultural values, which are within reach of mankind—these concepts foreshadowing a synthesis of the religious aspirations and scientific findings of the Prophets and pioneers of the race. They do not belong to one nation nor to one group; but are legacies of the Supreme Being to all nations and to all groups.

The Treasure Ineffable

As we look back and study the Great Religions, one by one, we realize that, in all of them, the *Name* was held holy. The true followers considered it as the divine Talisman, the highest Point, the Treasure ineffable. Their minds and hearts turned to the *Name* as pilgrims approach a shrine. It was the best Gift of God proffered to the best in man, and available to rich and poor, to wise and foolish, to saint and sinner. Even the beasts of the forest and the birds of the heavens, in their own ways, vibrated to the *Name*. All the roads led to the fountain of the *Name*, and all the wayfarers had the privilege of refreshing themselves at its cool margin.

A Desecration Without Parallel

While individuals, here and there, through ignorance or for various motives, have profaned the *Name*; while, with the passing of time, religious hierarchies have, in its regard, developed systems which led to misuse and abuse; it was left to the Bahai Administration to go on record, in cold blood and in the youth of the movement, with an official act of desecration applying to the latest *Name*.

On August 7, 1928, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada registered the word Bahai—the name of the Cause brought to earth by Baha-O-Llah—as a trade-mark for business purposes.

On August 28, 1934, this same body took out a trade-mark on the symbol, *Ya Baha-El-Abha*—the Most Great Name, the Supreme Invocation.

Thus, a desecration without parallel and the culmination of crime in the annals of religion was perpetrated by the leaders of the Bahai Administration, without qualm and without regret. In this Twentieth Century, those who considered themselves to be the Vice-Gerents of the Most High registered the *Name* of Him they claim to serve, as a *trade-mark that has been continuously used and applied to . . . goods*.

A Charge of Poaching

The Bahai authorities, having raided the Kingdom of Baha and carried off the *Name*; having built high fences around it, displaying placards inscribed with the words: Private Property, No Trespassing! Verboten!, continued for nearly twelve years, and thought to continue forever

in legalized ownership of illegal booty. They had noted, it is true, that their assumption of monopoly was ignored by some, but, feeling that their intrenchment was impregnable, they did not take this fact over-seriously; nevertheless, the day came, when it was considered advisable to bring the matter to an issue, once and for all. Consequently, the persons in question were hailed to court on a charge of poaching.

The first communication sent by the attorneys of the National Spiritual Assembly to Mrs. Chanler, and dated December 5th, 1939, was in the nature of a warning. It read:—

Probably you were not informed as to the trademark situation and it will not be necessary for our client to do more than bring the facts to your attention. In order to comply with the formalities, however, we must and do demand on behalf of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada that you discontinue immediately the use of the word Bahai . . . and we hereby notify you that upon your failure to do so our client will hold you responsible for profits, damages and costs of litigation. Will you please give the matter immediate consideration and advise us of your decision.

In this manner, and out of a clear sky, was the proposition put up to us: Would we, or would we not defend the *Name* of Baha-O-Llah? Naturally, we did not hesitate; and, without loss of time, our case was placed in the hands of Michtell & Bechert, Trade-mark Lawyers, of 420 Lexington Ave., New York. In their preliminary answer to the attorneys of the National Spiritual Assembly, Mitchell & Bechert stated plainly:—

It is our opinion . . . that Bahai, long prior to the year 1900, became and now is a word of common speech necessary for use in aptly describing a follower of Baha-O-Llah. In our opinion, therefore, the word "Bahai" cannot legally be exclusively appropriated by your client.

Again, Mitchell & Bechert wrote:—

It is our opinion that "Bahai" is a descriptive word for aptly describing a follower of the Bahai teachings and furthermore, that the word "Bahai" . . . if it is applied on Bahai literature is descriptive of that literature. . . . We must therefore repeat that, in our opinion, our client is not infringing any rights of your client and is not unfairly competing with your client.

The preliminary skirmishes in the shape of correspondence lasted almost five months and finally it became clear that no amount of logical reasoning could induce the National Spiritual Assembly to withdraw the suit. Then, on April 25, 1940, Mrs. Chanler and I were served with the original complaint—an elaborate document consisting of 12 pages.

The Papers having been officially served, we entered on the second stage of the lawsuit. There was no withdrawal in sight. We faced a real battle; for the forces of opposition were gathering their strength to strike, and strike hard. To the first and single charge—the unlawful use of the word Bahai—other charges, too numerous to catalogue, were presently added, and we realized that this was a fight to the finish and there was to be no turning to the left nor to the right until a final decision had been reached. Therefore Mr. and Mrs. Chanler and I held a conference with Mr. Robert C. Bechert to map out our future plans.

Inasmuch as the case, in the light of the actual Complaint, had branched out from the domain of the trade-mark into a larger field involving the fundamental rights of religious freedom, Mr. Bechert advised us to call into consultation the firm of Kleberg & Greenwald, Counselors-at-law; and at our first meeting with these attorneys, it became evident that the defense of the Cause was in expert hands. From that day on, the combined legal, intellectual and spiritual resources of Mitchell & Bechert and Kleberg & Greenwald were directed to the upholding of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, i.e.:—*Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press.*

Going back to the claim of the National Spiritual Assembly that it held an exclusive trade-mark on the name Bahai, Kleberg & Greenwald, in their first Memorandum, made the following wise declaration:—

It is important to observe however . . . that the word "Baha'i" is the title of a religious group, of a religion and of a follower of that religion. It is like the words Christian, Jew, Mohammadan, Protestant, Methodist, Catholic, Christian Scientist or any one of hundreds of similar designations. When used upon the magazines and printed books of the plaintiffs, it is descriptive of the contents of those magazines and printed books. It states positively and eloquently in effect: "The within publication is a discourse upon the Baha'i faith or some phase or incident of it." . . . Precisely for this reason, the word Baha'i was not susceptible of registration and cannot be the object of private appropriation. . . . Obviously, in view of what we have said . . . the plaintiffs



HON. LEWIS STUYVESANT CHANLER
As Lieutenant-Governor of New York State, in 1906.

are not the only ones who may issue Baha'i literature. The defendants may do that. Anyone in the world may.

To speak of a publication as being a Baha'i publication, is to give no hint as to its source. . . . A re-examination of all of the authorities cited and referred to in this point, will show that the fact that the plaintiffs have succeeded in registering the word Baha'i as their trademark, does not help them at all, since the word was not susceptible of private appropriation, since it belonged in the public domain in the first place, being the name of a religion and lastly, since it is descriptive of the material upon which it is used, it could not be registered, and if it was registered, the registration was meaningless.

An Abandoned Claim

After the masterly Memorandum containing the above statement had been submitted to the Court, and the attorneys of the National Spiritual Assembly had had a chance to digest its contents, they no doubt felt that the monopoly, so far as the trade-mark on the word Bahai was concerned, could not be maintained, and it is probable that they, then and there, persuaded the members of the National Spiritual Assembly to abandon this claim. However that may be, the *Amended* Complaint, which shortly followed and was presented long before the case came up before Justice Valente, was devoid of all reference to the trade-mark on the word Bahai.

Thus, The New History Society won its first battle out of court; and the name Bahai, after an imprisonment of nearly twelve years in a registration dungeon, passed into

the open—free to make its permanent abode in the hearts and lives of all who hold it in love and reverence.

In their final Memorandum presented to the Supreme Court, Kleeberg & Greenwald refer, in passing, to the abandoned claim.

In their original complaint, as a separate cause of action, they (The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada) sought to enjoin the use of the word Baha'i, in connection with defendants' literature by claiming that they had registered in the United States Patent Office, the trade-mark "Baha'i."

In the Amended complaint, this claim is abandoned. And for good reason.

The above slight reference to the question of trade-mark on the name Bahai, which had originally been the object of the lawsuit, must have made our opponents feel somewhat uncomfortable; for, having relinquished their claim, they did not wish to be even reminded of it. Suddenly, the subject had become taboo; and although the attorneys of the National Spiritual Assembly replied to our own attorneys in a measured legalistic manner, they seemed to question the good taste of dragging this skeleton out of the closet in the presence of the august tribunal.

This is my own psychological deduction, so I shall quote the actual words spoken in this reference by the attorneys of the National Spiritual Assembly in their Memorandum delivered before Justice Valente:—

It is true as defendants state that the original complaint pleaded registration and infringement of the

word Baha'i as a trade-mark . . . but no such question is raised by the amended complaint.

In this remarkable manner did the claim of trade-mark on the word Bahai go by default!

Misrepresentation

An interesting sidelight is contained in a Report of Mr. Martin T. Fisher of Washington, D. C., who made an exhaustive investigation of the trade-mark on the word Baha'i. The Report, which is dated December 8, 1939, includes the following extracts:—

Re: "Baha'i" Trade-Mark Registration No. 245,271.

Trade-Mark registration 245,271 is for the word "Bahai." The mark was registered under the 1905 Act as a non-descriptive mark on August 7, 1928. It was registered by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada of New York, New York, a common law corporation. The goods covered by the registration are magazines and printed books. Use of the mark is claimed since 1900. . . .

The mark was registered in 1928. I talked with one of the Examiners in the Trade-Mark Division about the situation and he said that there is considerable doubt whether, under the present practice, the mark would be registered. Probably the Examiner who allowed the mark in 1928 did not know that there was such a thing as a Bahai religion. He said that under the present practice, it probably would not be registered because descriptive. Furthermore, if the founder of the religion is named Baha, it could not be registered under 1905 Act. . . .

Certainly the use of the name "Bahai Book Store" on a book store is not infringement of the registration, because a book store, first of all, is not an article of merchandise, and even if it was, it is merchandise of different descriptive properties from the goods covered by the registration, namely magazines and printed books.

In substantiation of the point that the word is merely descriptive, I call your attention to Webster's New International Dictionary, 1925 Edition, in the "Addenda" in the first part of the dictionary, under "Bahai" there appears this:—

"A member of the sect of the Babis consisting of the adherents of Baha (Mirza Hussain Ali, 1817-1892), entitled "Baha'u'llah" or "the Splendor of God" . . . Baha in 1863 declared himself the supreme prophet of the sect, and became its recognized head."

In making a close study of the application for trade-mark on the word Bahai, one finds in it no reference to religion; it simply is a commercial enterprise doing business at the old stand. The Commissioner of Patents is given to understand that the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada is a *common-law corporation*, organized and operated under declaration of trust and doing business at . . . and that it *has adopted and used the trade-mark . . . on magazines and printed books . . . and presents herewith five specimens showing the trade-mark as actually used by applicant upon the goods. . . . The trade-mark has been continually used and applied to said goods in applicant's business since 1900. The trade-mark is applied or affixed to the goods by printing the same thereon.*

Now, I believe that no one can deny the assumption that the members of the National Spiritual Assembly, when they applied in 1928 for registration of the word Baha'i, knew the elementary truth that the Bahai Cause is a religion and that the word Baha'i is *descriptive*, and therefore not registerable. Then why, in the face of this knowledge, did they permit themselves to go ahead with their plan? One sentence in Mr. Martin Fisher's Report sheds a flood of light on this point. He says:—

Probably the Examiner who allowed the mark in 1928 did not know that there was such a thing as a Bahai religion.

We can imagine the Examiner thinking that Bahai was an exotic Oriental word, concocted, after some research on the part of these American *merchants* in order to label their goods and wares. This is current procedure in the business world; yet, by no stretch of imagination can we invest the members of the National Spiritual Assembly with the same innocence regarding the point involved. Then, why did they allow themselves to perpetrate the unethical act of concealing from the Commissioner of the United States Patent Office the fact that the word Bahai was derived from the name *Baha*, and that *Baha* was a person, and more, that he was the founder of a Universal Religion? The answer is of course plain. In such case, they would have been refused the trade-mark!

Victory on Three Counts

The proceedings brought by the National Spiritual Assembly against Mrs. Chanler and myself can be divided into two parts:

1. The original Complaint, which was instituted on the grounds of trade-mark on the word Bahai.

This claim was dropped; it went by default and, to all intents and purposes, the stigma of trade-mark has been lifted from the word Bahai.

2. The Amended Complaint, which applied to the teaching of the Bahai Cause, to holding meetings in the Bahai name, to publishing and distributing Bahai literature and to the collecting of money for the movement, etc.

This complaint came up before the Court and was set aside as invalid.

Thus, a victory was gained right down the line; and this victory included a *third* count which, although never mentioned or referred to in any complaint or in any brief, is closely involved with the whole proceeding. This third count is on the *MOST GREAT NAME*.

The Most Great Name



When, in 1934, the National Spiritual Assembly registered the symbol, *Ya Baha-El-Abha* as a trade-mark, it perpetrated a sacrilege too awful to contemplate. This phrase, in Arabic lettering, which has come down through the ages, and which was specified by Baha-O-Illah as constituting the highest vibration in all language, represents to the Bahai mind the ultimate degree of sanctity. The Bahai who, in his rapt moments, pronounces the *MOST*

GREAT NAME, realizes that he is penetrating to the realm of Divinity. He enters the Holy of Holies and, in so doing, he leaves behind the shoes of mortal considerations. The very angels might fear to tread in the sanctuary of the *MOST GREAT NAME*, but he who draws near in love and detachment may pronounce these syllables to the healing of his soul.

In speaking of the *MOST GREAT NAME*, Baha-O-Llah tells us to relinquish all else; for this word, *per se*, is our supreme possession. He says:—

In this day, neither knowledge nor art, neither wealth nor honor will enrich you. Cast them aside, and turn toward the MOST GREAT NAME, by which the Psalms, the Holy Pages and this Book are sponsored.

—Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, Pages 76-77.

Again, Baha-O-Llah tells us that in this Day God has conferred upon humanity the treasure ineffable, once hidden and now revealed by himself:—

O peoples of the world! The Ancient King has sent the MOST GREAT NAME, and has given to men the glad-tidings of this Manifestation, which, once hidden in the world, and conserved among the protected treasures, is now revealed by the Supreme Pen upon the pages of God.

—Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, page 98.

In referring to this celestial invocation, Abdul Baha said:—

In this century of the latter times Baha-U-Llah has appeared and so resuscitated spirits that they have manifested powers more than human. Thousands of



GERMAN BAHAI CHILDREN
Group taken with Abdul Baha in Stuttgart in 1913.

His followers have given their lives and while under the sword, shedding their blood, they have proclaimed:—
“Ya Baha-El-Abha!”

—*Bahai Scriptures*, page 368.

Often, in the watches of the night, I have heard the voice of Abdul Baha sounding out the *MOST GREAT NAME*, Ya Baha-El-Abha, over and over again; and my spirit would be caught up by the rhythm of those accents and the power of those tones, and spun toward the Garden of Reality. I have waited at those garden gates, while my Master walked therein among the roses and hyacinths of significance; and I have remembered.

The Sign of the Cross

It might be useful to pause here, in an attempt to realize what has been done; and, in order to get a quicker reaction, we will make a parallel of the most sacred symbol in a given religion. Let us choose Christianity.

From earliest times, the followers of Jesus have held to the Sign of the Cross. This sign typifies, in conjunction: sacrifice and redemption. It is the emblem of the little personal calvary, sanctified through the great universal Calvary; it is the vision of mercy and promise, glorifying the path that leads toward the Kingdom of Heaven.

The tiny shrine by the hillside, the simple chapel in the village street, the magnificent cathedral on the square of the metropolis carry the Sign of the Cross. The poor man and the rich man, the sinner and the saint, fix their eyes on the Cross. The gesture of the Cross is made on the newborn infant and over the sick-bed of him who prepares for his eternal rest. The Cross hangs on the rosary and, when

the beads of prayer and life are told, the suppliant, severed from the bonds of earth, presses his lips to the Cross.

Shall we continue our effort to make a parallel? Is it possible to imagine a registration in the United States Patent Office, or in the Patent Office of Rome or of any other locality, on the Sign of the Cross? Can we conceive of any group of hierarchs holding this symbol as a *trade-mark* to be *used upon goods* in the pursuance of business? No! The task is beyond us. We cannot think of the unimaginable, nor imagine the unthinkable. We are just where we started off—paralyzed before an actuality, the implications of which stagger the mind.

A Trade-Mark on Goods and Wares

The symbol of the *MOST GREAT NAME* was registered in the United States Patent Office on August 28, 1934, by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, as a *trade-mark . . . actually used by applicant upon goods*, with serial No. 316,444 (see *The Bahai World*, Vol. VI, 1934-1936, page 350). It was registered in the Dominion of Canada, by the Canadian Assembly, as an *Arabic symbol* on January 4, 1935, with serial No. 165,527. The registration in Canada on the word Bahai, of same date, carries the serial No. 165,526 (see *The Bahai World*, Vol. VI, 1934-1936, pages 351-357).

In the applications, presented to the Commissioner of Patents of the Dominion of Canada, it is stated that the *applicants have used the said mark . . . ("Baha'i" or the "Arabic symbol") on wares ordinarily and commercially described by the applicants as periodical literature and*

printed books. . . . The applicants are commercially concerned with wares ordinarily and commercially described as. . . . They were and are entitled to adopt and use the mark in Canada in association with the wares which they have used.

At a time when they were well under way toward completion of this campaign of trade-mark on the word Baha'i and on the holiest of all symbols, *Ya Baha-El-Abha*, both in the United States and in Canada, the members of the National Spiritual Assembly prepared to herald these glorious achievements to the Bahai world, and receive the approbation of their followers. Let us listen to the proclamation:—

The friends will be happy to learn that the use of this Symbol is now legally protected for proper Baha'i use under the trade-mark registration recently made by the National Spiritual Assembly through the U. S. Patent Office.

—Bahai News, No. 37, September 1934, page 2.

And again:—

The Symbol of the Greatest Name is now legally protected for proper use under trade-mark registration recently made by the National Assembly through the United States Patent Office. Action has also been taken to obtain similar protection in Canada. . . . The word "Baha'i" was legally protected several years ago.

—Bahai News, No. 91, April 1935, page 9.

In this manner was the *incommunicable Name* stolen from the temple and set up in the market place. This invocation, the last sound to issue from the throats of the

martyrs, this beatific vision, this hallowed call, this elysian aspiration, this supernal chant, this omnipotent orison, this majestic paeon, this redemptive breathing, this voice of conscience, this creative prayer, this angelic adoration—this *Ya Baha-Et-Abha* which has come down through the ages, was indexed, card-filed and catalogued by order of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada as a trade-mark to be applied to *goods* in pursuance of *business*. No words are strong enough, in this regard; no tears are warm enough; no blush is deep enough! The supreme sacrilege has been committed and inscribed on the record—and the record stands.

Hence, the trade-mark on the symbol of the *MOST GREAT NAME*, the application for which was signed by Mr. Horace Holley, Secretary, constitutes the rock-bottom of infidelity in the annals of the Bahai Administration. No further act, however black, can rival this one. The National Spiritual Assembly has a clear running—it can only move upward, after this!

CHAPTER VIII

THE APPEAL

The American Ideal

The American ideal of religious liberty as embodied in the Bill of Rights has, during one hundred and sixty-five years, shone like a brilliant star on the horizon of our cultural and intellectual institutions. It has inspired the leaders of men in the council chambers of the nation, in the courts of law and in the Halls of Congress.

Daniel Webster, champion of freedom for whites and blacks long before the Civil War, spoke often and passionately on the subject of *religious and civil liberty*. He said:—

If the true spark of religious and civil liberty is kindled, it will burn. Human agency cannot extinguish it. Like the earth's central fire, it may be smothered for a time; the ocean may overwhelm it; the mountains may press it down; but its inherent and unconquerable force will heave both the ocean and the land, and at some time or other, in some place or other, the volcano will break out and flame up to heaven.

President Roosevelt, in his epochal speech before Congress, delivered in January 1941, propounded his *Four Freedoms* as follows:—

In future days, which we seek to make secure, we look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms.

The first is freedom of speech and expression—everywhere in the world.

The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way—everywhere in the world.

The third is freedom from want, which, translated into world terms, means economic understanding which will secure to every nation a healthy peacetime life for its inhabitants—everywhere in the world.

Fourth is freedom from fear, which, translated into world terms, means world-wide reduction of armaments, to such a point and in such a thorough fashion that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbor—anywhere in the world.

That is no vision of a distant millennium. It is a definite basis for the kind of a world attainable in our time and generation. That kind of world is the very antithesis of the so-called New Order tyranny which the dictators seek to create with the crash of a bomb. To that new order we oppose the greater conception—moral order.

Freedom of worship, this most cherished ideal of the founders of the Republic, was brought again to the forefront of public discussion when Mr. Sumner Welles, Acting Secretary of State, issued a Statement to the country in regard to the fundamental policy of the United States government. It was published in the New York Times of June 24th. Mr. Welles said in part:—

This government often has stated, and in many of his public statements the President has declared, that the United States maintains that freedom to worship God as their conscience dictates is the great and funda-

mental right of all people. . . . To the people of the United States this and other principles and doctrines of communistic dictatorship are as intolerable and as alien to their beliefs as are the principles and doctrines of Nazi dictatorship. Neither kind of imposed overlordship can have, or will have, any support or any sway in the mode of life, or in the system of government of American people.

Turning to the educational field, let us now listen to Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, President of Columbia University, New York, as he spoke at Commencement Day on June 3rd, 1941:—

Are we, then, of this twentieth century and of this still free and independent land, to lose heart and to yield to the despair which is becoming so widespread in countries other than ours? Not for one moment will we yield our faith or our courage! We may well repeat once more the words of Abraham Lincoln: "Most governments have been based on the denial of the equal rights of men; ours began by affirming those rights. We made the experiment, and the fruit is before us. Look at it—think of it!" However dark the skies may seem now, however violent and apparently irresistible are the savage attacks being made with barbarous brutality upon innocent women and children and non-combatant men, upon hospitals and institutions for the care of the aged and dependent, upon cathedrals and churches, upon libraries and galleries of the world's art, upon classic monuments which record the architectural achievements of centuries—we must not despair. Our spirit of faith in the ultimate rule of the moral ideal and in the permanent establishment of liberty of thought, of

speech, of worship and of government will not, and must not, be permitted to weaken or to lose control of our mind and our action.

This ideal of religious liberty, so firmly established in the American mind and in the American way of life, is here to stay so long as our democracy endures; and should any individual or group of individuals, native or foreign, no matter how mighty or resourceful, scheme to minimize its influence and bedim its glory—the entire population of the nation would rise as one man and, like a giant cyclone, crush and scatter that sinister force into a thousand, nay into a million, pieces. Verily, the people of the United States can be counted upon to protect their chosen, their hard-won and most cherished principle—liberty.

When, in the Supreme Court of New York, Justice Louis A. Valente dismissed the Amended Complaint of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, brought against Mrs. Chanler and myself, as insufficient in law and laid down the decision that *the plaintiffs have no right to a monopoly of the name of a religion*, he simply implemented once more the First Amendment of the Bill of Rights, together with the wise utterances of Daniel Webster, President Roosevelt, the Acting Secretary of State, the President of the Columbia University and of a host of statesmen, educators and leaders of thought, past and present.

Nevertheless, the Bahai authorities could not or would not decipher the bold handwriting on the walls of our American institutions, so they carried the case to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, taking exception to

each and every part of Justice Valente's decision. They asked that:—

The judgment and order appealed from should be reversed and the motion for judgment on the pleadings denied with costs to appellants.

For Consumption Abroad and at Home

The National Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada has two faces—liberal and orthodox; democratic and totalitarian; and these faces are mirrored on the pages of their twin publications, entitled *World Order* and *Bahai News*. The former, which is intended for the public, reflects broad modern ideas; the latter, published for *Bahais Only*, presents articles and news designed to bolster up and maintain a despotic and illogical system. The material in both magazines is edited by the same hand.

Let us glance at the opening paragraph in a leading editorial, entitled *The Universal and the Sectarian*, which appeared in the May, 1941 issue of *World Order*; and as we read, we might try to realize that this article was signed by the National Spiritual Assembly at the very time it was bringing suit against us for holding Bahai meetings. I, myself, think that it is a splendid bit of writing, and believe that if Mr. Greenwald had seen it in time, he might have been inspired by it to a yet higher pitch of liberality, if that were humanly possible. Here is the extract:—

Religious controversy, it has been said, is not a quality of America. Here, for the first time in history, a great and varied population has been assured freedom of conscience and the individual right to worship God according to any practice not contravening the moral

code or attacking the authority of the civil state. Here, likewise, such opportunity has, until recent years at least, been offered for material advancement that most of the social energy has spent itself in effort to achieve personal fulfillment. The climate of tolerance and the season of fruitfulness are not conducive to the rancor of theological struggle.

Here we see that, while the National Spiritual Assembly asserts that religious controversy is not a quality of America, it allows itself the very un-American action of dragging its fellow-believers into the law-courts over nothing more nor less than a *religious controversy*. While it states that in this country a varied population has been assured freedom of conscience and the individual right to worship God according to any practice, it exerts itself to deprive the members of The New History Society and all liberal Bahais of this very *individual right to worship* God according to their convictions and beliefs. While it speaks of the *climate of tolerance*, it disseminates among its communities the poison of theological controversy and, without mercy or let-up, persecutes the liberal elements within its own ranks. But then, this piece of writing is for the public, while the actual doctrines of the Bahai Administration may be studied by the elect within the pages of the *Bahai News*.

Complexes

It is true that the National Spiritual Assembly, once in a while before its own membership, pretends to value the assets conferred by these United States. In a letter dated February 15, 1941, and addressed to *Bahai Friends*, it questions mournfully:—

In our favored country we are still in possession of our freedom, our possessions, our liberty of thought—how long will they last?

Indeed, not long if this institution has its way! The present day Bahai organization is the model upon which an alleged world order is to be fashioned; and what a world order it will be, judging from the pattern! The individual is not allowed to use his conscience, but must adhere to the rulings of his superiors without regard to modern social issues or humanitarian inclinations; above all, without regard to the Bahai teachings. Under these conditions, the better elements in the group are forced to maintain a painful silence, leaving the conduct of affairs to those of less sensitive fibre. It is largely for this reason that the Bahais keep themselves aloof from current affairs. They function on a basis that is untenable; consequently, they cannot look the world eye to eye. I have heard more than one of their leaders speaking on public platforms in Geneva, Switzerland, at times when that city was the hub of advanced thought, and these outstanding Bahais could not bring themselves to the point of pronouncing the name of Baha-O-Llah. Why this? Simply because the Bahai Administration has produced a complex among its advocates. The Guardian himself never ventures into the public.

Efficiency!

After April 1st, 1941, on which date Justice Valente had handed down his decision on our case, I immediately arranged for the making of a photostat which showed the court decision according to the New York Law Journal, together with newspaper articles from two metropolitan

dailies. Copies of this photostat were mailed on April 5th to all the Bahais on our list throughout the United States and Canada. I, then, applied myself to the writing of an article setting forth the facts involved in this court procedure. This article appeared in the May issue of *New History* and was distributed throughout the country about April 18th.

Now, it happened that the Bahai Convention opened in Chicago on April 24th and the Annual Report, 1940-1941, published by the National Spiritual Assembly for this occasion, was circulated among the delegates and others attending the Convention. It is interesting to study the section of this report appearing on page 2, which deals with the lawsuit, the more so when it is borne in mind that many of the Bahais who read it were already fully informed, by means of the photostat page and *New History*, on the outcome of the case. We wonder what these persons thought of the sentence: *At the moment of writing this report, the fundamental issues involved have not been determined by the court.* If these Bahai readers took this statement on its face value, we hope, at least, that they gave us credit for efficiency and reliable editing, in comparison with the cumbersome Bahai Administration which with all its fanfare about organization; with the vast sums expended on the greasing of its machinery; with its impressive secretariat, a building on the Temple grounds at Wilmette, Ill., going under the name: Haziratu'l-Quds or Island of Paradise, was yet unable to present to the delegates at its convention an up-to-date report. Be that as it may, we will now examine the statement on the lawsuit:—

2. The National Assembly, representing the American Baha'i community, is engaged in a legal action

before the Supreme Court of the State of New York for the purpose of preventing the public misuse of the name "Baha'i" in connection with activities under conditions which represent a clear betrayal of the Will and Testament of Abdul Baha, repudiation of His station as Center of Baha'u'llah's text, the definite disobedience to Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Faith, as well as to the recognized administrative institutions of the Faith in America. At the moment of writing this report, the fundamental issues involved have not been determined by the court. The Baha'i issues and principles, however, are truths which stand steadfast beyond compromise or corruption in the souls of the followers of Baha'u'llah . . .

No human being can alter or pervert or exploit a revealed truth. The realm of Revelation is raised high above the reach of hostile human influence. The issue in these cases is not one in which a Divine Faith subjects its vital truths to decision by any court. . . . But the community of believers at any given time represents many different stages of development, and the hostility of the betrayer and the foe comes as a necessary and helpful test of the individual believer's understanding and firmness. That is all, except for the further consideration that the Faith acquires public influence and esteem through the dramatization of its vital principles under onslaught or denial.

The Dear Old Fox

In the study of the above piece of writing, one sentence strikes us forcibly. It reads as follows:—*The issue in these cases is not one in which a Divine Faith subjects its vital truths to decision by any court.*

Here a sneaking suspicion creeps into the mind. Could it be that we underestimated the efficiency of our opponent in having presented to the Convention a report that was way behind the times? It is possible that the Bahai authorities did not wish the lawsuit which had miscarried to be discussed on the floor of the Convention; they may have decided that it were far better to leave the whole thing *in the air*, at the same time putting out the thought that a court decision was, after all, of no importance. I do not like to be crassly obvious, but here I cannot help recalling the dear old fox who would have found the grapes very palatable, indeed, if only he could have set his teeth into them. Yes! If Justice Valente's decision had been in favor of our opponents, it is more than probable that the Administration would have lifted his words to an altitude close to Baha-O-Llah's own and himself to the station of sainthood.

In a mimeographed copy of the Financial Report of the Bahai Administration for the year ending February 28, 1941, we find, included in the list of expenses, the sum of \$5,914.24 paid for legal services. Now, as the legal procedure against us has continued since that time, a second hearing having taken place before the Appellate Division the following June, we surmise that another item of \$19,000, bracketed for *contingent and unforeseen items* (*Bahai News*, May 1941) may be drawn upon for legal services to be rendered later. A good deal of money is entailed here; money contributed by sincere Bahais who doubtless were under the impression that the whole unpleasant business was worthwhile. Actually, I consider it inappropriate for a plaintiff to turn up his nose at law courts. No one invited him there; certainly not the poor defendant

who was jostled out of the mild tenor of daily life to meet his good pleasure. In our case, however, the Guardian of the Bahai Cause seems to place the agitation that was stirred up at our door, for, incorporated in a cablegram dated April 23rd which was addressed to the 33rd Annual Bahai Convention, we find the following:—

Scornful (of the) agitation stirred up by (their) adversaries, (the) breakers (of the) Covenant; the resolute upholders (of the) Divine Plan will, indeed cannot but, persist (in their) ordained task (to) propagate (the) flame, enlarge (the) administrative limits, (and) strike deeper roots (of the) world-encircling, world-redeeming Faith (of) Baha-U-Llah.

My opinion is that, at whatsoever door the agitation may justly be laid, a law court is at no time a fit place for controversy among the followers of Abdul Baha.

Appeal to a Higher Court

The friends are informed that with the Guardian's approval an appeal has been taken on the decision made by a judge of the New York Supreme Court on April 1st and the matter is therefore still in process of settlement.

—Bahai News, May 1941, page 6.

In the above statement, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada apprised their communities of the fact that the lawsuit which had been brought against Mrs. Chanler and myself had failed in its purpose, and that the decision of Justice Valente was being contested.

The legal season was now drawing to an end and there were many cases on the calendar; consequently it was a question as to whether or not ours would come up before the Court adjourned for the summer. It looked pretty doubtful, but both Mrs. Chanler and I hoped that the matter would be disposed of this spring; also we were interested in hearing the argument, as an experience, for we had been absent when the case was tried for the first time before Justice Valente. We therefore watched the calendar as our name crept toward the top, and on Thursday, June 5th, Mr. and Mrs. Chanler and I entered the Court House of the Appellate Division, First Department, Supreme Court, New York, on Madison Square at 25th Street. It was the closing day.

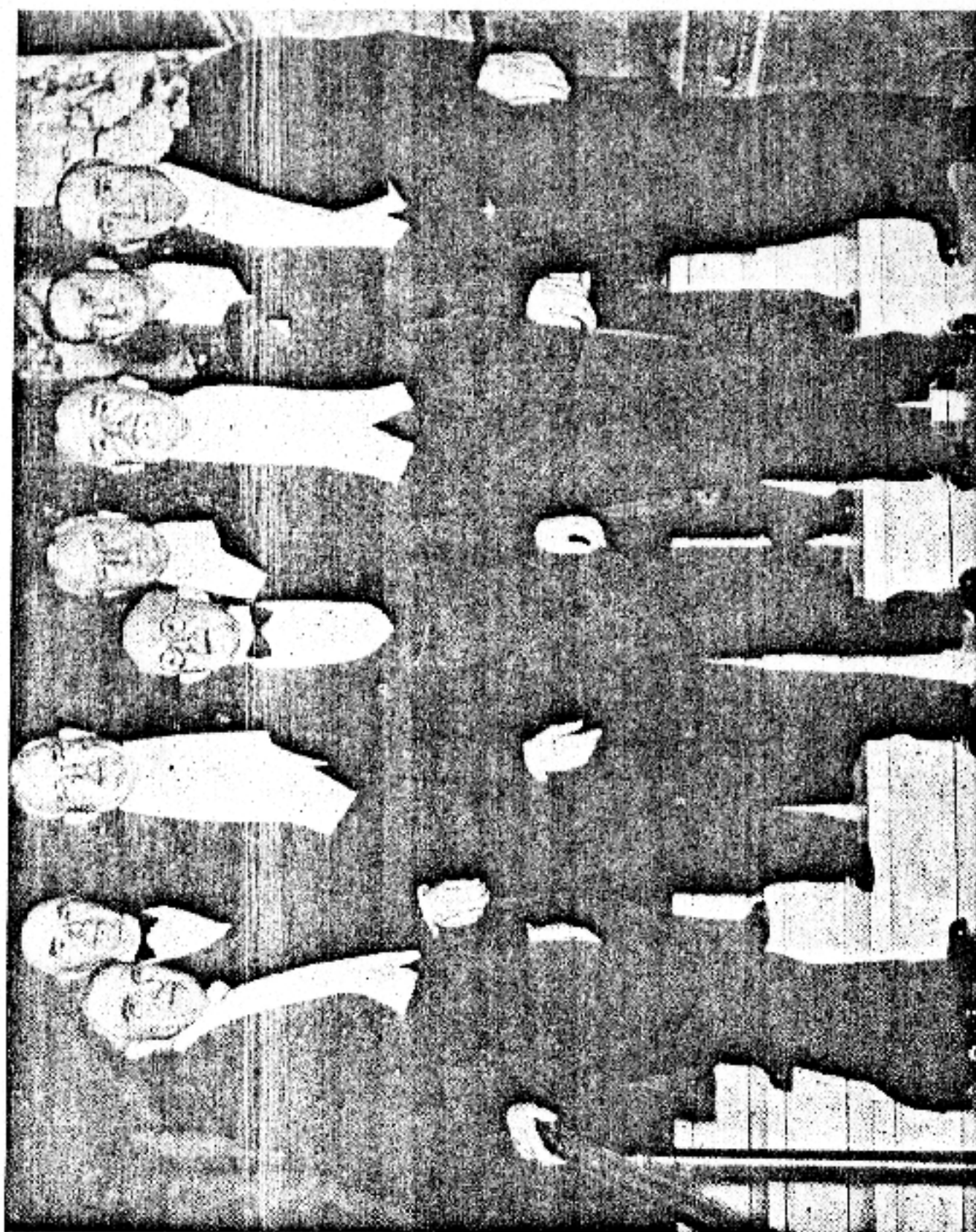
As we stood in the lobby, our attorney, Mr. Kleeberg, joined us and handed me the list of cases. I counted them; there were eighteen, ours being the eighth. It looked as if ours would not be reached, as the court sits from two to six P.M. and the sessions end promptly; so, Mr. Kleeberg wished us happy holidays and, leaving us in the hands of Mr. Greenwald, went back to his office.

We slipped into the court room and seated ourselves at the side. A case was in process of being argued and, by a strange coincidence, it happened to be one in which the City of New York was plaintiff, being represented by the Corporation Counsel, William C. Chanler; so our time of waiting was very well spent. Mr. Chanler had the unexpected pleasure of listening to an argument delivered by his son and all of us had the privilege of being present at a very interesting and important hearing, which, incidentally, consumed two hours.

When the case was disposed of, we realized that ours could not possibly come up in the short time remaining before six o'clock; and then the Presiding Judge made an unprecedented announcement. He said that an hour's recess would be allowed for dinner, after which the Court would hold an evening session. This decision came as a bombshell to the ears of the tired attorneys who had been waiting about all the afternoon on the chance of being called; but, needless to say, it delighted our trio of Bahai defendants. We were not to be disappointed after all and, as the lawyers filed out of the court room and gathered in groups in the lobby, we joined Mr. Greenwald who was distinctly in need of consolation at the prospect of having to argue a case after dinner.

It was at this time that Mr. Ellis W. Leavenworth, counsel for the National Spiritual Assembly passed by, and Mr. Greenwald, acting in true Bahai spirit, called him over. Then, Mr. Leavenworth, himself responding in like Bahai spirit, shook hands with all of us and we had the opportunity of exchanging a few words with our opponent, just before the battle. We appreciated this little incident and found that the plaintiff's lawyer had a very charming personality, seeming to be of the calibre that was accustomed to winning cases—not considering this one, of course. It is a fact that lawyers are very much like cooks: They cannot produce a satisfactory result if you have nothing but dry bones and bitter herbs in your market basket.

A walk in the rain to a near-by cafeteria, a little relaxation over coffee and sandwiches, and the hour's recess was over. We returned to the classical, but compact little building of the Appellate Division and took our places in the



(By courtesy of Wide World Photos)

Justices of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of the State of New York at a dinner given in their honor by the Bar Association. Left to right:—Justice Joseph M. Callahan; Charles H. Strong, Esq., Secretary of the Association; Hon. Francis Martin, Presiding Justice; Hon. Clarence J. Shearn, President of the Association; Justice Irwin Untermyer; Justice Edward Glennon; Justice Albert Cohn and Justice Edward S. Dore.

The justices of the Appellate Division who heard the case brought by the Bahas Administration were Justice Callahan, Presiding Justice Francis Martin, Justice Glennon and Justice Dore. The picture of Justice Townley, which does not appear in the above group, is to be found in a succeeding page in this chapter.

discreetly lighted court room. From the walls on either side of the benches and behind them, the faces of former Justices looked down, from within their gilt frames; while raised on a dais before us were the five Justices who, either by a majority vote or unanimously, were to decide for or against us in this case that was all important in our eyes. During the arguments that preceded ours, I examined their features, from left to right: the Honorables Edward S. Dore, Alfred H. Townley, Francis Martin, Presiding Justice, Edward J. Glennon and Joseph M. Callahan, and was deep in this psychological study when, at exactly 8:15 o'clock, the Presiding Justice proclaimed: *Allen B. McDaniel versus Mirza Ahmad Sohrab*, and I came to myself with a start.

Responding to this summons Mr. Leavenworth, counsel for the National Spiritual Assembly, rose to his feet and opened his argument. He stated that the Bahai Cause originated in Persia, having been founded by Baha-O-Llah (here a wave of emotion passed over me, for it was the first time, to my knowledge, that this name had been pronounced in an occidental court room); he then went on to say that the Cause was little known in America, and that he, himself, had heard of it for the first time when the case was placed in his hands.

Continuing, Mr. Leavenworth said that the subject of religious freedom had been much accentuated by the defense; actually, Justice Valente had rendered his decision on this ground, while as a matter of fact, this issue was not involved.

Here, Justice Dore leaned forward and asked: *Is not this case a question of religion, at least in part?*

No, your Honor! Mr. Leavenworth answered, *It is purely commercial.*

Completely nonplussed, I turned toward Mrs. Chanler to see her reaction. Her eyes were opened wide. Neither of us could believe our ears; but, we had another shock coming, for, at that moment, Mr. Leavenworth was asserting that his clients had never objected to our use of the word *Bahai*.

Mrs. Chanler and I settled back in our chairs. This evidently was to be a Comedy of Errors, and we might as well take it as such; also, we realized that the material upon which Justice Valente had based his opinion was actually in the hands of the Court.

The Bahai case afforded a period of relaxation in this session of unusual length. As soon as the word had been pronounced, all those present dropped the business attitude; the judges bent forward, some of the spectators tittered and many faces bore smiles. When the Master's name was mentioned, Justice Townley recollected that Abdul Baha had visited this country in 1915. While we made a mental correction of 1912, his associate judges looked at him quizzically and asked a few questions in undertones. Thus, the whole proceeding was carried out in comparatively informal vein, although the Court gave minute attention to the points presented.

When Mr. Leavenworth referred to the long-standing establishment of the Bahai organization in this country and said that the existence of the Bahai Bookshop led to misunderstanding, Justice Dore asked of our attorney:—*Why then do you not write under the name of your society or bookshop: "Not connected with the Bahai Assembly."*

Here, like a shot out of a gun, Mr. Greenwald flashed back: *Why shouldn't they write under the name of the National Spiritual Assembly: "Not connected with The New History Society or the Bahai Bookshop."* At this, Judge Townley remarked that it seemed to him that the names of the two groups were already well defined: the one functioning under the name Bahai Assembly, and the other under Bahai Bookshop.

In his argument, Mr. Greenwald emphasized the fact that the case, actually was *nothing* but religious; that it involved the fundamental principle of religious liberty; that Baha-O-Llah was the founder of a religion and a *Bahai* is one who follows his teachings; therefore, that the name was descriptive and could not be appropriated by any group or by any individual. He continued to speak along these lines, finally quoting Justice Valente's decision which held that the defendants, as Bahais, have the absolute right to practice Bahaism, to hold meetings, to publish books and receive contributions for their religious activities; for all these functions are the inalienable rights of every religious group. Then, he mentioned the fact that one of the two defendants was secretary to Abdul Baha up to two years before the latter's departure from this life. It was here that Justice Townley surprised everyone by showing that he also knew something about Abdul Baha.

Mr. Leavenworth and Mr. Greenwald took but ten minutes each to present their cases; consequently, the claims of both sides were offered in a sketchy fashion. It is to be remembered, however, that the full texts of the series of complaints and of the defense, in printed form, had already been submitted to the Court, to be studied at its leisure.



(By courtesy of Wide World Photos)

HON. ALFRED H. TOWNLEY

Justice of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court
of the State of New York.

Somersaults and other Agilities

A most striking point in the new brief presented to the Appellate Division by the National Spiritual Assembly is the assertion that this body had never attempted to prevent Mrs. Chanler and me from using the word *Bahai*; in fact, the plaintiffs concede that we are entitled to the use of the word. The new brief states:—

It is not the use of the word Baha'i but the manner of use that is the grounds of complaint. Defendants are entitled to make lawful use of the word, but have no right to use it as an instrument of deception. Nor is any question of religious freedom involved. Defendants are not charged with practicing Baha'ism. No question is raised as to what is or is not the true Bahai religion.

The above is a prestidigitatorial somersault; it is a complete reversal of that which was claimed by the plaintiffs in their original and Amended Complaints. A comparison between the documents presented to Justice Valente and the brief prepared for the Appellate Division makes us marvel at the bland manner in which the National Assembly travels from the north pole of error to the south pole of truth and vice versa without the slightest display of embarrassment. Let us place the following clause taken from the latest brief:—

Defendants are entitled to make lawful use of the word (Bahai)

side by side with an extract taken from an earlier brief:—

That the defendants and each of them, their agents, servants, employees, associates and each of them, be

enjoined and restrained, during the pendency of this action, and thereafter perpetually:

From using, or participating directly or indirectly in the use of, the word Baha'i, or any word deceptively similar thereto, as the name or a part of the name of any meeting, lecture, class or social gathering, or as the name or title or a part of the name or title of any book, magazine, or other publication, or as the name or a part of the name under which any bookshop or other business is conducted.

Kleeberg & Greenwald, in their answering argument, point out the somersault that was being made by the National Spiritual Assembly, who in

. . . their brief say with some emphasis that plaintiffs claim no monopoly of the word "Baha'i," and no question of religious freedom is involved. The former of the two questions is novel, constitutes a recession from a position taken in the court below and, we respectfully submit, belied by the language and the purport of the amended complaint. The latter of the two assertions, we take firm and somewhat indignant exception to.

This litigation does involve nothing else than religious freedom and the remarks of Mr. Justice Valente that "plaintiffs have no right to a monopoly of the name of a religion" and "defendants have the absolute right to practice Baha'ism" are well justified.

Of what were the members of the National Spiritual Assembly really thinking when they made this sudden reversal; or did they think at all? Could they have imagined that the Justices of the Appellate Division would be taken in by their innocent attitude and decide in their favor with-

out reading the contents of their Amended Complaint, in which the sacrilegious claim of ownership over the word *Bahai* had been made? At any rate, Kleeberg & Greenwald were little impressed by the display of agility that was taking place. With stern gesture, they halted the performers, as it were in mid-air, stating:—

Whatever plaintiffs may say in their brief about religious freedom not being involved here, we respectfully submit that the clear objective of their cause of action is the restraining of defendants from the practice of their faith. It is an attempt to compel defendants to recognize and yield to plaintiffs' authority and organization. And it is an arrogant attempt.

To succeed, plaintiffs must force facts into the molds of legal formulae. If they succeed in this, they succeed in consolidating their powers, in foisting their unwelcome paternity upon defendants, and incidentally their followers who, attending their lectures, etc., and reading their literature, may be assumed to also be Baha'is (the Baha'i membership of The New History Society, whom defendants represent). That they have not succeeded in meeting legal formulae, we will demonstrate. . . . Whatever may have been plaintiffs' contention in the court below, it is clear that at least now, belatedly, they concede that plaintiffs claim no monopoly of the word "Baha'i." Indeed, it is inconceivable that any other position could have been taken by plaintiffs for the name of a religion is clearly in the public domain.

As can be seen in the above passage, our attorneys, more than any others, have divined the sinister motive of the National Spiritual Assembly, screened as it was under much backing and filling. They have unmasked a deep-

laid scheme, the purport of which was none other than to shape their monopolistic demands into *legal formulae*, thus inscribing their unjust pretensions on the statute books, for all time to come. We owe a deep debt of gratitude to Kleeberg & Greenwald for their powers of penetration as well as for their gift of expression, for they have brought to light a plot which, had it been successful, would have totally nullified the objects and aims of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha.

In the course of the proceeding, a point was made of lawful use of the word Bahai, the plaintiffs asserting that:—

The fact that the name of a religion is a part of the language and open to public use does not give defendants the right to make deceptive use of it.

Here, Kleeberg & Greenwald answered:—

It is incidentally a complete retreat from the position taken in the complaint and in the court below where they asserted their right to ban absolutely the use of the word "Baha'i" by any one other than themselves or those acting under their authority.

In closing their argument the members of the National Spiritual Assembly cast their last die in the gamble for the retention of some sort of *authority* and *power* over The New History Society. On bended knee, figuratively speaking, they prayed to the Appellate Division to grant them something, no matter what—just a tiny something, in order to save their faces before the Bahai world! They were even willing—wonder of wonders! to concede to us the use of the name Bahai—but with a reservation, if

they could receive some kind of *relief* to which they felt entitled! They ask:—

Although plaintiffs pray for an unconditional injunction as is customary in such cases, the relief to which plaintiffs are entitled is measured by plaintiffs' right to prevent deception. If it is possible for the defendants to use the name Bahai in a way that does not cause deception, they are entitled to do so.

It is here that our attorney draws the sword of righteous indignation and in words that shall echo and re-echo through the corridors of time cries out:—

But are not plaintiffs being too smug and patronizing toward defendants? What greater right have they to say how defendants shall use the word "Bahai" than defendants have to say how plaintiffs shall use the word "Bahai"?

Actually it is not Funny

It was stated by the plaintiffs that the case brought against us was purely commercial; therefore, on this ground, our right to accept contributions toward our work in the Cause was contested. The fact that we never did receive contributions for Bahai purposes and never asked for such; that the tiny sums which were given to us were added to the Caravan Foundation Fund (an account reserved, untouched, for a club-house in the far-flung future) or else were donations toward our competitions and the exhibit at the World's Fair, were not taken into consideration. We took in payments for subscriptions to our magazine *New History* and *The Children's Caravan*, for books,

and again, for war-relief societies. Our Caravan Hall, where admission fees are paid to our dances, is still deeply in the red—all these things were not weighed by our opponents; naturally, they did not know of them in detail. However, the plaintiffs, under oath, charge that:—

Upon information and belief, defendants have solicited and received payments of money as contributions to the Bahai religion or cause at numerous times which are unknown to the plaintiffs, and such payments were solicited by each of the defendants personally.

I should think that the phrase: *at numerous times which are unknown to the plaintiffs*, would bring a smile to the face of a waxen image. If our sins (if sins they be) are known only to ourselves, why accuse us of them in court? The outcome of this charge was the same as that of all the other charges: it fell to the ground because it was totally unsubstantiated. All this is funny, in a sense; and yet actually, it is not funny that those who signed this document should so lend themselves to deception and untruth.

Priority

A most striking assertion made by the National Spiritual Assembly in its brief before the Appellate Division dealt with the subject of priority: Because this body and its predecessors have existed for more than forty consecutive years, administering the affairs of the Bahai community, acting as the custodians of multifarious Bahai properties, incorporating the Bahai Assemblies, publishing books and magazines and holding meetings, lectures, classes, social

gatherings and other activities—therefore, this priority in the field of service entitled the plaintiffs to an exclusive right over the Bahai Cause.

Now I, personally, do not believe in priority. The vineyard of the Lord is extensive; and the Lord wants the ground tilled. There is a parable in the New Testament in which the eleventh hour workers were rewarded even as the first; and some complained: *Saying, these last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. And the Lord answered: Take that thine is, and go thy way. I will give unto this last, even as unto thee.* (St. Matthew, Chapter 20, Verses 12 and 14.)

Naturally, I deny the validity of priority as such, but I will now set forth a few claims of my own in contradistinction to those made by the National Spiritual Assembly on the basis of their forty years of executive work:—

I am by birth a Persian, of the same nationality as the Bab, Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha; of the same nationality as the Babi and Bahai heroes, saints and martyrs.

My grandmother, as a girl, saw the Bab in her native city of Esphahan, and talked with him. She became one of his followers, and later brought up her family in the Faith.

Our house in Esphahan became the center and meeting-ground for all the Bahais in those parts. Here, my noble uncle Haji Sayyed Zeinel-Abedin, poet, philosopher and teacher, presided over a group of devoted enthusiasts, which held together in the midst of danger.

Finally our house was attacked and pillaged by the mob, led by the Mohammedan clergy. As a child, I suffered the



Left to right:—Haji Niaz, one of the foremost disciples of Baha-O-Llah; Mirza Ahmad Sohrab and Ahmad Yazdi, son-in-law of Abdul Baha.

This picture was taken in Port Said while the author was working as salesman in the department store of Ahmad Yazdi,

indignities of the bastinado, and had the honor of shedding a few drops of blood for the Cause.

For eight years, as secretary and interpreter, I served Abdul Baha in the East and in the West. I also served his followers. Long before many of the present members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada and their predecessors had even heard the name of the Cause, I was working to the best of my ability along the lines laid out for me by my Master.

These are my credentials, and I believe that Abdul Baha would endorse them; yet after all, personal credentials or group credentials are of small account when one considers the vast significance of the Cause.

Long before the Spiritual Assembly of New York City was turned into a religious corporation in 1932; before the word Bahai was trademarked in 1928; before the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada wrote its Constitution and By-laws in 1926; before the Tablets of the Divine Plan were unveiled in New York in 1918; before the foundations of the Temple were laid in Wilmette, Ill., in 1912; before the Bahai Authorities became trustees of properties and valuable holdings; before the Bahai Cause was established as a political organization, weighted down by parliamentary rules and procedures; before the Bahai Groups had become conscious of their existence and inaugurated their annual Conventions in 1907-08; before the present Bahai Spiritual Assemblies in various cities of the United States were evolved out of small working Committees during the period, 1894-1906; before the Bahai Movement was intro-

duced to America at the World Congress of Religions, in 1893; even before the emergence of Bahai Communities in Iran, Syria, Palestine, Iraq and other countries of Asia, from 1844 on—long before all these happenings, the Bahai Cause lived and vibrated in the hearts of the Bab Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha.

Indeed, prior to the appearance in Iran of this mighty trio, the ideals of the Bahai Cause had shone forth from the minds of Mohammad, Jesus, Moses, Confucius, Laotze, Buddha, Zoroaster and the Rishis of India; even as they had shimmered and twinkled in the consciousness of saints, seers, poets and philosophers, back through the ages.

We follow the clue, penetrating yet further into the abyss of time: Long before these Prophets, Avatars and Manifestations had been incarnated on this globe, the Bahai Cause, as a Cosmic Energy, was moving and flashing in illimitable space.

The Bahai Cause was *publici juris* long before the foundations of the world were laid; long before the creation of the heavens and the earth; even at the time when God said: *Let there be light, and there was light, and God saw the light (Baha) and the light was good!*

And now in this year of 1941 the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada have claimed a priority of *more than forty years'* standing on the Light of the World—the Cause of Baha-O-Llah!

The Decision

In concluding its brief before the Appellate Division,

the National Spiritual Assembly demanded that:—

The judgment and order appealed from should be reversed and the motion for judgment on the pleadings denied with costs to the appellants.

Kleeberg and Greenwald closed with:—

Lastly, it is respectfully submitted that the order and judgment appealed from should be affirmed with costs.

The case was argued before the Justices of the Appellate Division on June 5th. On June 19th, the New York Law Journal carried the brief but significant notice:—

McDaniel et al., v. Sohrab, &c., res—Judgment and order unanimously affirmed, with costs. No opinion. Order filed.

In journalistic language, according to the New York World-Telegram of the same day, this meant that:—

BAHA'I IS PLACED IN PUBLIC DOMAIN

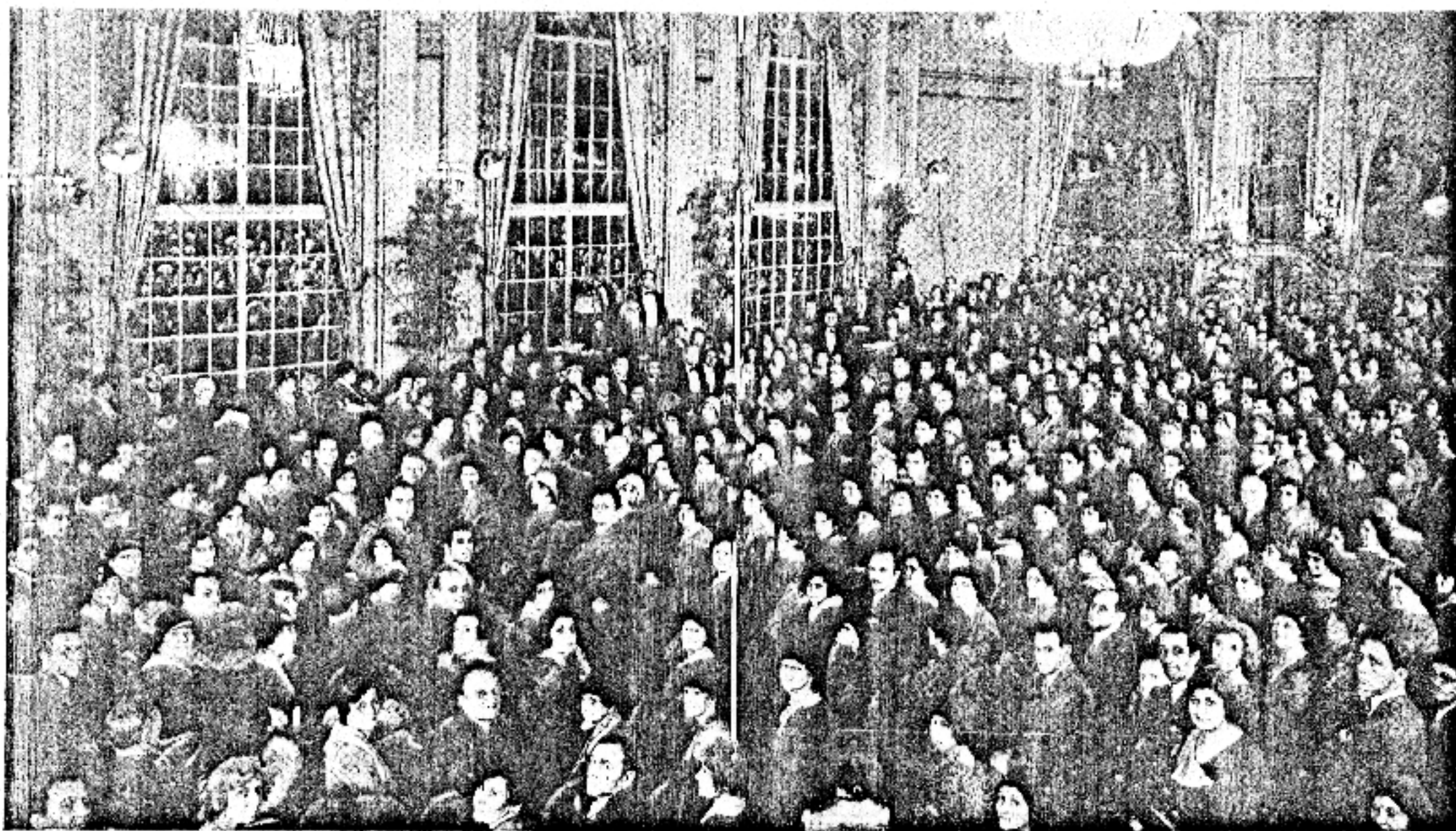
The Appellate Division today unanimously upheld the ruling of a Supreme Court Justice that no one could monopolize the name of a religion.

The Herald-Tribune on June 20th head-lined its article with:—

APPELLATE COURT REJECTS BAHAI PETITION ON NAME

Affirms Refusal to Restrict Use of Sect's Designation.

The Appellate Division affirmed unanimously yesterday a previous Supreme Court ruling that no one has a



A meeting in honor of Rabindranath Tagore, held
Carlton Hotel, New York, under the

on December 7, 1930, in the ballroom of the Ritz-
auspices of The New History Society.

See page 248

Closing words in the address of Rabindranath Tagore, given on December 7, 1930, before The New History Society:—

In the human world the great truth of unity was also at first realized as a power residing in the community, comprehending and transcending all individuals. This mysterious power according to the primitive people was magical, and they symbolized it in their totems and tried to invoke and propitiate it with their magical rites.

This was the first great discovery of man—the mysterious spirit of unity which was beyond the bounds of quantity that can be measured, and this is religion. But, as I have already suggested, religion in its first appearance had the aspect of power, which, though it gave unity to the tribe itself, created a strong division outside of it; for power is exclusive, and the tribe claimed its God as the source of all powers for its own benefit.

So long as God remained as thus divided, religion became cruel and terribly unjust, creating more mischief in this world than any passion that is criminal. Even today, when God is no longer believed to be specially belonging to the tribe, he is fenced in by secretarianism which gives rise to a fierce spirit of dissension and egotistical boastfulness. Truth, when tortured and mutilated, becomes more heinous than untruth; and therefore, when unbelievers bring proofs of the harm that religion has done to man we cannot but remain silent.

It is the mission of all great Prophets to see that religion, which is to give us spiritual emancipation, should not itself be made a fetter to immure our souls in a dungeon of dogma and formalism, giving rise to sectarian vanity that obscures our vision of the spiritual unity of man.

The first Prophet whom we know in the history of man was Zoroaster, who preached God as the universal truth of unity, the eternal source of goodness and love; and it is significant that on the same soil of Persia, which gave birth to him, arose the other great Prophet of the modern age, Baha-O-Llah, who also preached God as profoundly one, in all races, tribes and sects, the true worship of whom consists in service that has reason for its guide, and goodness and love for its inner motive principle.

We are here tonight to offer our homage to Baha-O-Llah. He is the latest Prophet to come out of Asia. His life is certainly a glorious record of unflinching human search after truth; and his message is of great importance for the progress of civilization. It makes me happy indeed to see that The New History Society is doing such splendid work for the propagation of the message of Baha-O-Llah.

right to monopolize the name of a religion and that followers of a religion cannot be restrained from practicing their beliefs because of the objections of organized practitioners of the same faith.

Thus was the opinion of Justice Valente, of the Supreme Court, New York County, unanimously affirmed by the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court; and, to repeat the well-chosen words of the World-Telegram:

BAHA'I IS PLACED IN PUBLIC DOMAIN.

SUPPLEMENT

Pen Pictures

As this book goes to press, two publications are brought to my attention: the one a pamphlet dated April, 1941, put out by The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, entitled *The Bahai Case against Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler and Mirza Ahmad Sohrab*, and the other, *Bahai News* of October, 1941.

This literature is well suited for analysis and would have been examined in detail had time allowed; however, I believe that in some cases comments are superfluous. Therefore, I content myself with taking a short extract from each publication and placing these side by side to serve as portraits of the two personalities who acted as defendants in the legal proceedings initiated by the Bahai Administration in 1939 and brought to a conclusion in 1941.

*Pen Picture of Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler,
drawn by The National Spiritual Assembly of
the Bahais of the United States and Canada*

After quoting from the reply sent by Mrs. Chanler's attorneys to the attorneys of The National Spiritual Assembly at the very outset of the legal proceedings, the writer of the pamphlet continues:

Read as an ordinary letter from a lawyer engaged to handle a legal problem for a client, this communication would indicate that this attorney, after making a serious study of the Baha'i literature and teachings, had advised his client that by his interpretation she is within her rights to use the word "Baha'i" in connection with any book or pamphlet which she, claiming to be herself a Baha'i, thinks is helpful to her conception of the Baha'i Cause. That is, technical questions being involved, Mrs. Chanler consults an attorney and accepts his opinion and acts upon it. But when we bear in mind the simple fact that all questions of Baha'i right or wrong, as to knowledge, faith or action, can be determined only by reference to the Baha'i teachings themselves or to the appointed Interpreters of these teachings, this recourse to an agency outside the Faith for a vindication of an attitude taken in defiance of the Baha'i teachings and Baha'i administrative bodies, as well as in denial of both Abdul'l-Baha and Shoghi Effendi, successively the sole Interpreter of the Baha'i literature, means that Mrs. Chanler, needing a weapon for attacking and wounding the sacred unity of the Faith of Baha'u'llah, seeks her sharpened blade in the realm of a legality developed for dealing with questions of property and neither intended nor adapted to

realize and apply the spiritual truths of a revealed religion. As the persecutors of the Babis and the early Baha'is in Iran seized torch, sword, rope and gun to inflict injury upon the innocent bodies of their victims, so now we have a similar motive and instinct expressed, however, in conformity with very different social conditions.

*Pen Picture of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, drawn by
Shoghi Effendi, Guardian of the Bahai Cause.*

And now more particularly concerning the prime mover of this latest agitation, which, whatever its immediate consequences, will sooner or later come to be regarded as merely one more of those ugly and abortive attempts designed to undermine the foundation, and obscure the purpose, of the Administrative Order of the Faith of Baha'u'llah. Obscure in his origin, ambitious of leadership, untaught by the lesson of such as have erred before him, odious in the hopes he nurses, contemptible in the methods he pursues, shameless in his deliberate distortions of truth he has long since ceased to believe in, ludicrous in his present isolation and helplessness, wounded and exasperated by the downfall which his own folly has precipitated, he, the latest protagonist of a spurious cause, cannot but in the end be subjected, as remorselessly as his infamous predecessors, to the fate which they invariably have suffered.

Haifa 19.1.29

Dear Mrs Chanler:

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your very kind letter dated Dec. 24th 1928. He was very glad to hear that Mr. Sobrah - a doing good service in New York in the way of public speaking. He surely knows the Cause very well, being for such a long time with the Master, translating his letters & talks to those who have been with the Beloved during his life. Time should feel the responsibility they bear & do their utmost in shouldering it. Especially those who were, we may say, nurtured by him. Shoghi Effendi hopes that all this work that he is doing will move & move living him into an active participation with his friends for his services in the way of

teaching a great

The news that we every now
often obtain concerning the condition in
New York is surely most encouraging
Thos. J. J. Lopes says that the unity will
daily increase & unite the friends com-
pletely. Unity at any expense should be
their motto. And the Master has, I believe
promised us that when true unity will
be obtained in New York it will spread
all over the country.

Thos. J. J. Lopes very much appre-
ciates the wonderful services you have
rendered the Cause & is always waiting
to see what the next will be. Your trans-
lation of the Epistle to the Son of the Beast
was only an example & we hope only
a beginning.

Will you please extend to all

the friends Shoghi Effendi's loving greetings
especially to your daughter & Ethel.

Please also add to that my kindest re-
gards I hope Elsie is doing well with
her Arabic this year Does she find it
very difficult? Once she masters her
Persian & she becomes capable of reading
the writings of Baha'u'llah, she will
 ~~reap~~ fully the fruit of her troubles

Yours ever sincerely

V Bahi Effendi

My dear & precious co-workers.

I wish to add a few words in person
as a token of my kin appreciation of your
past service & of my fervent hope & prayer for
the future extension of your manifold activities
I welcome Muzi Ahmad's collaboration with
you, in such an open & direct manner, for
a wider diffusion & a better understanding of
the purpose & the principles of the Baha'i Faith

I will pray for the success of your efforts
from the depths of my heart Your
true & grateful brother,
Shoghi Effendi

PART FOUR

RELIGION IN STRAITJACKET

9. Bahai Creed makes its Bow
10. Beginnings of the Bahai Organization
11. Development of the Bahai Organization
12. Establishment of Bahai Administration
13. Administrative Frills and Furbelows

*Woe unto him that saith to the wood:
Awake! To the dumb stone: Arise! It
shall teach! Behold! it is laid over
with gold and silver, and there is no
breath at all in the midst of it.*

—Habakkuk, Chapter 2, Verse 19

NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE

FRIDAY, JUNE 20, 1941

Appellate Court Rejects Baha'i Petition on Name

Affirms Refusal to Restrict Use of Sect's Designation

The Appellate Division affirmed unanimously yesterday a previous Supreme Court ruling that no one has a right to monopolize the name of a religion and that followers of a religion can not be restrained from practicing their beliefs because of the objections of organized practitioners of the same faith.

The Assembly and seven trustees of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada and the Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of New York brought action originally in Supreme Court in an effort to enjoin Mirza Ahmad Schrab, Persian poet and director of the New History Society, and Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler, wife of the former Lieutenant Governor of New York, founder of the society, from using the word Baha'i in connection with the sales of books, and in meetings or classes. Mr. Schrab and Mrs. Chanler also operate a book store under the name of Bahai Book Shop, at 828 Lexington Avenue.

Mrs. Chanler formed the New History Society after she broke with the so-called authorized Baha'is twelve years ago. The Baha'i religion was founded nearly a century ago by Baha-O-Llah, a Persian prophet, with international peace as its principal aim. Justice Louis A. Valente dismissed the original complaint in Supreme Court.

NEW YORK WORLD-TELEGRAM

THURSDAY, JUNE 19, 1941

Baha'i Is Placed In Public Domain

The Appellate Division today unanimously upheld the ruling of a Supreme Court justice that no one could monopolize the name of a religion.

Without handing down an opinion, the division indorsed the action of Justice Louis A. Valente in dismissing a complaint made by the National Spiritual Assembly and others against Mirza Ahmad Sohrab and Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler, society woman, who are doing business under the name of the Baha'i Book Shop, 828 Lexington Ave.

The assembly and seven trustees of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada, and the Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of this city sought to restrain the defendants from using the word Baha'i in their business. Justice Valente held that the plaintiffs "have no right to a monopoly of the name of a religion."

New York Law Journal

THURSDAY, JUNE 19, 1941

10529. *McDaniel et al., ap. v. Sohrab, &c.*, res—Judgment and order unanimously affirmed, with costs. No opinion. Order filed.

CHAPTER IX

BAHAI CREED MAKES ITS BOW

Creed Builders

None of the Founders of the Great Religions were creed-builders. They taught principles of spiritual life, morality and ethics. Their whole being was suffused with the rays of the Sun of Reality and they summoned all men to band together in the service of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Creeds and articles of faith were formulated by succeeding generations of theologians, men who had lost the vision of the Prophets and were wandering in the waste desert of metaphysical speculations. This is what happened to Christianity. It is happening to the Bahai Cause today—with only a difference of terminology: The Bahai theologians call themselves Administrators.

During a brief period of three years, as he travelled from town to town, from village to village, Christ taught certain spiritual maxims and simple rules for the conduct of life. He never expected that those maxims and rules would become the foundation of mighty, theological institutions nor foresaw that, for ages, the minds of his followers would be occupied with the creation, and obsessed with the enforcement, of dogmas, articles of faith and creeds. Thus, within the span of two centuries, a catechist at Rome produced the famous outline of the *Apostles' Creed*, which undoubtedly lies at the root of all the similar

creeds which flowered into a thousand branches at various church Councils and Synods. Here is the form of this *Old Roman Creed*—the fountain-head of all Christian theology, the starting-point of all strifes, divisions and sects, and the origin of all orthodoxies, heresies and ecclesiastical anathemas.

The Old Roman Creed

- I. 1. I believe in God, Father Almighty;
- II. 2. and in Christ, His only son, our Lord,
3. who was born of the Holy Ghost and the
Virgin Mary.
4. Crucified under Pontius Pilate and buried.
5. The third day He rose from the dead.
6. He ascended into heaven.
7. Sitteth at the right hand of the Father,
8. thence He shall come to judge living and dead.
- III. 9. And in the Holy Ghost
10. (the) Holy Church
11. (the) remission of sins
12. (the) resurrection of the flesh.

—“Creeds and Articles,” *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. III and IV, Page 237.

Precautions Taken by the Founders

It was too much to expect that the Bahai Cause would be immune to this process of stratification, but both Baha-O-Allah and Abdul Baha did their very best to avoid such a

calamity. Through continuous explanations, they made vivid this danger in order that the Bahai Movement might be fore-armed and protected from the errors of the previous religions. They were most emphatic on the points that this Cause is universal and all-inclusive; that it does not lend itself to the creation of an hierarchial order; that its fundamental basis is unity and not ecclesiastical distinctions; that it is essentially a spiritual fellowship and not a sectarian corporation with exclusive privileges; that its charter is freedom from worldly and material constitutions, and that its greatness depends upon non-crystallization and open portals.

The Breath of God is diffused throughout the world, asserted Baha-O-Llah. (*Bahai Scriptures*, page 98.)

The Fragrances of the Merciful have spread their sweet odors over all beings. (*Bahai Scriptures*, page 106.)

Good Character and Universal Service

It behooveth the people of El-Abha to assist the Lord through their utterance, and to preach unto the world through their deeds and good morals. The effect of deeds is greater than the effect of words (*Tablets of Baha-O-Llah*, page 41).

In this Day the hosts which assist the Cause are (good) deeds and (good) morals (*Tablets of Baha-O-Llah*, page 26).

O people of Baha! Adorn your temples with the mantle of trustworthiness and integrity; then assist your Lord with the hosts of (good) deeds and morals (*Tablets of Baha-O-Llah*, page 119).

O people of God! Be not occupied with yourselves.

Be intent on the betterment of the world and the training of nations. The betterment of the world can be accomplished through pure and excellent deeds and well-approved and agreeable conduct. The helper of the Cause is Deeds and its assistant is Good Character (*Tablets of Baha-O-Llah*, page 25).

The above shows the emphasis that Baha-O-Llah placed on conduct, and on activity in the path of God. Morality and not creeds; deeds and not words; service and not articles of faith.

Following in the footsteps of his Father, Abdul Baha accentuated the importance of appreciation for all men, and of love and service without compromise and without distinctions. Pointing to the disciples of the Christ as the supreme archetypes of free and untrammelled teachers, he advised the Bahais:

With hearts set aglow by the fire of the love of God and souls refreshed by the food of the Heavenly Spirit, you must go forth as the disciples, nineteen hundred years ago, quickening the hearts of men by the call of Glad-Tidings; the light of God in your faces; severed from everything save God (*Promulgation of Universal Peace*, Vol. I, page 6).

Therefore, we must make no distinctions between individual members of the human family. We must not consider any soul as barren or deprived (*Promulgation of Universal Peace*, Vol. I, page 12).

What is a Bahai? To be a Bahai simply means to love all the world; to love humanity and try to serve it; to work for universal peace and universal brotherhood (*Baha-O-Llah and the New Era*, page 90).

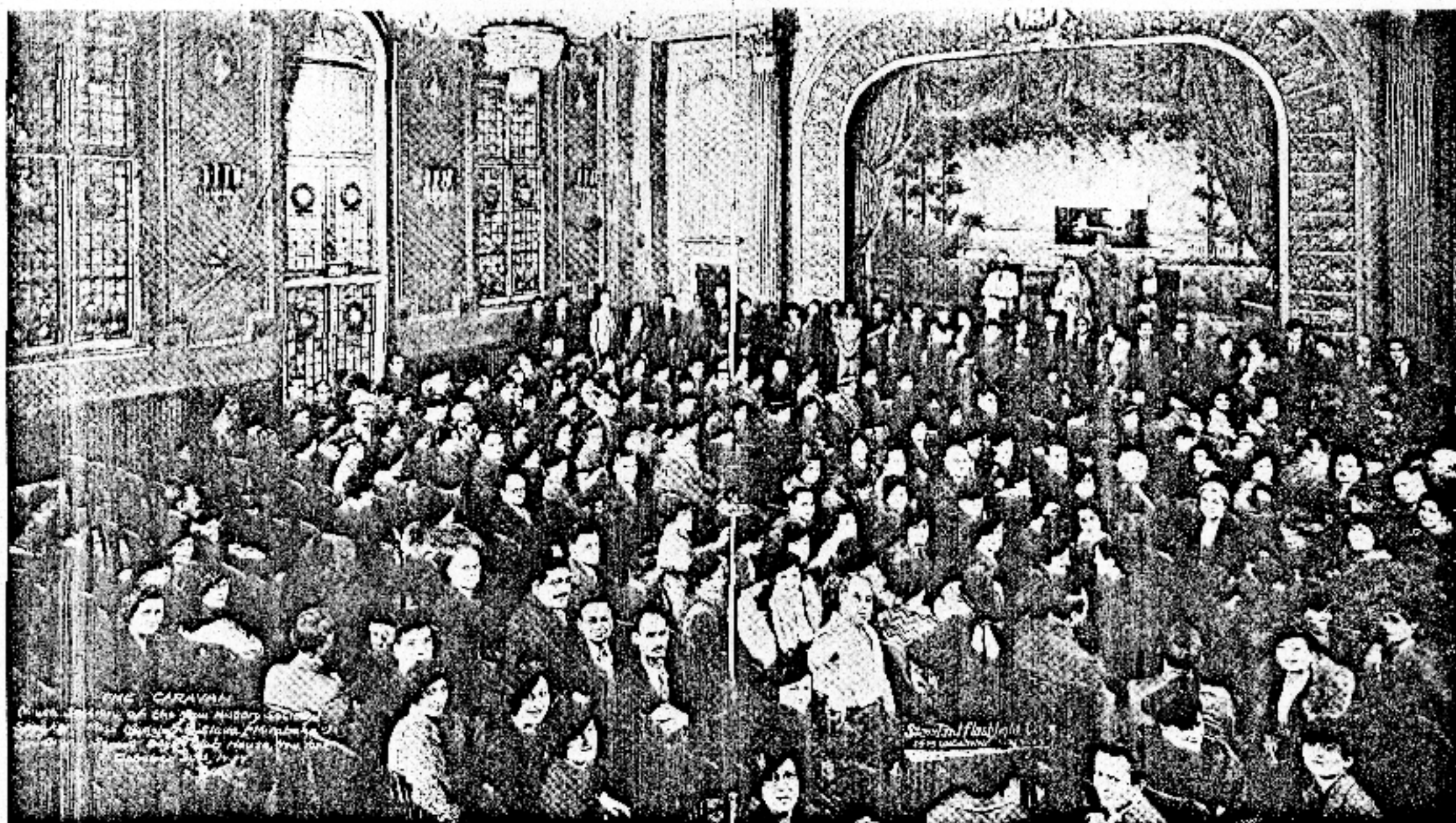
Declaration of Trust and By-Laws

It took almost two centuries for Christian theologians to formulate *The Old Roman Creed* and thus insert in the pure Faith a yard-stick and a bludgeon. In this instance, however, it took only a few years for *Bahai theologians*, under the more modern title of *Bahai Administrators*, to set up *The Bahai Creed* which, reducing the Cause from spirit to matter, has already become more authoritative and binding than *all* the teachings of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha.

On Monday, November 28, 1921, at 1:30 A. M., in Haifa, Palestine, Abdul Baha ascended to the life beyond.

On May 27, 1927, Shoghi Effendi, in a letter to the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, acknowledges the receipt of the Declaration of Trust, and in another letter dated October 18th, of the same year, he states: *I have read and re-read most carefully the final draft of the By-Laws.* (*Bahai Administration*, pages 124 and 132).

Thus, within the narrow limits of less than six years after the departure of Abdul Baha, a few American Bahais wrote the Declaration of Trust and By-Laws, submitted them to Shoghi Effendi and received his sanction. In this manner, the young Cause, so lately deprived of its great Protector, was, without loss of time, shoved into an institution—a mere waif, the latest one to enter the dark edifice of Religious Organization. No starving Oliver Twist, symbol of maltreated childhood, holding out his plate and asking for *more*, is pitiful to a greater extent than is the pallid Bahai Cause as it pants for breath under the cold stare of its inflexible trustees.



Meeting held in New York, in honor of Mirabehn (Madelaine
20, 1934, under the auspices
Platform group, from left to right:—Dr. H. T. Mazumdar,

Slade) spiritual daughter of Mahatma Gandhi, on October
of The New History Society.

Mirabehn, M. A. Sohrab and Hon. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler,

See page 264

When this instrument of tyranny was mailed to Shoghi Effendi he, unfortunately, did not see it as a terrible weapon wherewith to stultify the Cause that had been confided to his keeping, and so he gave it his blessing and placed on it his seal of approval.

Here are his exact words in a letter dated May 27, 1927:

The Declaration of Trust, the provisions of which you have so splendidly conceived and formulated with such assiduous care, marks yet another milestone on the road of progress along which you are patiently and determinedly advancing. Clear and concise in its wording, sound in principle and complete in its affirmations of the fundamentals of Bahai administration, it stands in its final form as a worthy and faithful exposition of the constitutional basis of Bahai communities in every land, foreshadowing the final emergence of the world Bahai Commonwealth of the future. This document, when correlated and combined with the set of by-laws which I trust are soon forthcoming, will serve as a pattern to every National Bahai Assembly, be it in the East or in the West. . . .

I eagerly await the receipt of the complete set of the contemplated by-laws, the purpose of which should be to supplement the provisions, clarify the purpose; and explain more fully the working of the principle underlying the above-mentioned Declaration (*Bahai Administration*, pages 124-125)..

Having received the By-Laws, Shoghi Effendi writes again in his letter dated October 18, 1927:

. . . I have read and re-read most carefully the final

draft of the By-Laws drawn up by that highly-talented, much-loved servant of Baha-U-Llah, Mountfort Mills, and feel I have nothing substantial to add to this first and very creditable attempt at codifying the principles of general Bahai administration. I heartily and unhesitatingly commend it to the earnest perusal of, and its loyal adoption by, every National Bahai Spiritual Assembly, whether constituted in the East or in the West. I would ask you particularly to send copies of the text of this document of fundamental importance accompanied by copies of the Declaration of Trust and the text of the Indenture of Trust, to every existing National Spiritual Assembly, with my insistent request to study the provisions, comprehend its implications, and endeavor to incorporate it, to the extent that their own circumstances permit, within the framework of their own national activities. . . .

I would specifically remind you that, in the text of the said By-Laws, which to the outside world represents the expression of the aspirations, the motives and objects that animate the collective responsibilities of Bahai Fellowship, due emphasis should not be placed only on the concentrated authority, the rights, the privileges and prerogatives enjoyed by the elected national representatives of the believers, but that special stress be laid also on their responsibilities as willing ministers, faithful stewards and loyal trustees to those who have chosen them. (*Bahai Administration*, pages 132-133.)

The Bahai Creed according to the National Spiritual Assembly

And now let us examine the Bahai Creed which is contained in the Declaration of Trust and By-Laws of the

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada:

The Bahais of the United States and Canada . . . shall consist of all persons . . . who are *recognized* by the National Spiritual Assembly as having fulfilled the requirements of voting membership in a local Bahai Community. To become a voting member of a Bahai Community a person shall

- a. **Be a resident of the locality defined by the area of jurisdiction of the local Spiritual Assembly, as provided by Article VII, Section 12, of this instrument.**
- b. **Have attained the age of 21 years.**
- c. **Have established to the satisfaction of the local Spiritual Assembly, subject to the approval of the National Assembly, that he possesses the qualifications of Bahai faith and practice required under the following standard:**

Full recognition of the station of the Forerunner (the Bab), the Author (Baha-U-Allah) and Abdul Baha the True Exemplar of the Bahai Cause; unreserved acceptance of, and submission to, whatever has been revealed by their pen;

Loyal and steadfast adherence to every clause of Abdul Baha's sacred Will; and close association with the spirit as well as the form of present-day Bahai administration throughout the world.

(*Bahai Administration*, page 146.)

The above articles of Bahai Creed and Confession demonstrate that, notwithstanding the warnings of Baha-O-Allah and Abdul Baha, their Cause is today as handi-

capped and circumscribed as are any of the institutionalized religions; at the same time it must be realized that, while the organizations of the former religions are laden with the sanctity and tradition of antiquity, the organization of the Bahai Cause has none of those hallmarks and is only a pseudo-imitation of those hoary and superannuated institutions.

Early Days in Bahai Administration

In order to corroborate my claim that, from the very start, overlordship was apparent in the Spiritual Assemblies, I will give extracts from a letter, (which is one among countless others on the same subject), written to me in 1923 by one who today is very close to the top of the administrative ladder. Although, in these articles, I am documenting the quotations used, in this case, for obvious reasons, I refrain from including the name of my correspondent. The letter follows:—

The people in the West live in a different world from their brothers and sisters in the East. This is due to the natural instinct of the overshadowing group soul. We must try to eliminate cliques and be more universally detached. As it is, we mostly travel in herds like sheep. How I wish I might have a heart to heart talk with you about these Spiritual Assemblies. There is a frightful lot of organization in this Cause which is supposed to be free from all such things, and democratic. I believe the trouble between the American believers is due to the manner in which the Spiritual Assemblies function. They carry things with a very high hand and mostly, instead of representing the group in each Assembly they sit and make laws without any

consideration of the souls whom they are supposed to represent. . . . This is the day of deeds not words; but it seems very difficult to convince some of the dead leaves. . . . They have gotten used to blowing around the tree of life, and they do nothing but blow. . . . Everything was in awful shape after Mrs. — got through with the first meeting. I just sat down and refused to work under the arrangements as laid down by the Assembly of Nine. . . . Do write me about this matter and don't start in telling me about *Obedience* and the absolute *Control* of said Assemblies. We are all sick of being reminded, every time we have a suggestion to make which did not originate in the minds of the Spiritual Nine, that we must leave that to the decision of the Spiritual Assembly.

Bahai Obscurantism

These articles of the Bahai Creed are the harbingers to an era of obscurantism in this glorious movement. They are compounded of bigotry in all its gruesome forms and pave the way to moral darkness. This desire for concentrated authority is in direct opposition to inquiry and enlightenment. It is a mediaevalizing tendency. In the Middle Ages we had dry scholasticism; in the Bahai Cause we have arid administrative legalism. The Bahai Administration is the progeny of religious intolerance, obviously injurious to spiritual freedom and ethical emancipation. The Articles of Creed as quoted are implements of torture in the hands of a Bahai Administrative Obscurantist. According to his standard, the Bahai Cause is to be run, not by the fresh springs of inspiration, but by the elixir distilled from the withered flowers of administrative theology.

The Bahai Obscurantists have deified the Bab, Baha-Ollah and Abdul Baha, but they have crucified their Cause.

The impulse to Bahai Obscurantism, or to any other form of obscurantism, arises from a deeply rooted, if not an inherent, tendency in human nature to distrust free inquiry. This tendency becomes aggravated when it operates in the sphere of religion. An uneasy suspicion of knowledge and its results; a dislike for a liberal and inquisitive mind, and a feeling of fear in regard to independent investigation of truth as for something not wholly good for any one—these sentiments have contributed to the evolution of Bahai Obscurantism, which is the herald of professional or class exclusiveness in the Cause as exemplified by the National Spiritual Assembly, and the local assemblies. Thus considered, it is the weakness of a select body which, I hope, and believe, stands in no relation to the common conscience of the rank and file of the Bahai communities.

One observes the distortion of truth on the part of the Bahai Obscurantists by their unwholesome preference for that which is secondary and derivative, as contrasted with that which is primary and fundamental; by their leanings toward the accretions and embellishments of administration, as contrasted with the sources of inspiration; toward the peculiarities of theories and creeds, as contrasted with the Bahai obligations which are universally binding.

The dislike of the sophisticated, intellectualized Americans, like some of the Bahai administrators, for those common, simple, universal realities of the Bahai Cause, which are the very soul of this movement, has taken practical effect in the substitution of mechanistic, legalistic,

administrative and organized authority for the seeing eye and illumined heart—and the result has been a gradual diminishing of reliance on the spiritual teachings of the Cause and a total absence of enthusiasm on its behalf.

However, it is not an idle word to say that, while Obscurantism has entrenched itself in the Bahai Cause, a strong reaction has, at the same time, been provoked against this entrenchment. This is not a negative reaction, not merely a sense of dissatisfaction, a state of unrest, but a positive anxiety and sense of responsibility, coupled with wistful remembrance of better days.

'The Clay-pieces of the World

Therefore, in the spirit of those to whom the teachings of Abdul Baha are ever alive, I will recall the admonitions of the Master regarding *verbal confessions, acknowledgments, literal faith and external relations*.

In this cycle of Baha-O-Llah, verbal confessions and acknowledgments, literal faith and certainty and external relations are of no avail. Nay, rather, the beloved of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful must manifest such *attributes and ethical conduct* as to embody and personify the teachings of Baha-O-Llah. They must promulgate the law of the Kingdom with deeds and not words.

Thus may they become the quintessence of being, the signs of the Kingdom of God and the standards of the Supreme Concourse.

—*Bahai News*, later renamed *Star of the West*,
Vol. 1, No. 4, May 17, 1910, pages 8-9.

Further, in regard to appellation and encumbrances, Baha-O-Llah says:

This Cause has crossed the gulf of words, and pitched its tent on the shores of the Sea of Detachment.

—*Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, page 58.

And again, from Baha-O-Llah, the call to serenity and the reminder that the purely material is not formidable:

Oh men! Why fear, and whom do you dread? These clay-pieces of the world shall be disintegrated by a slight moisture.

—*Tablets of Baha-O-Llah*, page 23.

CHAPTER X

BEGINNINGS OF THE BAHAI ORGANIZATION

The Ancient Path

The Bahai Cause is a Renaissance of the spirit and the appearance of a vital energy, pouring its divine potencies into the affairs of men. It is:

that which was revealed from the source of Majesty, through the tongue of power and strength, through the prophets of the past. We have taken of its essences and clothed it with the garment of brevity (Baha-O-Llah—*Hidden Words* page 1).

The Bahai Cause is a summons to unity on the material and spiritual planes:—

By sending you the prophets and in revealing the books, it was intended that men should attain unto the knowledge of God and become united and agreed (Baha-O-Llah—*Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, page 10).

Abdul Baha was asked: *What is the essence of the Bahai message?* He answered:

The Bahai message is a call to religious unity and not an invitation to a new religion, not a new path to immortality. God forbid! It is the ancient path cleared of the debris of imaginations and superstitions of men, of the debris of strife and misunderstanding, and is

again made a clear path to the sincere seeker, that he may enter therein in assurance and find that the word of God is one word, though the speakers were many. (From a Booklet No. 9, published under the supervision of the American National Spiritual Assembly).

When a *seeker* wrote to him, asking practically the same question, he replied:

The Cause of Baha-U-Llah is the same as the Cause of Christ. It is the same temple and the same foundation. Both of these are spiritual springtimes, and seasons of the soul-refreshing awakening and the cause of the renovation of the life of mankind. The spring of this year is the same as the spring of last year. The origins and ends are the same. The sun of today is the sun of yesterday. In the coming of Christ, the divine teachings were given in accordance with the infancy of the human race. The teachings of Baha-U-Llah have the same basic principles, but are according to the stage of the maturity of the world and the requirements of this illumined age. (*Tablets of Abdul Baha*, Vol. III, page 535.)

Concerning the work that the Bahais are commanded to do, Abdul Baha said:—

We are commanded to quicken the souls, to train the characters, to illumine the realm of man, to guide all the inhabitants of the earth, to create concord and unity among all men and to lead the world of humanity to the fountain of the everlasting Glory. The reformation of one Empire is not our aim; nay rather we invoke God that all the regions of the world be reformed and cultivated, the republics of men become the manifestors

of the bounty of the most glorious Lord, the East and the West be brought nearer together . . . in brief, all the nations and peoples of the world become as one soul and one spirit, in order that strife and warfare be entirely removed and rancor and hostility disappear, so that all become as the waves of one ocean, the drops of one sea, the flowers of one rose-garden, the trees of one orchard, the grains of one harvest and the plants of one meadow. (*Tablets of Abdul Baha*, Vol. III, page 490.)

Thus, it is evident that the Bahai Cause is a system of spiritual ethics and divine morality made imminent and compelling by the mighty personalities of Baha-O-Allah and Abdul Baha. This practical aspect of the movement becomes apparent as we read these words:—

To be no cause of grief to any one.

To be kind to all people and to love them with a pure spirit.

To look always at the good and not at the bad. If a man has ten good qualities and one bad one, look at the ten and forget the one. And if a man has ten bad qualities and one good one, to look at the one and forget the ten.

To be as one soul in many bodies; for the more we love each other, the nearer we shall be to God.

—Words of Abdul Baha from a booklet *No. 9*, published under the supervision of the American National Spiritual Assembly.

No Organization for the Bahai Cause

The Bahai Cause is not in opposition to any religion, nor is it a movement to organize the spiritual susceptibilities of

men. It offers us the Scriptures of the World's Faiths but, at the same time, it reminds us that the religions that have grown around these Holy Words must be purified of the man-made paraphernalia which cloak and obscure them. If we throw away the shell—organization—at the very core we shall find the kernel—Love—in all its splendor and simplicity—and that Love will make us free!

Throughout his life, Abdul Baha was most emphatic on this subject: No organization, no ecclesiasticism and theology, no limitations and restrictions in the Bahai Cause. On this tree, all the birds are invited to build their nests and raise their broods. Toward this heaven, they all can soar and flood the earth with their golden songs. In order to engrave the vital principle of non-organization upon the minds of the Bahais, East and West, North and South, Abdul Baha often spoke on this subject, with power and authority:—

The Bahai Movement is not an organization. You cannot organize the Bahai Movement. The Bahai Movement is the spirit of the age. It is the essence of all the highest ideals of this century. The Bahai Cause is an inclusive movement. The teachings of all religions and societies are found here. Christians, Jews, Buddhists, Mohammedans, Zoroastrians, Theosophists, Freemasons, Spiritualists, etc., find their highest aims in this Cause. Socialists and philosophers find their theories fully developed in this movement.

—From a booklet *No. 9*.

A Desire to Organize

The above clear and emphatic words of Abdul Baha were used in the course of public addresses as one of the

most characteristic teachings of the Cause. They were quoted over and over again in numerous articles and sundry publications. Abdul Baha had sounded the clarion-call: No Organization in the Bahai Cause; and the echo of this order reverberated through the corridors of the minds and spirits, for a time—and then it died away.

Let us then acknowledge the fact that the very tissue of the Occidental nature is interpenetrated with the belief that organization is the basis of every successful undertaking, whether material or spiritual. Consequently, quite a large number of the early American Bahais found it difficult to reconcile themselves to Abdul Baha's views on the matter; yet, the magnetic personality of the Master held them in a trance, his utterances overawed them and they repeated his teachings, trying to convince themselves that they believed in them. All the while, however, doubts and objections were rising in their hearts: How, and by what mysterious methods could the Bahai Cause establish itself in the Western world without the prop of organization? Not comprehending the A.B.C. of a free spiritual movement, they did not have sufficient confidence to sincerely try out the plan in order to see whether or not it would work.

First Organized Unit

The impulse on the American continent to organize the Bahai Cause manifested itself as far back as 1900-03, when reports reached this country of the first *Mashreq-Ul-Azkar* (Bahai Temple of Worship) erected in Ishkabad, Russia. At this time, the members of a *Spiritual Committee* in Chicago requested Abdul Baha to grant them per-

mission to construct the second *Mashreq-Ul-Azkar* in the United States.

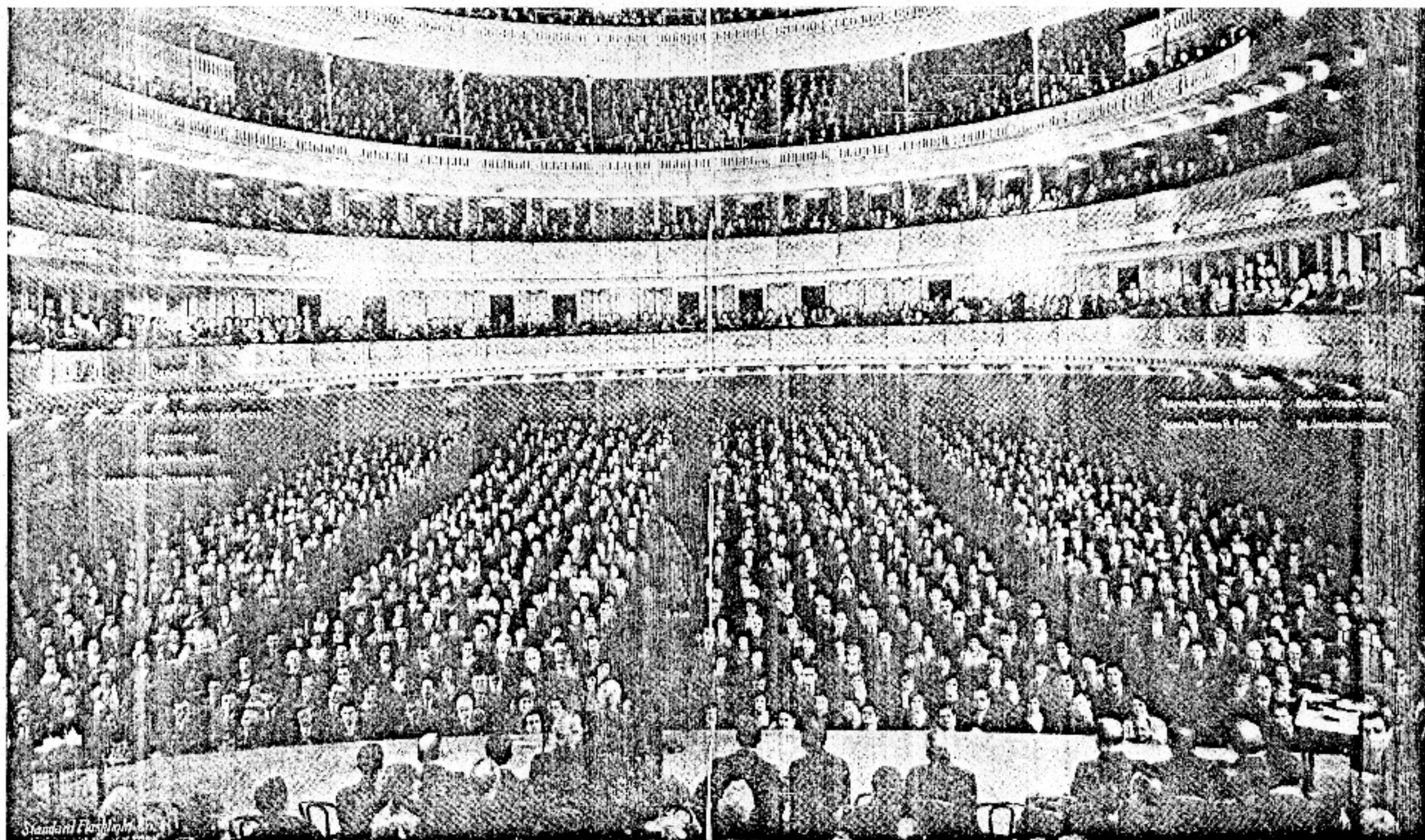
Baha-O-Llah in the Book of Aqdas had left this instruction:—

O concourse of creation! O people of God! Construct homes or houses in the most beautiful fashion possible, in every city, in every land, in the name of the Lord of religions. Adorn them with that which becometh them, not with pictures or paintings. Then commemorate thy Lord, the Merciful, the Clement, in spirit and fragrance. Verily, by His mention, by this commemoration, the breasts shall be dilated, the eyes illumined, the hearts gladdened; and thus shall you pray to the orient of praises, in the Mashreq-Ul-Azkar.

Here then was a problem. How could an unorganized spiritual group build a Temple? This was quite a legitimate question, possibly a difficult one to answer; yet, it would have been wise to find out how, and by what methods the Temple at Ishkabad had been built. Possibly the right solution lay there. At any rate, on November 26, 1907, the first Convention was called; it was attended by nine delegates, and they assembled the rudiments of the machinery to be used, had the news broadcast throughout the country and arranged for the reception of contributions from various Bahai groups and individuals.

The second Convention which met on March 22nd and 23rd, 1909, was attended by 36 delegates, and a more thorough and elaborate business foundation was laid. It resulted in the appearance of

The Bahai Temple Unity, as an organization, with



The Audience at a Debate held in February, 1932, at Carnegie Hall,
a view of the platform,

New York, under the auspices of The New History Society. For
see pages 296-7.

See page 280

full power and authority to provide ways and means for the erection of the Mashreq-Ul-Azkar. A constitution was presented and adopted, and the first executive board of Bahai Temple Unity composed of nine members was elected and authorized by the Convention to close and complete the purchase of the land, recommended by the first Convention. (Read *Brief History of the Mashreq-Ul-Azkar in America* by Mrs. Corinne True, *Star of the West*, Vol. VI, June 24, 1916, No. 6, page 52.)

The *Constitution* adopted at the second Convention, under the name of *The Bahai Temple Unity*, is a very simple document. It consists of a short preamble and ten brief articles, and it has *no* By-laws. It is democratic in that: *the powers of this Unity shall abide in the several Bahai Assemblies* (Article 4). It opens with the statement: *He is God*—the way Abdul Baha commenced his letters to his correspondents, and this unusual, Oriental manner of starting an American constitution is proof enough to me that its framers were single-purposed and sincere, and that it was composed in a sweet informal atmosphere of spiritual spontaneity. As described in the preamble, its only aim was to build the Bahai Temple:—

We, the Bahai Assemblies of North America, in unity convened at the City of Chicago, to the end that we may advance the Cause of God in this Western hemisphere by the founding and erection of a Temple with service accessories dedicated to His Holy Name, and devoted in His love to the service of mankind, do hereby adopt the following Constitution:

Article I: We acknowledge God as the source and

preserver of our Unity, revealed to us through the Manifestation of His Glory in Baha-U-Llah in this day, and declared by the beloved Servant of God and man, Abdul Baha.

—(Read *Star of the West*, Vol. IV, August 1, 1913, No. 8, page 140).

For seven years the *Bahai Temple Unity* labored, held annual conventions, published literature, collected funds, increased its powers and waxed strong under the above Constitution.

The 12th Annual Mashreq-Ul-Azkar Convention was held in New York, April 26-29, 1920. The *Star of the West*, Vol. XI, September 27, 1920, No. 11, gives us a Report of this Convention and, in the course of this Report the *Constitution and By-laws* of the *Bahai Temple Unity* is published for the second time. Here we find the preamble and the ten articles practically unchanged, except for a few words added here and there, but *Five* brand new Articles on By-laws have been added. Through them, we glimpse a gathering of the forces of organization and receive the impression that something new and slightly alarming is under way.

It remains a tragic commentary on the undeveloped nature of the American Bahais that the institution of the Mashreq-Ul-Azkar (literally: the dawning-place of the mentionings of God), the erection of which was intended to create centers of divine emotions, actually became the mainspring for the organizing of a spiritual cause and was the origin of the reduction of this movement to the status of an ecclesiastical order.

A Sublime Record

At this point in my narrative, I will retrace my steps to the year 1911, when Mr. Horace Holley visited Abdul Baha in Switzerland. The impressions which he received on this occasion were later published in a Booklet entitled, *A Pilgrimage to Thonon*. Now, I lived with Abdul Baha for eight years; I have written extensively on his personality and on his teachings, and have read practically everything that has been recorded about him by those who came in contact with him, but I have yet to find any description of a meeting with the Master that matches this one in sublimity of feeling and expression. Let us then read the words of Mr. Horace Holley as he wrote them on September 3, 1911, in Quattro Torri, Sienna. He has a beautiful message for us, which will do us a great deal of good if we can sense it as he, himself, did at the time:—

The Hotel du Parc lies in the midst of sweeping lawns. Groups of people were walking quietly about under the trees or seated at small tables in the open air. An orchestra played from a near-by pavilion. My wife caught sight of M. Dreyfus conversing with others, and pressed my arm. I looked up quickly. M. Dreyfus had recognized us at the same time, and as the party rose I saw among them a stately old man, robed in a cream-coloured gown, his white hair and beard shining in the sun. He displayed a beauty of stature, an inevitable harmony of attitude and dress I had never seen nor thought of in men. Without having ever visualized the Master, I knew that this was he. My whole body underwent a shock. My heart leaped, my knees weakened, a thrill of acute, receptive feeling flowed from head to foot. I seemed to have turned into some

most sensitive sense-organ, as if eyes and ears were not enough for this sublime impression. In every part of me I stood aware of Abdu'l Baha's presence. From sheer happiness I wanted to cry—it seemed the most suitable form of self-expression at my command. While my own personality was flowing away; even while I exhibited a state of complete humility, a new being not my own *assumed its place*. A glory, as it were, from the summits of human nature poured into me, and I was conscious of a most intense impulse to admire. In Abdu'l Baha I felt the awful presence of Baha'u'llah, and as my thoughts returned to activity I realized that I had thus drawn as near as man now may to pure Spirit and pure Being. This wonderful experience came to me beyond my own volition. I had entered the Master's presence and become the servant of a higher will for its own purpose. *Even my memory of that temporary change of being bears strange authority over me.* I know what men can become; and that single over-charged moment, shining out from the dark mountain mass of all past time, reflects like a mirror I can turn upon all circumstances to consider their worth by an intelligence purer than my own.

After what seemed a cycle of existence, this state passed with a deep sigh, and I advanced to accept Abdu'l Baha's hearty welcome.

Today, as Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, Mr. Horace Holley is the chief exponent and custodian of the Bahai Administration. More than any person, living or dead, he is responsible for the existence of this institution in which he lives and moves and has his being; yet this

same man has known the life of the spirit better than most of us. In my opinion, he was close to a mystic. I wish that he had not let *this state* pass with a deep sigh.

Early Services

A later book of Mr. Horace Holley, written in Paris and published in 1913 by Sigwick and Jackson Ltd., London, is entitled *The Modern Social Religion*. A copy was sent to Abdul Baha in the East. I distinctly remember the occasion when this book was received. The Master was sitting in a rose-garden, where he was accustomed to spend the cool of the day, dictating letters addressed to his friends. A package was brought; I opened it and placed the volume in his hands. He examined it, turning over a few pages and recalling the while, in very affectionate terms, Mr. Holley's visit to him in Thonon. Then, he asked me to translate the first chapter, which was headed *The Outlook*. With closed eyes he listened, and, when I had ended he smiled and said: *Khaily-Khoub! Khaily-Khoub! Marhaba! Marhaba!* (Well done! Well done! Bravo! Bravo!). Then, he dictated a Tablet of appreciation to the author. This Tablet, with a brief review of the book is published in the *Star of the West*, Vol. IV, December 31, 1913, No. 16, page 273.

The next time we come across Mr. Horace Holley is at the 9th Mashreq-ul-Azkar Convention held in Boston, Mass., April 29th to May 2nd, 1917. *Among the speakers were Mr. Horace Holley. . .* He had come to the United States, and was associating with the Bahais and taking his preliminary steps in the service of the Cause. I do not find his name listed among the delegates and therefore must

conclude that he attended the Convention merely as a visitor and as the distinguished author of *A Pilgrimage to Thonon* and *The Modern Social Religion*.

The *Star of the West*, Vol. VIII, August 20, 1917, No. 9, presents a varied and interesting Report of the Convention including extracts from the speeches. Page 118 is devoted to Mr. Horace Holley's address on the subject of *The Oneness of Mankind*. It is a scholarly talk, the keynote of which is struck on a very high plane. Undoubtedly, it impressed the delegates as it later impressed me when I read it. Mr. Holley began:—

We live today in an organized, developed society, among the accumulated resources of the past. The youthful mind, feeling its own solitary weakness in the presence of so much authority and power, tends to discredit its own resources and its own power, and early becomes susceptible to the all-pervading influences of materialism. For, in the broad view of things, materialism is simply the preponderance of external influences over the innate quality of the individual spiritual life. The ordinary mind, therefore, learns to develop its imitative, memorizing qualities at the expense of its creative, independent attributes. It locates authority in institutions, and traditional customs and beliefs rather than in spiritual impulse. In all activities, however, the creative work is done by minds which use accumulated knowledge, tradition and customs as fuel to their own vision. Without such minds in art, science, politics and philosophy—to say nothing of religion—the world would rapidly become stagnant, the slave of material doctrines. The vision of the few keeps alive the faith that the ultimate authority is really invested in the individual soul, for every new advance, every improve-

ment, comes from some soul's independent activity. The spirit creates all things, and without spiritual activity thoughts decay. . . .

These noble thoughts expressing with such irrefutable logic, *that the ultimate authority is really invested in the individual soul and that every new advance, every new improvement, comes from some soul's independent activity*, convinced a number of liberal Bahais that they had found in Mr. Horace Holley a protagonist of the liberty of conscience, one who would help them extricate the Cause from the fetters that were fast accumulating about it. Mr. Horace Holley was living in New York, and, although engaged in business, he little by little had become active in the Cause, beginning to write interesting studies on the Bahai teachings; these were periodically published in the *Star of the West* (see *The Writings of Baha-U-Llah* by Horace Holley, *Star of the West*, Vol. 13, August 1922, No. 5, page 105 and *The Spirit of Abdul Baha*, in two parts, in Vol. 13, No. 6 and 7).

Wire Pulling

The fifteenth Annual Bahai Convention was held in the Auditorium Hotel, Chicago, during April, 1923. A full account of it appears in the *Star of the West*, Vol. 14, No. 3, June 1923, pages 64-82. As is usual, a chief duty of the delegates was the election of the members of the National Spiritual Assembly for the coming year, and around this election a plot was hatched, in which I took part together with Janabe Fazel Mazandrani and Prof. M. R. Shirazi. Naturally we, three itinerant Bahai teach-

ers, had no political inclinations, but in this one instance we had set our hearts on a certain personality which we felt would be an inestimable asset on the National Board, and although we had not taken our chosen candidate into our confidence, we allowed ourselves to pull every string at our disposal in order to bring his name before the delegates.

How well I remember those days, and the fervor that animated me! Now, I was speaking with groups around lunch or dinner tables, again I was sitting behind closed doors in committee rooms until the wee hours of the morning. I stressed our need for an unorthodox and liberal influence in the Cause; I asserted my conviction that our chosen candidate was the man that we had been waiting for, and, in order to prove that my estimate of him was correct, on all occasions I carried his writings with me. Through the reading of certain passages in this, my campaign literature, tears were brought to the eyes of many a delegate.

In this way, we prepared the ground for the election, and finally, in the open meeting, I took my place on the platform with the other speakers.

After seventeen years, I do not remember what I said at that hour or how long I spoke, but thanks to the Report published in the *Star of the West* I can quote a paragraph concerning my address, which evidently was given in true Oriental style:—

Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, in a talk . . . gave a picturesque description of what he thought the new National Assembly, soon to be elected, should be. It should be like a rose, exhaling perfume; like a star, shedding lustre;

like a rain-laden cloud, with life-giving moisture; like a nightingale, sweetly singing; like a well in the oasis of the desert, refreshing the thirsty; like a shady tree, protecting man and beast; like pearls and diamonds, decorating the necks of all humanity; like a searchlight, illuminating the dark places and pointing the goal.

As I read the above words, spread before my eyes in cold, black ink, I see myself as I was then, eager, emotional, an optimist of the most incurable type, and perhaps a convincing one as the record seems to show; for the result of the election was the appointment to office of our chosen candidate—Mr. Horace Holley. Here is the list as printed on the record:—

The Convention after mature deliberation elected the following as the National Spiritual Assembly for the ensuing year: William H. Randall, Alfred E. Lunt, Horace Holley, Roy C. Wilhelm, Louis G. Gregory, Mrs. Corinne True, Mrs. Ella G. Cooper, Mrs. Agnes S. Parsons, Charles Mason Remey.

Consequences

The consequences of this action are a matter of Bahai history. Mr. Horace Holley became a permanent member of the National Spiritual Assembly; in the seventeen Conventions that have followed, he has been re-elected annually, being chosen as Secretary for practically all of this period.

Thus, a Persian trio, Janabe Fazel Mazandrani, Prof. M. R. Shirazi and Mirza Ahmad Sohrab presented Mr. Horace Holley to the Bahai world. Of the three, Prof.

Shirazi has passed from this mortal life; Janabe Fazel is far removed from us in Teheran, and as for Mirza Ahmad Sohrab—well, he pleads guilty before the bar of public opinion and Bahai opinion for having helped to the seat of absolute power a man who has seen fit to alter the Bahai consciousness to a degree which no mind is keen enough to measure and no heart sensitive enough to sufficiently deplore.

The tendency toward organization had, from the very beginning, existed among the American Bahais, but it remained for Mr. Holley to develop it, to officialize it, to make it obligatory and to place the details of Bahai housekeeping (and not very good housekeeping at that) on a level with the Teachings of the Revelator of the Modern Age.

A Social Order for Free Beings

In explanation of my action, I would like to refer to Mr. Holley's book, *The Modern Social Religion*, approved by Abdul Baha, which book I carried with me for many years and from which I drew much confidence and inspiration. As I write, my old copy, well marked, is beside me on the desk. I will here quote some of the passages which at the time I loved and depended on and which, in the light of later developments, I now think very striking.

On page 171, Mr. Horace Holley writes:—

Since Baha-O-Llah's death in 1892, Abdul Baha, *the perfect Bahai*, has not only personified Bahaism as the new relationship of man to society, as well as its emphasis of the Christian relationship of man to God, but

he has effectively spread the Bahai message through Asia, Europe and America. It is difficult to realize at first how this could be done by a prisoner without money, political influence or an ecclesiastical organization.

Then Mr. Holley goes on in a masterful fashion, pointing out the spiritual methods that Abdul Baha used in the promotion of the Cause, and demonstrating that it is possible to serve the Cause without an *ecclesiastical organization*. Again, on page 188:—

If Bahaism represented any such tendency toward disruption and division, it would be no more than another sect struggling for existence and survival in the merciless jungle of society; but its purpose and method of operation combine to render further disintegration impossible. Its purpose is to effect the complete ultimate reconciliation of every existing social fragment, both religious and political, and its method of operation consists in taking its stand within the institution, not outside, and pointing out the true road of development along which the institution, by its own doctrines, if religious, or responsibility, if political, is committed to go. It is, therefore, not hostile to any creed, sect or nation; but is hostile only to that fatal prejudice, bigotry and blindness which prevents creeds, sects and nations from realizing the purpose of their own origin. Bahaism is not the enemy of any Church, for its ideals of human unity and co-operation places its hostages in every race, Church and nation on earth.

On page 189:—

To the Christian, accordingly, the Bahai teaching

brings an obligation to remain within the Church and to obey more fully, not less fully, the Gospel of Christ. . . . The existing religious situation attempts to confine eternal forces to narrow social areas; but Bahaism breaks down the frontiers that cut off one area from another.

On page 191:—

Self-expression, accordingly, represents the supreme obligation and privilege; and God has not given His precious marble of opportunity to the Michael Angelo alone. Life offers every personality the means of beautiful expression, in noble conduct, great thought, or inspiring art. In this individual potentiality and impulse toward self-expression, all men are created free and equal. It is not too much to aver that the greater the mind and spirit, the greater the tendency to respect and admire other personalities, however they may be rated by the world; and the inability to recognize a transcendent and incomparable possibility in every person, must be accepted as the stigma of spiritual insufficiency. Those distinctions, classifications, and judgments which separate society into unsympathetic fragments, proceed from the intellect alone; but intellect itself, when enlightened and vitalized by spirit, gladly perceives and adores the personality latent within all. Upon the individual, then, Bahaism enjoins his spiritual development as the purpose, and hence the supreme obligation of life. For Baha-O-Llah, also, came not to destroy but to fulfill.

On page 194:—

Bahaism is equally explicit concerning the relation-

ship of the individual to society . . . he must bring new enthusiasm and faith to every necessary or constructive relationship, and to existing responsibilities bring a deeper vision of their significance. He must not withdraw from present religious organizations, but reinterpret their function in the light of evolution, endeavor to vitalize their activity, and remove the prejudice and ignorance walling them off from the social unity. . . . He must labor to unite minor organizations in order to make them effective, and to transfer the circumference of social consciousness from the city to the province, the province to the state, the state to the continent, and from the continent to the world.

To render himself effective, he must study the social problem through the most advanced ideas of science, economics and government; and no duty is so important for the believer as to create for his own mind a living, passionate, social ideal—a picture of the divine civilization described by Baha-O-Llah—and Abdul Baha—toward which his purpose may direct its activity and from which his will may be strengthened and revived.

On page 198:—

To sum up what I have termed its morality for institutions, Bahaism teaches that the prosperity and permanence of any religious or political organization is not the end for our personal loyalty; that we should be indifferent to the welfare of mere institutions, creeds, stone walls and iron conventions; but that our most vigorous and devoted loyalty belongs to the cause of humanity as represented by the needs of every environment.

And the last quotation from page 206:—

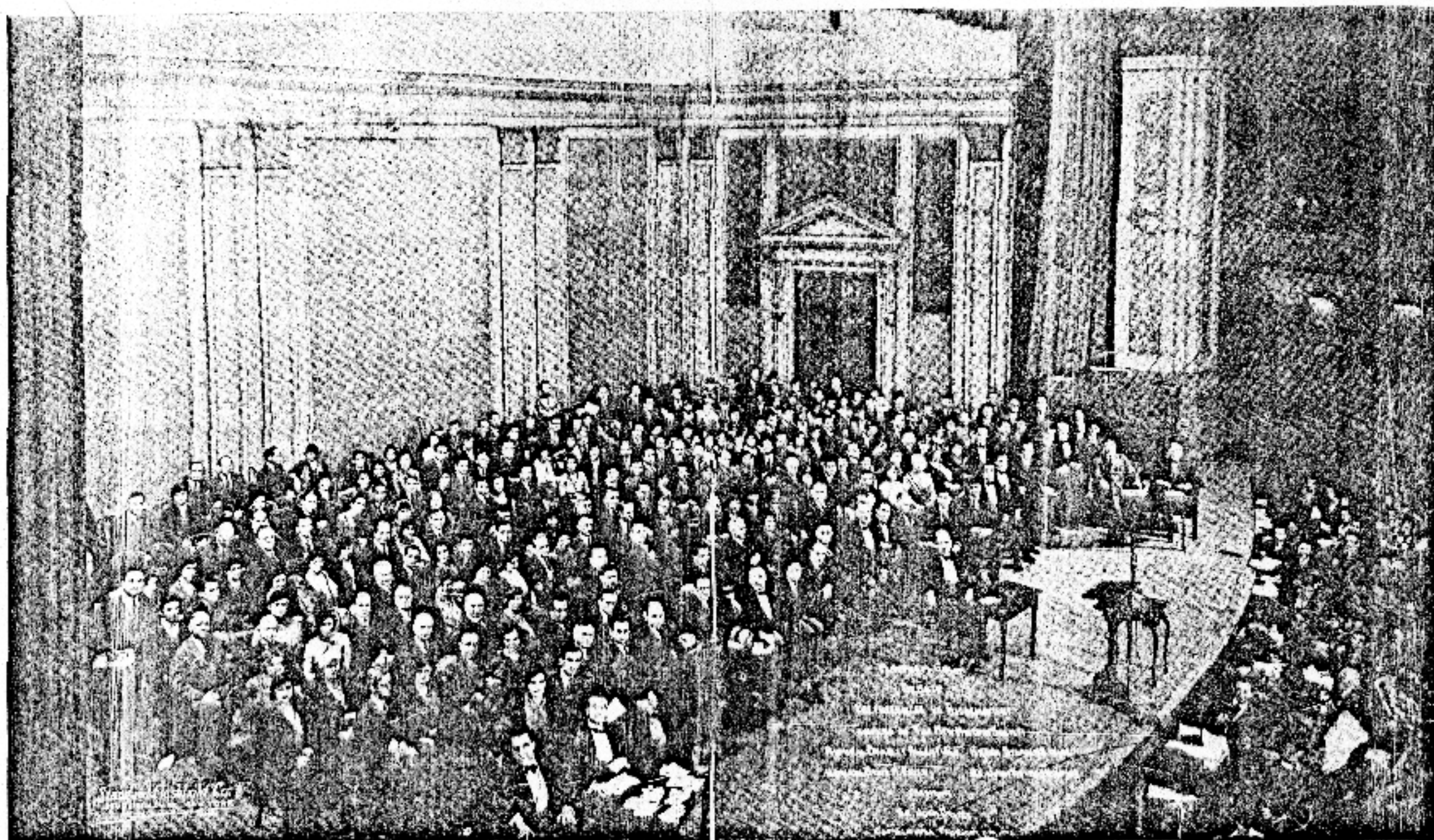
Bahaism desires a new social order in which the development of spiritualized men and women shall be the primary purpose; not supermen whose nature is essentially hostile to the many, but that order of free beings representing our own ideals achieved in daily life and common things. To such an order we already potentially belong, and the highest human fellowship the earth will ever contain will not be otherwise than our own kind, released and inspired by participation in a co-operative society.

On the basis of the above Bahai principles, to which I subscribed then and which I still support, Mr. Horace Holley was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly in 1923. Should he, however, advocate this same teaching in 1942, it is certain that he would not be re-elected to office; nay, rather I have no doubt but that Shoghi Effendi himself, as Guardian of the Cause, would expel him for disseminating doctrines that are totally at variance with the standards of present-day Bahai Administration.

We live and learn, and sometimes we live and forget; so, I would like to close this chapter by repeating the words of Mr. Horace Holley that we should be *indifferent to the welfare of mere institutions : . . that our most vigorous and devoted loyalty belongs to the cause of humanity as represented* (note well the elasticity of the sentiment) *by the needs of every environment.*

CARNEGIE HALL PLATFORM

The Platform at a Debate held in February, 1932, at Carnegie Hall,
New York, under the auspices of The New History Society.



Debate under the auspices of The New History Society, held in Carnegie Hall, New York, on February 8, 1932.

Subject: Resolved that Continuous Preparedness is Necessary for the United States.

Affirmative: Admiral Bradley A. Fisk and General Amos A. Fries.

Negative: Rabbi Stephen S. Wise and Rev. John Haynes Holmes.

Chairman
Prof. John Dewey

See page 296

CHAPTER XI

DEVELOPMENT OF THE BAHAI ORGANIZATION

The Divine Plan

During World War I, while all communications between Palestine and the outside world were cut off, Abdul Baha was not inactive. As a patriarch, he guided the affairs of the communities in Haifa, Acca and Tiberias, supervised extensive works of agriculture through which the monster of starvation was kept under control, and last, but far from least, revealed the mighty document known as the Divine Plan. It was as messenger of the Master that, shortly after the close of hostilities, I sailed for the United States bearing with me these incomparable Tablets.

Map of Bahai Unity

The Tablets were unveiled at the Eleventh Bahai Convention in New York, from April 26th to April 30th, 1919, unfolding a new conception for the promotion of the Bahai principles around the earth. Among the different committees that prepared the program of the Convention, that of Publicity was naturally one of the most important. Mr. Horace Holley served on this committee and, doubtless, his imagination was stirred, as was that of everybody, by the dramatic Tablets of Abdul Baha. Consequently, on February 15, 1921, he circulated among the Bahais a mimeographed pamphlet of twelve pages, en-

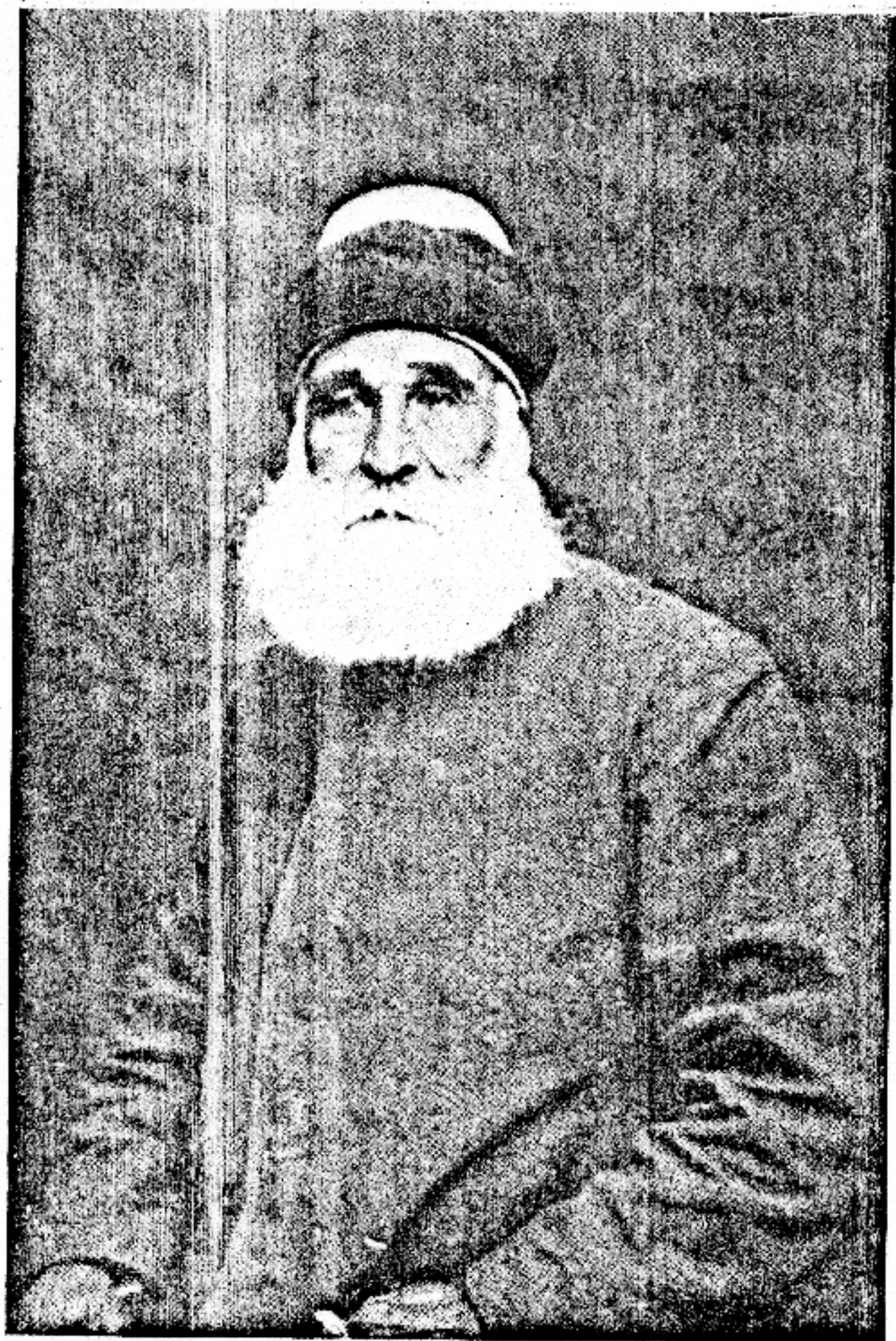
titled: *Map of Bahai Unity in North America*. The following description was incorporated therein: *Mutualizing the efforts of believers throughout Canada and the United States to fulfill the principles as set forth by Abdul Baha in the Divine Plan*.

Now, it would have been inappropriate to distrust an innocent *map* which was to *mutualize* (a nice word, by the way!) the efforts of the believers. The truth is that I fell into the trap. Who knew the significance of the Divine Plan better than I? Abdul Baha had dictated it to me, word by word; he had, on numerous occasions, discussed its contents with me, and I had kept notes in my diary of all that he had said; more than that, at his command I had committed to memory all those Tablets, so that in case the originals should either be confiscated at the frontiers or else lost during my long journey from Palestine to the United States, I would be in a position to reproduce them in their entirety after my landing in New York. With book in hand, he often had made me recite them to him from beginning to end, checking mistakes, correcting lapses of memory, until every sentence shone like a jewel in the chamber of my mind.

Well, that is a story in itself, but the point is that I would have welcomed any map that had power to put in motion the plan of Abdul Baha. Consequently, Mr. Holley's map fascinated me, and I was especially pleased because the booklet was headed with Abdul Baha's classic remark: *The Bahai Cause is not an Organization*.

The article later continues:—

Heeding the words of Abdul Baha, that the Bahai



SEYYED ASSADOLLAH, disciple of Baha-O-Llah, itinerant Bahai teacher, and travelling companion of Abdul Baha during the latter's visit to the United States.

Movement is not an organization, but on the contrary the Spirit of Organization, the Map is based not upon the factor of authority but upon that of the various services which the Divine Plan calls upon all the friends of God to perform. These services are analyzed in the form they have been performed in the past, and no new elements have been introduced except such as more closely knit together the different Assemblies, and the different National Committees in one active fellowship

Two Mystifying Points

Even in 1921, two points in this *map* mystified me.

FIRST: If the Bahai Movement is not an organization, how could it be the *spirit* of organization? If a glass be not full, how can it be the *spirit* of fullness? If a shoe be not comfortable, how can it be the *spirit* of comfort? If a statesman be not liberal, how can he be the *spirit* of liberalism? This argument seemed like sophistry, but the mass of the Bahais, and this includes myself, were very simple folk, ready to approve anything that promised to further the interests of the Cause they loved so much.

SECOND: The assurance that the *Map is based not upon the factor of authority*. Here, I sensed something foreign, but could not place my finger on it. The Map and its charts on page 4 gave unmistakable evidences of a concentration of authority in the various agencies that were to be set up; but inasmuch as this *authority* was rather well concealed, one could not very well yield oneself up to suspicion.

Be that as it may, I now consider this *Map of Bahai Unity in North America*, drawn up and elaborated by Mr.



MIRZA ABUL FAZL, Dean of the University of Hakim-Hashem in Teheran, Persia, in 1873. Disciple of Baha-O-Llah; Bahai historian and philosopher; author of *The Bahai Proofs*, and greatest of Bahai teachers.

Horace Holley, as a most important contributory document to the unification and vocalization of the reactionary desires of those whose aim it was to listen for the thunder of external authority rather than to the still small voice, and who placed the resourcefulness of the material mind above the effulgent rays of the heavenly consciousness.

The Bahais of the United States and Canada had by this time, by means of successive conventions, organized their material resources for the building of a *Temple of stone in Chicago*, as Mr. Horace Holley aptly describes it in his *Map of Bahai Unity in North America*. On the other hand, the *Temple of hearts* (which also is Mr. Holley's term) was left free and unorganized. Then lo and behold! Mr. Holley suddenly burst upon the scene with a proposed *working model* for the regimentation of that very *Temple of hearts*, even as we already have a *model to guide us in building the Temple of stone*, and we, all trustingly, offered our poor hearts, (which were soon to sustain the equivalent of finger-printing and card filing) thereby relinquishing our Bahai birthright. *Where there is no vision the people perish!*

I hope that I will be excused if I take the liberty of paraphrasing the 11th and 12th verses of I Kings, Chapter XIX, with application to the subject at hand:

And Abdul Baha said: Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Word. And, behold, the Divine Plan passed by; and a great and strong wind (*Bahai organization*) rent the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks before the Divine Plan, but the Divine Plan was not in the wind: and after the wind, an earthquake (*Map of Bahai Unity in North America*); but the Divine Plan was not

in the earthquake. And after the earthquake, a fire (*Bahai Administration*); but the Divine Plan was not in the fire; and after the fire, a still small voice. And it was so: the Divine Plan with its multitude of stars was still shining!

I will now recapitulate, and summarize the steps on which depended

The Evolution of the Bahai Organization

FIRST: On March 22nd and 23rd, 1909, an organization was formed under the name of *The Bahai Temple Unity*. A simple constitution having ten brief articles and no By-laws was adopted. In print, it took less than a page of the *Star of the West*.

SECOND: On April 26, 1920, the same constitution, with the addition of a few words here and there and five Articles on By-laws, was adopted for the second time. It still carried the title, *The Bahai Temple Unity* and in print, it takes a little less than two pages of the *Star of the West*. The object of the Bahai Temple Unity, armed with its two Constitutions, was the building of a *Temple of stone*.

THIRD: On February 15, 1921, Mr. Horace Holley promulgated the *Map of Bahai Unity in North America*, or the organization of the *Temple of hearts*, which was the counterpart of the Constitutions of the *Temple of stone*. In mimeograph form it takes 12 pages, 8½ by 11 size, to outline the Map.

FOURTH: On May 2, 1926, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada (note: no longer *The Bahai Temple Unity*), composed

of nine persons: *establish a Trust as hereinafter set forth, hereby declare that from this date the powers, responsibilities, rights, privileges and obligations . . . shall be exercised, administered and carried on by the above-named National Spiritual Assembly and their duly qualified successors under this Declaration of Trust.* It selects for itself the designation of *Trustees of the Bahais of the United States and Canada.* The spirituality that one could somehow feel in the two previous constitutions is utterly missing in this portentous and formidable Declaration of Trust. It is an ice-bound, juridical document. Its articles are like hailstones that pierce and cut into the heart of the reader; its phrases are so wind-laden that they transform the balmy atmosphere of the Paradise of Abha into the frigid immensities of Nova Zembla; it is the apotheosis of an inflexible organization, the hypostasis of the machine; it is the Bastille of Paris, the Tower of London and the Concentration Camp of the Third Reich all rolled into one, and striking terror into the soul of a most hardy champion of freedom of conscience! This Document of *Declaration of Trust* consists of thirteen printed pages, nine pages of which are devoted to the enumeration of 12 Articles of By-laws, some running into 12 and 13 Sections (*Bahai Administration*, pages 141-153).

The Framers of the Declaration of Trust

The above declaration of Trust and By-laws is the Magna Charta of the present-day Bahai Administration. Therefore, it is important to try to discover its original framers. A close study of the letters of Shoghi Effendi gives us some very interesting clues. Our preliminary find-

ing is that this document was prepared in two sections. The first is called *Declaration of Trust*; the second, *By-Laws of the National Spiritual Assembly*.

We are able to dispose of the second section very quickly, for Shoghi Effendi, himself, in his letter written from Haifa, Palestine, on October 18, 1927, acknowledges that it was: *drawn up by that highly-talented, much-beloved servant of Baha-U-Allah, Mountfort Mills*. So, it is quite evident that an American attorney wrote the By-laws. There can be no doubt about that. It is the brainchild of a single person, and is fully endorsed by Shoghi Effendi.

In seeking the framer or framers of the *Declaration of Trust*, our task is a little more difficult. We are therefore entitled to guess, and I hope that the reader will allow me a margin of error which I will be glad to fill in with any corrections.

At the very start, let us clearly understand that Mr. Horace Holley, as Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly, is the main official channel of communication between Shoghi Effendi and the American and Canadian Bahais. Shoghi Effendi writes occasional letters to individuals through his secretary, but wide and indiscriminate correspondence with him is definitely discouraged, and even the local assemblies and national committees are forbidden to mail their letters directly to the Guardian, but must send them through the National Spiritual Assembly (See *Bahai Procedure*, Section II, Sheet 20).

This close supervision of correspondence between Shoghi Effendi and the Bahais gives the National Spiritual Assembly paramount censorial rights and privileges. As secretary, Mr. Holley writes *all* the letters that are sent to

Shoghi Effendi on behalf of the National Spiritual Assembly; likewise, Shoghi Effendi's letters to the Assembly are received first by him. The Guardian holds Mr. Holley in high esteem as is shown by his letters to the National Spiritual Assembly, some of which are contained in *Bahai Administration*, published on November 30, 1927. These communications usually open with a phrase expressing appreciation of Mr. Holley, such as: *The letters which our able and devoted Mr. Horace Holley has addressed in your behalf. Or, the three communications . . . which I have received from that indefatigable servant of Baha-U-Llah, my esteemed spiritual brother Mr. Holley, have given me great satisfaction and have cheered and sustained me in my work. Or, I have perused your recent communication dated . . . and signed on your behalf by your vigilant and capable secretary; or again: The first printed issue of the National Spiritual Assembly's News Letter prepared and signed on behalf of the Assembly by its able secretary stands as a bright and eloquent testimony of his thoroughness, his industry, his conspicuous ability, his undoubted sacrifice.*

I have quoted the above to show the confidence in Mr. Holley that is expressed by the Guardian, and now I come to my point, namely: to try to identify the author of the *Declaration of Trust* of the Bahai Administration. My personal belief is that it was written by Mr. Horace Holley, either alone or else with the assistance of a very few close associates, and possibly of a jurist or two for the legal phrasing of its contents. At any rate, Mr. Horace Holley had a part in its composition and a very conspicuous one; of that I have no doubt.

That my guess may not be far from the truth is shown in the text of Shoghi Effendi's letter written on the receipt of the *Declaration of Trust* and dated May 27, 1927. He says: *The Declaration of Trust, the provisions of which you have so splendidly conceived, and formulated with such assiduous care, marks yet another milestone on the road of progress along which you are patiently and determinedly advancing.* The letter, of course, is addressed to the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, but one wonders who is this *you* that *conceived* and *formulated* the *Declaration of Trust*? Is it a singular or a collective you? Yet, of one thing we are sure: It is an *American you* and not a *Persian you*. Like the *By-laws*, it was originated and given currency in these United States; and the point that I want to establish and which I believe is already proven beyond a shadow of doubt, is that the *Declaration of Trust* and *By-laws* originated in the brain of an American, or in the brains of Americans and that the Bab, Baha-O-Llah and Abdal Baha had nothing to do with it.

Essential Uniformity

Somehow or other, through a process that I could never understand, Shoghi Effendi, from the very beginning, was attracted to this *Declaration of Trust* and *By-laws* and, in time, he came to consider it as the handiwork of God. So enamored with it was he that he caused the formation of National Spiritual Assemblies in Egypt, Persia, India, Iraq, England, Australia, etc.—East and West—with the injunction that all must adopt this very *Declaration of Trust* and *By-laws* as principles of *their own* Bahai Ad-

ministration. In this manner, he has introduced into the bubbling, effervescent, joyous and free Bahai Cause such a deadening uniformity that one cannot find its like even in the antiquated and dying religions. Here is the order of the Guardian in regard to the Egyptian Bahais:

I have insisted that the provisions of their constitution should, in all its details, conform to the text of the Declaration of Trust and By-laws which you have established, endeavoring thereby to preserve the uniformity which I feel is essential in all Bahai National Constitutions. I would like, in this connection to request of you, what I have already intimated to them, that whatever amendments you may decide to introduce in the text of the Declaration and By-laws, should be duly communicated to me, that I may take the necessary steps for the introduction of similar changes in the text of all other National Bahai Constitutions.

—World Order of Baha-U-Llah, page 11.

I can well imagine the state of mind of the Eastern Bahais, who are accustomed to soar in the boundless atmosphere of love and spirituality, when they were presented with this harsh and legalistic Constitution and told that they must adopt it, in all its details, without the least allowance being made for *their own mode of thought and life*; together with the further requirement that, whenever their American masters chose to introduce any amendments to this Constitution, they, the poor, dumb, Oriental Bahais, must slavishly add the same amendments to their own copies, whether applicable or not. I can picture the consternation and disquietude that gripped the souls of

those tried and true Bahais when they received this document and were asked to sign on the dotted line.

These spiritual stalwarts of Baha-O-Llah, these brilliant scholars of Abdul Baha, who had cast a commotion through the pillars of the earth by their subtle philosophical thinking and daring example, were treated as regiments of robots to be moved hither and thither by the legislations of a few shrewd American benchers, neat-handed pleaders and deft draftsmen. They were no longer expected to think or to retain a single idea in their minds. With the acceptance of the *Declaration of Trust and By-laws* concocted in the United States, their subjection and vassalage was sealed from everlasting to everlasting by the order from Shoghi Effendi that: *no departure from these cardinal and clearly enunciated principles, embodied and preserved in Bahai National and local constitutions . . . can under any circumstances be tolerated.* (*The Advent of Divine Justice*, page 52.)

Divine Origin

It took the Christians several centuries to deprive Jesus of the dignity of normal birth and foist super-human parentage upon him, but it took the Bahais only the twinkling of an eye to discount the material origin of the Administration and to set it up as divinely conceived. Let us note the words of Shoghi Effendi:

A word should now be said regarding the theory on which this Administrative Order is based and the principle that must govern the operation of its chief institutions. It would be utterly misleading to attempt a comparison between this unique, this divinely-con-

ceived order and any of the diverse systems which the minds of men, at various periods of their history, have contrived for the government of human institutions.

—*World Order of Baha-U-Llah*, page 152.

Thus, divine origin was conferred upon the Administration, but it seems that this was not sufficiently specific. A more definite source should be pointed to and this was found in no less a person than Baha-O-Llah himself. Shoghi Effendi declares:—

Let no one, while this system is still in its infancy, misconceive its character, belittle its significance or misrepresent its purpose. The bedrock on which this Administrative Order is founded is God's immutable Purpose for mankind in this day. The Source from which it derives its inspiration is no less than Baha-U-Llah Himself. Its shield and defender are the embattled hosts of the Abha Kingdom. Its seed is the blood of no less than 20,000 martyrs who have offered up their lives that it may be born and flourish.

—*World Order of Baha-U-Llah*, page 156.

I myself cannot help wondering what the poor martyrs would have thought, if they had known that they were giving up their lives for an American *corporation* instead of for a Persian *Cause*!

Even as he had claimed divine origin for the *Declaration of Trust* and *By-laws* of the Administration, Shoghi Effendi gives a high station to its framers. He writes:—

Few, if any, I venture to assert, among these privileged framers and custodians of the constitution of the Faith of Baha-U-Llah are even dimly aware of the preponderating role which the North American continent

is destined to play in the future orientation of their world-embracing Cause. Nor does any appreciable number among them seem sufficiently conscious of the decisive influence which they already exercise in the direction and management of its affairs.

—*World Order of Baha-U-Llah*, page 53.

Having to the best of my ability shown the origin, growth and development of the Bahai Organization, which record will not, I hope, embitter nor discourage us, I will return to the life-imparting words of Abdul Baha, which are addressed to all:—

Be ye not seated and silent! Diffuse the glad-tidings of the Kingdom far and wide to the ears, promulgate the Word of God . . . that is, arise ye with such qualities and attributes that ye may continually bestow life to the body of the world, and nurse the infants of the universe up to the station of maturity and perfection. Enkindle with all your might in every meeting the light of the love of God, gladden and cheer every heart with the utmost loving-kindness, show forth your love to the strangers just as you show forth to your relations. If a soul is seeking to quarrel, ask ye for reconciliation; if he blame ye, praise (him); if he give you a deadly poison, bestow ye an all-healing antidote; if he createth death, administer ye eternal life; if he becometh a thorn, change ye into roses and hyacinths. Perchance, through such deeds and words, this darkened world will become illuminated, this terrestrial universe will become transformed into a heavenly realm, and this satanic prison become a divine court; warfare and bloodshed be annihilated, and love and faithfulness hoist the tent of unity upon the apex of the world.

—*Tablets of Abdul Baha*, Vol. III, pages 503, 504.

UNITED STATES



Leonard L. Kimball
University of Michigan,
Ann Arbor,
Michigan

FIRST PRIZE
WINNERS
IN FIVE
COMPETITIONS

EUROPE



Russell M. Cooper

American, studying at
L'Institut Universitaire
de Hautes Etudes Inter-
national, Geneva, Switz-
erland

LATIN AMERICA



Celso Frota Pessoa
Polytechnic School of
the University of Rio
de Janeiro, Brazil

ASIA



Louise Pin Yen Chang
Chow Yang University,
Peiping, China

AFRICA, AUSTRALIA
CANADA
NEW ZEALAND



Wycliffe Mlungisi Tsotsi
Blythswood Institution,
Butterworth, S. Africa

EIGHT COMPETITIONS OF THE NEW HISTORY SOCIETY

Conscious of the approaching storm that was threatening our civilization during the fateful Thirties, The New History Society felt impelled to spread throughout the world, as far as was possible, the principles which must form the basis of a New Society. Therefore, from the year 1931 on through 1939, its main activity consisted in the conducting of eight Annual Prize Competitions, offered successively to the youth of the five continents and the inhabitants of the world on various international topics. By this means, the knowledge of the Bahai Cause and its principles was actually disseminated in all avenues of life in practically every country, and an unprecedented volume of correspondence was initiated with thousands of inquirers in every part of the earth.

The labor involved in the undertaking was great and, as it was largely contributed, this went far toward lessening the total cost. Nevertheless, the expenses of the Seven Regional Competitions together with the World Competition passed the figure of One Hundred Thousand Dollars, this including the First, Second, Third and Special Prizes, the translating and printing of the Conditions and of leaflets in eleven languages, the mailing, secretarial work and other items.

The originals of *all* the Papers submitted by the contestants in the eight Competitions were bound in 75 large volumes and placed in the library of The New History Society. These have been and still are available to the students of human thought and to those who are interested in learning of the ideas which were uppermost in the minds of the youth of the world as well as of its elders during the crucial years—1931-1939.

The Competitions offered, year by year, were on the following subjects:—

FIRST COMPETITION

Offered to the Youth of the United States of America, in 1931.

Subject: *How Can the Colleges Promote World Peace?*

* * *

SECOND COMPETITION

Offered to the Youth of Europe, in 1932.

Subject: *How Can the Youth of the Universities and Schools Contribute to the Realization of a United States of the World?*

THIRD COMPETITION

Offered to the Youth of South and Central America, Mexico, the West Indies and adjacent Islands, in 1933.

Subject: *How Can the Youth of the Universities and Professional Schools Contribute to the Reconstruction of the Human Commonwealth?*

* * *

FOURTH COMPETITION

Offered to the Youth of Asia, in 1934.

Subject: *How Can Youth Contribute to the Realization of a Universal Religion?*

* * *

FIFTH COMPETITION

Offered to the Youth of Africa, Australia, Canada and New Zealand, in 1935.

Subject: *How Can Youth Develop Co-operative and Harmonious Relations Among the Races of the Earth?*

* * *

SIXTH COMPETITION

Offered to the Population of the World, in 1936-1937.

Subject: *How Can the People of the World Achieve Universal Disarmament?*

* * *

SEVENTH COMPETITION

Offered to the People of the United States and its Outlying Possessions and Territories, in 1938.

Subject: *How Can Cultural and Social Values of Racial Minorities in the United States and its Outlying Possessions and Territories be Adjusted and Harmonized?*

* * *

EIGHTH COMPETITION

Offered to the Visitors at the New York World's Fair and the Inhabitants of the United States and Canada, 1939.

Subject: *What Influence Would a Bible of Mankind Exert on the World of Tomorrow?*

CHAPTER XII

ESTABLISHMENT OF BAHAI ADMINISTRATION

A Great Asset

Abdul Baha said: *The Bahai Cause is not an organization*; and, because this rule made of the movement something altogether new in the world of religion, something provocative and fascinating, the Bahais took it up with enthusiasm and featured it on all occasions.

Now, it was a good advertising phrase too; the public liked it, and the intelligentsia looked upon the Cause with favor on account of this very principle. Everybody, therefore, who was at all familiar with the Bahai Teachings, became accustomed to stress the point and to consider it as a great asset.

Unexpected Opportunities

Time passed; the World War, with separation from the Master even through correspondence, gave the Bahai leaders unexpected opportunities to leave their imprint on the affairs of the Cause. They were not without ideas of their own, and so they began to set these forth in articles. In one instance, the services of Mr. Charles Mason Remey were called for, and his statement *written at the request of several friends* appears in the *Star of the West*, Vol. 12, No. 9, August 20, 1921, under the title *Bahai Organization*. The author of this commentary begins cautiously, not so much disputing the authenticity of the words of Abdul

Baha: *The Bahai Cause can never be organized*, but, stating that: *from one short excerpt from the holy words, separated from its context, erroneous meanings may be obtained*. In this, however, Mr. Remey is wrong, because Abdul Baha's statement on the non-organization of the Bahai Cause consists of a compact closely-knit paragraph, one phrase leading to another.

Again, Mr. Remey writes:—

Some of the friends of the Bahai Cause have been a little confused regarding the organization of the holy Cause because of the wide circulation of some words, to the effect that this Cause should never be organized—thus some have imagined that no form of Bahai organization should exist. Now of late, we are informed by pilgrims returning to their homes from Palestine that Abdul Baha has explained that these words, circulated to the effect that the Cause should never be organized, give an impression very different from the reality of his teachings.

Mr. Remey refers to a *little* confusion among *some* of the friends. Here, he underestimates, for there was a *big* confusion; and not only that, there was a mortal struggle going on among *all* the friends regarding this, which was considered a fundamental issue: Spiritual Liberty versus Ecclesiastical Authority.

A more official attempt to defeat the forces of liberalism in the Cause was made a little later when the National Spiritual Assembly appointed a committee of three to prepare and submit a Report on Bahai Organization. This document, which bears close reading, is published in the

Star of the West, Vol. XIII, No. 12, March 1923, page 323. It opens:—

Organization in the Bahai Movement rests upon the sure foundation of the Word of God.

and later in the same document:—

At Haifa, Syria, in 1920, the following question was asked Abdul Baha by some American pilgrims:—

“It is misleading, is it not, to say that the Bahai Cause cannot be organized?” Abdul Baha replied: “How is it possible that there should be no organization?”

The so-called pilgrims who put the above question must have been a group of tricky and astute lawyers, very much like the Pharisees who tried to catch Jesus with the question: *Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar?*; but even the Pharisees did not make use of the suggestive negative, saying. It is not lawful, is it, to give tribute to Caesar? At any rate, this informal oral answer to the pilgrim's question was made full use of, and by the time that Abdul Baha had departed from this life, affairs were shaping themselves according to American standards.

What's in a Name?

The officials now began to soft-pedal the phrase: *The Bahai Cause is not an organization*, and to remove it, little by little, from conspicuous places in their literature; yet, to their discomfiture, the words remained engraven on the minds of the people. What was to be done? The leaders wondered and then, possibly remembering Juliet's desire for a Romeo who would not be called Romeo, re-

peated to themselves her words, or others to the same effect: *What's in a name? A rose by any other name would smell as sweet*, and presto, the answer was found! The Bahai Cause was not an organization, but it could well be the *spirit* of organization under another name. Names were numerous; and so the fond parents picked out a word, perhaps from the dictionary, called in their friends and a little christening party was held at which the *organization* became the *Administration*.

The first issue of *Bahai News* to be reserved for the affairs of the Administration made its appearance in December, 1924; and from then on this publication, more or less regularly, printed editorials on Bahai Administration and its principles. One of the most subtle moves was made as far back as 1927 when a writer, in an editorial, tried to identify *administrative success* with *moral success*. Quite a clever bit of propaganda! He says:—

Because in the Bahai Faith this perfect correspondence exists between spiritual and social laws, let us ever bear in mind that *administrative success*, for Bahais, is identical with moral success.

—Bahai News, May 1927, Special Number.

Thus, the campaign developed, increasing in momentum and presently *all* reports, programs, lectures, publicity, radio broadcasts, annual Conventions, youth activities, membership, elections became *colored* with expressions becoming to the Administration; until finally in 1928, a book containing the early letters of Shoghi Effendi was published under the title *Bahai Administration*. This book, with the authority back of it, crystallized the plan and made the name permanent.

Consolidation

The process of educating the Bahais in the laws of the Administration continued year by year, without let or hindrance. *Bahai News*, January, 1930, No. 37, carries a front page editorial on Bahai Administration. It states that, at a recent meeting, the National Spiritual Assembly voted to request the local Assemblies to arrange classes for the study of Bahai Administration, and that the character of Bahai Administration is such that its full power and significance can only be manifest when the believers are not only thoroughly informed, but imbued with its power. The writer goes on to explain in detail why there was no administration in the days of Abdul Baha and then in a very few significant lines gives himself away:—

The years since November 28, 1921 (the day of the departure of Abdul Baha) have, consequently, been largely devoted to the elimination of any *non-Bahai* views which might exist and to our re-education in Bahai Administration by the Guardian.

Only the old Bahais can appreciate what the writer means by *the elimination of any non-Bahai views*. It was no gentle elimination, but actually a Hitlerian purge conducted with full present-day Nazi efficiency. And as to *re-education!* That is where the *give-away* comes in; for in that period, which the writer frankly designates as dating from the departure of the Master, the poor simple Bahais were educated along totally different lines from those which they knew and loved, and which they believed to be the *Cause*.

In the course of time, *Bahai Administration* by Shoghi

Effendi became a textbook, a sacred scripture to be read in meetings and at Conventions, and to be studied in classes.

The special value of Bahai Administration, the need of training in it and its exercise in a way that will keep all the people of a community busy received much emphasis from the delegates in conference.

—Bahai News, May 1931, No. 52.

Its precepts had to be followed by all the Local Bahai Communities:

Permit no circumstance, however grievous, to lead you astray from the firm highway of the administrative order. In your local communities follow its precepts.

—Bahai News, May 1932, No. 62, page 6.

To determine whether a soul was qualified for Bahai membership, the laws of Administration had to be consulted like a book of oracle. At various Conventions, this subject was brought up and much time was consumed in such momentous discussion:—

A great many delegates spoke of the grave responsibility which rests upon Local Spiritual Assemblies in determining whether or not a soul is qualified for Bahai Membership, and here again the importance of careful study of Bahai Administration was stressed.

—Bahai News, July 1933, No. 75, page 5.

In *Bahai News*, November, 1933, No. 79, page 10, the Guardian reminds the friends, more fully than before, that the cardinal principle of the Bahai Administration is *the supreme and unchallengeable authority of the National Spiritual Assembly in national affairs.*

The root principle of Bahai Administration is the *undisputed authority of America's supreme administrative body*. No departure from this established tenet is contemplated and it must be maintained unreservedly (*Bahai News*, November, 1933, No. 79).

Shoghi Effendi has certainly invested the National Spiritual Assembly with undreamed-of dictatorial power and autocratic control over all the affairs of the Cause in North America.

Nothing can be clearer than the following quotations:—

Haifa, May 19, 1934. As to the problem which has arisen in connection with the News Letter published and circulated by the Boston Assembly, the Guardian has already written about it to your National Spiritual Assembly, expressing the view that under no circumstances should any local Assembly be given the right to criticize and much less oppose, the policy duly adopted and approved by the National Spiritual Assembly. It is his hope that henceforth the problem of the relationship between the National Spiritual Assembly and the local Assemblies in matters of this nature will, in the light of his instructions, be carefully understood by individuals and Assemblies alike.

Haifa, June 11, 1934. The Guardian wishes me to again affirm his view that the authority of the National Spiritual Assembly is undivided and unchallengeable in all matters pertaining to the administration of the Faith throughout the United States and Canada, and that, therefore, the obedience of individual Bahais, delegates, groups and Assemblies to that authority is imperative and should be wholehearted and unqualified. He is convinced that the unreserved acceptance and

complete application of this vital provision of the Administration is essential to the maintenance of the highest degree of unity among the believers, and is indispensable to the effective working of the administrative machinery of the Faith in every country.

As though all the above instructions through his secretary were not sufficiently lucid, Shoghi Effendi writes the following in his own hand:—

I wish to re-affirm, in clear and categorical language, the principle already enunciated upholding the supreme authority of the National Assembly in all matters that affect the interests of the Faith in that land. There can be no conflict of authority, no duality under any form or circumstances in any sphere of Bahai jurisdiction, whether local, national or international.

—The above three quotations are from *Bahai News*, July 1934, No. 85, page 2.

Here then, in plain language, we have nine Hitlers, or nine Mussolinis, or nine Stalins, all rolled into one; or probably we have a few of each species, combining their authority over, not 80 million Germans and more than 100 million conquered peoples, 45 million Italians and 175 million Russians, but over the conscience and activities of 2584 plain, simple, folksy, democratic Americans. With such paraphernalia to hold them in order, these American Bahais must indeed be the most unruly and rebellious people on the face of the earth!

Religious Isolation

Is the Bahai Cause, under the Administration, a progressive religious movement?

Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha taught their followers to associate with the devotees of all religions. This we know; but the Bahai Administration demands that the Bahais renounce their membership in other religious organizations, for: *to be a Bahai and at the same time accept membership in another religious body is an act of contradiction that no sincere and logically-minded person can possibly accept.* Thus, spiritual fellowship with other faiths is prohibited and the imparting by the Bahais of the universal religious conceptions of Baha-O-Llah, in the congregations of which they were part, is an act of disobedience.

In an article under the title: *Membership in other Organizations* published in *Bahai News*, No. 134, March, 1940, we read the following:—

The National Spiritual Assembly asks the friends to give careful and prayerful thought about their connection with non-Bahai Organizations, and endeavor, each for himself, to make any adjustment necessary in order to consolidate his spiritual and social life in the New World Order of Baha-U-Llah. For as the Guardian has instructed in recent years, it is not merely ecclesiastical or political organizations from which Bahais are to withdraw, but also any other type of organization whose aim and influence are incompatible with the nature of the Faith.

(For further reference read: *Association with the World Fellowship of Faiths*, *Bahai News*, No. 76, August, 1933; *Membership in Non-Bahai Association*, *Bahai News*, No. 93, July, 1935; *Concerning Membership in Non-Bahai Religious Organizations*, *Bahai News*, No. 98,

March, 1936; *Membership in Other Organizations, Bahai Procedure*, Section One, Sheet 7; and *Concerning Membership in Non-Bahai Religious Organizations, Bahai Procedure*, Section One, Sheets 8, 9, 10, 11.)

Abdul Baha told his followers that the Bahai Cause was not a *new* religion, and that it was their mission to carry the leaven of tolerance into all circles, thus little by little, demolishing sectarian lines of demarcation; yet the Administration has adopted a policy of complete RELIGIOUS ISOLATION, raising such iron-clad frontiers around their constituents that none of them can overstep them or presume to adhere to the injunction of Baha-O-Llah: *Associate with the people of all religions with joy and fragrance.*

Social Isolation

Is the Bahai Cause under the Administration a progressive social movement?

It is most evident from the writings of Shoghi Effendi and the National Spiritual Assembly that their organization has nothing to do with civic, national or international affairs. The Bahais are warned over and over again not to affiliate themselves with any political parties; not to run for any political offices nor to cast their votes for the election of candidates when these candidates are nominated by two parties. (Read *The World Order of Baha-U-Llah* by Shoghi Effendi, pages 64 and 153; "The Non-Political Character of the Bahai Cause," *Bahai News*, No. 69, December, 1932; "Non-Political Character of the Bahai Faith", *Bahai News*, No. 80, January, 1934, and "The Non-Political Character of the Bahai Faith," *Bahai Procedure*, Section One, Sheet 13.)

Thus, it is clear that the Bahai Administration commands its followers to *refrain from associating themselves, whether by word or deed, with the political pursuits of their respective nations, with the politics of their governments and the schemes and programs of parties*, yet, at the same time it claims leadership in the New World Order that is to be, as can be judged from its monthly publication appearing under the name *World Order* and from Shoghi Effendi's book entitled *The World Order*. Now, there never can be a World Order unless the fundamentals of world politics are changed, and if the Bahais hold themselves aloof from national and international politics, they not only will forego leadership in the New World Order, but will have no share in it whatsoever. They can reiterate their assertions, they can even trade-mark the name *World Order* (which they have done, see *Bahai World*, 1936-1938, Vol. VII, pages 415-416) and possibly follow it up with lawsuits as they did in connection with their trade-mark on the name *Bahai*, but when the great reconstruction takes shape, this will be owing to those who have worked for it and taken enormous risks for it, and not to those who have discreetly kept under cover while the mighty struggle was going on. (Incidentally, I cannot refrain from remarking that Mr. H. G. Wells in his publication of 1940, entitled *The New World Order* has come very close to infringement on the property rights held by the Bahai Administration on the words *World Order*, for, in the litigation brought against Mrs. Chanler and myself, this body requested that we be enjoined from using the name of their trade-mark Bahai or any word deceptively similar thereto!)

Added to its program of exclusiveness toward any and all political activities, the Administration prevents its followers from affiliation with any movements or societies, the policies of which are not in *strict conformity with the tenets of the Faith*. This exclusion act was made as watertight as possible, for it is evident that no societies come up to this requirement; consequently, the Bahais are prevented from taking part in any and all the progressive movements that are operative today.

In this manner has the Administration adopted a policy of SOCIAL ISOLATION, impossible to reconcile with the contents of most of the addresses delivered by Abdul Baha in Europe and America, for these deal with the abolition of political boundaries, the eradication of social limitations, the ensuring of the economic prosperity of mankind and the establishment of a new commonwealth of humanity based on freedom, justice and peace. And again, as our minds dwell on the Teachings, now so completely obscured, we come with a shock on the words of Baha-O-Llah: *Oh people . . . be intent on the betterment of the world and the training of nations.*

Divine Politics

I have, in this article, used the word *constituents*, which is an unusual term to be connected with a religious organization, but the fact of the matter is that, while the Administration takes no part in national politics, it is in itself a thorough-going political institution.

The Bahai Administration is composed of less than a hundred local Assemblies, scattered throughout the United States and Canada, having a total membership amounting

to 2584 persons. (*The World Almanac*, 1941, page 859.) It holds Annual Conventions, which are attended by delegates from the local Assemblies who elect nine persons to serve for the coming year on the National Spiritual Assembly, which body, in turn, nominates all the committees and is the paramount authority of the Cause in North America. The authority of this body is superseded only by the Guardian, operating from Palestine.

In 1938 and 1939 the second and third books of Shoghi Effendi were published under the titles: *The World Order of Baha-U-Llah* and *The Advent of Divine Justice*; and, with the appearance of this literature, the Administration was brought out of the human realm and raised to a station, incomparable, unassailable and divine.

Shoghi Effendi says:

It should be remembered by every follower of the Cause that the system of Bahai Administration is not an innovation imposed arbitrarily upon the Bahais of the world since the Master's passing, but derives its authority from the Will and Testament of Abdul Baha.

—*World Order of Baha-U-Llah*, page 5.

Again, delving further in history, he claims that:—

In the blood of the unnumbered martyrs of Persia lay the seed of the Divinely-appointed administration which, though transplanted from its native soil, is now budding out, under your loving care, into a new order, destined to overshadow all mankind.

—*World Order of Baha-U-Llah*, page 52.

Now, with sledge-hammer blows, Shoghi Effendi pushes forward, and presently the *Administration* has passed all bounds of human frailties and become *infallible*:—

Out of the pangs of anguish which His bereaved followers have suffered, amid the heat and dust which the attacks launched by a sleepless enemy had precipitated, the Administration of Baha-U-Llah's invincible Faith was born. The potent energies released through the ascension of the centre of His Covenant crystallized into this supreme, this infallible Organ, for the accomplishment of a Divine Purpose.

—*World Order of Baha-U-Llah*, page 89.

Again:—

The Administrative Order which ever since Abdul Baha's ascension has evolved and is taking shape under our very eyes in no fewer than forty countries of the world, may be considered as the framework of the Will itself, the inviolable stronghold wherein this new-born child is being nurtured and developed. This Administrative Order, as it expands and consolidates itself, will no doubt manifest the potentialities and reveal the full implications of this momentous Document . . . It will, as its component parts, its organic institutions, begin to function with efficiency and vigor, assert its claim and demonstrate its capacity to be regarded not only as the nucleus but the very pattern of the New World Order destined to embrace in the fullness of time the whole of mankind.

—*The World Order of Baha-U-Llah*, page 144.

As we continue to study this book, we find even more

WINNER OF WORLD COMPETITION



MME. CATHERINE LYDIA DE LIGT-VAN ROSSEM

Native of Holland—Resident of Switzerland

WINNER OF FIRST PRIZE IN
SEVENTH COMPETITION



RABBI JACOB J. WEINSTEIN

Director of the School of Jewish
Studies in San Francisco, Calif.

WINNER OF FIRST PRIZE IN
EIGHTH COMPETITION



CORNELIUS LACEY GOLIGHTLY

University of Michigan,
Ann Arbor, Michigan.

studendous claims being put forward for this Administration, although the author on page 91 of the same volume had conceded that it was born in the United States. He now says:—

The Bahai Commonwealth of the future, of which this vast Administrative Order is the sole frame-work, is, both in theory and practice, not only unique in the entire history of political institutions, but can find no parallel in the annals of any of the world's recognized religious systems . . . This new-born Administrative Order incorporates within its structure certain elements which are to be found in each of the three recognized forms of secular government, without being in any sense a mere replica of any one of them, and without introducing within its machinery any of the objectionable features which they inherently possess.

—*The World Order of Baha-U-Llah*, page 152.

It would have been an interesting experience if one could have looked upon the glowing faces of the American framers of the Constitution and By-laws of the Administration when they read the above encomium about their brain-child!

An Unparalleled Order

There is one point on which I profoundly disagree with Shoghi Effendi, namely, in his interpretation that, in time, this Administration will develop into the House of Justice mentioned by Baha-O-Llah in the book of Aqdas. These two institutions, the one functioning at present, while the other still in the womb of futurity, are as dissimilar as are night and day. A bitter tree will not yield sweet fruits;

the buzzing of a cricket will never evolve into the song of the nightingale, and a totally exclusive and reactionary system cannot develop into a world government—the dream of all liberals.

Baha-O-Llah (in the book of Aqdas) advises the members of the House of Justice:—

to regard themselves as trustees and representatives of God in the created world . . . and strive to fulfill for the good of the public the trust placed in them for the sake of God, as though they were managing their own affairs and choosing that which is best.

Here Shoghi Effendi draws the conclusion that:—

the Administrative Order of the Faith of Baha-U-Llah must in no wise be regarded as purely democratic in character inasmuch as the basic assumption which requires all democracies to depend fundamentally upon getting their mandate from the people is altogether lacking in this Dispensation.

—*The World Order of Baha-U-Llah*, page 153.

Why? To my mind, the argument is untenable. The fact that the members of the future House of Justice must regard themselves as trustees and representatives of God in the created world, should not, and must not exclude them from considering themselves, at one and the same time, the elected representatives of men, devoted to the interests of their constituents.

Shoghi Effendi further elucidates:—

In the conduct of the administrative affairs of the

Faith, in the enactment of the legislation necessary to supplement the laws of the Kitab-i-Aqdas, the members of the Universal House of Justice, it should be borne in mind, are not, as Baha-U-Llah's utterances clearly imply, responsible to those whom they represent, nor are they allowed to be governed by the feelings, the general opinion, and even the convictions of the mass of the faithful, or of those who directly elect them. They are to follow in a prayerful attitude the dictates and promptings of their conscience . . . "*God will verily inspire them with whatsoever He willeth,*" is Baha-U-Llah's incontrovertible assurance. They, and not the body of those who either directly or indirectly elect them, have thus been made the recipients of the divine guidance.

—*The World Order of Baha-U-Llah*, page 153.

This is the building up of a theocratic order, so intransigent, so frightful, that nothing hitherto imagined can match it. Shoghi Effendi is indeed correct in saying that his system is unique and has no parallel in all the annals of history!

In Italics

An integral part of an organization is *funds* and *fund raising*, and from this dreary aspect of concerted effort the Bahai Administration is not exempt; in fact, the National Spiritual Assembly has so accentuated the subject of contributions that *money* ranks alongside of *authority* as the second feature in italics of the Cause as it stands today.

A *Plan of Unified Action* drawn up by the National Spiritual Assembly and submitted in December, 1925, to the Bahai community of the United States and Canada

had for object the raising of an average yearly amount of \$150,000. This Plan was approved by the Guardian in the following cablegram, dated January, 1926:—

Congratulate National Assembly on Plan. Noble in conception, sound in method, forceful in its appeal. Fully endorse it. Commend it to every declared believer. Shoghi.

—*Bahai News*, March 1930, No. 39, page 4.

As later events showed, it was most difficult to raise this annual religious taxation and the Plan would have failed, had it not been for the flooding of the country with high pressure appeals, cables, letters, bulletins, articles and especial calls. Shoghi Effendi writes:—

We must continually repeat, appeal and urge them to realize afresh the vital urgency of the task before them.

Again he says:—

It is my earnest hope and prayer that the friends will more universally, substantially and regularly contribute to this Plan.

Again:—

I would be grieved to learn that any believer would ever attempt to support an activity that lies outside the province of the Plan, and would neglect thereby his sacred obligation toward the Budget.

—Above quotations from *Bahai News*,
January, 1928, No. 21.

By means of such calls, the Bahais nobly rose to the occasion, and the obligations of the Plan have been substantially fulfilled.

It must be remembered that the Administration has set itself to the almost superhuman task of building a magnificent Temple in the vicinity of Chicago, which, up to this time, has cost more than a million dollars, and that this tremendous obligation necessarily dominates its horizon. Added to this are the very large expenses involved in the maintenance of the National Spiritual Assembly, amounting to \$35,000 annually, (which sum does not include the expenses of any local assemblies), together with a lesser amount (small in the past, but increasing lately) which is expended on teaching. I personally consider that the huge sum of money raised yearly from just a handful of men and women represents a miracle of devotion and self-sacrifice which it would be almost impossible to parallel. It certainly is a commentary on the love which the Cause inspires in the hearts of the people. On the other hand, the continuous drive for money, which feature is never absent from the Guardian's letters, acts as a depressant on the minds of all. Here is a sample of the Guardian's appeal: *Contributions to this Fund constitute in addition a practical and effective way whereby each believer can test the measure and character of his faith.*

From this state of affairs, a conclusion may here be drawn and it is this: Everybody who accepts the Faith at the hands of the Administration places himself or herself under the severe obligation of contributing funds to the movement, while those who acquire the Teachings through other channels undergo no taxation whatsoever. It is evi-

dent that the Administration, having in mind the dream of world dominion (which dream seems to include one of universal taxation), would consider such independent individuals or groups as a menace to its plan for temporal power, and this undoubtedly explains, in part, the disfavor in which The New History Society is held. However that may be, I believe that a great Cause, such as that conferred upon humanity by Baha-O-Ulah, would do well to accept the words of Christ as its standard for contributions: *Freely you have received, freely give*. I admit that, in such case, the monetary harvest would be smaller, but something else would be gained—something that is important also.

My Object

I have herein outlined the circumstances which led to the founding, development and establishment of the Bahai Administration, an institution which by this time has so identified itself with the Cause that the large majority of Bahais feel that this universal movement, born in Persia, is unauthentic without the trade-mark: *Made in the United States*. Like an octopus, this sinister organism has wound itself about its victim, while the *faithful*, ever obedient to authority and power, stifle whatsoever instincts of responsibility that yet remain in their hearts. Now, I do not flatter myself with the hope of making even a dent on the consciousness of those who follow the Administration; such is not my object in writing this book. I merely wish to set down, as a record for the future, a few notes of historic importance, believing that no one else is possessed of the knowledge, the documentation and the *will* to do so.

In addition, I am inserting the views of an individual who loves the Cause devotedly and who believes that he understands, in some measure, the liberal and lofty intentions of Abdul Baha. Perhaps, some day, when mankind has learned much through suffering, a few scholars will look through these pages and gain a new impression of the movement. But, this is for the future and what the future holds, no man knows. At present, we can only be sincere and do our utmost, leaving the rest to God and to His Destiny, the plans of which cannot be forestalled.

Unheeded Words

Wishing to close this chapter on a high note and yet hold to the general subject that has been treated, I find that I can do no better than quote the words of Shoghi Effendi himself:—

The call of Baha-U-Llah is primarily directed against all forms of provincialism, all insularities and prejudices. If long-cherished ideals and time-honored institutions, if certain social assumptions and religious formulae have ceased to promote the welfare of the generality of mankind, if they no longer minister to the needs of a continually evolving humanity, let them be swept away and relegated to the limbo of obsolescent and forgotten doctrines. Why should these, in a world subject to the immutable law of change and decay, be exempt from the deterioration that must needs overtake every human institution? For legal standards, political and economic theories are solely designed to safeguard the interests of humanity as a whole, and not humanity

to be crucified for the preservation of the integrity of any particular law or doctrine.

--*World Order of Baha-U-Llah*, page 42.

It is to be regretted that this phase of the Guardian's recommendations has not been taken seriously; had it been so, I would not have had occasion to write this book.

CHAPTER XIII

ADMINISTRATIVE FRILLS AND FURBELOWS

Early Misgivings

In 1926, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada promulgated: *Declaration of Trust and By-Laws of the National Spiritual Assembly*, incorporating the Bahai Cause and assuming an alleged proprietorship and trusteeship over this universal movement. Unfortunately Shoghi Effendi, as the Guardian, approved every step thus taken, although there have been instances when he warned his representatives against concentrating too much on the less important aspects of the movement. As early as 1924, he held up the finger of caution:

But let us be on our guard . . . lest too much concern in that which is secondary in importance, and too long a preoccupation with the details of our affairs and activities, make us neglectful of the most essential, the most urgent of all our obligations, namely, to bury our cares and teach the Cause.

—Bahai Administration, page 37.

That the warnings of Shoghi Effendi were justified and that the National Spiritual Assembly itself came to realize the fact that a sense of anxiety and unrest existed among its members is evidenced by the following admission on its part:—

There seems to be a growing feeling among a rela-

tively few of the believers that the Administration of the Cause in America is developing into a hard and inflexible machine and that there is a tendency to restrict individual effort and stifle individual initiative and enterprise.

—*Bahai News*, No. 77, Sept. 1933.

Under the present order of Bahai organization, the National Spiritual Assembly is the supreme authority (*Bahai News*, No. 63, June 1932); all the local assemblies are to adhere to its dicta, while the people must obey the local assemblies. (*Bahai News*, No. 62, May 1932.) At one time, however, it seems that the National Spiritual Assembly, in its turn, felt that Shoghi Effendi's standard was a little uncompromising, for it states: *It is evident that if the Guardian's standard is too rigidly applied a community will be choked and stifled . . . for some months the members of the National Assembly have given special thought to this subject. . . .*

Administrative Structure Takes Shape

Membership: The considerations involved in joining the Bahai Organization are so complicated and detailed that Shoghi Effendi states: *I cannot in this connection emphasize too strongly the supreme necessity for the exercise of the utmost discretion, caution and tact* (*Bahai News*, No. 65, August 1932, page 3) and the *Bahai News*, in numerous issues, again and again comes back to the subject. One of the suggestions advanced is to make the applicant sign a blank which sets forth the exact qualifications required; another is *to lay down a definite period of time—for ex-*

ample, a year, before an assembly can act upon an application after it is received. For those who are interested in partially understanding the complications attendant upon the acceptance of a new member, I suggest the study of a long article from which I have just quoted and also the four Sections of *Bahai Procedure* issued by Bahai Publishing Committee, 1937.

Minority rights: A distinctly dictatorial touch is applied to the deliberations of the Bahai council: *the teachings recognize no minority rights whatever within the body of an Assembly. Every decision made by a Spiritual Assembly is binding upon each and all its members alike, whatever their personal views* (*Bahai News*, No. 87, Sept. 1934, page 3) and, *There is no place in Bahai Administration for minority action or reports. How often have we heard in Assemblies' deliberations the expressed wish of one or more members to be recorded as voting in opposition to the action of the majority. Such an expressed wish manifests the ego of our human nature.* (*Bahai News*, No. 77, Sept. 1933, page 2.)

Infallibility of the Assembly: Although the members of the National Spiritual Assembly are elected annually by the representatives of the Bahai Assemblies of the United States and Canada in convention assembled, and owe their continuation in office to those electors, it is asserted: *that the Spiritual Assembly is not a body created by the believers, even though by their votes at elections they determine its membership. . . . A spiritual Assembly rests upon sanctions higher than that of the voting community. Its functions and powers are unalterable. The responsibility of its members is not to the electorate but to the*

higher authority resident in the Cause. (Bahai News, No. 87, Sept. 1934, page 2.) Infallibility is actually attached to the National Spiritual Assembly in the following words of the Guardian: *The potent energies released through the ascension of the Center of His Covenant (Abdul Baha) crystallized into this supreme, this infallible Organ for the accomplishment of a Divine Purpose. (World Order of Baha-O-Ilah by Shoghi Effendi, page 89.)*

Teaching: Now, in regard to teaching: *to achieve complete success, every teacher should work directly under the supervision and recognition of his or her Spiritual Assembly. (Bahai News, No. 64, July 1932, page 3.)* One definition of a qualified teacher is a Bahai who adheres implicitly to the Bahai Administration and is in accord with the National Spiritual Assembly and with the local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahai Community to which he belongs. *(Bahai News, No. 49, March 1931, page 6.)*

Twenty Lessons in Bahai Administration

Inasmuch as the teaching of the accumulated rules and laws of the National Spiritual Assembly became the be-all and end-all of the Bahai Organization, it was decided to issue a booklet in mimeograph form entitled *Twenty Lessons in Bahai Administration*. This was prepared by the Study Outline Committee, approved by the Bahai Reviewing Committee in 1935 and distributed by Bahai Publishing Committee, P. O. Box 348, Grand Central Annex, New York, N. Y. This booklet contains twenty lessons, and the student, under the direction of an approved teacher, is supposed to study one lesson a week—in a period

approximately measured at five months. This amazing document, in itself, is a convincing proof that the glorious teachings of Baha-O-Ilah and Abdul Baha are totally forgotten. Indeed, not one trace of them is left. Here is a supreme tragedy, a cause for lamentation and an occasion for mourning! The Bahai Faith is buried under the debris of these regulations—all of which tend to obscure, in the consciousness of the student, the pure and majestic conception of the Cause which is his by right. Imagine spending five months filling one's mind and heart with such childish, legalistic twiddle-dum and twiddle-dee! Then, having waded through these muddy waters and stagnant pools, the student is expected to answer a number of questions, some of which are reproduced herewith:—

Test Questions

What is the foundation of the Bahai Administrative Order and what is the watchword?

Why does the authority in the Bahai Administrative Order command complete allegiance?

Discuss the balance between the final authority of the National Assembly and the purely consultative function of the National Convention.

Discuss the jurisdiction, duties and powers of the National Spiritual Assembly.

What position has the National Assembly taken regarding acting as administrator of estates or as guardian for children, and also regarding gifts of property?

In what matters does the Guardian declare the authority of the National Spiritual Assembly to be "undivided and unchallengeable"?

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How would you answer an inquiry as to how a Guardian differs from a Pope?

In what respect does the Universal House of Justice differ from the House of Cardinals?

What is the residential qualification for a voting believer?

What are the more fundamental qualifications for voting believers?

Note the distinction between believers and those who consider themselves Bahais but do not accept the Will and Testament of Abdul Baha.

Are people who accept the Cause with reservations to consider themselves Bahais?

Under what conditions may a believer be removed from the voting list of a Bahai Community? What body makes the final decision?

Discuss the function of the Local Spiritual Assembly in passing upon the qualifications of a new believer.

What standard exists for legal incorporation of a local Spiritual Assembly?

Does a Local Spiritual Assembly have the authority to criticize a policy duly adopted by the National Spiritual Assembly?

What is the function of Bahai News and to whom should it be given?

Are the Nineteen Day Feasts open to non-believers?

What is the practice about securing credentials when visiting other Bahai Communities?

What is the rule about admitting Orientals to Bahai Communities?

What is the relation of the National Assembly to institutions outside the Bahai Organization?

With what kind of groups may Bahais associate themselves and what kind are they not to join?

What reasons do you see for the stand taken against adherence to a political party?

What are Shoghi Effendi's instructions concerning church membership?

Why are contributions to the Bahai Fund a measure of the faith of a believer?

Problems in Bahai Administration

His ability having been tested by the above questions and many more, the student is now up for a second grueling examination, this time on *Problems in Bahai Administration* (a section incorporated in The Booklet of Twenty Lessons). In order to study these enigmas with befitting attention, one runs the risk of losing either one's reason or one's sense of humor—probably both. What have such childish fancies to do with the Cause of Baha-O-Llah, the aim of which is the spiritual regeneration of the world and the glorification of mankind? However, my readers may be more expert at puzzles than I am (it is likely that some of them are adepts at the Prof. Quiz radio hour), so I will give them the chance to solve some of them. Here they are:—

Mr. S. finds that he could visit a number of communities in connection with a business trip and is qualified to contribute toward meeting programs or to help in any teaching projects. What steps should he take (a) before leaving home and (b) in introducing himself to each new Local Assembly?

Mrs. A., a member of the New York Baha'i community, expects to spend the winter in Miami and would like to join in their community activities. What steps should be taken toward this end before she leaves home? If Mrs. A. neglects this step before making contact with the Miami Baha'is, what should the Miami Spiritual Assembly do about it?

Miss G. is trying gradually to interest a group of her friends in the Baha'i Faith through informal discussion of general subjects from the Baha'i point of view. Other Baha'is criticize her for working alone in the teaching project. Which attitude do you think Shoghi Effendi would approve of? What should be the relationship of Miss G. and the Local Spiritual Assembly in her project?

Mrs. X. is an old believer whose faith centers around her personal experiences with Abdul Baha and she understands neither the authority of Shoghi Effendi nor the significance of Baha'i Administration. What could the Local Assembly do to help her make that necessary transition? What is the difference between Mrs. X.'s position and that of a person who actively opposes Shoghi Effendi and Baha'i Administration?

Mr. E. has always been an active Democrat in his city and neither wants to break his connection with the Democratic party nor understands why he should do so. What arguments would you use to convince him that as a Baha'i he must give up all political affiliations? What would be the result if he refuses to see the point and accepts election to a government office of some kind?

Miss A. has attended four Baha'i meetings and is much attracted to the teachings. An over-enthusiastic be-

liever asks her if she would like to join the Baha'is and takes her to the next nineteen day feast. In how many ways did the believer show her ignorance of Baha'i administration? How should the Local Spiritual Assembly handle this delicate situation?

Mr. X. has been attending Baha'i meetings occasionally for ten years and has just expressed a desire to associate himself with the Baha'is. Does this fact necessarily mean that he is qualified to become a voting member of the community? How should you ascertain his eligibility?

A member of a community interests individuals in the Baha'i Faith and contributes regularly but does not attend Nineteen-Day Feasts or other meetings. How should the Spiritual Assembly handle this problem?

The above portentous problems on Bahai Administration (which I admit are baffling to my type of mentality) carry me back to my childhood days when my teacher used to present to the class certain oral and written exercises, on which I spent hours, but from which I seldom came out victorious. With pain and anguish I still remember some of them. For instance:—

A cellar is 15 ft. long and 12 ft. wide. What is the area of the floor? If the cellar is 8 ft. deep, how many cubic feet does it contain?

A kite string was broken, and four parts were saved. The first part of the string was $75\frac{1}{4}$ ft. long, the second part $127\frac{1}{4}$ ft., the third part 261 ft., and the fourth part $891\frac{1}{4}$ ft. Allowing 1 ft. for tying, how long was the string when all four were tied together?



Van ready to leave for U. S. Post Office on October 7, 1936. Members of staff and volunteers who prepared 75,000 pieces of mail for World Competition.

From left to right:—Mr. Felix Ramos, Mr. O. J. Hanko, Mrs. Frederick Allien, Mrs. L. S. Chanler, Miss Chancy Carro, Mrs. Gemma Mannini, Miss Lilyan Tannen, Mr. Louis J. Meisler, Miss Eleanor Hoagland and Mirza Ahmad Sohrab.

The main difference between the problems of the arithmetic book and those of the Bahai Administration is that with the former we can find a definite solution while answers to the latter, even though satisfactory to the examiners, may still remain questionable to many an earnest mind.

While reading this remarkable booklet, and selecting a few *Questions* for use in this article, I was trying in all fairness to discover a relationship, no matter how remote, between this literature and the Cause of Baha-O-Llah. Does the faith of an individual who has responded to the Bahai Revelation really and truly depend upon a mastery of these questions? And supposing an inquirer, in all enthusiasm, takes up this course of instruction and comes through it with flying colors, has he at the end gained an understanding which will be of use to him in promulgating the fundamental principles of the Cause? Has he become a more illumined servant of the world of humanity? Was it to him that Baha-O-Llah spoke: *Be the deliverer of the Cause of God in such wise that through thine utterances, the tree will be set on fire?* (Baha-O-Llah—*Bahai Scriptures*, p. 193.) Is he able to *destroy the abodes of neglect by the hands of power and composure, and build the chambers of knowledge in the hearts?* (Baha-O-Llah—*Bahai Scriptures*, p. 98.) Is he fitted to *take possession of the cities of hearts by the swords of wisdom and of explanation?* (Baha-O-Llah—*Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 43.) Has he gained wings that he may *Walk above the world by the power of the Greatest Name and see the secrets of Pre-Existence and know that which none knew of?* (Baha-O-Llah—*Bahai Scriptures*, p. 193.) Is he now like a well-cultivated garden wherein the roses and varie-

gated flowers of heaven are growing in fragrance and beauty? (Abdul Baha—*Promulgation of Universal Peace*, Vol. I, p. 21.) Can he honestly claim that he is now in a better position to become *a breath of life, a banner of salvation and a manifest sign . . . a lamp of reconciliation and peace, a standard of love and attraction, a star of guidance among mankind?* (*Tablets of Abdul Baha*, Vol. III, p. 712.)

I may be mistaken, but in my estimation these *Twenty Lessons in Bahai Administration* are like unto a mirage which has the show of water. The thirsty ones make abundant efforts in their search, but, when reaching it, remain deprived and portionless. Or . . . like unto the image of a loved one which is destitute of life and soul. When the lover reaches it, he finds it of no worth and value, and finds no gain save great pain and despondency. (Baha-O-Llah—*Bahai Scriptures*, p. 224.)

Regarding the student of these *Twenty Lessons in Bahai Administration*, ambitious as he undoubtedly is, and sincere in his purpose, I make bold to offer a graphic and most striking utterance of the Revelator himself:—

Ye are in likeness as a bird, which with all joy and fragrance soars in the utmost security in the cheerful air of the Praised One; then in the imaginary hope of grains, it inclines toward the mud and water of the earth, and with all eagerness, besmeurs itself with mud and mire; and when it attempts to re-ascend, it finds itself unable and a captive, forasmuch as wings besmeared with water and clay are not capable of flight. At that time, that bird of the exalted heaven finds itself a dweller in the mortal earth.

—*Bahai Scriptures*, page 223.

PART FIVE

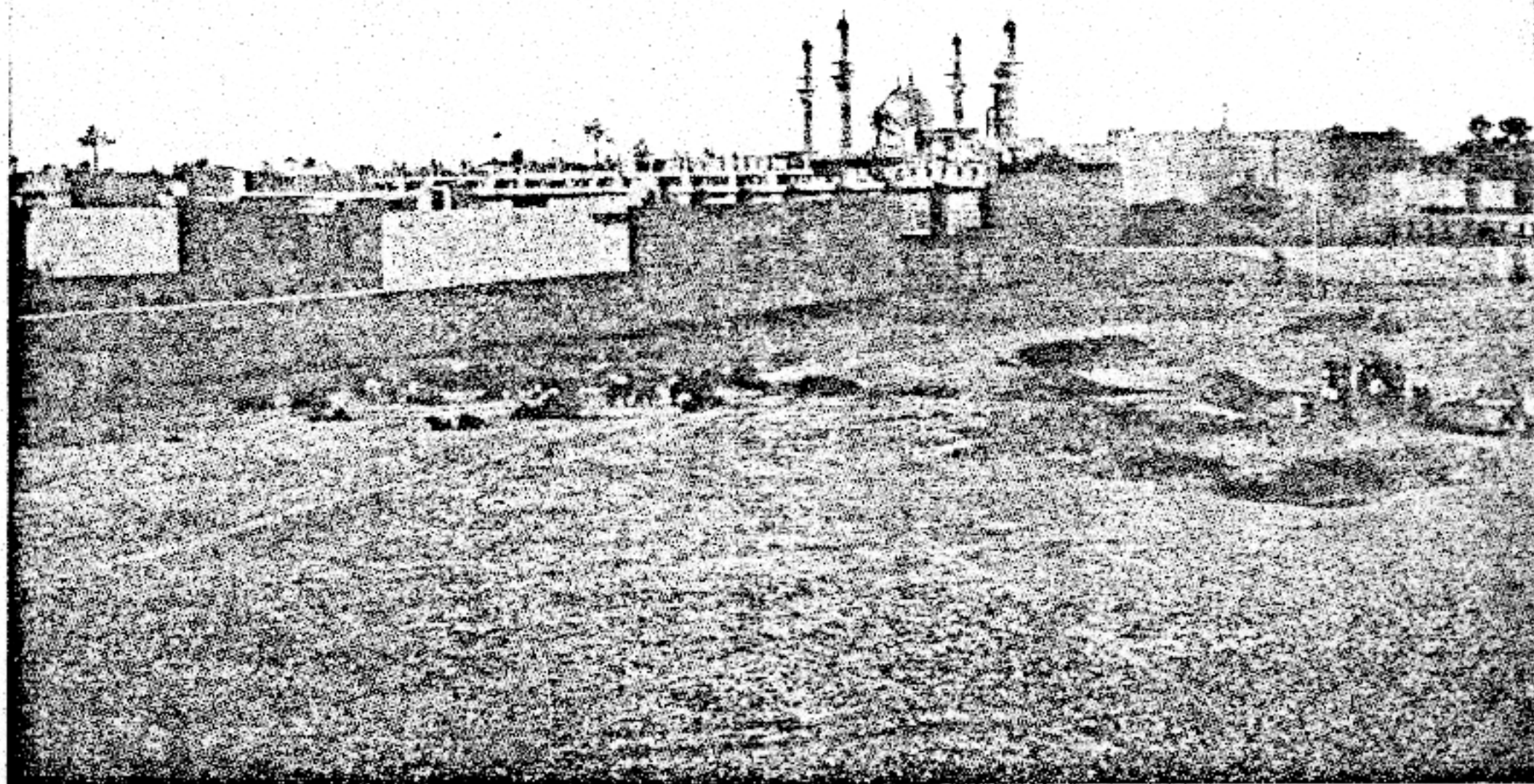
CAPRICE, INC.

14. The Double Mask

15. Thought Control

For the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. Now, the Lord is that spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

*—Epistle of Paul, II Corinthians,
Chapter 3, Verses 6 and 17*



Old Baghdad, where Baha-O-Llah lived after his exile from Persia. It was in the "Garden of Rizwan", in the outskirts of the city, that Baha-O-Llah declared his Message on April 21, 1863.

CHAPTER XIV

THE DOUBLE MASK

The Bill of Rights

Immediately following the adoption of the Constitution of the United States, on September 17, 1789, a number of safeguarding amendments were drawn up, and, when the First Congress met at its initial session in the City of New York, on September 25th, of the same year, it was voted to submit these to the States for ratification. The Amendments, 12 in number, were properly called: A Bill of Rights; ten of them were ratified within the next two years.

The *First* Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, and the most important and far-reaching, reads as follows:—

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press.

The greatness of the United States and the intrinsic superiority of its civilization to all others lies within these twenty-six simple words. I venture to assert that no other sentence has exercised such epoch-making influence over the destiny of any nation, ancient or modern. These twenty-six words are the origin of the religious, cultural, scientific, industrial, economic and literary progress of the nation.

It is claimed that language is not expected to convey all

the delicate shades of meaning or the inner states of mind, but, inasmuch as facts must be described in some way, words are used—always with a latent consciousness of their inadequacy. However, regarding these twenty-six immortal words, no such apology is appropriate, for like giant searchlights they have guided and are guiding the lost mariners on the tempestuous sea of thought to the course of enlightenment and the harbor of universal tolerance.

Freedom in Truth

Since the dawn of Christianity, men have been taught by Church and State: *Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free* (St. John 8:32). Nevertheless, the brand of truth that was dogmatically taught by these institutions did not make them free, but rather enslaved their minds, and tortured and murdered their bodies. Man was told that he was created in the image of God and that he shared in the divine nature, but the Great Model was banished from human society and imprisoned in civic dungeons, while poor humanity was set to imitate the satanic model and develop its lower nature. Liberty, as a religious experience, was unknown except to a few daring thinkers, and the exercise of conscience was a transgression to be frowned upon by the law-abiding.

Now, for over a hundred and fifty years the United States has *put into practice* the words of its First Amendment, and during that time a civilization has applied itself to the truth and has sought to know it.

Had it not been for the First Amendment in the Bill of Rights we, in all probability, would have a different story to tell regarding the promotion of the Bahai Cause in the

United States since its introduction at the Parliament of Religions in Chicago, in 1893.

Baha-O-Llah was a champion of religious liberty, an apostle of intellectual freedom and the advocate of man's emancipation from the fetters of dogmas and creeds. His teachings inaugurated an era of human brotherhood on a logical foundation, and made a royal circle of universal understanding among the religions, nations and races. Consequently, the Bahai Cause stands for equality, and this equality of course can have no meaning except equal rights for *all*; nor can there be a functioning of equal rights unless the individual is allowed liberty to act according to his best judgment and the dictates of his conscience.

Baha-O-Llah calls upon his disciples to arise and banish religious intolerance from the face of the earth, in order that the era of universal freedom may set in. He says:—

Gird up the loins of endeavor, so that perchance religious dissension and strife may, through your efforts, be reduced to nothingness among the inhabitants of the world. Arise for the love of God and man in this important Cause.

—*Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 11.

Spiritual Hospitality

The late Prof. Edward G. Browne, Orientalist of Cambridge University, England, visited Acca, Palestine, in 1890 and had the privilege of several interviews with Baha-O-Llah. At their first meeting, the founder of the Bahai Cause addressed him thus:—

We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; yet they deem us a stirrer up of

strife and sedition worthy of bondage and banishment. . . . That all nations should become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men should be strengthened; that diversity of religion should cease, and differences of race be annulled—what harm is there in this?

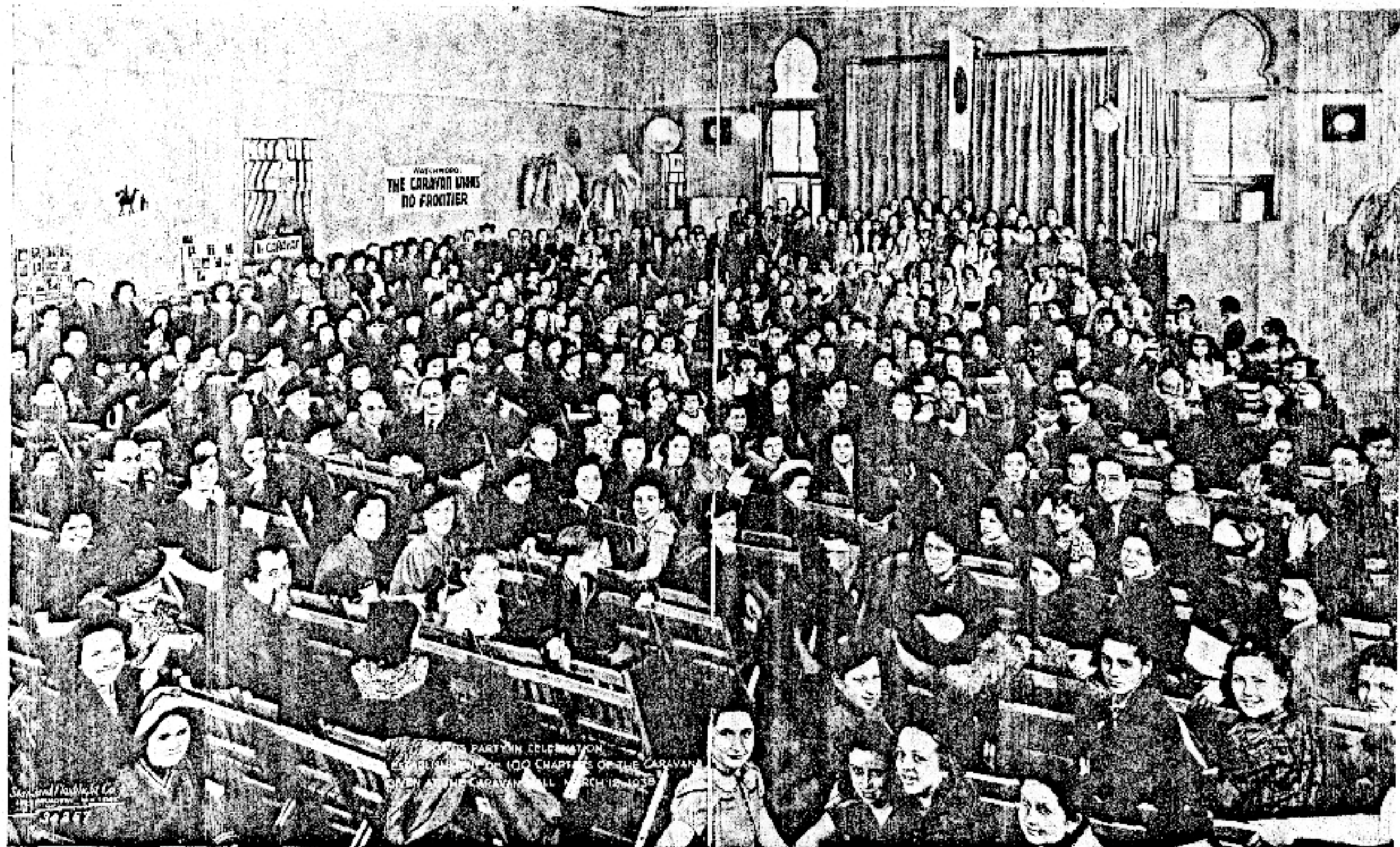
—*Introduction to a Traveller's Narrative*, page xl.

The purpose of Baha-O-Illah, as expressed in the above utterance, is more and more becoming justified in these United States, for through the power of the First Amendment, a spiritual hospitality *has* been established, and religions, sects and denominations, instead of shunning and antagonizing one another, live side by side, associate and are *as brothers*—thus the ground is prepared for the realization of the *One Faith*. Indeed, we see before our eyes a miracle of transformation; sons of men, having come from the four corners of the earth, are strengthening amongst themselves *the bonds of affection and unity*, and year by year minimizing *diversity of religion* until, in God's own appointed time, they shall turn *in complete harmony and concord*, to the Divine Horizon that encircles them all. Toward this beloved land of opportunity all the races of the world have wended their way. Englishmen and Frenchmen, Italians and Germans, Poles and Swedes, Palestinians and Persians, Chinese and Japanese, Africans and Syrians, Turks and Arabs—all are here in these United States. *Differences of race* are not yet *annulled* and it may be a long, long time before they are definitely placed in the discard, but we have taken the preliminary steps toward that end; we are not hostile to one another; we meet in the market-place and often in the

churches; we work side by side, study from the same textbooks, read the same magazines and newspapers, travel east and west, north and south, without passports or customs barriers; and we broadcast our grievances, and listen to the music and messages of our multi-colored, multi-farious brothers and sisters as the radio brings them to us by day and by night. More than all, we have come to value the cultures and noble qualities that characterize the races, and appreciate the contributions of each one to the spiritual, artistic, scientific and economic structure that is America.

Yes, we have learned to *know* one another very well, and to have respect for one another's ideals and convictions; and, as the years roll on, we are becoming aware of the fact that the salvation of mankind lies in religious, intellectual, social, national, international and interracial cooperation. Even now, through her own example, America can teach this lesson of cooperation to the rest of the world.

No! *Differences of race* are not *annulled*, but they do not play havoc in our national life; they hardly disturb the smooth workings of our national economy. For the present, we are moderately satisfied with the results that have come out of the laboratory of our interracial experiences. A working example of unity has been set up. It is not perfect, far from it; but it operates and is better than anything that has been attempted elsewhere. Or I might ask: Has it *ever* been attempted elsewhere? Doubtless, as we continue to learn the lessons of universal cooperation and apply them to the actual and concrete problems of our life, *differences of race will be annulled*, for



Oasis Party of The Caravan (Youth Section of The New History Society)
The meeting is in celebration of the One Hundredth Chapter year of 1941, the Two Hundredth

Society) held at the Caravan Hall, New York, in March, 1938. formed in this international correspondence club. In the present mark has been passed.

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such is the injunction of Baha-O-Llah—his wish for us as we strive and struggle in our ever-evolving civilization! And then—not now—can we exclaim with him: *What harm is there in this?* and the answer will come, out of our own experience: *Nothing at all! Nothing at all!*

Baha-O-Llah says:—

I declare by the Sun of Truth that the light of understanding renders the horizon brilliant and luminous.

—Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, page 11.

And he makes his mission very clear as he speaks again:—

O people of the earth! My only aim has been to suppress disputes among the religions of the world and enmity among the nations, so that all, happy and free, may occupy themselves with their own interests.

—Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, page 26.

The first part of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States established the right to religious freedom; the second part established the right to *freedom of speech and of the press*. This one sentence put an end to *enmity among the nations* that had adopted this country as their home; for, their rights of worship and of expressing their ideas and hopes in speech and press being protected, there remained no reason for any misunderstanding or altercation. Through these constitutional protections, they could, *happy and free*, occupy themselves with their *own interests*.

In the words of Baha-O-Llah which I have repeatedly quoted throughout the preceding paragraphs, we plainly see that the supreme mission of this Prophet has been to

confer upon the population of the entire earth the inalienable rights of liberty of religion, of speech and of the press. Evidently, emancipation of mind and spirit is a fundamental doctrine of the Bahai Cause, even as it is an elementary law of the United States. It originates in the liberation of a moral personality, working towards the Highest Good—the *Supreme Concourse*, or in Christian terminology, the Kingdom of Heaven.

Reformation

Abdul Baha visited the United States in 1912, where in speech after speech he referred to the problem under discussion. He felt that the entire conception of man in regard to civilization must be reformed; that, inasmuch as the sciences and arts were subject to change, even so the laws of morality and religion must undergo a thorough transformation and be brought up to the level of the spiritual consciousness of God, universal, all-embracing, free—so that man himself may become a reflector of the Divine Radiance. In a speech delivered before the New Thought Forum, Boston, Mass., on August 25th, 1912, he said:—

Day by day, the world attains a new bounty. In this radiant century, neither the old customs nor the old sciences, crafts, laws and regulations have remained. The old political principles are undergoing change and a new body-politic is in process of formation. Nevertheless, some whose thoughts are congealed and whose souls are bereft of the light of the Sun of Reality seek to arrest this development in the world of the minds of men. Is this possible?

In the unmistakable and universal re-formation we are witnessing, when outer conditions of humanity are receiving such impetus, when human life is assuming a new aspect, when sciences are stimulated afresh, inventions and discoveries increasing, civic laws undergoing change and moralities evidencing uplift and betterment, is it possible that spiritual impulses and influences should not be renewed and reformed? Naturally, new spiritual thoughts and inclinations must also become manifest. If spirituality be not renewed, what fruits come from mere physical reformation? For instance, the body of man may improve, the quality of bone and sinew may advance, the hand may develop, other limbs and members may increase in excellence, but if the mind fails to develop, of what use is the rest? The important factor in human improvement is the mind. In the world of the mind there must needs be development and improvement. There must be re-formation in the kingdom of the human spirit, otherwise no result will be attained from betterment of the mere physical structure.

In this new year, new fruits must be forthcoming, for that is the provision and intention of spiritual re-formation. The renewal of the leaf is fruitless. From the re-formation of bark, or branch, no fruit will come forth. The renewal of verdure produces nothing. If there be no renewal of fruit from the tree, of what avail is the re-formation of bark, blossom, branch and trunk? For a fruitless tree is of no special value. Similarly, of what avail is the re-formation of physical conditions, unless they are concomitant with spiritual re-formation? For the essential reality is the spirit, the foundation basis is the spirit, the life of man is due to the spirit, the happiness, the radiance, the glory of

man—all are due to the spirit; and if in the spirit no re-formation takes place, there will be no result to human existence.

Therefore, we must strive with life and heart that the material and physical world may be re-formed, human perception become keener, the merciful effulgence manifest and the radiance of reality shine. Then the star of love shall appear and the world of humanity become illumined. The purpose is that the world of existence is dependent for its progress upon re-formation; otherwise it will be as dead. Consider, if a new springtime failed to appear, what would be the effect upon this globe, the earth? Undoubtedly it would become desolate and life extinct. The earth has need of an annual coming of spring. It is necessary that a new bounty should be forthcoming. If it comes not, life would be effaced. In the same way the world of spirit needs new life, the world of mind necessitates new development, the world of souls a new bounty, the world of morality a re-formation, the world of divine effulgence ever new bestowals. Were it not for this replenishment, the life of the world would become effaced and extinguished. If this room is not ventilated and the air freshened, respiration will cease after a length of time. If no rain falls, all life organisms will perish. If new light does not shine, the darkness of death will envelop the earth. If a new springtime does not arrive, life upon this globe will be obliterated.

Therefore, thoughts must be lofty and ideals uplifted in order that the world of humanity may become assisted in new conditions of reform. When this re-formation affects every degree, then will come the very "Day of the Lord" of which all the prophets have spoken. That is the Day wherein the whole world will

be regenerated. Consider: are the laws of past ages applicable to present human conditions? Evidently they are not. For example, the laws of former centuries sanctioned despotic forms of government. Are the laws of despotic control fitted for present-day conditions? How could they be applied to solve the questions surrounding modern nations? Similarly, we ask, would the status of ancient thought, the crudeness of arts and crafts, the insufficiency of scientific attainment serve us today? Would the agricultural methods of the ancients suffice in the twentieth century? Transportation in the former ages was restricted to conveyance by animals. How would it provide for human needs today? If modes of transportation had not been re-formed, the teeming millions now upon the earth would die of starvation. Without the railway and the fast-going steamship, the world of the present day would be as dead. How could great cities such as New York and London subsist if dependent upon ancient means of conveyance? It is also true of other things which have been re-formed in proportion to the needs of the present time. Had they not been re-formed, man could not find subsistence.

If these material tendencies are in such need of re-formation, how much greater the need in the world of the human spirit, the world of human thought, perception, virtues and bounties! Is it possible that that need has remained stationary while the world has been advancing in every other condition and direction? It is impossible.

Abdul Baha—*The Promulgation of Universal Peace*,
Vol. II, pages 272, 273, 274.

In the preceding pages, I have presented ample proofs

that the Bahai Cause, as a religious and cultural re-formation, is free from the bondage of any and all the limitations that in the past have impeded the progress of thought; that it aims not only at the moral but also at the practical emancipation of man; that it looks to the fulfillment of the *glorious liberty of the children of God* (Romans 8:21). Baha-O-Llah and his son, Abdul Baha, are the two great Apostles of Freedom. Their message is addressed to freemen and slaves alike; to freemen to lead the *children of God* into the Land of Promise; to slaves to throw off the shackles of serfdom and assert their heritage to the Kingdom. The Bahai Cause summons all men to a glorious enterprise, and in turn it offers *itself* to all men as a way to Truth, liberty and universal service.

A Case in Point

Abdul Baha said that there are some men who *seek to arrest this development in the world of the minds of men*, and one cannot but consider that the lawsuit, brought by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada against Mrs. Chanler and myself, in which the court was requested to restrain us from the *unlawful act* of teaching the Bahai Religion, is a case in point. The Papers were signed by a battery of four lawyers, and I cannot but wonder whether any one of them had ever read the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, wherein the people are guaranteed the free exercise of their religions. Attention to this simple phrase, from this most famous document, would undoubtedly have convinced them that the words *unlawful act* were unwisely chosen.

This strange Complaint continues:—

(1) That the defendants and each of them, their agents, servants, employees, associates, and each of them, be enjoined and restrained, during the pendency of this action and thereafter perpetually

(a) From using, or participating directly or indirectly in the use of, the word Baha'i or any word deceptively similar thereto, as the name or a part of the name of any meeting, lecture, class or social gathering, or as the name or title or a part of the name or title of any book, magazine, or other publication, or as the name or a part of the name under which any book shop or other business is conducted.

Now, I take it for granted that the judges of our courts know the contents of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights and that they would not under any circumstances restrain the citizens of these United States from the exercise of their religious beliefs. Therefore, the request of the National Spiritual Assembly that an unconstitutional judgment be rendered, preventing us, our employees and our associates from *using or participating* in the name of our Faith, during the pendency of the lawsuit and thereafter perpetually, is so fantastic and so incredible that I cannot find words to describe such arrogant naïveté.

Perpetually!

What is the actual significance of the word *perpetually*? Perpetual means continuous, incessant, interminable; also everlasting and eternal. Now, as we all are subject to

death, it is evident that the members of the National Spiritual Assembly intended the Court to carry its rulings into the life-hereafter, so that, in the very Kingdom of God we may be prevented from gathering together in the name of our Master and uttering the word *Bahai* or any syllable thereof, or any word *similar thereto*, either *directly or indirectly*.

Likewise, this august body doubtless intended the long arm of present day justice to stretch out into the future affairs of the nation and prevent our children and grandchildren, and the children and grandchildren of our agents, servants, employees and associates unto the third and fourth generation, nay, unto the hundredth generation, throughout all ages and cycles—in other words *perpetually*—from using the word *Bahai as the name or a part of the name of any meeting, lecture, class or social gathering*.

I am a writer and lecturer, and frankly I enjoy my work. I speak and write on the Bahai Cause and on a number of other subjects, and I know that the Bill of Rights has given me and all other American citizens

1. Liberty of Religion,
2. Liberty of Speech,
3. Liberty of the Press.

Thus, in the three particular domains in which I specialize, I have been accorded complete freedom of expression, and neither the National Spiritual Assembly nor the Courts of the United States can take these privileges away from me or from any other.

According to Hitler's policy makers, the Nazi regime of dictatorship is set at one thousand years; but, to the National Spiritual Assembly such a period is but a short and fleeting moment. Its vision is far more grandiose; indeed, it envisaged a *perpetual* dictatorship to be imposed on every aspect of spiritual life, backed by the laws of the United States.

Probation

Simply out of curiosity and with the utmost goodwill, I would like to ask a question of the members of the National Spiritual Assembly. How did they expect the Courts of New York to carry out their demand? Did they suggest that a corps of marshals and detectives shadow Mrs. Chanler, myself and our *agents, servants, employees, associates and each of them* by day and by night, ready, as soon as they hear the word *Bahai*, to swoop down upon us and drag us to the police department? Would such precautions, and the expense to the city involved therein, be justified in the eyes of the Mayor?

If so, I will proceed with another inquiry. Are we really such desperados that we should be subjected to minute and incessant supervision? Do we belong to the class of malefactors of wealth, known as *economic royalists*, or are we Fifth Columnists, ready at any moment to do our part in handing over the country to other dictatorships which have already *arrived*? Actually what is the color of our guilt? Is it perhaps red?

If we have trespassed on anyone's property; if we have disrupted the peace of the community; if we have committed arson; if we have embezzled the funds of a business or society; if we have pillaged, plundered, rifled and

sacked the private possessions of our neighbors; if we have smuggled forbidden goods through the customs house; in brief, if we have violated any of the laws of these United States, we would be more than willing to stand before the bar of justice and receive adequate and ample sentence of fine or jail, or think ourselves lucky if we should get off on probation, perpetual or otherwise.

Yet, the while I ask these questions, I know very well that our supposed sins are far greater than these, and more serious: We do not surrender our religious liberty nor submit to the corporate and ecclesiastical authority of the National Spiritual Assembly. We turn to Baha-O-Llah without asking permission. We carry the name of Abdul Baha in our hearts and on our lips. We spread the ideals of peace and brotherhood as taught by these, our beloved Masters. We hold meetings and deliver lectures on spiritual subjects relative to the Bahai Cause. We write and publish leaflets, pamphlets and books on the Bahai Movement. Yes, we perpetrate all these actions, in love, happiness and freedom; we have stepped out into the open spaces of service, unmindful of obligations imposed on us to remain on perpetual parole and on perpetual probation; and these crimes have been committed in broad daylight, unblushingly and with no tremors of fear. Indeed, we are fully aware of the fact that few Bahais would have acted as we have.

Justice

Now, it is probable (and this is the pity of it) that the members of the National Spiritual Assembly believed that, in this legal action, they were just to the Cause and just to us, and it is not for me to question their ideal of justice.

Nevertheless, I venture to quote the ideal of justice as tendered to us by Baha-O-Llah. It is to be found in the *Hidden Words*:—

Justice is loved above all. Neglect it not, if thou desirest Me. By it thou wilt be strengthened to perceive things with thine own eyes and not by the eyes of men, to know them by thine own knowledge and not by the knowledge of any in the world. Meditate on this—how thou oughtest to be. Justice is of My bounty to thee and of My providence over thee; therefore, keep it ever before thy sight.

Janus

We have all read of Janus, an ancient Roman Deity, primarily god of gates and doors—hence of all beginnings. Our month of January was named after him. In the Forum, the shrine of Janus was equipped with double doors, symbolizing the quality of this personage who was represented as having two faces, looking opposite ways.

Now, after a close study of the actions of the National Spiritual Assembly, I have come to the conclusion that this body is a replica of that ancient god, for it looks upon the world through two masks, one turned toward the East and the other toward the West.

First:(a) On the one hand, the literature put out by the Bahai Administration is replete with references to present-day persecutions undergone by the Bahais in Persia and other parts of the East, on account of the absence of religious liberty in those countries. In numerous letters, Shoghi Effendi describes most vividly the injustices heaped upon the followers of the Faith, who have thus been

denied freedom of expression. He requests the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada who, as Westerners, have received *the inestimable benefits of religious toleration and freedom* (*Bahai Administration*, page 124), to give publicity to the *unbridled barbarism* existent in Persia.

(b) On the other hand, this same National Spiritual Assembly, with the sanction of Shoghi Effendi, has been making every effort to abolish religious liberty within the country where it functions. As a final step, it instituted legal proceedings to prevent the meeting of Bahai groups which do not operate under its own supervision. The explanation offered is: *the protection of the sacred rights of the Bahai Community* (*Annual Reports of the National Spiritual Assembly 1939-1940*, page 2).

Now, it is a fact that the Persians, in denying religious liberty to the Bahais, also bear in mind *the protection of the sacred rights of the Islamic Community*. It is for this reason that they enforce restrictions upon a minority such as the Bahais, and the reason is considered valid by the Hierarchy and the State likewise. It is to be noted that, in this instance, the sanction of the State constitutes the only difference between the two examples; for, in our country, the State holds itself aloof from such matters. (For fuller information read *Bahai News*, No. 53, July 1931, p. 6, article entitled "Persia"; *Bahai News*, No. 90, March 1939, p. 3, "Important Events Affecting the Faith in Persia"; *Bahai News*, No. 96, December 1935, p. 6, "Report from National Spiritual Assembly of Iran"; *Bahai News*, No. 97, January 1936, p. 1, "Letter from Shoghi Effendi on Closing of Tarbiat Schools"; *Bahai News*, No.

121, December 1938, pp. 10-11, "Annual Report, Iran"; also *Bahai Administration*, pp. 84, 94, 111, 123, 124.)

A Shrine in Bagdad

Second: A certain property in Iraq has, for many years, been an object of litigation between the Bahais and the Mohammedan Community.

When, after his exile from Persia in 1852, Baha-O-Llah arrived in Bagdad, he established himself and his family in a group of dwelling-houses belonging to one of his disciples, which houses he later acquired. Here he lived for eleven years until a second exile drove him on to Adrianople.

Now, Baha-O-Llah had never revealed his ownership of these dwelling-houses, which to all appearances remained the property of the disciple; but, after his departure they continued vacant, owing to the sacred character which the long residence of the Prophet had imposed upon them.

So, for many years, the Bahais watched over this property very quietly, concealing from the authorities the importance that they attached to it, for religious persecution was rampant in those days.

Matters remained in this condition until, with the establishment of the British Mandate, *liberty of conscience and religion*, proclaimed in the Covenant of the League of Nations, was confirmed in Iraq by the Treaty of 1922 with Great Britain, and later by the Organic Law of Iraq. Then, taking advantage of a security and freedom which they had never before known, the Bahais, under the direction of Shoghi Effendi, set about to putting into repair

these dwellings, *which*, the Guardian describes, *to outward seeming, appeared only as a cluster of humble and decrepit buildings lost amid the obscure and tortuous lanes of old Bagdad.*

Presently, the Bahais tried to take possession of the houses, and it was at this juncture that definite opposition set in. The case was carried from court to court with no decision in favor of the Bahais until, through the efforts of the Bahai Assembly of Bagdad with the assistance of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, Mr. Mountfort Mills, a lawyer and a most prominent Bahai, was enabled to bring the question before the Permanent Mandates Commission held in Geneva, Switzerland, from October 26th to November 13, 1928. The conclusion was as follows: *The Permanent Mandates Commission, recognizing the justice of the complaint made by the Bahai Spiritual Assembly of Bagdad, has recommended to the Council of the League such action as it thinks proper to redress the wrong suffered by the petitioners.*

I regret that I do not find any record in the literature of the Bahai Administration that is in my possession whether the Council of the League made any recommendation regarding the actual return of the property to the Bahais; or whether the return was ever accomplished. I certainly hope so.

Inconsistency

My object in giving the details of this transaction is to show that, in support of their claims, the Bahai Community repeatedly appealed *to the principle of the liberty*

of conscience and religion contained in the Treaty of 1922 between Iraq and Great Britain (Article III) and in the Organic Law of Iraq (Article XIII) as also to Article 22 (1) of the League Covenant. The principle of *liberty of conscience and religion* seems very important to the National Spiritual Assembly in its dealings with the East, and it turns to the Courts of that land to enforce its application; but this same body, in its dealings with the West, applies to the Courts of the United States to *prevent* the application of the same principle. Here is the DOUBLE MASK, in full use!

Again, I can picture the Janus-faced lock, which history describes to us. It was one that could be opened by two keys on opposite sides of the door. Now, the National Spiritual Assembly turns the key, opening toward Bagdad and pours reproaches upon the officials of that city because, in their dealings with the Bahais, they do not put into practice *the principle of liberty of conscience and religion* as embodied in their Organic Law. Then, this same Assembly turns the key opening toward New York and pours reproaches, even more vehement, upon a group of Bahais in The New History Society, because they have allowed themselves to put into practice *the principle of the liberty of conscience and religion* as taught by Baha-O-Allah and Abdul Baha, and as embodied in the Bill of Rights.

*But whereunto shall I liken this generation? . . .
For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they
say, He hath a devil.*

The Son of man came eating and drinking and they

say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners.

—*St. Matthew, Chapter XI, Verses 16-19.*

(For further details about the House of Baha-O-Llah in Bagdad, read *Bahai News*, No. 30, March 1929, p. 3, "Letters from Shoghi Effendi"; *Bahai News*, No. 32, May 1929, pp. 5-7, "Letter from Shoghi Effendi"; *Bahai News*, No. 41, May 1930, pp. 6-7, "The Houses of Baha-O-Llah"; and *Bahai Administration*, pp. 84, 85, 90, 96, 104.)

Ban on Literature

Third: The Government of Iran, in furtherance of its nationalistic policy, had placed a ban on the entry and circulation of Bahai literature throughout the country. In 1932, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, following instructions from Shoghi Effendi, addressed a petition to His Imperial Majesty the Shah on the subject of lifting this ban, and entrusted this petition to its personal representative, Mrs. Keith Ransom-Kehler.

In this document, thus forwarded to the ruler of Persia, the National Spiritual Assembly considered *how widely spread throughout America and especially among the Bahais, is the appreciation of the notable reforms which have been made in Persia as the result of your Majesty's Administration of Affairs in that land.* It also referred to *the importance of the spiritual ties, through the reverence of the believers in both countries for the enlightened religious teachings of Baha-O-Llah;* and finally stated: *The appointment of a representative, to journey to Teheran*

for the purpose of presenting in person the petition of this Assembly, will make it evident to your Majesty how profoundly the American Bahais are moved by their inability to communicate fully with their fellow-religionists in Persia by reason of the Postal regulations still prohibiting the entry of Bahai books and magazines published in the United States and Canada.

Mrs. Ransom-Kehler did not meet the Shah, but was received by the Prime Minister in August 1932 and was given the assurance that the ban on Bahai literature would be lifted. This announcement produced extraordinary rejoicing throughout the Bahai world and the National Spiritual Assembly released news of victory to the press. A long cable was sent to the Prime Minister expressing gratitude for the removal of the ban, and this message was brought to the attention of the Persian Minister in Washington, D. C. Likewise, *A statement to the American press was also issued, reporting that Mrs. Ransom-Kehler had received firm assurance from the Court Minister that the postal regulations under which Bahai literature had been confiscated would be immediately annulled.*

Then, within a very short time, and to the consternation of the Bahai community, it was realized that the ban had *not* been annulled. Here, Mrs. Ransom-Kehler again valiantly rose to the occasion; she made every effort to discover the reason for the change of attitude; she interviewed the Secretary charged with American affairs at the Foreign Office; she wrote passionate and glowing appeals to the Shah, to the President of the Parliament and to Cabinet Ministers, yet she was never able to penetrate the official veil. The Secretary at the Foreign Office told her

that it was contrary to the Constitution of Persia to sanction any religion founded *after* Islam and, that consequently, Bahai literature must remain unrecognized. In a long letter to the Shah, Mrs. Ransom-Kehler spoke of *the recent gracious action of your Majesty in asserting the power of religious freedom and opening the door to the amenities of international communication customary in modern times which was by us immediately communicated to all leading newspapers in the United States and Canada together with an expression of our grateful recognition of your Majesty's response to our petition.* No answer to this letter was received.

The story is a long one. The matter was brought up for full discussion by the delegates at the 25th Bahai Convention held in Chicago in June 1933, and a resolution was adopted *to take immediate action to bring about the cessation of the reported maltreatment of our Bahai brethren, to secure the entry of Bahai literature and to restore the constitutional provision for the printing and circulation of Bahai literature within Persia.* An elaborate report was drawn up and presented to the Persian Minister in Washington by a Committee of the National Spiritual Assembly. It says in part:—

After entertaining the hope that the ancient land of Persia had been granted the high privilege of a regime based upon fearless justice, the very foundation of civilization, we cannot but deplore the survival from the past of indications that *free intercourse* on the part of American citizens with loyal citizens of Persia on matters of purely spiritual interest is prevented by regulations imposed by Persian authorities. The Bahais of America assert very frankly to your Excellency their

unhappiness because of the fact that unfounded prejudice against the Bahais of Persia, whether emanating from atheistic or ecclesiastical sources, can in this day and age find sanction from authorities of the State. . . . The outcome of this representation will, we trust, enable the National Spiritual Assembly to inform the local Bahai communities that their determined desire to assist in removing the disabilities and maltreatment of their Persian brothers has been completely realized.

On Sept. 10, 1933, Mrs. Ransom-Kehler, still in Persia, sent the following announcement to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada: *Petition unanswered.*

And on October 27, 1933, the Spiritual Assembly of Teheran cabled the sad news that Mrs. Ransom-Kehler had passed into the life beyond.

Thus, a very interesting and significant *effort* made by Shoghi Effendi and the National Spiritual Assembly, in trying to remove the ban placed on the entry and circulation of Bahai literature in Persia, came to an end.

Now, the point which I again wish to call to the attention of the reader is the contradictory attitude of the National Spiritual Assembly which, on the one hand, puts forward such a stupendous amount of time, energy and money to lift the ban on entry of Bahai literature in Persia, on the basis of *the power of religious freedom and international communication customary in modern times*; while, on the other hand, it spends a very appreciable amount of time, energy and money to place a ban on this same literature in the *United States*.

Can one reconcile these two diametrically opposite ac-

tions of the National Spiritual Assembly, or are its members endowed with two natures such as are amphibians, who have adapted themselves to live on land and in water, at one and the same time?

(For a detailed account of Mrs. Ransom-Kehler's trip to Iran and her effort to lift the ban on entry and circulation of Bahai literature in that country read *Bahai News*, No. 69, October 1932, p. 5, "Persian Government Removes Ban on entry of Bahai literature"; *Bahai News*, No. 80, January 1934, pp. 10-15, "The Unity of the East and West"; and *Bahai Administration*, pp. 109, 110.)

Relations with Society

To my mind, the major tenor of Bahai life is the process of the transmutation of authority into liberty; of tradition into freedom of thought and action; it is the ceaseless renovation of habits and customs and the incoming and outgoing of the spirit of truth to and from the heart of a Bahai. No individual or group should have dictatorial rights over other individuals or groups, and everyone should be allowed to function as a Bahai according to the dictates of his conscience.

In our striving after freedom of conscience and liberty, we have been accused by the National Spiritual Assembly of a tendency to break away from the divine government; of a destructive effort to atomize the distinctive teachings of the Cause; of planning to bring about dissolution of discipline and order. But the National Spiritual Assembly has lost sight of the important fact that a human Bahai

personality must possess the moral privilege of expressing itself in thought and action, and that it is entitled, through divine right, to emancipation which in itself is the essence of discipline and the substratum of the divine order.

A moral Bahai personality has two aspects. The first is the universal aspect, which I call the religious or the spiritual, in virtue of which every Bahai ought to have complete and unchallenged right to idealistic and ethical self-expression. Here, freedom of conscience holds court with no rival; here, we enjoy liberty of thought, undivided and whole. Then, there is the individual aspect, to which I ascribe legal or state obligations. Here the individual Bahai, as a member of society, is called upon to observe the laws of the State and realize the fact that, although he is free to break any of these laws, he is at the same time liable to be haled into court and punished for his infractions.

Today, in the civilized world, there is *no* religious tribunal that can *compel* a man to appear before it on account of his so-called heresies or unbeliefs in the doctrines of the church. In the moral sphere, there is no judge to condemn a person. The religious authorities may excommunicate him, but such an act will not be legal in any state court and will simply be regarded as the decision of a group of ecclesiastical disciplinarians.

In brief, the relation subsisting between an individual Bahai and his group must be conditioned by the incontrovertible postulate that, as a moral personality, he shall have all rights to think and act spontaneously and consistently according to his own spiritual insight.

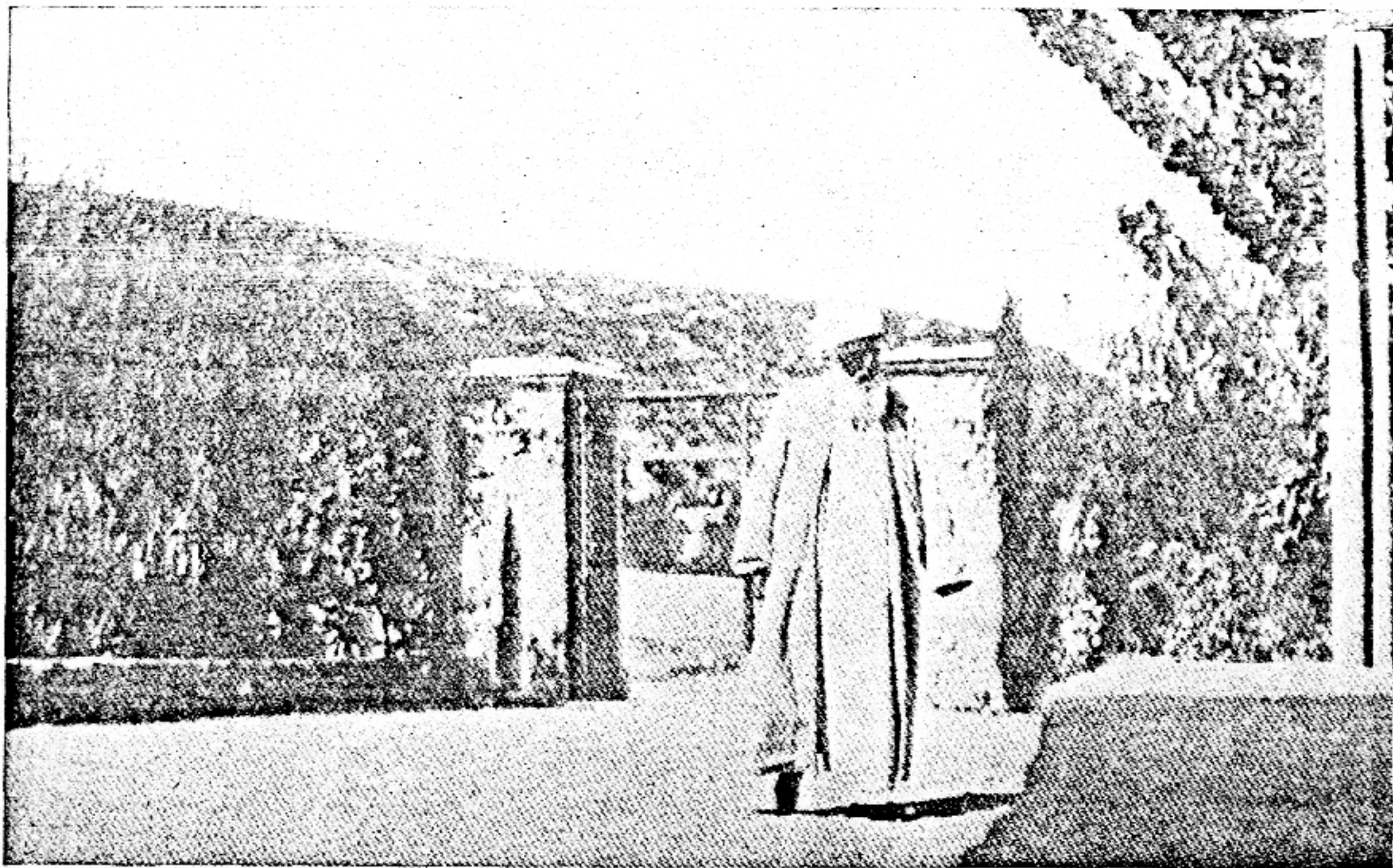
Our Standard

Abdul Baha has set up before us a very high and lofty standard. If I and my friends, as well as the members of the Bahai Administration, could live up to it, we would be *distinguished by a brilliancy like unto the sun, and all misunderstandings would disappear in the twinkling of an eye*. In such case, we would welcome a *Bahai modernist* as a sincere seeker after truth, and take to heart a *Bahai traditionalist* as a reverent follower of the law. We would exercise the grace of patience toward one another, for, although liberty is a great gift, charity is yet greater.

And now, let us listen to Abdul Baha as he sets up before our eyes his measure of the Bahai life:—

. . . you must conduct and deport yourselves in such a manner that you may stand out among other souls distinguished by a brilliancy like unto the sun. If any one of you enters a city, he must become the center of attraction, because of the sincerity, faithfulness, love, honesty, fidelity, truthfulness and loving-kindness of his disposition and nature toward all the inhabitants of the world, that the people of the city may all cry out: "This person is unquestionably a Bahai; for his manners, his behavior, his conduct, his morals, his nature and his disposition are of the attributes of the Bahais.

—*Tablets of Abdul-Baha*, Vol. I, p. 41.



Abdul Baha in his garden at Haifa, with Mount Carmel in the background.

CHAPTER XV

THOUGHT-CONTROL

Independent Investigation

A fundamental law of religion and philosophy is freedom of inquiry and investigation, together with the inalienable right of each individual to express the result of his search without any external control or official supervision. *Censorship* as applied to the fruits of the spirit is the negation of the spirit itself. In the Baháí Cause, the obligation of free and independent research is basic and incontrovertible. Baha-O-Llah states:—

Should a servant desire to make the words, deeds and actions of other servants, learned or ignorant, the standard for knowing God and His Chosen Ones, he shall never enter the Rizwan of the Knowledge of the Lord of Might nor attain to the Fountains of the Knowledge and Wisdom of the King of Oneness; neither shall he reach the bourne of immortality nor partake of the Cup of Nearness and Good Pleasure.

—*The Book of Assurance*, page 2.

In this way, the Founder of the Baháí Revelation has discounted reliance on the traditions and authorities of past and present, requiring from each student personal and rigorous application to the discovery of truth and to its enunciation. To make this individual responsibility still more binding, he declares in ringing tones:—

The Peerless Beloved says:
The Way of Freedom is opened!
Hasten ye!
The Fountain of Knowledge is gushing!
Drink ye!

—Baha-O-Llah, *Bahai Scriptures*, page 132.

Self-Reliance

On his visit to this country, Abdul Baha was asked: What is the greatest thing you have seen in America? and he answered: *The greatest thing I have seen in America is its freedom.*

—*Star of the West*, Vol. IV, No. 12,
October 16, 1913, page 207.

In enumerating the fundamental teachings of his Father, the Master usually placed the principle of *independent investigation of truth* at the top of the list. He asserted that we must depend on our own reason and adhere to the outcome of our own investigation. The following quotation, which is one example chosen from hundreds of similar utterances, boldly illustrates this mighty truth:

God has given man the eye of investigation by which he may see and recognize truth. He has endowed man with ears that he may hear the message of reality and conferred upon him the gift of reason by which he may discover things for himself. This is his endowment and equipment for the investigation of reality. Man is not intended to see through the eyes of another, hear through another's ears nor comprehend with another's brain. . . . Therefore depend upon your own reason and judgment and adhere to the outcome of

your own investigation; otherwise you will be utterly submerged in the sea of ignorance and deprived of all the bounties of God.

—Abdul Baha—*Promulgation of Universal Peace*,
Vol. II, page 287.

No progressive student of religion would deny the validity of the above assertions which are again to be found in Abdul Baha's remarkable sermon given on November 6, 1912, at the Universalist Church, in Washington, D. C.:—

Praise be to God! The standard of liberty is held aloft in this land. You enjoy political liberty; you enjoy liberty of thought and speech, religious liberty, racial and personal liberty. Surely this is worthy of appreciation and thanksgiving. . . . Liberalism is essential in this day; justness and equity toward all nations and people. Human attitudes must not be limited, for God is unlimited, and whosoever is the servant of the Threshold of God must likewise be free from limitations.

—*Promulgation of Universal Peace*,
Vol. II, page 384.

A Dramatic Change

This attitude of religious liberalism and freedom of conscience; this *idealization of the liberty of thought and right of speech*; this *right of unrestricted individual belief* came to an end with the departure of Abdul Baha from this life, in 1921. Immediately, a sudden and dramatic change of principle and policy was inaugurated, for Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Bahai Cause, in a letter dated March 5, 1922, created a censorship to be applied not only

to all Bahai writings and books, but to all other matters as well. The right of supervision was placed in the hands of the members of the National Spiritual Assembly. Shoghi Effendi writes:—

Not only with regard to publication, but all matters without any exception whatsoever, regarding the interests of the Cause in that locality, individually or collectively, should be referred exclusively to the Spiritual Assembly in that locality, which shall decide upon it, unless it be a matter of National interest, in which case it shall be referred to the National body. With this National body also will rest the decision whether a given question is of local or national interest. . . . Large issues in such spiritual activities that affect the Cause in general in that land, such as the management of the *Star of the West*, and any periodical which the National Body may decide to be a Bahai Organ, the matter of publication, or reprinting Bahai literature and its distribution among the various assemblies, the means whereby the teaching campaign may be stimulated and maintained, . . . the matter of receiving Orientals and association with them, the care and maintenance of the precious film exhibiting a phase of the Master's sojourn in the United States of America as well as the original matrix and the records of His voice, and various other national spiritual activities, far from being under the exclusive jurisdiction of any local assembly or group of friends, must each be minutely and fully directed by a special board, elected by the National Body, constituted as a committee thereof, responsible to it and upon which the National Body shall exercise constant and general supervision.

—*Bahai Administration*, pages 23-24.

This desire to control the thoughts and actions of the Bahai community, this drive toward the centralization of authority, this creation of a board of censorship, this plan of bringing under the full jurisdiction of the National Spiritual Assembly *all* matters pertaining to the Bahai Cause is, to say the least, in strange and incomprehensible contrast to the broad tolerance and liberality of Baha-O-Allah and Abdul Baha.

Centralized Control

Just as Baha-O-Allah and Abdul Baha, over and over again in their writings, repeat their injunction regarding freedom of thought and liberty of speech, Shoghi Effendi misses not a single occasion to reiterate his ideas on the centralization of power in the hands of the National Spiritual Assembly.

In a subsequent letter dated March 12, 1923 (*Bahai Administration*, page 33), Shoghi Effendi feels that, inasmuch as the Bahai Cause is still in its infancy, all its publications need *supervision*. He does not realize the very evident fact that what this movement actually needs at this, its early stage, is freedom to grow and to develop its muscles, both intellectual and spiritual. It is too young and fragile to be placed under the rigid rules of disciplinarian nurses. In the same letter the Guardian refers to *grave responsibilities* to be assumed by the National Spiritual Assembly, namely: to exercise *full authority over all local Assemblies*; to *direct the activities of friends*; to *guard vigilantly the Cause of God and control and supervise the affairs of the Movement in general*. With such intensive control exercised over every department of the



Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Chanler and Headquarters of
The New History Society.

Bahai Cause, the believers become mere automata, having no will of their own, no incentive and no initiative to start any original undertaking; for, they are at all times conscious that, at any moment, the heavy hand of the National Spiritual Assembly may fall upon them and destroy their labors.

The work of teaching the Cause, a bounden duty of every Bahai, is likewise placed under the authority of the National Spiritual Assembly, so that a teacher must follow, to the letter, exact and rigid prescriptions. He has no liberty of action, no leeway to express his own convictions. Always, he must accommodate himself to the regulations of the Teaching Committee. Shoghi Effendi states that *authority* must be centralized in the National Spiritual Assembly and *power* concentrated in the various local Assemblies. He seems to differentiate between authority and power. This definition may bewilder the uninitiated, but I feel sure that those who enjoy these prerogatives know the exact groove in which they fit.

In another letter dated April 9, 1923 (*Bahai Administration*, page 40), all publications must *fall under the exclusive control of the National Spiritual Assembly*. However, it seems that this control is not enough: a special committee shall minutely guide and judiciously scrutinize all information.

What a system! Apparently we are a lot of wayward children. Every word, spoken or written, must be scrutinized; every action must be controlled. We are, indeed, according to these extraordinary orders, as dead men in the hands of an undertaker. Why, in heaven's name, become Bahais? What benefits do we receive from this

spiritual totalitarianism? Even the helots of Greece, the galley slaves of Rome, the serfs of the Middle Ages and the bondsmen of the Southern States had more freedom than have the Bahais who thus submit themselves to such parasitical dependency!

Censorship

The strict injunctions laid down by Shoghi Effendi in his letters, naturally, led the National Spiritual Assembly to create a Reviewing Committee. This Reviewing Committee or Board of Censorship is patterned on the church authorities of the Middle Ages whose function it was to suppress the expression of free thought. In spite of the fact that there were no official censors before the age of printing, the informal beginnings of the practice did exist among the ancients. Methods were rough and ready in those days. Socrates was condemned for blasphemy and for corrupting the morals of youth; so the cup of hemlock brought him to speedy account. In the Middle Ages, writers were chiefly ecclesiastics. When printing quickened the flow of books and growing culture widened the circle of authors, clerical influence arose to demand censorship in order to protect the tenets of the Church.

This clamor for the control of thought created the Catholic *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*—an institution and a body of rules for the proscription of *pernicious* literature. The Index, like the Reviewing Committee of the National Spiritual Assembly, constituted a positive ecclesiastical ordinance, based on the false assumption that free thought was dangerous.

As far back as the first centuries of Christianity, when

ecclesiastical authority was still in its infancy, the apocryphal writings and certain other books were consigned to the flames.

Toward the close of the 15th century, the University of Cologne passed a measure which finally became the *Imprimatur* or preliminary censorship of books; it prescribed the examination of books before printing. The manuscripts which survived this ordeal carried the *Imprimatur* of the Board of Censors.

In similar manner the National Spiritual Assembly, in its legal action brought against me, had requested the Court to prevent my using the name Bahai, *in connection with any publication, which teaches or purports to teach any Bahai religion, faith, cause, movement, system of thought or way of living, unless said publication shall be submitted to and approved by the Reviewing Committee of the plaintiff trustees or their successors, and there shall be printed on the title page the notice: "Approved by the Reviewing Committee of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada."*

Roman Catholic Imprimatur

About 1501 A. D., Pope Alexander VI forbade the printers of the dioceses of Cologne, Mainz, Trèves and Magdeburg, on pain of excommunication and fine, to print any book whatsoever without permission from the bishop. The prohibition of books, specified by name, began in 1520 through the bull of Leo X which condemned all the writings of Luther. In 1624, Clement VII ordered excommunication as the penalty for the reading of books which the Church considered heretical. This order remains un-

changed to the present day. Likewise, even now it is necessary to have permission to print the *Imprimatur* of the Bishop on all books applying to religion or sciences. Excommunication is incurred by those who wittingly without permission read, keep, print or defend any books written by those whom the Church has designated as apostates and heretics, or the books directly condemned by the Pope. Excommunication is the penalty also for those who, without permission, print or cause to be printed the books of the Holy Scriptures or annotations or commentaries thereon. Thus were the laws of censorship created by the Church to suppress free expression of thought.

Now, I maintain that these were criminal acts committed against reason and spirit. If in any realm more than any other we need freedom, it is in the domain of religion. History has shown us that censorship may deprive a nation of its best leadings and inspirations.

Again, I assert that no man or body of men is wise enough or tolerant enough to be entrusted with power controlling the expression of thought, either in the Catholic Church or outside of it. The right of free speech and free press is the most precious possession of man, and there is no authority on the face of the earth which has the right to withhold it.

Bahai Imprimatur

Let us now turn our attention to the rules of *Bahai Procedure* as set forth by the National Spiritual Assembly for the guidance of its so-called Reviewing Committee.

In *Bahai Procedure*, Section 2, Sheet 25, we find an article entitled *Review and Publication of Bahai Litera-*

ture by Local Assemblies. This article contains the result of the discussion on the subject of Bahai Publications by the National Spiritual Assembly.

The National Spiritual Assembly considers itself very liberal in not including in the list of *publications*, programs and bulletins printed by Local Assemblies. The *Procedure* continues:—

What the National Spiritual Assembly had in mind in adopting a general policy was the more formal publications represented by pamphlets and books. . . . The Guardian's instructions in Bahai Administration make it clear that all Bahai literature of a general character, that is aside from programs and bulletins, are to be reviewed by a Committee of the National Spiritual Assembly. This makes it evident that, as far as the review function is concerned, a Local Spiritual Assembly (apart from local teaching and publicity work) is subject to the general jurisdiction of the National Spiritual Assembly.

Another privilege given to a Local Spiritual Assembly is that it can publish a pamphlet (such as excerpts from the recognized writings) already approved by the Reviewing Committee of the National Spiritual Assembly. However, such a pamphlet must be distributed free of charge, for publishing Bahai literature for sale is vested solely in the Publishing Committee appointed by the National Spiritual Assembly. The article concludes by again generously allowing Local Spiritual Assemblies to print their programs without submitting them to the Reviewing Committee. Thus:—

Aside from evidently local matters, like programs, a

Local Spiritual Assembly has no right of review or publication of Bahai literature, except in the one case that it may issue, as free literature, printed leaflets and pamphlets, containing material already in its entirety approved by the National Reviewing Committee and subsequently confirmed by action of the National Spiritual Assembly.

On Sheet 26 of *Bahai Procedure*, Section II, no Bahai is allowed to deliver a radio broadcast unless it is approved by the Local Assembly before delivery.

On Sheet 16 of *Bahai Procedure*, Section I, all literature, charts and other material used in Bahai teaching should be confined to that which has been approved by the Reviewing Committee or has the recorded sanction of the National Spiritual Assembly.

On Sheets 20-21 of *Bahai Procedure*, Section I, a compilation from the writings of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha is subject to review by the Reviewing Committee in the same manner as are other Bahai works. The compiler should not conclude any arrangement with a non-Bahai publisher until the compilation has been officially approved, and if the compiler intends to print the compilation outside the Cause, the proposed arrangement is to be submitted to the National Spiritual Assembly through its Publishing Committee for approval. Over and above all these restrictions, the National Spiritual Assembly requests the compiler to assign to the Bahai Publishing Committee any copyright taken out on the publication of the book or pamphlet.

Having placed all kinds of iron fences around the Kingdom of Bahai thought, closing the *Way of Freedom* that

Baha-O-Llah had *opened and sealing the Fountain of Knowledge* which was intended to flood the earth with its salubrious waters, the legislator of the Reviewing Committee solemnly affirms:—

The purpose of this statement is to assure proper protection of the interests of the Bahai Faith, while providing sufficient freedom of action to individual believers under all circumstances.

Royal Largesse

In reading the above *statement* one cannot help wondering what are the particular *interests of the Bahai Faith* which need *proper protection*!

Does God and His Truth stand in need of the protecting arm of the National Spiritual Assembly? Can the creature indeed *protect* the Creator? Or, is it the people who are to be protected from contamination through the Love of God; and are we to combine in a union to bar the common run of humanity from access to the life-giving words of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha?

Yet, in regard to the clause which provides *sufficient freedom to individual believers*, probably, it is appropriate to offer a vote of thanks to the National Spiritual Assembly for this largesse on their part, so royally meted out. *Sufficient freedom*? Of course! It is a superfluity, even beyond our deserts. Why should we be grasping? As intellectual and spiritual bondsmen to the National Spiritual Assembly, we must accept our lowly station, and in all obsequiousness stoop to pick up the crumbs that fall from the table of our Administrative masters! Who are we, and what are we that we should dare to even *think*

of more freedom? The members of the National Spiritual Assembly are all-wise, and they say that it is sufficient. So, sufficient it is and sufficient it must be! We should ask no questions. As model slaves, it is fitting that we obliterate ourselves before our superiors. We should pray that we be characterized with the qualities of meekness, deference, compliance and subserviency. We should, in all humility, present our allegiance to these shepherds who have assembled us under the overhanging rock of their salvation and who, in solicitude for us, have set aside appropriate and *sufficient* pasture-land, wherein we may graze and offer them our thanksgiving at dawn and at sunset.

A Divine Legacy

Just the same, there are some who cannot blot out the memory of the Bahai Cause as it was taught once upon a time and who, in spite of prevailing conditions, yet hold to the teachings of Baha-O-Llah and the universal expositions of them as dispensed by Abdul Baha. Man's reason contains a truth which has existed since the dawn of human history; his spirit is enveloped with a light which was enkindled by God at the very foundation of creation. This is no other than a divine legacy reserved for us by the Maker of the Universe. The Prophets appeared upon the earth to remind us of these preternatural truths, which so consistently have been defaced by spiritual charlatans and perverted by superstitious organizations. In our own times, Baha-O-Llah came to restore these lost truths through the free exercise of rational and celestial faculties; and now, while powerful influences, actually *within* the established Faiths, have arisen to assist mankind in

this process of emancipation, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, pitifully claiming to represent the foremost liberal element in religion, has formed another set of dogmas wherewith to throttle free thought and subvert the essential liberty of human expression in all its diversified manifestations. Censorship, in the social domain, is an outmoded tyranny; in the spiritual realm, it is unwholesome and impracticable. Censorship is not wanted anywhere, especially in the Bahai Cause; and if we allow it to retain the upper hand in the great movement that has been entrusted to us, we will set ourselves up before the world and in the face of history as false trustees, and as men and women unworthy and unfit to call ourselves Bahais.

We could not voice our vehement protest against the Reviewing Committee of the National Spiritual Assembly better than by quoting the words of Milton, who himself revolted against church censorship when serious objection was raised to parts of *Paradise Lost*. In his *Areopagitica*, a classic on tolerance of speech and thought, he said:—

Should ye set an oligarchy . . . over it (the Press) to bring a famine upon our minds again, we shall know nothing but what is measured to us by their bushel. When God shakes a Kingdom with strong and healthful commotions to a general reforming, it is not untrue that many sectaries and false teachers are then busiest in seducing; but yet more true it is that God then raises to His own work men of rare abilities, and more than common industry, not only to look back and revise what hath been taught heretofore, but to gain further and go on some new enlightened steps in the discovery of truth. He relies on the survival of the fittest in this

sphere. . . . Let her (Truth) and Falsehood grapple: whoever knew Truth put to the worse in a free and open encounter?

The Emergence of a New Race

In this summer of 1941, a meeting without parallel in sheer dramatic worth took place between the Prime Minister of England and the President of the United States. On a sea, alive with danger and under ominous skies, these two great personalities came face to face and drafted a Charter for the emancipation of the peoples of all nations. The Churchill-Roosevelt Eight Points, fruit of this dangerous excursion, stand as testimony to the awakened conscience of the leaders of the Anglo-Saxon race; and when, in his report to Congress on the meeting at sea, made on August 21st, 1941, Mr. Roosevelt added two more points, which he said were necessarily included, the Atlantic Charter was rounded out to full value. These two points, in the language of the President, read as follows:—

It is also unnecessary for me to point out that the declaration of principles includes of necessity the world need for freedom of religion and freedom of information. No society of the world organized under the announced principles could survive without these freedoms which are a part of the whole freedom for which we strive.

On the same day, the President sent a message to the National Convention of Young Democrats, meeting in Louisville, Kentucky, which was delivered to delegates

from 48 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. In it, Mr. Roosevelt has this to say about the preservation of *utmost freedom*:—

I would be the last person to dispute or limit the right of every citizen to have his own opinion and express it, and I know you are with me as to the preservation of that utmost freedom.

This ideal of utmost freedom has been set forth by H. G. Wells in very concise terms. In his *Declaration of the Rights of Man*, he says:

Every man has a right to the utmost freedom of expression, discussion, association and worship.

—*The Rotarian Magazine*, September, 1941, page 9.

The leaders of the Bahai Administration in America have for years been carrying on an ideological flirtation with the totalitarian religious systems of the past, copying their methods and procedures, and manifesting the while a pride and satisfaction as if they had discovered an entirely new system. Nevertheless, the incomparable worth of Baha-O-Llah's genius lies in the fact that he has constructed for the children of this generation a spiritual fortress which shall protect the rights of man against the encroachment of all religious dictators, whether in the Bahai Administration or outside of it.

As Bahais, it is our duty to stand firm by the principles of the Cause; as citizens of a New World Order, we must proclaim the essential rights of men. New advocates of human dignity are raising their voices in every quarter of the globe; new champions of a United Humanity are

waging war against blind and selfish interests. The ideals of a new civilization are being hammered on the anvil of high striving and bitter experience, and at last we behold the emergence of the New World, which can be effected only by the sons and daughters of an emancipated race.

PART SIX

PSYCHOSES

16. Fear

17. Excommunication

*And who is he that will harm you, if
ye be followers of that which is good?*

—I Peter, Chapter 3, Verse 13



Group taken with Abdul Baha on the terrace of the Bab's tomb on Mt. Carmel, Haifa, Palestine, about 1917.

CHAPTER XVI

FEAR

The Secret of Fearlessness

There is no fear in Bahai Philosophy. Its basic principles are the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God. There are no secret doctrines in the Bahai Teaching. The chief premise of the Cause is association and collaboration among men and women of all races and all religions. It does not recognize any enemy, for it does not wage physical, intellectual or spiritual warfare against the children of God who are encircled by the hounties of a Merciful Father.

Fear—a persistent, all-pervading influence—poisoning mind and character, has no place in the Bahai vocabulary. Fear, a morbid enslavement, a paralysis of will and effort in anticipation of some actual or remote contingency, does not affect the Bahai attitude. A Bahai is not plagued with a fear-consciousness nor with a fear-complex; he does not allow his life to be guided by fear-impulse or fear-reaction. Not recognizing the existence of enmity, he does not harbor hatred toward any living creature; his life is an exemplification of love and affection for all mankind. Baha-O-Llah teaches his followers to overcome fear. He says:—

There is today a science which can eradicate fear. It must be taught from the earliest period of childhood and if it becomes popular, the very nature of man will be changed; for that which decreases fear increases courage. —Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, pages 25-26.

Abdul Baha had mastered the secret of fear-control; and this he demonstrated in his daily relations with his fellowmen. It consisted of the simple and yet mysterious lesson of non-recognition of enmity between souls and the inculcation of the ideal of friendship.

In order to impress this lesson on our minds he on one occasion declared:—

Baha-O-Llah has clearly said in his Tablets that if you have an enemy, consider him not as an enemy. Do not simply be long-suffering, nay rather, love him. Your treatment of him should be that which is becoming to lovers. Do not even say that he is your enemy. Do not see any enemies. Though he be your murderer, see no enemy. Look upon him with the eye of friendship. Be mindful that you do not consider him as an enemy and simply tolerate him, for that is but stratagem and hypocrisy. To consider a man your enemy and love him is hypocrisy. This is not becoming of any soul. You must behold him as a friend. You must treat him well. That is right.

**—Promulgation of Universal Peace,
Vol II, pages 261-262.**

Baha-O-Llah, the Wise Physician, knew that more than often the spark of enmity and alienation is ignited through religious controversy and altercation; therefore, he exhorted his followers to discourse with the people *in the language of love and affection*.

He says:—

Oh people of Baha! Consort with all men with joy and fragrance. If you possess a word or principle, of which another is deprived, reveal and communicate

it in the language of love and affection; if it is accepted and produces its effect, the end is obtained; if not, rather than torment your friend, leave him to himself and pray for him.

—*Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, page 12.

Again, he says:—

In the book of God, the Mighty, the Glorious, you are forbidden to dispute and to contend with one another. Cultivate that which will benefit you and the peoples of the earth likewise.

—*Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, pages 19-20.

Bahai Comradeship.

On December 2, 1912, three days before his departure from the United States, Abdul Baha, after a journey of nine months athwart this country, delivered a farewell address at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Edward J. Kinney in New York. In this talk he epitomized his ideal of non-recognition of enmity in the Bahai Cause and elucidated this important topic in such a clear and comprehensive manner that his words should serve as a manual of instruction for all time to come. They were as follows:—

These are the days of my farewell to you for I am sailing on the fifth of the month. . . . I must therefore give you my instructions and exhortations today, and these are none other than the teachings of Baha-U-Llah.

You must manifest complete love and affection toward all mankind. Do not exalt yourselves above others but consider all as your equals, recognizing them as the servants of one God. Know that God is compassionate toward all; therefore love all from the

depths of your hearts, prefer all religionists before yourselves, be filled with love for every race and be kind toward the people of all nationalities. Never speak disparagingly of others but praise without distinction. Pollute not your tongues by speaking evil of another. Recognize your enemies as friends and consider those who wish you evil as the wishers of good. You must not see evil as evil and then compromise with your opinion, for to treat in a smooth, kindly way one whom you consider evil or an enemy, is hypocrisy and this is not worthy or allowable. You must consider your enemies as your friends, look upon your evil-wishers as your well-wishers and treat them accordingly. Act in such a way that your heart may be free from hatred. Let not your heart be offended with anyone. If some one commits an error and wrong toward you, you must instantly forgive him. Do not complain of others. Refrain from reprimanding them, and if you wish to give admonition or advice, let it be offered in such a way that it will not burden the bearer. Turn all your thoughts toward bringing joy to hearts. Beware! Beware! lest ye offend any heart. Assist the world of humanity as much as possible. Be the source of consolation to every sad one, assist every weak one, be helpful to every indigent one, care for every sick one, be the cause of glorification to every lowly one and shelter those who are overshadowed by fear.

In brief, let each one of you be as a lamp shining forth with the light of the virtues of the world of humanity. Be trustworthy, sincere, affectionate and replete with chastity. Be illumined, be spiritual, be divine, be glorious, be quickened of God, be a Baha'i.

—*Promulgation of Universal Peace*,
Vol. II, pages 448-449.

A Dangerous Doctrine

In considering the problem of fear, let us for a while study the writings of Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Cause, and see how he handles this vital subject. We will do this because the issue is one which cannot be ignored in this study of the present-day Bahai Movement.

The three published volumes of Shoghi Effendi are *Baha'i Administration*, *The World Order of Baha'u'llah* and *The Advent of Divine Justice*, which works consist of the letters which he has addressed to the National Spiritual Assembly in the course of the last 20 years. Now, I have read these three books and find that the words *enemies* and *adversaries* are greatly featured. Baha-O-Llah has said: *Consort with all men with joy and fragrance*, yet Shoghi Effendi, in his very first letter, dated January 21, 1922, written after his assumption of the guardianship, recommends *the absolute shunning of whomsoever we feel to be an enemy of the Cause*. (*Bahai Administration*, page 16.)

Now, I cannot bring myself to the point of believing that *absolute shunning* of whomsoever we *feel* to be the enemy of the Cause is a principle of Baha-O-Llah. Is every one going to let his *feelings* guide him in the matter? Can we not take for granted that frail human beings as we are, a great deal of personal caprice and spite may enter into our calculations as to *who* is the enemy of the Bahai Cause? This is a very dangerous doctrine, and yet one finds it in different forms throughout Shoghi Effendi's communications. He practically never mentions the names of the *enemies* or *adversaries* to whom he constantly refers. He simply creates ogres and bogey men, and fills the

hearts of the Bahais with apprehension and fear. In this way, the fountain-head of free and open comradeship is dried up and the flowers of loving-kindness wither away.

Abdul Baha makes this point very plain when he says:—

Even as avoiding and shunning the company of people and being harsh with them are the sure means of filling them with fear, so are love, kindness, humility and gentleness the truest method of binding people's souls and attracting their hearts.

—*The Mysterious Forces of Civilization*, page 62.

Here, let us recall that Baha-O-Llah in the *Tablet of the World* states that in this Revelation brutal manners are changed into spiritual qualities; also that the four great barriers which kept the people of the world separate have been demolished by the Grace and Authority of the Word of God; one of the barriers referred to was *shunning other nations*. (*Tablets of Baha'U'llah*, page 31.)

Let us consider: Is not the so-called enemy, whom Shoghi Effendi commands us to shun absolutely, part and parcel of *other nations*, the same which Baha-O-Llah orders us not to shun?

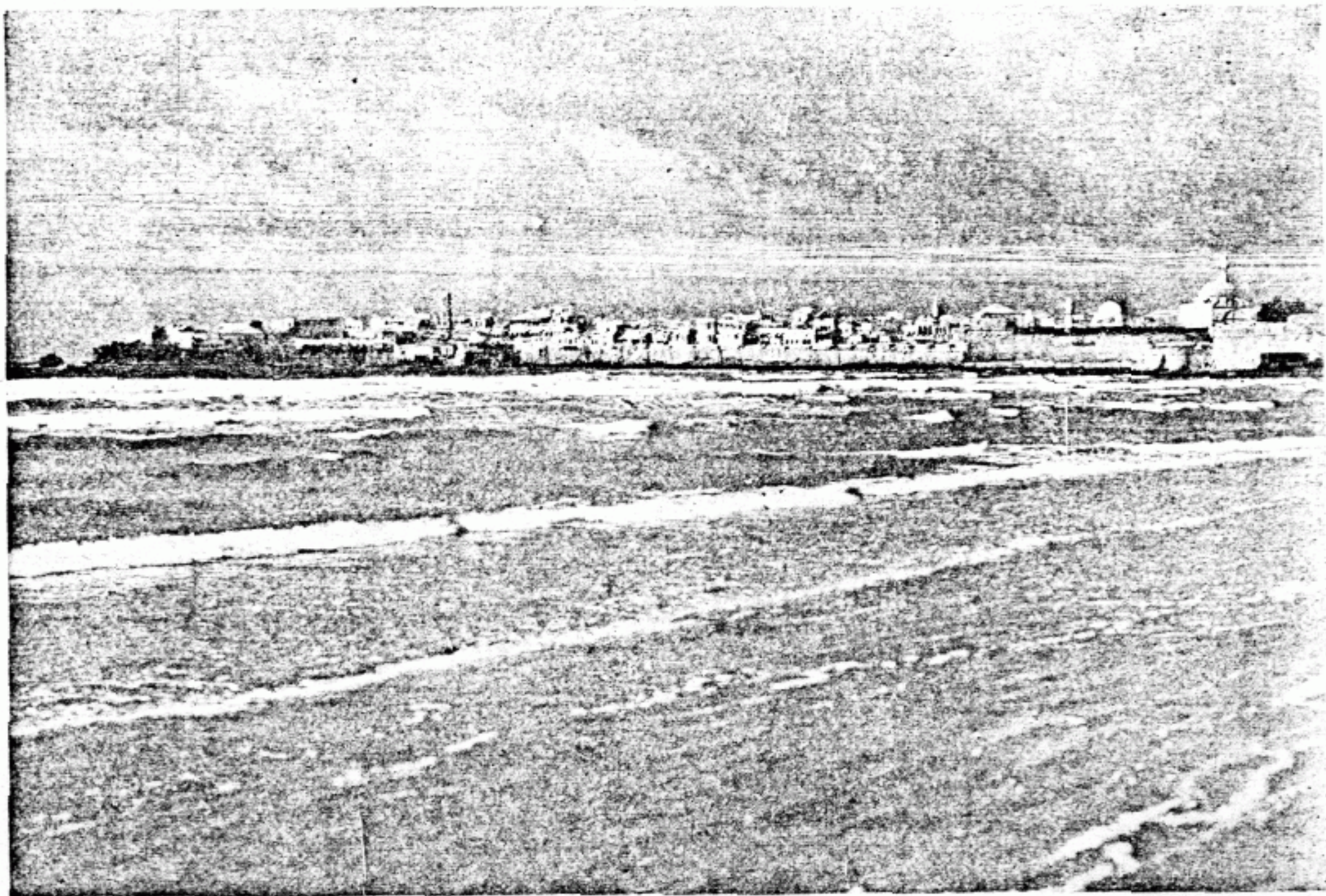
I am not going to dwell on the troublous impression which these sections of Shoghi Effendi's letters have made on me, but will simply submit a few of them and leave it to the reader to judge whether or not I exaggerate.

To the attitude of goodwill, of forbearance and genuine kindness to all, must be added, however, constant but unprovocative vigilance, lest unrestricted association with the peoples of the world should enable the very few who have been definitely pronounced by

the Master as injurious to the body of the Cause, to make a breach in the Movement. Not until, however, an unmistakable evidence should appear, manifestly revealing the evil motives of a certain individual or group of individuals, is it advisable to make the matter public. . . . In order, however, to insure fair and quick and vigorous action whenever such an evil activity is revealed and has been carefully ascertained, the best and only means would appear to be, for the careful observer, once he is assured of such an evil action, and has grown hopeless of the attitude of kindness and forbearance, to report it quietly to the Spiritual Assembly representative of the friends in that locality and submit the case to their earnest and full consideration. Should the majority of the members of that Assembly be conscientiously convinced of the case—and this being a national issue affecting the body of the friends in America—it should, only through the intermediary of that Assembly, be cautiously communicated to that greater body representing all the Assemblies in America, which will in its turn obtain all the available data from the local Assembly in question, study carefully the situation and reserve for itself the ultimate decision. It may, if it decides so, refer it to the Holy Land for further consideration and consultation.

—March 5, 1922, *Baha'i Administration*,
pages 18-19.

This servant, after that grievous event and great calamity, the ascension of His Holiness Abdul Baha to the Abha Kingdom, has been so stricken with grief and pain and so entangled in the troubles (created) by the enemies of the Cause of God, that I consider that



Acca, Palestine, Baha-O-Llah's final place of exile. From behind the walls of this "Most Great Prison", he wrote his immortal epistles to the kings and rulers of the world.

my presence here, at such a time and in such an atmosphere is not in accordance with the fulfillment of my important and sacred duties.

—May, 1922, *Baha'i Administration*, page 25.

The work of the noble Edifice that the mighty hands of the All-Wise Master has reared in this world can suffer no delay, nor can its foundations be made to totter, whatever the apparent obstacles its enemies in their impotent wrath and despair may throw in its way. We need not wait too long, for already from various quarters there comes the news that the awful promises of Abdul Baha regarding the Covenant-breakers have been strikingly fulfilled. But it behooves us not to dwell for a moment on these doomed and darkened efforts.

—December 16, 1922, *Baha'i Administration*, page 26.

From the East and from the West, from the North and from the South, the unnumbered servants of Baha-U-Llah, disdainful of the evil machinations of the enemies of His Cause, the breakers of His behests, have rallied to His Standard, and risen with one accord to carry on the great work He has entrusted to their charge.

—March 12, 1923, *Baha'i Administration*, page 29.

It is incumbent upon them to be vigilant and cautious, discreet and watchful, and protect at all times the Temple of the Cause from the dart of the mischief-maker and the onslaught of the enemy.

—March 12, 1923, *Baha'i Administration*, page 33.

The flames of sedition, so maliciously kindled in the past by those who have dared to flout His Will, are gone out forever, and the fondest hopes of these evil plotters are now abandoned, doomed never to revive. . . . And now, with the Cause purified and inwardly victorious, its principles vindicated, its enemies silenced and sunk in unspeakable misery, may we not, henceforth, direct all our efforts to collective action and constructive achievement, and in utter disregard of the flickerings of their fast-fading light, arise to carry out those urgent measures that will secure the outward and complete triumph of the Cause.

—November 14, 1923, *Baha'i Administration*,
pages 44-45.

Who can question that His loved ones, both in the East and the West, notwithstanding the insidious strivings of the enemies of the Cause, have displayed a spirit of unshakable loyalty worthy of the highest praise?

—November 24, 1924, *Baha'i Administration*,
page 59.

These challenging criticisms, whether or not dictated by malice, cannot but serve to galvanize the souls of its ardent supporters and to consolidate the ranks of its faithful promoters. They will purge the Faith from those pernicious elements whose continued association with the believers tends to discredit the fair name of the Cause, and to tarnish the purity of its spirit. We should welcome, therefore, not only the open attacks which its avowed enemies persistently launch against it, but should also view as a blessing in disguise every storm of mischief with which they who apostatize their faith or claim to be its faithful exponents assail it from

time to time. Instead of undermining the Faith, such assaults, both from within and from without, reinforce its foundations and excite the intensity of its flame.

—March 21, 1930, *The World Order of Baha'U'Llah*, page 15.

Let him (an upholder of the Cause) be aware that so soon as the full measure of the stupendous claim of the Faith of Baha'U'Llah comes to be recognized by those time-honored and powerful strongholds of orthodoxy, whose deliberate aim is to maintain their stranglehold over the thoughts and consciences of men, this infant Faith will have to contend with enemies more powerful and more insidious than the cruelest torture-mongers and the most fanatical clerics who have afflicted it in the past.

—March 21, 1930, *The World Order of Baha'U'Llah*, page 17.

Many and powerful have been its enemies who, as soon as they discovered the evidences of the growing ascendancy of its declared supporters, have vied with one another in hurling at its face the vilest imputations and in pouring out upon the Object of its devotion the vials of their fiercest wrath.

—April 21, 1933, *The World Order of Baha'U'Llah*, page 72.

In the prosecution of their task neither the whisperings of the treacherous nor the virulent attacks of their avowed enemies were allowed to deflect them from their high purpose or to undermine their faith in the sublimity of their calling.

The agitation provoked by him who in his incessant and sordid pursuit of earthly riches would have, but

for Abdul Baha's warning, sullied the fair name of their Faith, had left them in the main undisturbed. Schooled by tribulation and secure within the stronghold of their fast evolving institutions they scorned his insinuations and by their unswerving loyalty were able to shatter his hopes. They refused to allow any consideration of the admitted prestige and past services of his father and of his associates to weaken their determination to ignore entirely the person whom Abdul Baha had so emphatically condemned.

The veiled attacks with which a handful of deluded enthusiasts subsequently sought in the pages of their periodical to check the growth and blight the prospects of an infant Administration had likewise failed to achieve their purpose.

The attitude which a besotted woman later on assumed, her ludicrous assertions, her boldness in flouting the Will of Abdul Baha and in challenging its authenticity and her attempts to subvert its principles were again powerless to produce the slightest breach in the ranks of its valiant upholders.

The treacherous schemes which the ambition of a perfidious and still more recent enemy has devised and through which he is still striving to deface Abdul Baha's noble handiwork and corrupt its administrative principles are being once more completely frustrated.

These intermittent and abortive attempts on the part of its assailants to force the surrender of the newly built stronghold of the Faith its defenders have from the very beginning utterly disdained. No matter how fierce the assaults of the enemy or skillful his stratagem they have refused to yield one jot or one tittle of their cherished convictions.

His insinuations and clamor they have consistently ignored. The motives which animated his actions, the methods he steadily pursued, the precarious privileges he seemed momentarily to enjoy they could not but despise.

Thriving for a time through the devices which their scheming minds had conceived and supported by the ephemeral advantages which fame, ability or fortune can confer, these notorious exponents of corruption and heresy have succeeded in protruding for a time their ugly features, only to sink, as rapidly as they had risen, into the mire of an ignominious end.

—April 21, 1933, *The World Order of Baha'U'Llah*, pages 89-90.

These verities, if valiantly upheld and properly assimilated, will, I am convinced, powerfully reinforce the vigor of our spiritual life and greatly assist in counteracting the machinations of an implacable and vigilant enemy.

—1933, *The World Order of Baha'U'Llah*, pages 99-100.

Numerous and powerful have been the forces that have schemed, both from within and from without, in lands both far and near, to quench its light and abolish its holy name. Some have apostatized from its principles and betrayed ignominiously its cause. Others have hurled against it the fiercest anathemas which the embittered leaders of any ecclesiastical institution are able to pronounce. Still others have heaped upon it the afflictions and humiliations which sovereign authority can alone, in the plenitude of its power, inflict.

The utmost its avowed and secret enemies could hope

to achieve was to retard its growth and obscure momentarily its purpose. What they actually accomplished was to purge and purify its life, to stir it to still greater depths, to galvanize its soul, to prune its institutions, and cement its unity. A schism, a permanent cleavage in the vast body of its adherents, they could never create.

They who betrayed its cause, its lukewarm and faint-hearted supporters, withered away and dropped as dead leaves, powerless to cloud its radiance or to imperil its structure. Its most implacable adversaries, they who assailed it from without, were hurled from power, and, in the most astonishing fashion, met their doom.

—March 11, 1936, *The World Order of Baha'U'Llah*, pages 195-196.

Though the enemies which every acceleration in the progress of your mission must raise up be fierce, numerous, and unrelenting, yet the invisible Hosts which, if you persevere, must, as promised, rush forth to your aid, will, in the end, enable you to vanquish their hopes and annihilate their forces.

—Dec. 25, 1938, *The Advent of Divine Justice*, page 13.

Fear Complex

Through the publication and wide distribution of these instructions, the National Spiritual Assembly and its followers have come down with an acute attack of ecclesiastical goose-flesh and much energy is spent in locating these *enemies* and in unearthing their *plots*. Gossip becomes fact, and facts assume distorted proportions. Consequently, a chain of correspondence is established among the

various Spiritual Assemblies, the object of which is to hunt down the enemies and expose them. Meanwhile, hatred is engendered and the spirit of tolerance, mercy and forgiveness is trampled underfoot.

Baha'i News, organ of the National Spiritual Assembly published month by month *For Baha'is Only*, communicates these sacred fears to all the Bahai Communities throughout the world. Here is one example:—

. . . Indeed contact with the different centers in Europe has proven beyond question the great need for the protection of the friends from the nefarious operations of those whom the Guardian and the National Spiritual Assembly have found to be disturbers of peace and disseminators of evil. Firmness and courage are required to deal with these situations so that they may be removed from any vestige of personal animus, and only emphasize the direct and positive laws of administration in the most dignified and helpful way. Had such wise methods been employed earlier, much of the confusion which it has taken nearly two years to undo might have been avoided. We are only beginning to glimpse the beauty and perfection of the system which must ultimately become the perfectly functioning medium for circulating general information.

—*Bahai News*, No. 62, page 14, May, 1932.

I am sure that Heinrich Himmler would describe *the beauty and perfection* of his own system of Gestapo in much the same manner.

The Years Have Brought Safety

In recalling the events which, since its inception, have

taken place in the Cause, one cannot ignore the fact that enemies *have* played no small part in the history of the movement. The early Babis and Bahais were forced to contend with overwhelming odds, and thousands of them suffered martyrdom. Baha-O-Llah himself met with opposition, not only from without but from within, and to such a point that his very life was attempted by a blood-relative, with the result that he carried with him physical injury throughout his existence on this earth. Abdul Baha, for forty years a captive in Palestine, was under constant surveillance and at the mercy of traitors and spies. He was forced to recognize the existence of enemies and to take steps to protect the Cause from their plots, both open and secret. But, Shoghi Effendi has never been a prisoner. The rule of Nasiru'd Din Shah and of Sultan Abdul Hamid, under which the Cause quivered for so long a time, has, in Persia and Turkey, been replaced by progressive governments; while Palestine, the headquarters of the movement, enjoys the beneficent protectorship of England. The lives of the Bahais are safe, so is their property; and, if once in a while a Christian missionary writes an argument against the Bahai Faith, or, if a Bahai author sends a book to press without the sanction of the authorized publishing committee, or again, if a Bahai with an unassailable record chooses to associate with an old friend, the orders of the Assemblies notwithstanding, these actions do not constitute such danger to the Cause that the tenor of the Guardian's recommendations to his followers need be colored thereby. No! The risks in these days are very mild, to say the least, and it seems unnecessary to apply to them the terminology that might have been appropriate in former years.

What if Abdul Baha found it necessary, after long persecution, to read out of the Cause some individuals whom his infinite patience and loving-kindness could not placate! What if, in contemplating a House of Justice to be established in the distant future, he envisioned the possibility of the expulsion of recalcitrant members! Shall then an order of priests make of these facts a precedent, so that, henceforth and forever after, it shall feel at liberty to hold aloft the weapon of excommunication? No! I think that the least we can allow the Master is all sanction regarding what he did and what he did not do, and that our duty is to concern ourselves with his teachings and to practice them.

I had so much hoped that Shoghi Effendi, assuming leadership as he did at a time when all danger had passed, would have seen fit to discard and eliminate the fear-complex which has left so deep a mark on the Bahai mentality. With his training at the Universities of Beirut, Syria, and Cambridge, England, it would have seemed appropriate, and we had every reason to expect, that the hang-over of dread, resultant from an anguished past, would have been forcibly lifted from the minds of the Bahais the world over. And in regard to these United States, the Bahai citizens of which have always been afforded every right and privilege, what a pity it is to transplant from overseas, and graft on their consciousness, this seed of fear with its abundant and destructive harvest! Times have changed, no dagger is brandished before the Bahais; then why should they load their bodies and consume their strength with the weighty links of the medieval mailed shirt?

The Test of a Bahai

A recently received communication from the Guardian on the subject of *enemies* brings up, among other points, one which I consider to be most important. It is in reference to the Master's Will and Testament.

In the Bahai writings, we have a vast body of incomparable teachings which include universal principles for the regeneration of mankind; we also have the Will of Abdul Baha. Naturally, this latter document has its place in Bahai literature, and an important one; but, look at it as you will, it is only *part* of the great whole.

Now, the Bahai Administration has seen fit to feature the Will above and beyond everything that has been written and spoken by the Founders of the Cause. It is ever accentuated in publications, ever driven in upon the minds of the people with unremitting intensity. Nothing else matters; only the Will, the Will, the Will! The word has, by this time, been seared into the consciousness of the Bahais. It, and it alone, is the Cause.

Why so? Simply, for the reason that, in his Will, Abdul Baha made it incumbent upon his followers to render absolute obedience to the Guardian. The Master had his reasons for doing this: he trusted Shoghi Effendi to carry out his teachings, and he wished, at all hazards, to prevent a split in the movement. This is very clear; and, certainly, a foremost wish in the mind of every Bahai would be to adhere to the Master's instructions. For many years this was my own ardent wish; for, naturally, I have never doubted the authenticity of Abdul Baha's Will.

Yet, after all, the Will is not the Cause *in toto*; there are other injunctions, other teachings. We cannot forget

the glorious Bahai education that has been made available to us, in order to cling desperately to this one point. The National Spiritual Assembly has its reasons for so bringing forward the Will. The Will says: Obey the Guardian! and the Guardian says: Obey the National Assembly! Therefore, the Will constitutes a sceptre of authority, a sceptre which, but too often, bears the aspect of a whip.

Unfortunately, it is not the National Spiritual Assembly alone which bears unflagging testimony to this feature in the Master's Will, for the Guardian himself gives to it supreme and unparalleled importance; and, as things stand today, an obedience to Shoghi Effendi, so abject as to entail all personal dignity, has become the test of a Bahai. Nothing else matters; nothing else is ever dwelt upon.

Abdul Baha said: *If a man has ten good qualities and one bad one, look at the ten and forget the one; and if a man has ten bad qualities and one good one, look at the one, and forget the ten*; yet, the Bahai authorities say: If a man has ten Bahai qualities and does not recognize the Guardian as the arbiter of his conscience, think only of this last failing and forget all the other qualities.

Now, I am not possessed of the courtier-psychology; I did not have it when I served the Master, and he did not exact it of me. He wanted us to be upright, sincere and self-reliant, and I have patterned myself on his conception of a man. I frankly admit, at this juncture, that there is nothing in my bearing of the Uriah Heep, and that I have small respect for that perennial type, so deftly portrayed by Charles Dickens.

Following is Shoghi Effendi's letter, written by his secretary, to which I have just referred:—

The material sent to him regarding the legal action taken against the New History Society, as well as copies of their monthly publication, have been received and the Guardian feels that Ahmad Sohrab is increasingly revealing his latent opposition to the spirit as well as the letter of the Master's Will and Testament. His references to excommunication flatly contradict the Master's own actions and attitude, of which he is personally fully aware, and are irreconcilable with some of the most emphatic and unmistakable injunctions of 'Abdu'l-Baha in His Will and Testament. His increasingly bold criticisms of the action taken by the Guardian amounts to a repudiation of the authority of the Guardianship, and is thus an open and flagrant violation of the Will establishing that authority. In fact the more he writes and the more he gives vent to his true feelings, and discloses his real attitude to what 'Abdu'l-Baha has regarded as absolutely essential to the unity, the integrity and protection of the Faith, the more will he clearly demonstrate his disloyalty to the Master whom he professes to uphold and defend. He is no doubt the most subtle, resourceful and indefatigable enemy the Faith has had in America, and the retribution he will in the end suffer will be correspondingly grievous and devastating. Every effort should be made by your Assembly to protect the new believers from the poison which he is trying to instill into their minds and souls, and to reinforce their confidence in his ultimate downfall and complete obliteration.

—*Excerpts From Letter From the Guardian
in Bahai News, No. 145, July 1941.*

In the above description of myself, I am rather flattered at the word *subtle*, for it is a characteristic that I never

thought I possessed. There is so much that I think and feel, now that the flood-gates of discussion have been *opened*, that I can do no more than explain and act upon my innermost convictions. However, I consider the adjectives *resourceful* and *indefatigable* as well chosen, for I have been trained by the most resourceful of all teachers and the most indefatigable of all leaders. Was I not, during eight years, a witness to the Master's unflagging enthusiasm, undeviating tenacity and world-shaking energy! He expected me to imitate these qualities in him, and I expected this course of action of myself.

In regard to being an *enemy of the Faith*, to this I definitely make objection; nor do I allow this statement to pass without making flat denial. If the upholding of the freedom of the Cause, is enmity to the Cause; if the teaching of the Bahai principles, is *instilling* poison into the minds of the hearers, then I assert, and without reserve, that Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha were enemies of the Cause, *par excellence*, and that their words were the essence of poison upon poison.

Finally, I note that the National Spiritual Assembly should exert *every effort to reinforce* the confidence of the Bahais in my *ultimate downfall and complete obliteration*. Here we have entered the realm of prophecy. It would seem that the people should be left free to believe in certain prophecies, or to ignore them, or to disbelieve in them, according to their choice and aptitudes; and I do question the advisability of taking steps to induce the Bahais to accept forecasts of the future, especially when these forecasts apply to the obliteration of any soul. Such efforts are not conducive to the healthy development of a com-

munity; they simply bring to mind the dark practices of the past, when so-called sorcerers applied themselves to inserting pins into the waxen bodies of dolls shaped to portray their enemies. This did not do any harm to the bodies and souls of the alleged enemies, but I believe that it did a lot of harm to the bodies and souls of those who inserted the pins.

Oriental Exclusion Act

In a letter dated June 8, 1919, written during the lifetime of Abdul Baha, Shoghi Effendi, after giving a glowing account of the Mashriqu'l Azkar at Ishkabad, Russia, as described by a pilgrim, mentions the Master's instructions regarding fellowship and association. The following is an extract from this early communication:—

When Abdul Baha inquired the condition and the association of the friends, it was intimated that, unlike the days gone by, the friends are intimately associating with all the people of every shade and opinion, of every sect and social standing. He said:— “Such is the way that must be adopted, for only through intimate association will the friends be able to teach and sow the seed in the heart of a seeker. The flower must be brought close and near in order to inhale its scent and fragrance.”

**—*Star of the West*, Vol. XI, No. 1,
March 21, 1920, page 15.**

However, with his assumption of the guardianship, these ideas seem to have receded in the mind of Shoghi Effendi.

Although the Bahai Cause has appeared in the Orient

and its cardinal principle is union and harmony between the inhabitants of East and West; although Baha-O-Llah openly declares. *Oh people of the world! Ye are all the fruits of one tree and the leaves of one branch. Conduct yourselves with perfect love, friendship and understanding (Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, page 11)*; although Abdul Baha cries at the top of his voice: *We must exercise the utmost love toward each other. We must be loving to all the people of the world. We must not consider any people, the people of Satan, but know and recognize all as the servants of the One God (Promulgation of Universal Peace, Vol. II, page 264)*; yet, for some obscure reason, Shoghi Effendi instructs the American Bahais not to receive Orientals in their midst—even Oriental Bahais are barred out unless they can produce proper credentials from the right authorities.

Here are the instructions written by Shoghi Effendi himself:—

I wish to add a few lines and remind you of the necessity of refusing to admit to your assembly, or associate with, any Oriental who does not have proper credentials from a recognized spiritual Assembly. No excuse whatever is acceptable. I am sure that a few are trying to cause mischief and bring about a split in the ranks of the believers in these days of stress, and the utmost caution should be exercised, lest these mischief-makers succeed in undermining the foundations of the Cause.

—Bahai News, No. 52, pages 4-5, May, 1931.

Regarding association with Oriental travelers and residents in the United States and Canada, I desire

to emphasize afresh the vital necessity for the exercise in these days of the greatest vigilance and reserve, prudence and caution, on the part of the American believers in their dealings with them, either in an official or private capacity, whether in business transactions or for purely religious purposes. As the Movement grows in prestige, fame and influence, as the ambitions, malice and ill-will of strangers and enemies correspondingly wax greater, it becomes increasingly important for every individual and spiritual Assembly to be on their guard lest they fall innocent victims of the evil designs of the malevolent, the self-seeking and greedy.

—*Baha'i Administration*, page 92.

The matter of receiving Orientals is left entirely in the hands of the National Spiritual Assembly, whose special committee for this purpose will have to investigate all the questions arising in this connection in future.

—*Baha'i Administration*, page 41.

In this manner, the entire Eastern Hemisphere, the home of Revelation, is looked askance by the Bahai community, and one thousand million Orientals automatically become suspect.

Additional instructions regarding the above subjects are to be found in *Bahai News*:

The National Spiritual Assembly feels that Oriental believers visiting America should transmit their credentials to the Secretary of the National Assembly, so that proper credentials may be issued by the National Assembly for their use while in America. If therefore, a Baha'i from the Orient should hereafter present his

credentials to any local Assembly, that Assembly is requested to see that the credentials are transmitted.

—*Bahai News*, No. 131, page 7, November, 1939.

As regards those Persian or Oriental non-believers who become genuinely interested in the Cause in America, they can be admitted to study classes, but every care should be taken by the Assemblies to fully test their sincerity and the genuineness of their desire to join the Community before they are given the necessary facilities that will enable them eventually to be regarded as voting members of the faith.

—*Bahai News*, No. 118, page 2, August, 1938.

Thus, it is made most difficult for Eastern people of all faiths and creeds to come in contact with American Bahais and to learn of the Cause; and then to cap this gorgeous structure of exclusiveness and intolerance, a bar is made, preventing even the American Bahais, travelling from one city to another, from visiting local Assemblies or having a chat with individual believers, if these travellers happen to be unarmed with the proper *credentials*. Here is the fiat that proclaims this spiritual embargo to all the world:—

It has been voted to call attention once more to the fact that local Assemblies and individual believers should be careful in dealing with persons who claim to be Baha'is but have no proper credentials. This applies particularly to persons who come from other cities.

—*Bahai News*, No. 95, page 4, October, 1935.

Segregation! Thy name, indeed, is Bahai Organization!

Isolationists! Why not take a few leaves out of the text books of the Bahai Administration?

Irreconcilable Teachings

In bringing this chapter to a close, I venture to make the following comparison between the two points of view treated here; that of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha and that of Shoghi Effendi.

Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha banish the spectre of fear and enmity; Shoghi Effendi evokes them.

Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha teach association with all men; Shoghi Effendi commands the shunning of whomsoever we even *feel* to be an enemy.

Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha throw wide open the gates of the Kingdom of Heaven; Shoghi Effendi closes them to a crack lest any *mischief-makers* enter the Temple of the Cause.

Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha were the embodiments of courtesy and affability; Shoghi Effendi departs considerably from the path of even ordinary good manners, as is exemplified by his term *besotted woman* which he applies to an honorable lady, a Bahai of more than twenty years' standing, whose conclusions on certain matters may be incorrect, but who is intelligent, sincere and self-sacrificing beyond all shadow of doubt. It was no less a person than Baha-O-Llah who said:—

I declare by God that the sword of civility is keener than blades of steel.

—Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, page 23.

Baha-O-Llah tells his followers: *If in the presence of*

the Manifestation, the evil in some one is apparent, you must not make opposition, only turn to God (Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, page 84); Shoghi Effendi, instead of renouncing opposition, is much taken up with the flames of sedition, the pernicious elements, the machinations of an implacable and vigilant enemy and the invading forces of schism. He, likewise, is catapulted into an idyllic rapture when he contemplates the awful doom that will overtake these notorious exponents of corruption and heresy who succeed in protruding for a time their ugly features only to sink, as rapidly as they had arisen, into the mire of an ignominious end. There is a sentence for you! One fitted to strike terror into the hearts of many so-called heretics, and at the same time to produce unctuous satisfaction in the innermost being of those who are trained to hunt them.

Thus, we can see that Shoghi Effendi and the National Spiritual Assembly throughout these years have built a segregated community—a community, the members of which are taught to suspect the motives and actions of the most innocent—an isolated, self-centered, self-satisfied community, living behind the iron walls of a prison which Baha-O-Ilah and Abdul Baha thought to destroy. Tragic? Yes. Unexpected? Of course; and as the Father and Son, from the Supreme Horizon, watch this process of rebuilding the fortress of alienation and proscription which they themselves had dismantled, can you guess the thoughts that occur in their Minds, can you imagine the conversation that is going on between them? Can you?



GATEWAY TO ACCA

CHAPTER XVII

EXCOMMUNICATION

An Ecclesiastical Law

Excommunication, as practiced by religious communities throughout the ages, is an ecclesiastical law adopted by the spiritual leaders of Judaism and Christianity, also Islam in modified form, to protect the faithful from contamination with those *ideals and ideas* that were considered harmful or heretical. Throughout the Middle Ages, the Roman Catholic Church resorted to this method in order to eject, and shut out from communion, those men and women who questioned her authority or her exclusive claim to salvation.

As an ecclesiastical law, whenever pronounced against a person or persons, it automatically deprived them of fellowship in things spiritual. The Roman Catholic Church perfected this engine of discipline and divided excommunication into two kinds: minor and major. Minor excommunication is separation or suspension from the sacraments. Major excommunication is absolute exclusion from the Church with all its rights and advantages and, in the case of very great offenders, even from social intercourse with the faithful.

In time, the church hierarchy created most rigorous methods of disciplinary constraint which culminated in the establishment of the Boards of Inquisition, which were empowered to excommunicate those *found guilty of heresy*, to imprison them and see to it that their houses were de-

stroyed, their goods confiscated and their bodies burned at the stake.

These severe measures reduced the church government to a mere contrivance for exacting explicit obedience to a system of ecclesiastical enactments; thus turning religion, which had been intended to be the very essence of mercy and love, into a machine of injustice and hate.

The practice of excommunication, as developed from the theories of the Schoolmen, was as follows: first: to reclaim the believer from error of doctrine and if possible to save his soul; second: in case the first act of mercy were unsuccessful, to cut him off, as a withered branch, from the body of Christ and all participation in the benefits thereof. Penalties of various degrees were legislated and enforced upon dissenters from the Church's formulated standard of doctrine. One most efficacious invention, fitted to strike terror into the heart of any rebel, was excommunication by inch or excommunication by candle, where the period allowed for repentance depended on the life of a burning candle. If the candle had died out before the apostate had recanted, no restoration could be expected in this world or in the world to come, and even Christ would not act as a pleader on the judgment day for such an accursed soul.

Now, I deny the temporal and spiritual right of excommunication as exercised in the past by the ecclesiastical institutions; and I reject claims to the same prerogatives which are maintained today by those who hold themselves as the shepherds of the flocks. Long enough has religion been defaced by this inhuman contraption, operated by so-called *holy* men! Long enough have these far-from-holy-men manipulated the conscience of mankind through

their demoniacal devices and, terming themselves the Vice-Gerents of the Most High, imposed their anti-spiritual and anti-social dogmas on a defenseless and innocent humanity!

The people of the world must awaken to the realization that God, who is the fountain-head of all blessings, was not, is not and will never be an excommunicator. He is no God of wrath and vengeance, but a God of understanding and compassion. All those who sat on the thrones of authority, expelling and anathematizing the *dissenters*, did not themselves know what faith meant and had no share in the truth that they pretended to promulgate.

The greatest service that could be rendered to religion is to lift from its brow the dark curse of excommunication and to demand, nay to insist, that this law be struck out from the creeds of all faiths. As long as it retains its place, even theoretically, in the Articles of the Confessions of various sects and denominations, the establishment of the principles of a Universal Religion and a Universal God will remain an impossibility. Therefore we, the people of the world, must eradicate from the pages of our spiritual consciousness the language of hate and denunciation, and obliterate from our religious books the rules of expulsion and anathema.

The Language of Love

It was certainly not an idle exhortation when Baha-O-Llah, from behind the prison walls of Acca, Palestine, announced that:—

The language of love is the touchstone of hearts and sustenance for the spirit; it is like unto the significances

behind the words, and a horizon for the dawn of the Sun of Wisdom and Knowledge.

—*Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, page 12.

Baha-O-Llah's aim was to purify all religions from the defects of cursing, execration and excommunication. His plan was to change the surface of the earth into the Paradise of Our Lord the Merciful; and in order that his followers might arise for the accomplishment of this mighty task, he addressed them saying:—

O people of Baha! Ye are the dawning-places of the Love and day-springs of the Favor of God. Defile not the tongues with cursing and execrating any one.

—*Tablets of Baha-O-Llah*, page 130.

Again he admonished them:—

I sincerely hope that my friends will not be contaminated by the dust of lies, and that the exaggerated things which they hear will not affect their state, their condition, their saintliness nor their purity.

—*Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, page 26.

The Bahais are therefore called upon, by the Revelator himself, to speak in the language of love and to protect themselves from the dust of lies; and the greatest lie of all the ages is that a compassionate God is the excommunicator of His own children or that He approves excommunication in His Name.

Baha-O-Llah, also says:—

The people of Baha must not refuse to discharge the reward of any one, and must respect possessors of

talents; and they must not stain their *tongues with slander* (or evil words) like unto the former community (i.e. Islamites).

—*Tablets of Baha-O-Llah*, page 10.

The Language of Hate

In this connection I cannot help but think of the excommunication pronounced by Clement VI (1346) against Louis the Bavarian. It surpasses anything that I have read on this subject. Compared to it, a cup of hemlock is heavenly nectar and prussic acid a life-imparting remedy. Through these words you can hear the hiss of the serpent and the whistling of the slave driver's scourge. It is a gem in the literature of the Curse:—

Let him be damned in his going out and his coming in! The Lord strike him with madness and blindness and mental insanity; may the heavens empty upon him their thunderbolts, and the Wrath of the Omnipotent burn itself into him in the present and the future world! May the universe fight against him, and the earth open to swallow him up alive!

Small wonder that emperors, kings, princes and the peoples of Europe quaked before this awesome power! When I, for the first time, read this majestic curse, a tremor ran through my spine and my pulse boiled as though caught in fire.

Presently, however, I realized more plainly than before what Baha-O-Llah really meant when he commanded us: *Defile not the tongues with cursing and execrating any one*; and when I had controlled my horror and regained my poise I remembered that I must not let myself be com-

laminated by the dust of lies—for these are indeed blasphemy against God, the Father, and the Christ, His Son, who on the cross prayed for his enemies. They are blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, attendant upon all men.

A Vast Difference

In carrying this new principle of a non-cursing, non-execrating and non-excommunicating religion to its logical conclusion, Abdul Baha, while traveling in the United States, repeatedly spoke on the subject. In the course of a sermon delivered before the Congregation of All Souls Unitarian Church, New York, on July 14, 1912, he said:—

All humanity must be looked upon with love, kindness and respect, for what we behold in them are none other than the signs and traces of God Himself. All are evidences of God; therefore, how shall we be justified in debasing and belittling them, uttering anathema and preventing them from drawing near unto His mercy. This is ignorance and injustice, displeasing to God, for in His sight all are His servants.

**—Promulgation of Universal Peace,
Vol. I, page 226.**

What a vast difference between the above utterances of Abdul Baha and those of Thomas Aquinas—the father of the rationalization of theology in the Roman Catholic Church—who, relying on the authority of St. Augustine, asserted that:—

Heretics were not only to be separated from the Church by excommunication, but from the world by death. As falsifiers of coins are put to death, much

more should they be put to death who are guilty of the more wicked act of corrupting the faith. The heretic, the Church delivers over to the secular tribunal to be put out of the world.

Heretic-Hunting

The Tribunal of Inquisition, established by Innocent III (1215), was intended to meet the peril of heresy and extirpate it. The heretics were compared to serpents concealing themselves in the grass, and princes were ordered to take an oath to support the Church in punishing them, and, on pain of forfeiting their dignities, to imprison them and confiscate their goods. Anyone who, in whatsoever way, supported heretics was himself excommunicated and denied his inheritance. Innocent III openly declared that even as treason was punished, so much more should punishments be meted out to those who committed the greater crime of blasphemy against God and His Son.

Abdul Baha must have been thinking on these and other such ungodly occurrences when on August 17, 1912, he spoke at Green Acre, Maine:—

From the beginning of human history down to the present time the various religions of the world have anathematized and accused each other of falsity. Each religion has considered the others bereft of the face of God, deprived of His mercy and in the direct line of divine wrath. Therefore, they have shunned each other most rigidly, exercising mutual animosity and rancour.

—*Promulgation of Universal Peace*,
Vol. II, page 259.

Universal Bounty

In the same speech, Abdul Baha develops this subject in a very striking and original manner:—

. . . How ignorant therefore the thought that God who created man, educated and nurtured him, surrounded him with all blessings, made the sun and all phenomenal existence for his benefit, bestowed upon him tenderness and kindness and then did not love him! This is palpable ignorance, for no matter to what religion a man belongs, even though he be an atheist or materialist, nevertheless God nurtures him, bestows his kindness and sheds upon him His light. How then can we believe God is wrathful and unloving? How can we even imagine this when as a matter of fact we are witnesses of the tenderness and mercy of God upon every hand? All about us we behold manifestations of the love of God. If therefore God be loving, what should we do? We have nothing else to do but to emulate Him. Just as God loves all and is kind to all, so must we really love and be kind to everybody. We must consider none bad, none worthy of detestation, no one as an enemy. We must love all; nay we must consider every one as related to us, for all are the servants of one God. All are under the instructions of one educator. We must strive day and night that love and amity may increase, that this bond of unity may be strengthened, that joy and happiness may more and more prevail, that in unity and solidarity, all mankind may gather beneath the shadow of God, that people may turn to God for their sustenance, finding in Him the life that is everlasting.

—*Promulgation of Universal Peace*,
Vol. II, page 261.

Inquisitorial Precepts

Let us contrast the above spiritual utterances of Abdul Baha with the writing of Pope Innocent III to the Inquisitorial Magistrates of Viterbo on the 25th of March, 1199:—

According to civil law, criminals convicted of treason are punished with death and their goods are confiscated; if even their children's lives are spared, it is simply out of pity. With how much more reason then should they who offend Jesus, the Son of the Lord God, by deserting the faith, be cut off from Christian communion and stripped of their goods, for it is infinitely more serious to offend against the Divine Majesty than to injure human majesty.

On another occasion the same Pope addressed the Princes of France:—

It is our wish that all the people take arms against the heretics whenever Brother Raynier and Brother Gui may deem advisable to give the command.

Bahai Administration Follows Suit

The few quotations from the writings of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that their central aim was the abolition of all exclusive acts and of every sectarian tendency. This one all-embracing spirit distinguishes their cause from all the past religions.

Yet, alas, *this limitation, this expulsion, this excommunication*, which Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha entreated their followers to renounce and cast away, these evil spirits of a by-gone age, these gibbering goblins of a lost generation

have been taken up by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada and incorporated in the fundamental laws of their ecclesiastical organization. The pity of it is that Shoghi Effendi falls in line with their medieval orthodoxy, with the result that today the Bahai world is witnessing religious persecution, heresy-hunting and excommunication according to standard pattern. In addition to this, the National Spiritual Assembly does not permit its *recognized* followers to join any organization, political or religious, and the Bahais are required to cancel any membership they may have in such bodies.

Thus, it seems to me that this is not at all *the New World Order of Baha-O-Llah* but the very old world order of intolerance, fanaticism, exclusion and spiritual isolation which Baha-O-Llah came to destroy. Thanks to the labor and ingenuity of the National Spiritual Assembly and Shoghi Effendi, these liabilities of the dark ages have been recaptured and embodied bag and baggage in this modern and one-time healthy movement.

Minor and Major Excommunication

According to its ruling, the National and Local Assemblies have the power to deprive a member of voting rights and suspend him from meetings and gatherings. These individuals are termed *recalcitrant*—not considered as expelled or excommunicated, but simply subsisting under a temporary ban.

This is very much like the *Minor Excommunication* in the Catholic Church; however, when the Guardian expels or excommunicates a person, this act has far-reaching spiritual implications *affecting the very soul of that be-*

liever. This is, of course the *Major Excommunication*, similar to that in the Roman Church. The triumphant edict of excommunication is laid down in *Bahai News*, No. 134, March 1940, page 2.

Concerning your question as to the status of those individuals whom the local Assembly or the National Spiritual Assembly have considered it necessary to deprive of the voting right and to suspend from local meetings and gatherings; such action which local and National Assemblies have been empowered to take against such recalcitrant members, however justified and no matter how severe, should under no circumstance be considered as implying the complete expulsion of the individuals affected from the Cause. The suspension of voting and other administrative rights of an individual, always conditional and therefore temporary, can never have such far-reaching implications, since it constitutes merely an administrative sanction; whereas his expulsion or excommunication from the Faith, which can be effected by the Guardian alone, in his capacity as the supreme spiritual head of the Community, has far-reaching spiritual implications affecting the very soul of that believer. The former, as already stated, is an administrative sanction, whereas the latter is essentially spiritual, involving not only the particular relationship of a believer to his local or National Assembly, but his very spiritual existence in the Cause. It follows, therefore, that a believer can continue calling himself a Bahai even though he may cease to be a voting member of the Community. But in case he is excluded from the body of the Cause by an act of the Guardian he ceases to be a believer, and cannot possibly identify himself even nominally with the Faith.



Group taken with Abdul Baha in Paris, in 1913.

From left to right:—A Persian statesman, Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, Dr. Lotfullah Hakim, Mirza Mahmud Zargani and Seyyed Assadollah.

The above quotation is from a letter addressed to Mr. Harlan Ober, a member of the National Spiritual Assembly. To my mind it raises a few fundamental issues, the discussion of which will be of vital importance.

The letter is written by the Guardian through his secretary and is published in *Bahai News with Shoghi Effendi's consent*; therefore to all intents and purposes it has the same validity as if he had written it personally.

A Staggering Claim

Shoghi Effendi claims for himself a power that is staggering in its implication; he assumes a spiritual dictatorship which is predictable of catastrophic results as regards the future of the Bahai Cause. This is a brand of Fascism much as that which has placed Europe under the heels of dictators accountable to no one, and which thus reduces Bahai membership to the level of spiritual serfdom. The exercise of this power is the more dangerous because, once Shoghi Effendi, as the Guardian, is entrenched in it and the precedent has become well established, all the succeeding Guardians will be liable to follow suit, appropriating it as their natural and inherited right.

It is an axiomatic fact that there is no man who, before the face of his Maker, can arrogate unto himself the power of excommunicating any person whatsoever from the religion of God or of controlling the spiritual destiny of that person. If it is proven that Shoghi Effendi really claims and actually practices this unwarranted right, then I say with all solemnity that it is the bounden duty of the liberal Bahais throughout the world to wage a continuous and vigorous war against such an assumption on his part.

For ages, the Christian world was crimsoned with the blood of innocent men, women and children, because the Popes claimed and exercised the power of excommunicating the so-called heretics and apostates. No record is more ghastly, no account more gruesome than are the records and accounts of the Inquisition and the *Autos-da-fe*; the very names suggest the worst horrors—lighted torches, towering flames, fierce-eyed hangmen, burning bodies, to say nothing of the faces of those who watched these spectacles with fiendish glee or, to say the least, with acquiescence. Now, do we want to bring into the Bahai Cause these relics of barbarism, these inventions of the devil? One may legitimately argue that such conditions will never return to our world. Yet I answer: So long as a single man claims this power and the right to exercise it, and a subservient group yields to his authority, the potential danger of a return to the practices of the Middle Ages exists. Some day there may be an eruption like unto a silent volcano which, at unforeseen times, floods the countryside with its rivers of lava and covers the face of the heavens with its clouds of smoke.

No one ever dreamed that in our lifetime Europe would be saddled with Nazism and Fascism with their attendant ideologies of regimentation, intolerance and barbarism, yet the impossible has happened and here we are, facing this terror!

On the other hand, it is not difficult to picture the establishment of a type of spiritual cruelty which would not necessitate the burning of heretics at the stake. This is the 20th Century, in spite of the European nightmare, and it is probable that we will content ourselves with more

refined methods of persecution. We are able to propagate, by subtle and *civilized* methods, rumors that in time will destroy the character of those whom we are pleased to point out as enemies. Just keep hammering at it, persistently, unremittingly, and, in time, men will be ready to call white black, and day night.

The Twin Swords

The Roman Catholic Church arrogated to herself the wielding of the *spiritual sword*; she *draws the sword which of God she hath received*, and the Princes of Europe were commanded to draw their *temporal* swords and support her in her doings. Another important chapter in the history of the Roman Catholic Church was the famous assertion of Boniface VIII (1302) that *both* swords were in the hands of the Pope. The Popes unsheathed these two swords and with their sharp blades struck at thousands. These acts of spiritual terrorism and devastation were the *fruits of seeds* sown in the early stages of Christianity, no doubt in some cases by sincere Christians whose sole aim it had been to protect the *deposit of Faith* handed down by the Apostles.

In Shoghi Effendi's letter, we find the statement: *But in case he is excluded from the body of the Cause by an act of the Guardian he ceases to be a believer, and cannot possibly identify himself even nominally with the Faith.* Being familiar with the development of the history of religions, we recognize in this statement the seed out of which will unquestionably grow the tree of a new Inquisition with its attendant cruelty and corruption. As you

sow so shall you reap, is the universal law of nature—cause and effect—no one can escape it.

The very worst calamity that could befall the Bahai Cause is that its members should supinely accept the principle that Shoghi Effendi, *in his capacity as the supreme spiritual head of the Community*, has the power to *expel* or to *excommunicate* a *believer* and that this act *has far-reaching spiritual implications affecting the very soul of that believer*. Shoghi Effendi has no such power! His excommunication cannot affect even the soul of an amocba; how much less the soul of a believer in Baha-O-Llah! My faith in the Bahai Cause would indeed be very superficial, should I come to believe that *any* human being could, by a mere gesture or a few mesmeric words, take it away from me or from any one else. Every soul, in accepting the Bahai Cause, makes a covenant with Baha-O-Llah, and that Covenant, neither Shoghi Effendi nor the National or Local Assemblies can ever break. Its foundation is in the deeps of consciousness, and God alone knows its dwelling-place.

Scriptural Authority

The Pope, as we have seen, *in his capacity as the supreme head of the Community*, had the power to *expel* or *excommunicate* a *believer*, and that act was supposed to have *far-reaching spiritual implications affecting the very soul of that believer*. Now, how did the Pope find grounds on which to assert this power? Those who chose to invest him with this prerogative had to search the New Testament in order to find a verse that would support such a claim. Well, they found it. Here is the verse:—

And I say also unto thee, that, thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.

—*St. Matthew, Chapter 16, Verses 18-19.*

On the authority of these two verses the Roman Church built her universal, temporal and spiritual Empire!

Never, in the furthest stretch of his divine vision, could Christ have imagined the astounding repercussions of the above words, and if Peter, the humble fisherman, could have projected himself into coming centuries and witnessed what his so-called *successors* were perpetrating in his name, he would have opened his honest eyes in horror and disgust. Peter would have repudiated his successors, while it goes without saying that they, likewise, would have repudiated him, throwing him out of the Vatican as the *reprobate Jew* that he was.

The Doctrine of the Keys

From the very beginning, the doctrine of *the keys* was a topic of theological discussion, and for centuries controversy raged around this point. As an essential credo of the Church, it was related to the teaching which applied to the forgiveness of sin (John, Chapter 5: Verse 14 and Chapter 8: Verse 11). The Fathers wrote volumes of commentaries on this point, and indulged in varied and conflicting interpretations, all of which go to prove the

supreme importance that was attached to this doctrine, necessary to discipline and fundamental for the maintenance of religious uniformity.

Thus, the Church of Rome held up Peter as the steward of the House of God on earth, who possessed the keys to all the heavenly mansions and had therefore the power to open or to shut. This gift of the power to open or to shut, to bind or to loose, to permit or to forbid, was in time assumed by Bishops and Popes and exercised under all circumstances. Later, the claim was regularized by the Fathers and Schoolmen in the interests of the Church Order and of a Ministry that had become increasingly sacerdotal. Ambrose, in particular, asserted that the Church had the keys in her own possession and enjoyed the sole power both to *bind and to loose*.

Externalizing the Word of God

The resemblance between the Roman Catholic Church and the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada affords another striking parallel: All the spiritual ideals of Christ, originally metaphoric and uttered in the flowery language of Eastern symbology, became hardened by the Western Church into dogmas, thus changing the spring of spirituality into the winter of formalism. This externalizing process gained momentum from age to age, as the forces of orthodoxy found themselves in control of the State. The belief in the divine right of the hierarchy and the duty of imposing submission to it by force became the cardinal principle of the Church, with the result that a suffocating darkness descended upon the nations. The method which the succes-

sors of Peter adopted was not to *loose* the souls on earth but to *bind* them; it was one of violence, not of persuasion. The Church rested her rule on the sword rather than on the Cross. Thus, the primitive Christianity of the East was transformed into the elaborate and ritualistic Catholicism of the West with its vast jungle of rules, culminating in its official slogan: *No salvation without the Church*.

As a result of the doctrine of excommunication propounded by Shoghi Effendi and upheld by the National Spiritual Assembly, the Bahai Cause has taken up all the characteristics of the Church of Rome and, unless this doctrine is publicly repudiated, it will be subject to the same spiritual diseases, with gradual corruption and disintegration.

Contradictory Estimates

The claim made by Shoghi Effendi, regarding his right, *in his capacity as the supreme spiritual head*, to excommunicate the believers from the Faith, totally and fundamentally differs from a previous estimate of himself, written by him in the *World Order of Baha-U-Llah*. This estimate was published in 1934, while the new role which he now assumes was given out in 1939. There is quite a gap between the two statements and a distinct change of principle. In the earlier one, he does not think that he is a *co-sharer with Abdul Baha*; he can never *claim to be a perfect exemplar of the teachings of Baha-U-Llah or the stainless mirror that reflects His light*; he forbids the believers to pray to him, to seek his benediction or even to celebrate his birthday. He feels that he can exercise the right and perform the obligation imposed upon him as the

Guardian and yet remain infinitely inferior to both Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha *in rank, and different in nature*. Here are his words:—

The Guardian of the Faith must not under any circumstances . . . be exalted to the rank that will make him a co-sharer with Abdul Baha in the unique position which the Center of the Covenant occupies—much less to the station exclusively ordained for the Manifestation of God. So grave a departure from the established tenets of our Faith is nothing short of open blasphemy. . . .

No Guardian of the Faith, I feel it my solemn duty to place on record, can ever claim to be the perfect exemplar of the teachings of Baha-U-Llah or the stainless mirror that reflects His light. . . . In the light of this truth to pray to the Guardian of the Faith, to address him as lord and master, to designate him as his holiness, to seek his benediction, to celebrate his birthday, or to commemorate any event associated with his life would be tantamount to a departure from those established truths that are enshrined within our beloved Faith.

Feb. 8, 1934, Haifa, Palestine.

—*The World Order of Baha-U-Llah*,
pages 150, 151.

Naturally, I am fully aware of the fact that by this time many *believers* in the organization have, in contradiction to the above statement, deified Shoghi Effendi. It is known that they look upon him as a reincarnation of the spirit of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha and that they have bedecked his shoulders with the mantle of infallibility.

This strange belief, wholly at variance with Shoghi Effendi's earlier concept of himself, is taught but orally from mouth to mouth, yet traces of it can be detected in some of the pronouncements of the National Spiritual Assembly and the reports of its various committees.

The Black Plague

The doctrine of excommunication, appropriated by Shoghi Effendi, is peculiarly the weapon of the Dark Ages of intolerance and ignorance. No other dogma is so distinctly the creation of an irreligious era. It is the black plague in the realm of the mind; it is religious assassination and spiritual murder; it is an abomination unto the Lord of Mercy and Truth. The spiritual and cultural manifestations of the Renaissance as well as the courage and sacrifice of thousands of lovers of freedom contributed to wrest (to all intents and purposes) the power of excommunication from the hands of the Roman Catholic Church and to establish in Europe and America the age of the liberty of Religion. Does it then seem credible that Shoghi Effendi is so unmindful of the history of the past that he has brought himself to believe that he can bring back into the Western world the doctrine of excommunication? Are the members of the National Spiritual Assembly so blind to the significant events in the United States during the last hundred and fifty years that they hope to succeed in establishing on these shores a religious tribunal, with authority to expel from the Cause those believers whom they are unable to brow-beat into submission? The following significant words of Baha-O-Llah are applicable to this subject:—

**O people of Baha! The possessor of the Name says:
Meditate upon these events that ye may really break
the idols of superstitions and imaginations.**

—Bahai Scriptures, page 230.

A Worthwhile Excommunication

If the Bahai Cause aspires to spread its teachings far and wide and gain the respect and devotion of mankind, now or in the future, it must purge itself of *all* the religious limitations of the past. It must submit to a process of complete self-purification and then dedicate itself to the progressive, spiritual, social and intellectual interests of our fellowmen.

The doctrine of excommunication has *not one* good thing in its favor. It has set men against men and class against class. It has made the leaders of religions suspicious and revengeful, leaving behind an accursed memory. It is beyond my comprehension why Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of a Universal Movement, wishes to revive this practically lifeless corpse and so inflict a mortal injury upon the Cause!

In the face of this overriding danger, which is embodied in Shoghi Effendi's claim that as the supreme head of the Cause he has the power to excommunicate or expel the believers, thereby depriving them of their spiritual heritage, no other choice is left to me but to sound the alarm. I have been impelled by motives beyond my control to present this problem before the Bahai world, before the public in general, and before the conscience of an awakening society which, little by little, is becoming aware of the mission of Baha-O-Llah.

Herewith I appeal to Shoghi Effendi, as the Guardian designated by the Master, to preserve the democracy of the Bahai Cause, to protect the vital dignity of man, to obliterate all the traces of negation, to herald the universality of the Message of Abdul Baha, and, in so doing, to *expel* expulsion and *excommunicate* excommunication. Such an excommunication would, indeed, be worthwhile!

A Little Bunch of Flowers

Before leaving this subject, I will recount a story, simple, human and very touching. It took place shortly after The New History Society had been cut from the Bahai Administration, at a time when I had suddenly become *untouchable* to my former Bahai companions. This intimate glimpse of a ship-wrecked life can serve as an example of what has occurred over the centuries, in instances without number.

One night, a few of us were gathered in Mrs. Chanler's house. It was late, and the household had retired, so, when a ring was heard at the front door, I went downstairs and answered it myself. No one was there but, at my feet, a little bunch of flowers was resting on the doormat. I picked it up and carried it to the library; and all of us knew that it was a message of love that could not be delivered in person.

A few evenings later, under exactly the same circumstances, we again heard a ring at the door and I went down to find one of our Bahai friends in the street. She had not run away this time. I brought her up to the library, and there we held her in our arms for a long time

while she sobbed most pitifully; and all the while she was moaning: *I have come home! I could not bear it any longer. I have come home!*

The reunion was only a temporary one, for this Bahai sister of mine had a great veneration for the Guardian and she could not withstand his commands. So, for a while, she came and went, trying to reconcile her conception of the Cause with the dealings of the Administration. Sometimes she would pace the streets half the night in the hope that a speeding taxicab would put an end to her agony. Finally, when body and mind could endure no more, she passed between the doors of a hospital and disappeared from the sight of all who knew her.

Some years later, she returned to her family, and that fact is the last news that I have had of her. Probably, we will never meet again in this life, but she has left behind her a memory of spiritual loveliness and warm, human susceptibilities as poignant as any that I have, and, although the period of our separation is long, I can still sense the perfume of that little bunch of flowers that lay on the doormat.

Such is the harvest of excommunication—broken hearts, broken lives, shattered confidence! Does Shoghi Effendi really wish to deck the altar of the Bahai Cause with these gruesome trophies?

PART SEVEN

POLITICS AND THE BAHAI CAUSE

- 18. Bahais and Persian Politics
- 19. "Da" and "Niet"—"Ja" and "Nein"
- 20. Bahai Non-participation in Politics

By the blessing of the upright, the city is exalted. . . . Where no counsel is, the people fall; but, in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.

—Proverbs, Chapter 11, Verses 11 & 14



Abbas Effendi, later known as Abdul Baha.
Photograph taken in Adrianople.

CHAPTER XVIII

BAHAIS AND PERSIAN POLITICS

A Marked Movement

From the year 1844, when the Bab declared his mission in Shiraz, up to the year 1909-10, the Babis, and the Bahais who succeeded them, lived under the autocratic rule of the Shabs of the Kadjar Dynasty; and, when in 1852 Baha-O-Llah was exiled to Turkey, he and those who accompanied him were subjected to another tyranny, that of the Ottoman Sultans.

In the dispensation of the Bab, his band of devoted followers met successive waves of persecution, during which thousands upon thousands were put to the sword by order of the Iranian government and the Islamic clergy. These blood-orgies were the result of loud and persistent accusations against the Babis, which were to the effect that this order planned to interfere with the political affairs of the nation and to overthrow the established order.

The encounters that took place between the small but fervent religious band and the armed forces of Iran make astounding reading. In several parts of the country, the Babis were attacked by the army and the populace, and were forced to take refuge in barracks where they were surrounded on all sides. Here, in many cases, protracted sieges set in, which, after months of heroic resistance, were terminated by promises of exemption and pardon which were never kept. When the exhausted Babis emerged from their refuge, they were massacred wholesale.

Precautionary Measures

Now, while these events were taking place, and in subsequent years when their recurrence was ever imminent, Baha-O-Llah from his place of exile strove to convey to the rulers of Iran and Turkey the fact that his people were, in no sense of the word, seditious; at the same time, he instructed the Bahais to concentrate on the improvement of their own characters and under no circumstances to engage in political pursuits. This step on the part of Baha-O-Llah was a most necessary one, for it prevented the wiping out of the entire movement. His stand was later adopted by Abdul Baha.

Baha-O-Llah Instructs the Bahais

The following words of Baha-O-Llah addressed to his followers very conclusively prove the point under discussion:—

Ye are forbidden sedition and strife in the books and epistles; and herein I desire nought save your exaltation and elevation, whereunto beareth witness the heaven and its stars, the sun and its radiance, the trees and their leaves, the seas and their waves and the earth and its treasures.

—A Traveller's Narrative, page 152.

This is what is intended by victory: Sedition hath never been nor is pleasing to God, and that which certain ignorant persons formerly wrought was never approved. If ye be slain for His good pleasure verily it is better for you than that ye should slay.

—A Traveller's Narrative, page 115.

The meaning of victory is not this, that any one should fight or strive with any one.

—*A Traveller's Narrative*, page 113.

Every one, then, who desireth victory must first subdue the city of his own heart with the sword of spiritual truth and of the Word.

—*A Traveller's Narrative*, page 114.

These lofty and definite statements of Baha-O-Llah induced the early Bahais to lay aside the more provocative attitude which had been held by the Babis and to turn their attention from the corrupt political systems of Iran and Turkey, which they were in no position to alter, to the spread of the teachings and the increase of their numbers. Thus in time they became a well-knit, disciplined minority, the model behavior of which had far-reaching influence.

Baha-O-Llah Pleads with the Shah

While Baha-O-Llah, on the one hand, was striving to restrain the dauntless Bahais from over-activity on dangerous terrain, he on the other hand laid their case before the Shah of Persia and did not hesitate to blame this sovereign in full for the part which he had taken in the long chapter of persecution.

Baha-O-Llah says:—

They have attacked a number of reformers of the world with the charge of seditiousness. As God liveth, these persons had and have no intent nor hope save the glory of the State and service to their nation! For God they spoke and for God they speak, and in the way of God do they journey.

—*A Traveller's Narrative*, pages 79-80.

It is twenty years and more that they (the Bahais) have been tormented by day and by night with the fierceness of the royal anger and that they have been cast each one into a different land by the blasts of the tempests of the king's wrath. How many children have been left fatherless! How many fathers have become childless! How many mothers have not dared, through fear and dread, to mourn over their slaughtered children! —*A Traveller's Narrative*, pages 119-120.

And then Baha-O-Llah cries out from the depth of his heart:—

O King! The lamps of justice are extinguished and the fire of persecution is kindled on all sides, until that they have made my people captives.

—*A Traveller's Narrative*, page 139.

O King, I conjure thee by thy Lord the Merciful to regard His servants with the gaze of pitiful eyes, and to rule with justice in their midst, that God may award His Favor unto thee. —*Bahai Scriptures*, page 69.

Verily those who surround thee, love thee for their own sakes, while this Servant loveth thee for thine own sake, nor doth He desire aught save that He may bring thee nigh unto the station of grace and turn thee unto the right hand of Justice.

—*Bahai Scriptures*, pages 70-71.

O God, this is a letter which I wish to send to the King; and Thou knowest that I have not desired aught of him save the display of his justice to Thy people, and the showing forth of his favors to the dwellers in Thy kingdom, and verily, for myself, I have not desired

aught save what Thou desirest. . . . Help, O God, his Majesty the King, to execute Thy laws amongst Thy servants and to show forth Thy Justice amidst Thy creatures, that he may rule over this sect as he ruleth over those who are beside them. Verily Thou art the Potent, the Mighty, the Wise.

—*Bahai Scriptures* page 74.

By God, I do not desire sedition, but the purification of God's servants from all that withholdeth them from approach to God.

—*Bahai Scriptures*, page 76.

We ask God . . . to assist the King in that which He liketh and approveth; and to help him unto that which shall bring him near to the Day-Spring of His Most Comely Names, that he may not shut his eyes to the wrong which he seeth, but may regard his subjects with the eye of favor and preserve them from violence. . . . And we ask Him to make thee a helper unto His religion and a regarder of His Justice, that thou mayest rule over His servants as thou rulest over those of thy kindred, and mayest choose for them what thou wouldst choose for thyself.

—*Bahai Scriptures*, page 80.

Baha-O-Llah Pleads with the Sultan

It is now the turn of the Sultan of Turkey to receive the reprimand of Baha-O-Llah:—

O, thou personage, who considerest thyself the greatest of all men, while looking upon the Divine Youth, (Baha-O-Llah) thinking him to be the lowest of men, yet through Him the eye of the Supreme Concourse is brightened. . . . From the beginning every one of the Manifestations of mercifulness . . . who have stepped

forth from the Realm of Immortality . . . men like thee have considered those sanctified souls . . . upon whom the reformation of the world depends, as the people of strife and wrong-doers. Verily, their names (the deniers) are forgotten and ere long thy name will also be forgotten and thou shalt find thyself in great loss.

According to thy opinion, this Quickener of the world and its Peace-maker is culpable and seditious. What crime have the women, children and suffering babes committed, to merit thy wrath, oppression and hate? In every religion and community the children are considered innocent, nor does the Pen of Divine Command hold them responsible, yet the reign of thy tyranny and despotism has surrounded them. If thou art the follower of any religion or sect, read thou the Heavenly Books . . . so that thou mayest realize the irresponsibility of children . . . even those people who do not believe in God, have never committed such crimes. . . .

You have persecuted a number of souls who have shown no opposition in your country and who have instigated no revolution against the government; nay rather, days and nights they have been peacefully engaged in the mentioning of God. You have pillaged their properties and through your tyrannical acts, all they had was taken from them. . . .

Before God, a handful of dust is greater than your kingdom, sovereignty, glory and dominion, and should He desire, He would scatter you as the sand of the desert, and ere long his wrath shall overtake you, revolutions shall appear in your midst and your countries will be divided! Then you will weep and lament and nowhere will you find help or protection. . . .

Be ye watchful, for the wrath of God is prepared and ere long ye shall behold that which is descended from the Pen of Command. Have ye thought that your glory is everlasting, or did ye dream that your kingdom would remain forever? No, by the life of God! Your glory is not eternal, and our humiliation will not last. . . .

The point is this, that thou mayest raise thy head from the bed of negligence and become mindful and not oppose the servants of God without reason. Bear in mind that so far as power and strength remain in the body, thou shouldst remove persecutions from the oppressed ones. . . . Be just! Then turn to God, perchance He may forgive the sins thou hast committed in this ephemeral life . . . Through thy tyranny the Fire of Sinai flamed forth, the Spirit wept, and the hearts of the angels bled. . . .

Do not think that thou hast made this Youth powerless, or that thou hast conquered him. Thou art defeated by one of the servants but thou knowest it not. The worst and lowest of creatures rules over thee, that is, thy passion and desire . . . Thou art weak, and knowest it not.

—Baha-O-Llah in his tablet to Sultan of Turkey,
Bahai Scriptures, pages 81-88.

Abdul Baha Takes up the Defense

Writing in about 1874, Abdul Baha continued along the same lines, pointing out to the then Shah of Iran the fact that the Bahais were not a rebellious people; that they did not manifest any signs of *sedition*; that they were *the loyal subjects of the king*, and all that they required

from the government was freedom of conscience, which he thought must be the established principle of monarchy. This is the way that Abdul Baha expresses himself:—

For thirty years there has been no rumour of disturbance or rebellion, nor any sign of sedition. Notwithstanding the duplication of adherents, and the increase and multiplication of this body, through many admonitions and encouragements to virtue this sect are all in the utmost repose and stability; they have made obedience their distinctive trait and in extreme submissiveness and subordination are the loyal subjects of the king.

On what lawful grounds can the government further molest them, or permit them to be slighted? Besides, this interference with the consciences and beliefs of peoples, and persecution of diverse denominations of men is . . . contrary to the established principles of monarchy.

—*A Traveller's Narrative*, page 160.

Abdul Baha as well as Baha-O-Llah never condoned the injustices of the Shah, and, after exposing the enormities that had been committed against his followers, he asserts that one of the functions of government is *to ensure freedom of conscience and tranquility of heart*. He reminds the Shah that other countries did not become civilized, nor did they attain to high degrees of influence and power, until they had come to the point of dealing with all classes according to *one standard*. He then ends his dissertation with the significant remark: *The common interest is complete equality*.

Let us read his words:—

The true nature and real doctrine of this sect have now become evident and well known: all their writings and tracts have repeatedly and frequently fallen into our hands and are to be found preserved in the possession of the government. If they be perused, the actual truth and inward verity will become clear and apparent. These pages are entirely taken up with prohibitions of sedition, recommendations of upright conduct among mankind, obedience, submission, loyalty, conformity and acquisition of laudable qualities and encouragements to become endowed with praiseworthy accomplishments and characteristics. They have absolutely no reference to political questions, nor do they treat of that which could cause disturbance or sedition.

Under these circumstances a just government can find no excuse, and possesses no pretext for further persecuting this sect, except a claim to the right of interference in thought and conscience, which are the private possessions of the heart and soul.

And, as regards this matter, there has already been much interference, and countless efforts have been made. What blood has been shed! What heads have been hung up! Thousands of persons have been slain; thousands of women and children have become wanderers or captives; many are the buildings which have been ruined; and how many noble races and families have become headless and homeless! Yet nought has been effected and no advantage has been gained; no remedy has been discovered for this ill, nor any easy salve for this wound.

To ensure freedom of conscience and tranquillity of heart and soul is one of the duties and functions of government, and is in all ages the cause of progress in development and ascendancy over other lands. Other

civilized countries acquired not this pre-eminence, nor attained unto these high degrees of influence and power, till such time as they put away the strife of sects out of their midst, and dealt with all classes according to one standard. All are one people, one nation, one species, one kind. The common interest is complete equality. —*A Traveller's Narrative*, pages 157-158.

The Bahais Hold to their Mission

Notwithstanding this aloof attitude from the *corrupt autocratic systems* of Iran and Turkey which had been adopted as a protective measure, we must not lose sight of the fact that the Bahais were far from indifferent to the social and political destiny of their native land. They did not stand on the sidelines, callous to injustices, but simply changed their tactics and worked along unprovocative constructive lines.

Abdul Baha, the incomparable statesman, had placed in their hands a mighty weapon, with which to fight the dark forces of political chicanery and corruption; and, through this means, his people gained unheralded victories in the highways and byways of society. What was this weapon? It simply was a book: *The Mysterious Forces of Civilization*, written anonymously by the Master himself.

As its name indicates, this work is a treatise on political philosophy, democracy and just government. It develops the theories of citizenship, national and international; it deals with civil and religious liberty, freedom of speech and other basic principles for a new world order. Written in eloquent Persian, it was circulated far and wide.

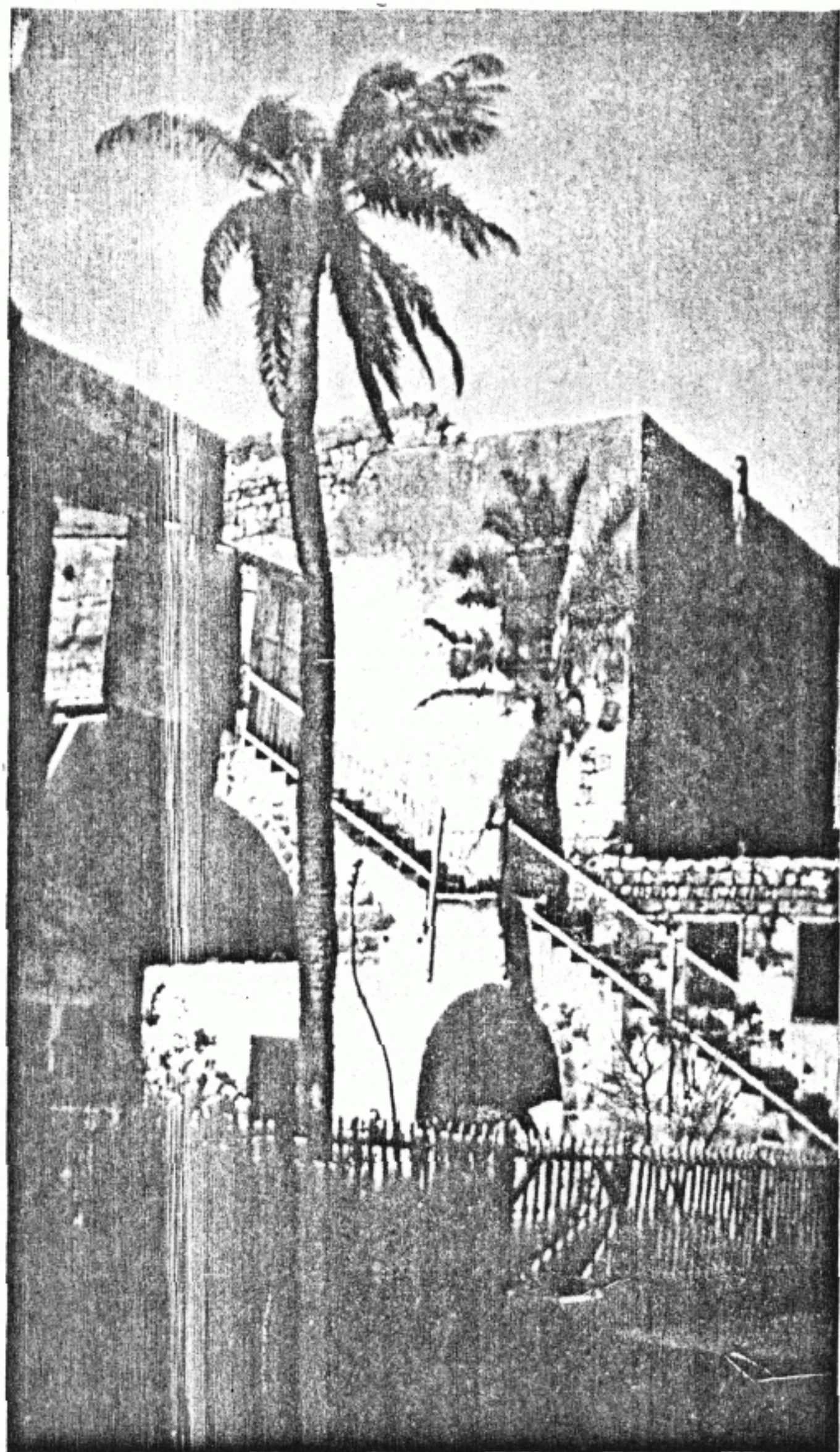
Like leaven, these ideas fermented in the minds of the

young leaders and would-be reformers of Iran and Turkey. According to the judgment of a number of competent witnesses, the unobtrusive and persistent passing of this book from hand to hand contributed a decisive blow toward the downfall of the Iranian and Turkish monarchies, during the fateful years 1909-10. The fly-leaf bears the words: *Written in Persian by an Eminent Bahai Philosopher.*

The Mysterious Forces of Civilization, as translated into English by Johanna Dawud, became available to the western world through its first London edition in 1910. A reprint was made in 1918 by the Bahai Publishing Society of Chicago, Ill. I submit it, to the interested student, as a most consummate exposition of the kind of political philosophy that must inevitably be practiced in the world of today and the world of tomorrow, also as a manual for the organization of national and international government based on justice, truth and fair dealing. Likewise, I take the liberty of submitting it to the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, for a careful reading of this document will, to their possible amazement and I hope to their enlightenment, reveal the fact that Abdul Baha, unlike his grandson Shoghi Effendi, did not express his *abhorrence of political affairs* (*Bahai News*, July 1933, No. 75, Page 3) but rather, that he was the most able statesman our age has produced, and that he stands a model of political enterprise for those who wish to emulate him.

Restrictions Lifted

When the decadent autocracies of Iran and Turkey col-



ABDUL BAHHA'S HOUSE AT ACCA.

lapsed under the impact of democratic uprisings, a new era was inaugurated in those countries, and the Bahais found themselves at liberty to take their legitimate part in the establishment of a humanitarian society. It was at this time that Abdul Baha advised his followers to enter the domain of clean politics, enjoining them to purify the poisonous atmosphere that was still clinging to the minds of their contemporaries and to help lay the stable foundations of a fellowship of nations. There is no doubt but that the Bahais tackled the work with vigor and enthusiasm.

If the reader needs any evidence to prove the above assertion, I can do no better than quote a statement made by Abdul Baha in Boston, Mass., on July 23, 1912. It is in answer to questions put to him by some American friends who no doubt remembered his past instructions regarding the non-participation of the believers in politics.

Abdul Baha said:—

The injunction to Bahais has been this:—They must not engage in matters of politics which lead to corruption. They must have nothing to do with corruption or sedition, but should interest themselves in clean politics. In Persia, at the present time, the Bahais have no part in the movements which have terminated in corruption; but on the other hand a Bahai may be a politician of the right type; even ministers in Persia are Bahais. We have Governor-Generals who are Bahais and there are many other Bahais who take part in politics, but not in corruption. It is evident they must have nothing to do with seditious movements. For example, if the

Americans should arise with the intention of reinstating despotism, the Bahais should take no part in it.

**—*Star of the West*, Vol. IV, page 122, No. 7,
July 13, 1912.**

The above statement of Abdul Baha demonstrates the pride which he took in the political achievements of his Iranian followers. We can, by reminding ourselves of certain rules and developments, appreciate more fully the significance of his words:—

(a) Up to 1909, his instructions to the Bahais in Iran regarding non-participation in political affairs was literally obeyed.

(b) Within the short space of four years from 1909, when the Iranian Revolution occurred and the despotic monarchy was overthrown, up to 1912, when Abdul Baha made the foregoing statement, there had appeared on the political scene of Iran Bahai Ministers, Bahai Governor-Generals and Bahai Statesmen who were wielding the sceptre of power, not for the purpose of filling their own purses, but for that of serving the best interests of their country, and in the most unselfish manner.

(c) Abdul Baha divided politics into two parts: *clean* politics and *corrupt* politics. The Bahais should interest themselves in the former and totally avoid the latter. This instruction applies to America as well as Persia, and to all other lands as well.

(d) A Bahai may be a statesman. This is to be desired.

So did Abdul Baha give to his native land, Iran, some very wise and able servants. The question is: how did

he do it; how did he make such a transformation in men who, for over half a century, had been trained to rigidly avoid everything political? The whole answer lies in the meaning which he intended to convey, and which his followers read between the lines and grasped from the very beginning. When they were told not to participate in politics, they looked at one another, exchanged a few words, and went after their business, which was on the upward trend. Likewise, when the Shah of Iran and the Sultan of Turkey and their ministers read the words of Abdul Baha, they were very well satisfied and also went after their business—a business which was on the brink of failure. Finally, when the crash came, the Bahais stepped onto the scene, fully equipped for the work that was to be done.

The result of all this? Abdul Baha himself reported it to the American Bahais. Unfortunately, they had ears, but heard not; eyes, but saw not, and minds that did not comprehend.

Church and State

Abdul Baha did not believe in the centralization of governmental or religious authorities into vast monopolistic corporations. He denounced this tendency as directly leading to despotism. At the close of an address delivered at the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Ascension on Sunday morning, June 2, 1912, in New York City, he was asked the question:—

Is it not a fact that Universal Peace cannot be accomplished until there is political democracy in all the countries of the world?

Answer:—It is very evident that in the future of all the countries of the world, be they constitutional in government or Republican or Democratic in form, there shall be no centralization. The United States may be held up as the example of government in time to come, that is to say, each Province will be independent in itself but there will be a union concerning the interests of the various independent states . . . To cast aside centralization which promotes despotism is the exigency of the time.

—*Star of the West*, Vol. III, No. 10, page 27,
Sept. 8, 1912.

In studying the principle of non-centralization in government and progressive democracy, it would be well to examine the thoughts of H. G. Wells on the subject of legislation in a free world. In his *Declaration of the Rights of Man*, he says:—

In matters of cooperative and collective action, man must abide by the majority decisions ascertained by electoral methods which give effective expression to individual choice. All legislation must be subject to repeal. No treaties or contracts shall be made secretly in the name of the community. The fount of legislation in a free world is the whole people, and since life flows on constantly to new citizens, no generation can, in whole or in part, surrender or delegate this legislative power which is inalienably inherent in mankind.

—*The Rotarian Magazine*, September, 1941, page 9.

Separation of Religion and Politics

In the teachings of Abdul Baha, as in the constitutional laws of the United States, politics is separated from re-

ligion. Neither should interfere with the other, for each has definite and essential services to render to society. Nevertheless, Abdul Baha expects the officials of the government, no matter what position they may occupy, to be conscious of religion and of the spiritual values. Their souls must be vibrant with the love of God, their services to the nation must be actuated by noble impulses; at the same time, the internal problems of religion as such do not enter their domain.

Similarly, religious teachers should be conscious of social and democratic values, and must cooperate with the State. However, their duties lie along the lines of education, and their responsibilities are toward the unfortunate and the poor. They must hold to their mission and abstain from political plans and schemes. They should trust the officers of their government to perform their duties in the political domain, even as they are performing their own in the religious field. To make the above cardinal Bahai principle plain let us listen to Abdul Baha:—

At the same time religious interests should not be brought into politics. Religions should treat of morals; politics of material circumstances. Those in authority should occupy themselves with the lives of men; they should teach ideas of service, good morals and develop the habit of Justice. "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's."

**—*Star of the West*, Vol. III, No. 2, page 7,
April 9, 1912.**

On another occasion the same thought is expressed in a slightly different way:—

In despotic Governments carried on by men without divine faith, where no fear of spiritual retribution exists, the execution of the laws is tyrannical and unjust. There is no greater prevention of oppression than these two sentiments, hope and fear. They have both political and spiritual consequences.

If Administrators of the law would take into consideration the spiritual consequences of their decisions, and follow the guidance of religion, they would be divine agents in the world of action, the representatives of God for those who are on earth, and they would defend, for the love of God, the interests of His servants as they would defend their own. If a Governor realizes his responsibility and fears to defy the Divine Law, his judgments will be just. Above all, if he believes that the consequences of his actions will follow him beyond his earthly life, and that "as he sows so must he reap," such a man will surely avoid injustice and tyranny.

Should an official, on the contrary, think that all responsibility for his actions must end with his earthly life, knowing and believing nothing of divine favors and a spiritual kingdom of joy, he will lack the incentive to just dealing, and the inspiration to destroy oppression and unrighteousness.

When a ruler knows that his judgments will be weighed in a balance by the Divine Judge, and that if he be not found wanting he will come into the Celestial Kingdom and that the light of the heavenly Bounty will shine upon him, then will he surely act with justice and equity. Behold how important it is that Ministers of State should be enlightened by Religion.

With political questions, the clergy, however, have nothing to do! Religious matters should not be con-

fused with Politics in the present state of the world (for their interests are not identical).

Religion concerns matters of the heart, of the Spirit and of morals. Politics are occupied with the material things of life. Religious teachers should not invade the realm of politics; they should concern themselves with the spiritual education of the people; they should ever give good counsel to men, trying to serve God and humankind; they should endeavor to awaken spiritual aspiration, and strive to enlarge the understanding and knowledge of humanity, to improve morals, and to increase the love for justice. . . .

In Persia there are some amongst the important Ministers of State who are religious, who are exemplary, who worship God, and who fear to disobey His laws, who judge justly and rule their people with equity.

Other Governors there are in this land who have no fear before their eyes, who think not of the consequences of their actions, working for their own desires, and these have brought Persia into great trouble and difficulty.

—*The Wisdom of Abdul Baha*—Addresses delivered in Paris 1910-11. Published by The Bahai Publishing Committee, New York, N. Y., 1924, pages 146-47-48.

Triumph of Democracy

In the era that is ahead of us, the development of governmental agencies along lines of Bahai thought is inevitable, but this must be orderly process of evolutionary laws. National adjustment through violence is a theory already discarded by the practical mind. It is true that

even in these modern days, the powers of brute force and of Democracy are ranged against each other; yet so long as there is one man in the world who can think and plan democratically, he is of the future and stands head and shoulders above those who cannot. His eventual success is assured.

The great despotic empires of Sumeria, Egypt, Assyria, Persia, Greece and Rome have left a tradition of violence, war and destruction; and are now no more.

Through the struggle of the European nations, the Catholic Church, in the sixteenth century, lost its claim to worldly and spiritual universal sovereignty.

The American and French Revolutions form the watershed which divides the autocratic form of government from the slowly evolving nation-states. Broadly regarded, the history of modern government, until the declaration of the First World War in 1914, has been the history of a steady widening of the basis of democratic powers.

The arrival on the political arena of the Communist, Fascist and Nazi totalitarian regimes, each with its own dictatorial ideology, has once more thrown our world into a convulsive revolution, and the democratic system is being attacked on all sides by the forces of disruption and anarchy.

However, as a student of the Bahai Cause, I retain a deep and abiding faith in Democracy and am confident that although its ideal is being subjected to a severe test by the present crisis, it will, sooner or later, emerge from confinement and, purified by adversity and torture, establish itself in all lands as the universal principle. Strength-

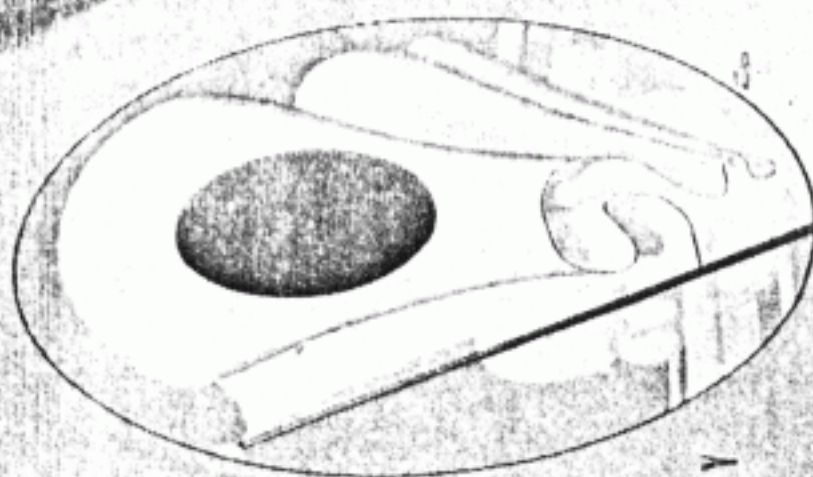
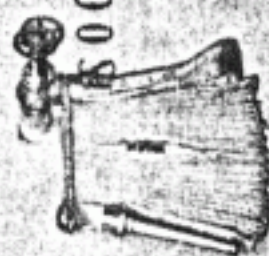
ened and ennobled, it will maintain supremacy, not with cannon and poison gas, bombers and submarines, but with shining hopes, liberal measures and humanitarian accomplishments, the whole actuated by high responsibility toward every form and expression of life.

WORLD FLAG

AS PROPOSED BY

THE NEW

HISTORY

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CHAPTER XIX

"DA" AND "NIET"—"JA" AND "NEIN"

Injunctions to Iran and Turkey Only

Although Baha-O-Llah and later on Abdul Baha had enjoined their followers in Iran and Turkey to abstain from political affairs, this was but a temporary concession to the despotic rulers of those countries, made for the protection of a small minority. It was a measure taken, one may say, *under fire*. A close study of the dates when these orders were issued reveal this fact very plainly. Abdul Baha never would have given nor did he ever give any such advice to democratic countries, for if he had done so, the Bahai Cause would have been stigmatized as pro-autocratic and anti-social. He never would have commanded, as does the present-day Bahai Administration, the American and Canadian believers to refrain from all legitimate political activities, which are essential to the welfare of their nations. He never would have commanded, as does the present-day Bahai Administration, the American and Canadian believers to forego their voting prerogatives, when it is a case of candidates running on the fundamentally democratic two (or more) Party systems. He never would have forbidden, as does the present-day Bahai Administration, the American and Canadian believers to participate in the civic and national duties of their fellow countrymen; nor would he have accompanied these unpatriotic requirements with threats of expulsion from the Bahai community.

Abdul Baha never would have done such things, and he never did them. On the contrary, he advised the Americans most emphatically to take an active part in the politics of their country, and he told them that they should under no circumstances deprive themselves of the inestimable privilege of the vote.

Injunctions to the United States

As far back as 1907, about the time that the Turkish Investigation Committee had arrived in Acca from Constantinople (this being *before* the overthrow of the Ottoman Empire) Abdul Baha wrote to Mr. Thornton Chase, a prominent believer of Chicago:—

Thou hast asked regarding the political affairs. In the United States it is necessary that the citizens shall take part in elections. This is a necessary matter and no excuse from it is possible. . . . As the government of America is a republican form of government, it is necessary that all the citizens shall take part in the elections of officers and take part in the affairs of the Republic.

—*Tablets of Abdul Baha Abbas*, Vol. II, pages 342-343, Published by Bahai Publishing Society, Chicago, Ill., 1915.

The above statement is so simple that even a sixth grade child could grasp its meaning, and one would naturally think that there would never be occasion to misunderstand it. In each sentence, Abdul Baha repeats the word *necessary*:—

It is *necessary* that the citizens shall take part in elections.

This is a *necessary* matter and no excuse from it is possible.

As the government of America is a republican form of government, it is *necessary*, that *all* the citizens shall take part in the affairs of the Republic.

Evidently, Abdul Baha was trying to make his meaning as clear as crystal; he was stating, in so many words, that, inasmuch as the government of the United States was a Republic and not an Oriental Monarchy, free American *citizens* could not be compared to the enslaved *subjects* of the *Shadow of Allah* nor to the obedient *servants* of the *Holy Caliph*. Therefore, it was *necessary* for *all* of them to take part in the affairs of the nation.

No statement could be set forth more concretely, and yet the Bahai Administration, through culpable misinterpretation, has set aside the above clear injunction of Abdul Baha to the American Bahais, and has incorporated in its fundamental laws and applied to the citizens of the United States and Canada the concessions (temporary at that) made to the defunct empires of Iran and Turkey.

If the above quoted Tablet of Abdul Baha is not sufficient to prove that the Master made a clear distinction between Despotism and Democracy, the following report of a conversation that took place between him and a pilgrim, during the year 1907, makes the matter still more plain. Here, it is again significant to point out the fact that this note was recorded during the very year when the Turkish Investigation Committee was in Acca to interrogate Abdul Baha and to examine his affairs. Abdul Baha's remark shows that, however dangerous the circumstances, he did

not mince words when the question of a principle was involved.

Asked if it were ever right to rebel against an earthly ruler, Abdul Baha replied:—

Yes, if he deals unjustly and tyrannically with his people he forfeits the right to govern them.

—Notes taken by A. S. D., Acca, October 16, 1907
(In *Compilation of the Holy Utterances of Baha-O'llah and Abdul Baha*, page 69. Publication authorized by the tenth Annual Convention of the Bahais of America held in Chicago, April 29-30, 1918).

I accept the above report as authentic, because I myself, on countless occasions, have heard the Master make substantially the same statement.

Abdul Baha's Policy Set Aside

The foundation on which the present-day non-political character of the Bahai Cause is based are the writings of Shoghi Effendi and the declarations of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, published in *Bahai News*. These are our sources of authoritative information; so, in order to get an impartial and unbiased understanding of the subject, we must now explore the above documents and compare them with Abdul Baha's teachings, to the end that we may find out how far they agree and to what extent they resemble each other.

Back in March 1932, Shoghi Effendi, in writing to the *beloved of God and the hand-maids of the Merciful*

throughout the United States and Canada, says:—

I feel it, therefore, incumbent upon me to stress, now that the time is ripe, the importance of an instruction which, at the present stage of the evolution of our Faith, should be increasingly emphasized, irrespective of its application to the East or to the West. And this principle is no other than that which involves the non-participation by the adherents of the Faith of Baha-U-Llah, whether in their individual capacities or collectively as local or national Assemblies, in any form of activity that might be interpreted, either directly or indirectly, as an interference in the political affairs of any particular government. Whether it be in the publications which they initiate and supervise; or in their official and public deliberations; or in the posts they occupy and the services they render; or in the communications they address to their fellow-disciples; or in their dealings with men of eminence and authority; or in their affiliations with kindred societies and organizations, it is, I am firmly convinced, their first and sacred obligation to abstain from any word or deed that might be construed as a violation of this vital principle.

—*The World Order of Baha-U-Llah,*
pages 63-64.

This sweeping command of the Guardian was like a bomb-shell thrown into the midst of a peaceful community. In the estimation of practically every believer who was even superficially conversant with the Teachings, this order was in direct contradiction to the instructions of Abdal Baha, most especially to his statement written to Mr. Thornton Chase 25 years earlier.

Athwart the continent, the pot of controversy boiled, and questions such as these were asked on all sides: On what grounds could a non-American religious leader, from his almost cloistered headquarters, 5,000 miles away in Haifa, Palestine, take it upon himself to lay the command upon citizens of the United States and Canada that they abstain from taking part, *either directly or indirectly*, in the legitimate political obligations of their respective countries? Was not this action, in itself, a direct interference in the affairs of other nations? Did not these governments count on the co-operation of their citizens, and would they welcome a loyalty to a foreign power superimposed on the national loyalty? Why, and on what logical basis, should an American or a Canadian Bahai think that *his first and sacred obligation was to abstain from any word or deed that might be construed as a violation of this vital principle* of aloofness? Did not this principle mean that the Bahais must abstain from all political participation in the affairs of their democracies; keep away from the polling booths on election day and, if need be, allow gangsters and racketeers to control by their votes the destiny of the unoffending citizenry? The question was asked: How could crooks and shysters be driven out of national and state offices, if the people who were supposed to be straight were deprived of their only weapon—the ballot?

The order of Shoghi Effendi was written in March, 1932, and ere long, the detailed letter including this order which was circulated throughout the continent, became the storm-center of heated debate. Then, in December of the same year, *Bahai News* published a statement by the

National Spiritual Assembly under the title: *The Non-Political Character of the Bahai Faith*. After referring to the order of Shoghi Effendi the statement continues:—

This instruction raised among American believers the important question whether the act of voting, in the normal pursuance of the function of citizenship, should be construed as a participation in political matters.

Another letter written by his secretary gives the Guardian's view on the subject:—

He strongly feels that the friends should abstain from any election that is along party line.

Again, we have this statement addressed to the National Spiritual Assembly:—

This is the general and vital principle; it is for the National representatives to apply it with fidelity and vigor.

Then the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, feeling a great responsibility in applying the principle to all detailed situations that can arise among local communities, summarizes the Assembly's understanding of this new instruction in the following articles of Faith:—

1. Recognized Bahais of the United States and Canada shall not hereafter take part in any local, provincial or national election conducted by political parties, where votes are to be cast for one of two or more rival candidates.

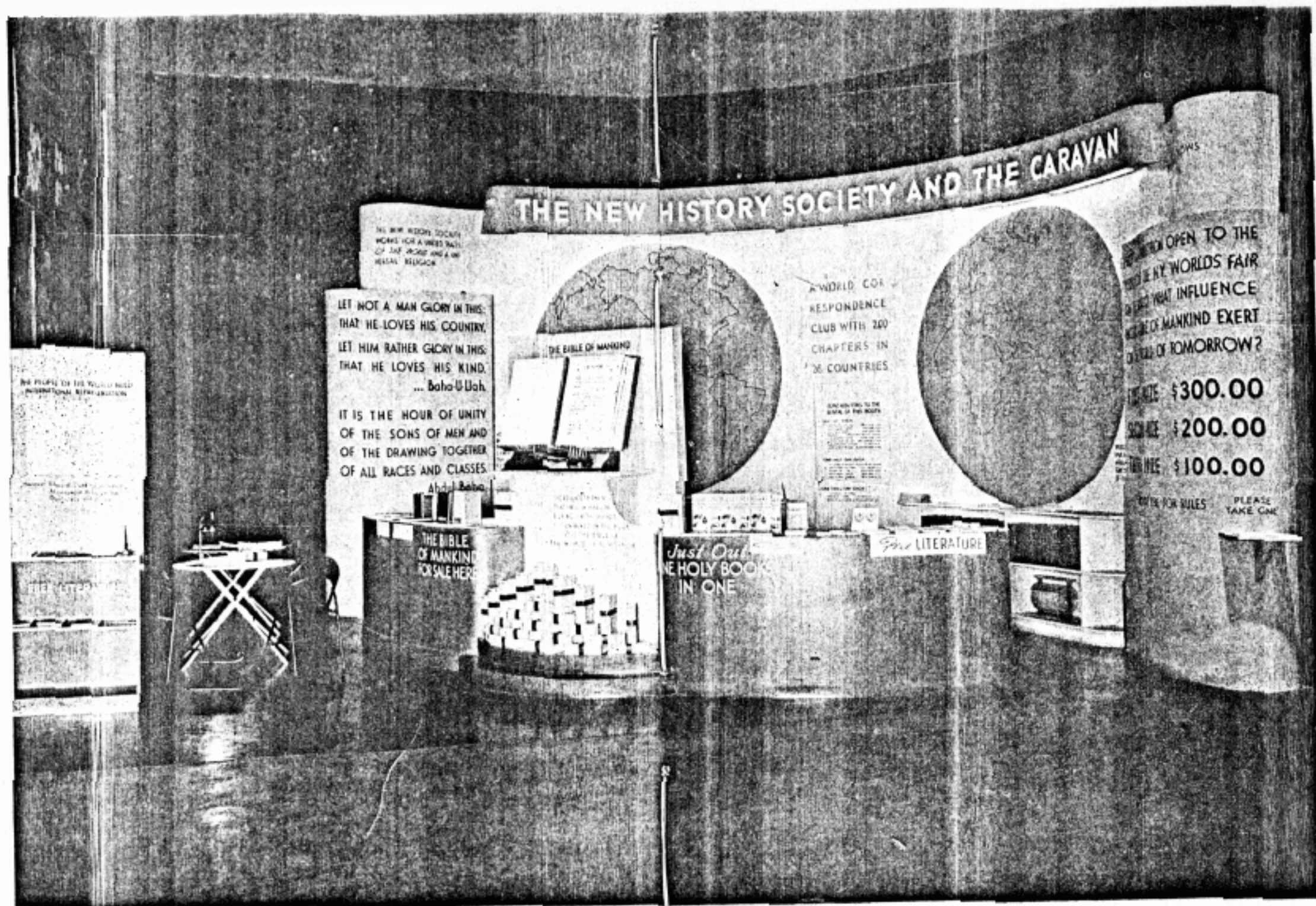


Exhibit of The New History Society at

the New York World's Fair, in 1939.

See page 488

2. Recognized Bahais shall not run for any public office as candidate of any political party, nor take part, directly or indirectly, in the promotion of any party or party platform.

3. Political issues of a partisan character shall not be discussed at Bahai meetings.

4. Recognized Bahais shall abstain from affiliation with movements . . . whether avowedly political in nature or, while non-political in name, advocating social changes that presume partisan political action.

5. Bahais who speak on Bahai platforms shall refrain from making . . . critical statements about any particular Government or National policy.

6. Every Local Spiritual Assembly shall be responsible for the carrying out of these instructions by the Bahais in their respective communities. Local membership lists shall include only the names of those believers who faithfully preserve the non-political character of the Faith.

—*Bahai News*, No. 69, December, 1932.

The above list of instructions makes startling reading to any citizen of the United States and Canada, but article 1, especially, gives us pause in these days when the idea of a one-candidate Party is far from unfamiliar.

One Ticket

Inasmuch as it is difficult to conceive of Democracy without Parties, the Bahais of the two great Democracies of North America are, by this act, automatically excluded from *all* participation in local, state and national elections.

On the other hand, there are two other important countries, Russia and Germany, which are known as totalitarian dictatorships, where political life is organized and conducted by means of a One Party system. Therefore the National Spiritual Assembly, in its provisions regarding the political set-up to be contemplated, must have taken a leaf out of the revolutionary chronicle of these countries, which enjoy the very questionable privilege of *One monopolistic Party and One Ticket*.

In Russia, the dictatorship of the Proletariat has removed the burden of political thinking from the minds of the *people*. The Parties are liquidated; the liberals either are taking a sojourn in Siberia or have sought refuge in foreign lands, leaving to the *comrades* all the privileges and rights of voting for the *One Communist Party*, on its single ticket headed by the perennial Joseph Stalin. Yes, the Russians of today have been able to vote *DA*, in all safety—or *niet*, at the risk of their heads.

In Germany, the National Socialist Party, in order to glorify the Fatherland, got rid of all the bothersome Parties; purged the country of all the democrats; sent the intellectuals to concentration camps and drove the Jews and non-Aryans out of the third Reich. Then to the sound of trumpets, martial music, mass-herding and the singing of Horst Wessel and Deutschland Ueber Alles, all the goose-stepping German folk and simon-pure Aryans gathered together in the one and only National Socialist Party, headed by Reichsfürer Adolf Hitler. Yes, the Germans of today can vote *JA* in all safety—or *nein*, at the peril of their lives.

Now, I venture to think that the Bahai Administration,

with its allowance for a one Party system and its principle of letting the country go to the dogs, or to the wolves, would have been welcomed in Russia yesterday; today we do not know; and in Germany, yesterday, today and unfortunately tomorrow too. The Bahais would be enrolled as members in good standing—models of regimentation, uniformity, obedience and subserviency. It is certain that no Dictator would find their presence irksome or disturbing.

Unrest in Bahai Household

The publication of the above listed articles on the non-participation of Bahais in politics caused great commotion among the followers of the Faith in the United States and Canada. Many sharply disagreed with these Draconian rules and totalitarian measures; some, with a good deal of bitterness, compared them to the teachings of Abdul Baha and, finally, a few wrote to Shoghi Effendi, expressing their surprise and bewilderment. The atmosphere was charged with electric arguments, pro and con.

Many liberal Bahais, honestly and sincerely, considered that the Cause had been betrayed and its principles pilloried on a totem-pole of misunderstanding. The future of the movement had been sold across the counter for a mess of improvident pottage and its ideals sacrificed and abandoned. For a few months, there was no rest in the Bahai household; the opinions expressed were wide apart, for some keenly felt their responsibility toward the Cause, while others, more concerned with keeping out of trouble, were therefore willing to confide both mind and conscience to the tender mercies of the Administration.

The dissatisfaction and remonstrances on the part of the Bahais at length forced the National Spiritual Assembly to publish an explanatory statement in the February 1933 issue, No. 71, of *Bahai News*. The writer of the article makes a weak attempt to assure the believers that no radical departure from the original teachings had been made, and is quite confident that the grave doubts which had arisen in the minds of the Bahais could, through local consultations, be removed, creating *not merely an occasion for blind obedience, but rather for conscious, grateful co-operation*. Finally, in order to pour oil over the troubled waters, he makes an utterly meaningless concession, presupposing a possible political situation in which the Bahais *could* vote; although, he must have known that such a situation has never existed, nor will it ever exist in a democratic or republican form of government. Here is the incredibly fatuous concession:—

The instruction not to take part in political elections leaves us free to vote in any election where the various political parties have combined upon one candidate or one ticket.

Here we are back again in Russia or Germany, or rather, we are being helped forward toward an equally sinister form of government to supplant our Democracy in this country; but whatever the details of this sad postulate, or whatever the name to be used, be it old or new, we can only say, and with all our hearts: *In America at least, God forbid!*

It is, indeed, a sad commentary on the lack of imagination and acumen on the part of a large percentage of the

Bahais, that during all these years the National Spiritual Assembly has been able to pull the wool over their eyes by means of such specious reasoning.

On the other hand, there were some who strove to retain their political rights; therefore, the National Spiritual Assembly once more had to go on record, not only to guard the inviolability of its own word but to protect Shoghi Effendi from further molestation. An elaborate communication, in the form of an open letter to the *Beloved Friends*, in the April 1933 issue, No. 72, of *Bahai News*, appealed to the emotional and religious ideals and convictions of the reader, so that the best possible construction might be allowed to a very precarious situation. The writer makes a heroic effort to defend a principle that is *indefensible and, whenever he finds himself in a tight corner, resorts to sanctimonious flourishes and undulations, such as may be noticed in the following passage:—*

The matter of the non-political character of the Bahai Faith has arisen this year for the purpose of stimulating deeper awareness of our privileges and responsibilities in the World Order of Baha-U-Llah. Only four years ago the Guardian first upheld that glorious conception of the goal toward which humanity is being so rapidly impelled by the power of the divine Will.

For many of us, the idea that we should no longer take any part in the normal political activities of our environment came as a distinct shock.

A distinct shock? That is a mild way of putting it! It was an earthquake, a head-on collision that threw many a sincere Bahai reeling toward the precipice of spiritual

collapse. Yet, listen to the pietistic interpretation of the *inspiring new attitude*:—

The need that we arise to a higher vision and a more universal loyalty was not at first easy to appreciate. But little by little, thanks to the guidance given us by Shoghi Effendi, we can assimilate and make part of ourselves this inspiring new attitude the *Guardian* wishes for the protection of the Cause and our own spiritual well-being.

Free as Air

And now once more the chimerical situation presented in the February (1933) issue of *Bahai News* is paraded before the bewildered eyes of the believers:—

We are all free to vote in such elections as are non-partisan—that is, where the parties have combined upon one set of candidates, and voting is not merely a choice between two or more party tickets.

We are all free to vote! Free as air! Isn't that generous? Isn't that wonderful? For a moment, we were nervous; but now we are relieved, indeed! Yet, on second thought, *where* shall we vote? Certainly not in the United States, nor in Canada, nor in England, nor in Australia, nor in New Zealand, nor in any of the Democracies; because in none of these countries do the Parties ever combine *upon one set of candidates*. Where shall it be then? Please, don't offer us Russia again, nor Germany; for, even if we do fit in with the regime of those countries, even if they are likely to consider us in every way desirable, we *do* have a sneaking feeling that, sooner or later,

the Democracies will come out on top. We remember that Abdul Baha also said so; but, probably that is one of his sayings that we are supposed to forget.

A Strange Local

To go back to the open letter. The writer proceeds, striking a cadence on the *calm peace and steadfast faith* that *marks the true Bahai*. This brand of talk is intended to divert the attention of the victim from the main topic and lull him into the mythical Sahara of a somnambulent, denaturalized idealism. Listen:—

In a world through which run so many conflicting torrents of popular passion and partisan struggle, the spirit of calm peace, of steadfast faith and unswerving assurance marks the true Bahai and sets off a Bahai community from every other type of human gathering. . . . In the establishment of Local, National and International Bahai communities, we have the most glorious field of service ever granted to man.

This seems to be a perfect description of a self-centered, self-satisfied, self-contained, self-opinionated, self-applauding community, useless in every sense of the word to the country that harbors, maintains and protects it. A community, *set off from every other type of human gathering*, bringing to mind but one thing—a cemetery, which also is *set off from every other type of human gathering*; in which all the *conflicting torrents of popular passion and partisan struggle* are eternally stilled, and where, among the tombs, there broods *the spirit of calm peace*. A strange local indeed for the successors of the Babis and early

Bahais, those intrepid, ever-wakeful men and women, who had the will to die and the nerve to live in order *that the principles of their Masters might become dominant in the affairs of men!*



Corner of speakers' table at a dinner given by "Friends of the Duke of Windsor in America" at the Town Hall Club, New York, on January 20, 1939.

From left to right:—Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler, the late Rev. Christian F. Reisner, D.D. and the late Dr. Har Dayal.

CHAPTER XX

BAHAI NON-PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS

A Vision of Eternity

Bahais must never forget that they are members of a community that extends beyond the borders of one country and the Guardian's instructions covering non-participation in politics are not based upon human representations in any given communities but upon his vision over eons of time and the results which would follow the actions of the present time.

The above statement, made by the National Spiritual Assembly, presents two points very clearly. *First*: the Bahais are members of an international community. *Second*: the Guardian's instructions to them are based upon the future which is discernible to him.

We gather then that the believers must forego local political activities because of their bearing, whether evident or not, upon the larger scene; also, that Shoghi Effendi's vision actually extends beyond the confines of the centuries (according to the dictionary, eons of time means an infinite space of time---eternity). This latter assertion is a stupendous one. It leaves us breathless; for if true, the Guardian emerges from the station of man, seer or prophet, and becomes a conscious part of the Godhead. The National Spiritual Assembly continues:—

The question is not one of interpretation of the instructions of the Guardian but rather one of strict

obedience to him in the assurance that the wisdom of the principle will become more and more apparent as time goes on.

And now:—

As the new consciousness is universal and not local, the believers cannot lower this standard by participation in divisional activities.

Once more:—

It was generally agreed that if the world cannot be saved, it matters not at all whether one or another is elected, whereas the Bahais are called by Shoghi Effendi to establish the new world order of Baha-U-Llah.

(The above four quotations are from *Bahai News*, No. 75, July, 1933, page 3).

Physician Heal Thyself!

These instructions give pause to the average citizen of the United States, and especially to the American Bahai who has been trained, through the teachings of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha, to co-operate with all systems that are tending toward a larger life for the human race. To these people, this type of reasoning applies to the man who, while neglecting his own character, thinks of improving the characters of others; to the community which, unconcerned with righteousness and justice, looks for these qualities in other communities. Physician, heal thyself! is an old maxim; and it would seem that it is the duty of every American to set himself to putting his own national house in order, before attempting to bring order to the

world. A person endowed with the Bahai ideal (whether or not he be a Bahai) could well expend his energies on both causes at the same time; but it is difficult to allow exemption from national responsibility to one who claims international citizenship.

Inclusion of a Larger Loyalty

If the National Spiritual Assembly had been consistent in the formulation of its policies, it would have realized the untenability of its position; because, on the one hand, it makes a point of exacting of the Bahais obedience to the ordinances of their government while, on the other hand, by denying them the right to perform their civic and national duties as law-abiding and progressive citizens, it prevents them from so doing. Obviously, Abdul Baha did not invite the Americans to accept the universal teachings of Baha-O-Llah, in order to divest them of their responsibilities as citizens of the United States. It is true that, on embracing the Cause, an American immediately becomes member of a world-wide community composed of Persians, Turks, Hindus, Frenchmen, Englishmen, Chinese, etc., but this larger loyalty does not curtail his loyalty to the United States. When individuals become Bahais, they lose their national *prejudices*, not their national *rights* and obligations. Like variegated flowers in a garden, they contribute their beauty to the general scene, while retaining their own distinctive color and fragrance. The sun of the New Day shines upon all, and the mercy of the Almighty envelops the first and the last. The Bahais will co-operate and learn from one another. They will not throw away their hard-won liberties, but will

share them with their new-found brethren; for Baha-O-Llah did not come to abrogate the cherished freedoms of humanity, but to enlarge and spread them over the wide expanse of the earth.

The Teachings of the Faith Must be Set Aside

At this point, it is interesting to note that the National Spiritual Assembly, while denying the Bahais rational and humane participation in the constructive civic and social affairs of their country, has urged these same Bahais to register their names for service in the military preparations of the United States; and this, regardless of the already quoted words: *the believers cannot lower this standard by participation in divisional activities*. I suppose that killing is not regarded as a *divisional activity*. The people are dead, and that is the end of them!

A letter written in 1939 by the Guardian's secretary to the National Spiritual Assembly of the British Isles reveals Shoghi Effendi's views on the subject of military service:—

It is still his firm conviction that the believers, while expressing their readiness to unreservedly obey any directions that the authorities may issue concerning national service in time of war, should also, and while there is yet no outbreak of hostilities, appeal to the government for exemption from active military service in a combatant capacity, stressing the fact that in doing so they are not prompted by any selfish considerations but by the sole and supreme motive of upholding the Teachings of their Faith, which make it a moral obligation for them to desist from any act that would in-

volve them in direct warfare with their fellow-humans of any other race or nation.

—*Bahai News*, No. 132, January, 1940, page 1.

Here we find that the believers should *appeal* to the government for exemption from active military service, *stressing the fact* that they are prompted by *the sole and supreme motive of upholding the Teachings of their Faith*. Nevertheless, they must express *their readiness to unreservedly obey any directions that the authorities may issue concerning national service in time of war*. Thus in order to be on good terms with the government, the *Teachings of the Faith* must, if necessary, be set aside.

In the Front Line or in Jail

According to my belief, it is good to stand by one's principles. If a man's conscience allows him to fight, and he steps forward to give his all, one cannot but respect him. On the other hand, if he has consecrated himself to the system of pacifism (as I myself have) neither displeasure of government nor the fear of punishment bears the slightest weight. At least, let us be clean-cut about it, taking the risks that are entailed in our conscientious choice; and may we never entreat for indulgence and special privileges when the question of moral obligation is involved!

In a book entitled *The Men I Killed* written by Brigadier General Frank Percy Crozier, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., published by Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc., New York, 1938, the following dedication appears on the fly-leaf:—

To the genuine fighters of all nations who stuck it



A BAHAI GROUP IN THE NEW HISTORY SOCIETY, TAKEN AT

Seated on floor. From left to right:—Mr. Solomon W. Leventhal, Miss May Carro, Miss Sarah Isaacs, Miss Harriet Meisler, Miss Geraldine Falk, Miss Serene Blake, Miss Ouise Vaupel, Mr. Alphonse Tonietti, Mrs. Adriene Peabody Van Rossum.

Second Row. From left to right:—Dr. Leopold Kohr, Miss Mildred Goodman, Mr. H. Obadie, Mrs. H. Obadie, Mr. O. J. Hanko, Mrs. Robert Blake, Mrs. Mary Furgang, Mrs. Charles E. Boyd, Mrs. Elsa Tabrizi, Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler, Dr. Edwin F. Bowers, Mr. Charles E. Boyd.

Third Row. From left to right:—Mrs. Zahra Gemerd, Mr. Maurice Falk, Mrs. Maurice Falk, Mr. Kedar Nath DasGupta, Major Honoré Joseph Jaxon, Miss Janet Osterman, Miss Claire Osterman, Mr. Jacob Ferreira, Dr. Haridas T. Muzumdar, Mirza Ahmad

THE CARAVAN HALL, NEW YORK, ON OCTOBER 14, 1941.

Sohrab, Mr. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler, Mrs. Charles H. Clarke, Mrs. Frederick Allien, Miss Chancy Carro, Mr. Louis J. Meisler.

Fourth Row. From left to right:—Mrs. H. H. Oliver, Mr. H. H. Oliver, Miss Anne Gemerd, Miss Sofia Froberg, Mr. M. Remneck, Mr. John J. Fitzpatrick, Miss Margaret O'Connor, Miss Fannie Rudy, Prof. Georgia Dunn, Miss Florence Brownell, Mr. John Forster, Maestro Pasquale Mondrone, Mr. James Mott, Mr. Emanuel Larsen.

Top Row. From left to right:—Mr. Bhupesh Guha, Mr. Rudolph Lopez, Mrs. Rudolph Lopez, Mr. James Bland Tuohy, Mr. Robert Blake, Mr. Lew Von Harden, Mr. Walter Sloane, Mr. Jay E. Abbott, Mrs. Grace Kopman, Miss Lilyan Tannen, Miss Patricia Goode, Mr. Murray Furgang.

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to the end in the front line, and to the genuine conscientious objectors of all nations who stuck it to the end in jail, this book is dedicated.

Now, I would like to see Bahais in either or both of these groups; but to imagine them, with their tails between their legs, begging the government for permission to uphold the *Teachings of the Faith* is pitiful, to put it mildly. Indeed, the picture is not in accord with their background, their calling nor their *name*.

Thus, in abstaining from *divisional activities* through the ballot (because of the fact that the Bahai movement is an international one), and in taking part in *divisional activities* through the bayonet and bomb (in spite of the fact that the Bahai movement is an international one), the Bahais have assumed a totally illogical position. They cannot maintain it by argument, because they have forsworn their principles, but can merely lower their eyes and feebly rattle their chains in explanation.

Protracted Discussion

To their credit, it can at least be said that the liberal elements in the Assemblies of the United States and Canada did not accept the ruling on non-participation in political affairs without protracted protest. As a consequence, the subject was brought up for discussion and debate before the 25th Annual Bahai Convention held in Chicago during the month of April, 1933.

The July issue of *Bahai News* (1933) gives us the following under the heading *The Story of the Convention*:—

Therefore, the first subject for consultation was "The Non-Political Character of the Bahai Faith."

In opening the discussion, the chairman pointed out that with the receipt of the Guardian's letter, "The Golden Age of the Cause of Baha'u'llah," the opposition of the Guardian to participation in party politics became apparent and that later individual Bahais as well as the National Spiritual Assembly received communications saying that Bahais must not vote in any election based upon personal allegiances or partisanship.

These instructions seem to have been misunderstood by a number of the friends and it was felt wise that they should be thoroughly discussed in order that some general understanding and action might be formulated by the Convention.

Mr. Holley in giving the highlights of the subject said that the first intimation that the National Spiritual Assembly had had that the Guardian did not desire the American believers to vote was on receipt of a letter to a believer containing this instruction from the Guardian.

About the same time another believer sent in a copy of a tablet from Abdul Baha to Thornton Chase in which Abdul Baha said American citizens must vote. With these apparently conflicting instructions before it, the National Spiritual Assembly wrote to the Guardian to inquire if he were now setting aside the tablet. In his reply the Guardian said that the instruction of Abdul Baha is not conclusive under present conditions *and expressed his abhorrence of political affairs, pointing out that the National Spiritual Assembly is obligated to carry out his instructions on the subject.* The National Spiritual Assembly therefore drafted the article which appeared in the Bahai News of December, 1932, and which was considered by some as somewhat

drastic. It resulted in the exchange of several communications between the National Spiritual Assembly and the Guardian. —*Bahai News*, No. 75, July 1933.

The Tablet to Mr. Thornton Chase, already quoted, may here be referred to, and I doubt if any reader, Bahai or otherwise, will find Abdul Baha's instructions on the necessity for voting in any way ambiguous or susceptible to any interpretation other than its plain surface meaning. Here then we have a revealing picture of the way in which the Guardian reaches conclusions.

1. He delivers the opinion that Abdul Baha's instruction is *not conclusive under present conditions*. Why? If it is inconclusive *now*, it must have been inconclusive in 1907 when it was written.

2. Shoghi Effendi expresses *his abhorrence* of political affairs. There is the point! The Guardian, living thousands of miles away, unfamiliar with the democratic processes of the New World, finds them distasteful, chooses to *abhor* them, and then expects all his followers to alter their palates so that they also may abhor them. I myself cannot help questioning the method of bringing personal taste into the problem at all.

3. Shoghi Effendi informs the National Spiritual Assembly that *it is obligated to carry out* his instructions on the subject. There is no attempt at reasoning; there is no necessity for it. It is a Caesarian order, pure and simple. In so many words, the Guardian says:—

Yours not to make reply,
Yours not to reason why,
Yours but to do and die.

Independent investigation! The least that can be said of this principle of Baha-O-Llah is that the very mention of it has, by this time, become *heresy*.

Tactful but Vigorous Handling

A subsequent letter from the Guardian published in *Bahai News*, No. 78, October 1933, contains a variety of instructions on the subject. Evidently, there was need for a more delicate treatment of the case, for Shoghi Effendi calls upon his lieutenants in the National Spiritual Assembly to handle the subject of the non-participation of *Bahais of East and West in political affairs* with the *utmost circumspection, tact and vigilance*. Let us read his new instructions:—

The handling of this delicate and vital problem regarding non-participation by Bahais of East and West in political affairs, calls for the utmost circumspection, tact, patience and vigilance on the part of those whose function and privilege is to guard, promote and administer the activities of a world-wide ever-advancing Cause. The misgivings and apprehensions of individual Bahais should be allayed and eventually completely dispelled. Any misconception of the sane and genuine patriotism that animates every Bahai heart, if it ever obscures or perplexes the minds of responsible government officials, should be instantly and courageously dissipated. Any deliberate misrepresentation by the enemies of the Cause of God, of the aim, the tenets and methods of the administrators of the Faith of Baha-U-Llah should be vigorously faced and its fallacy pitilessly exposed.

Here, I take the liberty of remarking that no *responsible government officials* in the United States would ever concern themselves with the non-participation of the Bahais in politics. One can take it into consideration that in the 1940 Presidential campaign, nearly fifty million Americans cast their votes; consequently, the absence or presence of 2,585 Bahais (the World Almanac 1941, Page 854) would be neither felt nor noticed. Thousands of others, on account of old age or infirmities, were unable to go to the polling booths; others again, disfranchised for a variety of reasons, did not make an appearance. Then, there always are some men and women who are too listless to take an interest in anything. The government expects to find a vast gap between its population and its voters, and will not inquire into reasons for absence at the polls.

In regard to *deliberate misrepresentations by enemies of the aim, the tenets and methods* of the Bahai Administration, I will state that because a few interested observers or a number of Bahais did not approve of the disfranchisement of this community and had sufficient concern to voice their opposition, this attitude on their part did not make of them *enemies of the Cause of God* who should be vigorously faced and their fallacy pitilessly exposed. These people were nothing of the sort. They were honest and sincere men and women, students of the Bahai teachings who couldn't adjust themselves to the new ordinances. Everybody cannot think alike, try as they will, and it would seem that the Bahai Cause is big enough to embrace different opinions, or at least respect them.

During 1932-33, this question was discussed at full

length, and some cases of heresy came to light; in a few instances, suspects were dropped from membership on various committees and their places filled with the *regulars*. Then, little by little, the smoke of the battle drifted from the horizon of the Administration; the day had been won, definitely and completely, and if a handful of *enemies of the Cause of God* managed to make their escape from the *vigorous and pitiless* attacks of the forces of organization, these were left to lick their wounds in hide-outs and faraway places, and their very existence was presently forgotten.

In order to mark its definite victory over the opposition, the National Spiritual Assembly sums up the whole struggle from beginning to end in the January 1934 issue, No. 80, of *Bahai News*. The communiqué is entitled:—

The Non-Political Character of the Bahai Faith. A Statement prepared by the National Spiritual Assembly in Response to the Request for clarification of the subject voiced by the 1933 Annual Convention.

The communiqué is a long one, reviewing the successive instructions of the Guardian and the steps taken on the various fronts to establish the non-political character of the Bahai Faith.

Non-Participation in Bahai Politics

Having, to all intents and purposes, silenced the *enemies of the Cause of God*, Shoghi Effendi, looking toward the future, legislates an order for the adequate punishment of all those who may ignore the rulings of the new regime—i.e.: non-participation of all Bahais in the

civic, social and political affairs of their countries.

This order is dated March 16, 1933, and published at the end of the above-mentioned communiqué:—

But if a certain person does enter into party politics and labors for the ascendancy of one party over another, and continues to do it against the expressed appeals and warnings of the Assembly, then the Assembly has the right to refuse him the right to vote in Bahai elections.

Bahai elections? Yes, my gentle reader! Although I admit that it is almost too quaint to be true; for the punishment meted out by Shoghi Effendi to the Bahais who do not accept his ruling of non-participation in the political affairs of the United States is—believe it, if you can—non-participation in the political affairs of the Bahai movement. Actually, the recalcitrant Bahais, who persist in co-operating with their government for the progress of the Democracy which their forefathers established on these shores, are deprived of membership in the Bahai political machine, an institution which has incorporated within itself all the stratagems, tricks and juggleries of Tammany Hall in its most flourishing days. Thus, the recalcitrant Bahai can no longer attend the Annual Bahai Conventions and sit behind closed doors in its secret sessions; he can no longer apply himself to electioneering, possibly for Tenth or Fifteenth Term candidates; he can no longer go to the Bahai polling booths nor take advantage of the Bahai absentee vote; he can no longer share in the little privileges that are allotted to members in good standing nor bask in the sunlight that is shed upon the humble by

those who sit in High Places. Alas! He must resign himself to non-participation in Bahai political affairs, now and for evermore, as the price for being a self-respecting citizen of the United States, and for having tried to make his country a better place to live in.



MIRZA AHMAD SOHRAB
in 1931.

PART EIGHT

A CONFESSION OF FAITH

21. I Believe in the Bahai Cause

*Not by might, nor by power, but by
my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.*

—Zechariah, Chapter 4, Verse 6

CHAPTER XXI

I BELIEVE IN THE BAHAI CAUSE

Religion and Theology

I believe in the Bahai Cause

for it has taught me

that religion is not dogma and creed; it is not metaphysics and speculation; it is not mystery and mystification; it is not a series of sanctified and mummified articles of faith and the performance of sacerdotal gymnastics. If we ever find sufficient courage to take our spiritual destiny into our hands, banishing these strange bedfellows to some lonely island from which they can never escape to molest us, we should have the chance of looking straight into the face of religion, and of discovering that, after all, it is not such an insidious enemy of mankind as it is represented by both its votaries and its adversaries. The Bahai Cause states that religion is truth, love, peace, beauty; it also is common sense, good humor and every-day helpfulness. It propounds the question: To what extent are you capable of serving your fellowmen, irrespective of race, color and creed? To what degree are you willing to forego your own so-called interests in the interests of others?

Thus, the Bahai Cause points to service as the highest commitment of religion—not service to your soul, not service to your religious group, but service to people and to principles. This emphasis on altruism is the approach to a humane, spiritual and scientific outlook upon life; it

carries with it enthusiasm, indomitable persistence, an all-consuming faith in the final victory of good over evil, of right over might, together with an unshakable belief in the oneness of the essence of religion.

In the Bahai Cause is pointed out the too often forgotten yet important truth that the Founders of the Great Religions were born in the East and that all the Sacred Books were there revealed through the Minds of Eastern Prophets. Hence, the East is the fountain-head of Spiritual Knowledge and the power-house of inspiration in the phenomenal world. Just as the sun rises from the East to flood the earth with its warm rays, so has the Sun of Truth ever dawned in the hearts of Eastern Sages to illumine the world with the splendors of God's Revelations.

While the East has given us spiritual aspirations and ethical concepts of life, the West, according to its materialistic tendency, has constructed vast factories of theology. For ages, prosperous industrial ecclesiastics and privileged barons and princes of monopolistic sects have controlled the minds and the purse-strings of the Occidental nations and, while enriching their corporations, have starved the souls of the people. To all intents and purposes, they have usurped the moral sanction of the Holy Scriptures and dominated the religious scene with the whips of inflexible creeds.

At this juncture in history, the Bahai Cause strives to make it plain that the West is in need of a new outpouring of the spirit of the Prophets, so that it may be enabled to destroy the strongholds of religious materialism and fanatical orthodoxy; and, while bringing to an end the

winter of religiosity, usher in the springtime of spiritual spontaneity.

This task once accomplished, it will not be at all difficult to think of religion, not as churches and synagogues, not as mosques and temples, not as theologies and ceremonial ritualism, but as *self-illumination* and *self-realization*; for it is an axiomatic fact that no one can lay a claim to the possession of religion before it is *realized* and *witnessed* in the inner recesses of the heart. We do not need priests, rabbis, mullahs, authoritarians and theologians to tell us what we should and what we should not believe insofar as religion is concerned. Religion is truth, and truth is religion; religion is love, and love is religion; religion is joy, and joy is religion. Religion is simple and not complex. Religion is caught and not taught. Religion is the whole of life, and not a segment of it. When theology is acquired, religion is lost.

We can dispense with theology and ecclesiasticism, but we cannot live without religion.

A Bahai does not subscribe to any separativeness. He does not believe in nationalism, in racialism, in sectarianism, in churchianism. The moment you imprison your religion within the four walls of a building, it is dead; and the best thing that you can do is to admit the fact and bury it quickly.

From time to time, man has changed the form of his theologies, even as he has changed his politics, his economics, his social life. He will continue to pass through these changes until the hour when the true, unchangeable *Form* of the Formless Religion is revealed to him in all its simplicity and majesty—the religion that is a good gift,

a perfect gift, and which has ever come down *from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.* (*James*, Chapter I, Verse 17.)

Unity

I believe in the Bahai Cause

for it has taught me

that religion in its etymological sense means to connect, to unite and to bring the people closer together. On the other hand, any system of thought, no matter under what name it parades itself, which isolates, divides, separates and segregates man from his fellows, is not and cannot be designated as religion. A study of the Bahai Teachings makes it plain that this is the fundamental approach to religion.

An *organized religion* is hard, dour, rigid, iron-handed and iron-hearted; it is stern, arrogant, coercive and merciless. An *administered religion* has been, is and ever shall remain an *arrested religion*; for the premise that a few individuals or a net-work of individuals are able to organize or administer the spiritual realities of God, is an assumption as false as it is impertinent, and as outlandish as it is sacrilegious.

Here is the test of the true religion: Does it unite the minds and hearts of the people in the task of developing a stable society and a humane civilization? Does it make us more tolerant, more sympathetic, more compassionate, more joyous, more sincere, more loving? If it accomplishes these things, then it is religion, indeed, and it comes straight from the Creator of the Universe.

If, on the other hand, self-seeking and self-assertive organizers and administrators place theological and artificial obstacles in the pathway of its followers, it is certain that such a system of thought, in spite of any regenerative powers which it may possess, will be not only limited but also nullified, and that ere long man will enbalm it as a mummy and put it away in the museum of religious monstrosities.

Abdul Baha said:—

If religion be the cause of enmity and rancor, if it should prove the cause of alienating men, assuredly non-religion would be better. For religion and the teachings which appertain to it are as a course of treatment. What is the object of any course of treatment? It is cure and healing. But if the outcome of a course of treatment should be productive of mere diagnosis and discussion of symptoms, the abolition of it is evidently preferable. In this sense, abandoning religion would be a step toward unity.

—No. 9, page 5. A booklet published under the supervision of the American National Spiritual Assembly.

Universal Reconciliation

I believe in the Bahai Cause

for it has taught me

to keep the door of Bahai fellowship open wide to all humanity not excluding a single soul, no matter how sinister, how traitorous, how degraded or how inhuman! Hence, I have determined to associate in joy and fragrance

with all, in the task of the education and development of mankind, and to envelop every creature with the mantle of love and forgiveness. My Master has warned us against being dogmatic and self-opinionated; he has told us to put his Ideals into practice, and he has commanded us to go forth, relying on his help, into the wide world to deliver his message of goodwill and cordiality to all the children of men. I heard his voice in the long ago, and since that time, his ideas have reverberated through the corridors of my mind, even as the sound of an angel-choir descending from the upper sky:—

This is the day of international friendship!

This is the era of world-wide association!

This is the age of universal reconciliation!

This is the time of economic brotherhood!

This is the century of mutual helpfulness!

O men! O women! O leaders! Forget your religious differences! Set aside your theological squabbles! Cast to the winds your credal misunderstandings! Come, and sit around the banquet-table of harmony! Away with suspicion! Away with dogmatism! Away with fanaticism! Away with falsehood and accusations! Away with litigations and lawsuits! We are all *one*—not only behind the veil of glory, but in the open court of the earth!

Protectionism

I believe in the Bahai Cause

for it has taught me

a set of universal principles destined to regenerate the world of humanity. I am not the owner nor the proprietor

of these principles; they were not given to me for safe-keeping, but rather on the understanding that I should share them with others.

The Bahai Cause does not foster a High Tariff Party, striving to create a monopoly of its assets under the deceptive title of *Protection*. Firstly, the Cause is in no need of protection and, secondly, neither Baha-O-Llah nor Abdul Baha was a protectionist. Instead, both of them asserted that the more recklessly we disseminate their teachings, the more we own them. Truth is its best protection; generosity is the wisest investment, and if the Bahai Cause is the truth, as I believe it to be, then let us give it away, scatter its jewels to the four winds of heaven and establish its domain throughout the length and breadth of the land. We can do this joyously, freely, abundantly and without reserve, for we are aware of the fact that when we unlock the doors of our spiritual treasury, our treasure remains but the safer, showing manifold increase.

Do we want a religion that will forever keep us in a legal nursery? Will we not welcome a religion that will help us to win our intellectual and spiritual freedom? If so, let us realize without loss of energy, and without any further litigations and lawsuits, that the Kingdom of Baha-O-Llah and his Spirit will never be found behind high tariff walls as embodied in the National and State Constitutions and By-laws of the Bahai Administration; nor will they even faintly be detected in Deeds of Trust or Corporation Charters. The Kingdom of Baha-O-Llah and his Spirit are to be discovered *within us*, as we live, aspire and work in every community for the furtherance of his Cause.

Therefore, I most respectfully submit: Let the un-

daunted soldiers of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha wage a fiery and uninterrupted war against all the religious protectionists, legalists, fundamentalists, canonists and codificationists of an old and impossible world; and, relying on the confirmation of their Supreme Generals, let them carry on the campaign, both within the Cause and outside of it, until the enemies of freedom fail—until they fall.

Cooperation

I believe in the Bahai Cause

for it has taught me

the fundamental doctrine of co-operation among the members of the human family, in religion, in politics, in science and in the arts. It emphasizes that in co-operation there is life; in isolation, there is death. As long as the cells of the body co-operate one with another, there is health; disease is lack of co-operation between the cells of one part and the cells of another part of the human anatomy.

A progressive Bahai cannot subscribe to an isolationist program; an enlightened Bahai cannot but be an internationalist.

It is an accepted fact that all the phenomena of life co-operate with one another. The sun co-operates with the mineral kingdom; the animal draws support from the mineral and vegetable worlds. Man is nothing less than the product of co-operation in all the lower kingdoms; then, how shall he refuse to co-operate with his own strata of existence, as expressed by the institutions of his age, through the civic, political and educational forces of his

community, through the religious societies and clubs of his country and the peace agencies and philanthropic associations of his world? My Bahai faith proclaims that the mandate of nature as well as of God is the universal law of co-operation, and that from this law there is no escape.

Whenever the leaders of any religious organization, Bahai or otherwise, prescribe for their followers, and put into effect, a plan of non-co-operation with human beings, either individually or collectively, they automatically prepare for the inevitable, if slow, disintegration of their religion; for association, according to Baha-O-Llah, leads to union and harmony; and isolation is synonymous with dissolution and extinction.

As a Bahai I have been taught the following, and I have deemed it wise and true: *Consort with all the people with joy and fragrance. Fellowship is the cause of unity, and unity is the source of order in the world.* It is indeed a sad commentary on the attitude of certain religious leaders who have lost sight of the teachings of their own Faith to such a degree as to substitute the principle of co-operation with orders spelling the exact reverse. It is a still sadder commentary that in this age, there can be found men and women who are willing to follow such blind leaders.

Has it not been said of yore:—*Blind leaders of the blind!*

My Bahai faith, as a universal religion, enjoins upon me to live up to its claim one hundred percent by sincerely and cordially inviting *all* the races, *all* the nations and *all* the tribes of men to enter the circle of its benign and

generous influence so that they may become part of its great destiny.

Initiative

I believe in the Bahai Cause

for it has taught me

a plan for the reconstruction of the human commonwealth—the most bold and, at the same time, the most practical ever conceived. In order to help in its fulfillment, every Bahai must, in his own right, become bold and practical. Through his innate power, he must open up new fields of action and, through self-reflection and self-perception, arrive at self-confidence. His heart must be as an ever-playing fountain, tossing high the life-giving waters of truth in order to irrigate the parched grounds of the world of humanity.

He must *become a lamp full of light*; he must *be active and fear not*; he must *go out from the solitary place like unto a shining star, blazing on its horizon*.

In countless ways, the Founders of the Bahai Cause have striven to evoke the original and creative faculties that are latent within us; they have told us not to belittle ourselves by being mere copyists and repeaters of ideas; they have encouraged us to rely on our mental and spiritual resources, for we cannot know the worth of these resources until we have drawn upon them.

Today the Cause requires self-possessed, independent workers. It needs leaders and not henchmen. Courtiers have never served their countries nor their kind, for the man of parts is unwilling to stand first on one foot and then on the other in the close atmosphere of the audience chamber.

It has been said that humility is a part of wisdom, but it also has been said that in the assurance of strength, there is strength. And strength comes from God.

Let us then move, as hollow puppets, on the great stage of life. Through ourselves, we can accomplish nothing, but the Lord holds the strings—we know that; and, if we are willing to respond to the deft workings of His hand, we will play our parts nobly and well, and bring the performance to a triumphant conclusion. Again, we may consider ourselves as actors, and in every scene listen closely to the voice of the Prompter—the still small voice that sounds in the secret shrines of our own hearts—the voice that never fails us, that never leaves us stranded.

Baha-O-Llah addressing each one of us declares:—

I have created thee rich; why dost thou make thyself poor? Noble have I made thee; why dost thou degrade thyself? Of the essence of Knowledge have I manifested thee; why searchest for another than Me?

—Hidden Words, page 7.

The rich resources of spiritual independence are within us; the essences of divine wisdom are implanted in our hearts; the honors of the world of freedom are hidden in our minds. Deaf, dumb and blind, we do not put these inherent treasures into use but instead, like beggars, look to others for spiritual support and moral confidence.

Great is the strength of the individual soul who, relying on the spiritual trust deposited within him by Baha-O-Llah, will arise to spread his Cause! Such a soul will shine forever from the horizon of eternity and will be accounted as among the companions of the White Way.

With wings outstretched, he will soar toward the Kingdom of Heaven; as a flame, he will enkindle the seekers with the fire of the Love of God. Girding up the loins of endeavor, he will display universal efforts, being constantly revitalized with the breaths of the Holy Spirit.

Such an intrepid and resourceful Bahai is a confirmed Bahai. He is the herald of the Cause of Baha-O-Llah, the proclaimer of his message, the producer of his drama, the distributor of his ideas, the interpreter of his dreams, the flagbearer of his army and the disciple at his Threshold.

As if realizing the difficulties that such an individual will have to encounter in his career of service to the Bahai Cause, Abdul Baha thus addresses him: — *Let not thy hands tremble nor thy heart be disturbed.* (*Tablets of Abdul Baha*, Vol. I, page 170.)

A Bahai

I believe in the Bahai Cause

for it has taught me

that a Bahai is a follower of Light, a diffuser of Light, a lover of Light from whatsoever globe it is shining.

He is baptized in the waters of Truth and emancipated from the superstitions of the past.

He is delivered from the sea of names; he does not use signs of discrimination.

A Bahai, not recognizing any racial, national, religious or political prejudices, looks upon all mankind as the children of one Father, as the sheep of one Shepherd, as the stars of one heaven, as the birds of one meadow and the fruits of one tree.

He is unafraid of the authority of Church and State—of Organization and Administration.

He does not sit in judgment upon his brothers, nor does he place stumbling-blocks of ignorance and hatred on the pathway of the marching pilgrims.

He is not occupied with himself, but is intent on the betterment of the world and the training of nations.

He turns his eyes from foreignness and gazes toward oneness.

He does not glory in the love of country, but in the love of humanity as a whole.

He is as an artery, pulsating in the body of the created world.

A Bahai does not attribute to another that which he would not attribute to himself.

He consorts with all the people with joy and fragrance, seeing in their faces the countenance of his Lord, the Merciful, the Clement, the Compassionate.

He does not choose his associates, for God has chosen them for him at the creation; and these associates are the members of his own family scattered over the expanse of the earth.

He is an optimist; he recognizes only the beautiful and the good, and works for the establishment of these virtues in all localities and in all regions.

A Bahai reverences all the spiritual Law-givers that have successively appeared in the East to act as connecting channels between the Supreme Power and Humanity.

He does not concern himself with theological rulings and priestly privileges; but, building his life on internal sanction and turning his sight unto himself, he finds the

Eternal Witness standing within him, powerful, mighty and supreme.

A Bahai is one who lives in the *Everlasting*.

What is a Bahai?

A Bahai is a torch in the darkness, a joy for grief, a sea for the thirsty, a refuge for the unfortunate, an arm for the oppressed. He is a home to the stranger, a remedy to the sick, a fortress to him who seeks protection. He is sight for the blind, a path for the strayed, dew for the earth of kindness, a bark for the sea of knowledge, a sun for the heaven of generosity—a white point upon the brow of the world.

Love of Liberty

I believe in the Bahai Cause

for it has taught me

that the mission of the Prophets and sages of the past was to assemble the scattered fragments of humanity into a whole and to establish the rule of spiritual democracy on the five continents and the islands of the seas.

This is the fiat of Providence, the concern of Heaven and the *will* of the supreme Architect of the New World Order—Baha-O-Llah.

There may be those within the Bahai Administration and outside of it who may claim that they can level to the surface of a smooth plain the towering Himalayas; they may pretend that they are able to turn backward the flow of the mighty Niagara; they may maintain that they can stop the sun from rising or the winds from blowing; they may announce that they can arrest the march of the spinning globes, hinder the law of universal evolution and

progress, damn to eternal perdition the children of the Almighty, or silence God in His Chamber of Melodies and imprison Him in their catacombs of death!

Well, they may lay claim to all these things, and indeed they yet may even have power to perform much weird jugglery and many a fantastic miracle; yet of one thing I entertain not the slightest doubt. It is this:—

They cannot and will never be able to stop, even for a second, the irresistible, uprushing and world-encircling power of BAHAI love and the love of liberty that surges and storms in the minds and hearts of the *freedmen of Baha-O-Llah*. Such religious technicians together with all the principalities, kingdoms and empires of the earth will be baffled before these individuals who have understood and suffered, who have fixed their eyes on the horizon lit by their Lord and cried out: *We have found Baha and we are his ransom*.

O freedmen of Baha-O-Llah! Possess daring, to dream the dreams of your Master; then coin these dreams into deeds of emancipation, so as to set their mark on the coming ages. Pave the pathways of your countryside with the accomplishments of intelligence and wisdom. Be compassionate to your enemies and ill-wishers. Seize life by never seizing it, and work unremittingly in this blood-drenched, hate-encircled world to the end that it may be transformed into a moonlit and dream-visited planet!

The Company of Free Individual Bahais

I believe in the Bahai Cause

for it has taught me

that it is the Way of God to man and the way of man

to God. It is the religion of Truth unveiled before the eyes of the seekers, and the truth of religion heralded from the house-tops. It is the source of all good and the origin of all honor. It is the principle of a Faith that inspires men to lessen words and increase deeds; for he whose words exceed his acts, his non-being is better than his being and his death better than his life. It is the root of knowledge, the mainspring of love and the power-house of endurance and self-sacrifice through which mankind shall be developed and exalted. It is freedom from the superstitions and imitations that have kept the people imprisoned in the dark jails of ignorance.

The Bahai Cause is not simply a religion or a faith; it is not simply a philosophy or a movement; it pre-eminently is a system of constructive thinking and a way of wholesome living that never can lend itself to rigid organization or arid regimentation. It is the assertion of man's immortal spirit, and a rallying cry for those unvanquished heroes who have dedicated themselves to the cause of the new civilization which is destined to emerge from the chaos of our time.

The Bahai Administration, on its part, has expended every effort to confine this limitless Ocean in a bottle and to reduce this glorious Light to a faint glow; and it might conceivably have succeeded in its destructive work, had it not been for the clear-cut decision of Justice Louis A. Valente, rendered in the Supreme Court of New York, which was sustained by the Appellate Division of the same county. That decision was based on a very simple theme—liberty of religious practice; yet, actually, it is packed with dynamite. It will become the cornerstone of developing

Bahai activity in this country and throughout the world. Indeed, *God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet* (*Psalms 47, Verse 5*), and reactionary leaders of all types would do well to hearken to that sound!

At this juncture in human history, when Democracy is meeting its crucial test before the embattled hosts of Totalitarianism, the Bahai Cause, as the spiritual Democracy of these times, was likewise forced to the encounter. It would seem that that struggle was inevitable in an epoch when the fundamental principle of Liberty is at stake everywhere, to be lost or won, to be blotted out in daily life or worn as a badge of honor, to be annihilated or set on the path of development and progress, where liberty as measured today will be slavery as measured tomorrow.

It is not an exaggeration to state that the aroused conscience of a considerable part of the Bahai world has expressed itself in the simple words of Justice Valente. Through this decision, and in spite of the theological barricades raised by the Bahai Administration, those who feel themselves called upon to serve the Cause independently will be strengthened in their resolve. Obviously, they would have preferred to please the representative of Abdul Baha by co-operating with the National Spiritual Assembly, even as I myself would have so preferred; but, sometimes a choice has to be made. In this case, the Cause of the Bab, Baha-O-Ilah and Abdul Baha waits patiently on the one hand, while the Bahai Administration sits enthroned on the other. We cannot have them both; therefore, which shall it be? Abdul Baha once said that if, in the face of two important issues, it is incumbent upon us

to make a decision, we must choose the more important. Then, shall we take our places in the wake of the Glorious Dispossessed or shall we stand at attention before the monopolistic powers? This is a problem which each of us must answer for himself.

Baha-O-Llah's hammer-stroke of fate is sounding! Now is the time! Now is the accepted time! Let the disillusioned regimented Bahais, everywhere, arise and break the chains and fetters that are binding them to a despotic Administration! This is their opportunity to defy the tyrants within the Cause, even as Baha-O-Llah himself defied the tyrants that had subverted the former religions.

It is certain that, in that New World which we as Bahais have been taught to expect, which we in faith have anticipated, the followers of Baha-O-Llah will play no small part. Rising from each community, from each state, from each country, eager, determined children of the New Day shall form themselves into a formless Order—THE COMPANY OF FREE INDIVIDUAL BAHAIS; and these persons, known and unknown to one another, within organizations (even the Bahai organization) and outside of them, shall carry the name of their Lord to every region and take active part in the establishment of his Kingdom upon the earth.

May God be the support of the teachers who shall travel to these countries, and their helper!

Formerly they were as moths, but they shall become as royal falcons. Formerly they were as bubbles, but they shall become the sea!

Who was Baha-O-Llah?

He was the divine Advocate of man's emancipation

from the thralldom of former ages. His ideas were not static and temporary, but dynamic and eternal. He was a man of peace, but also he was a man of battle; and he led the army of New Ideas against the army of tradition. He was the personification of a spiritual and intensely human genius. He had daring and sublime self-confidence. While the enlightened religionists of his day gazed fearfully into the depths of prejudice and intolerance where their fellowmen were disporting themselves, he, with one stride, bridged the abyss and, in the face of the storm which rose about him on every side, he called on the kings and rulers of the earth, and on men and women in all walks of life, to arise, to move and to unite, in the name of freedom and in the cause of the oppressed and the downtrodden. Baha-O-Llah fought his battles without reserve.

Now, our time has arrived; our hour has struck! We, *THE COMPANY OF FREE INDIVIDUAL BAH AIS* must continue his work!

The Bounties of the Omnipotent are inexhaustible and they shall pour upon us! The Favors of the Merciful are boundless and they shall surround us! The Gifts of the King of Kings are numberless and they shall be given unto us! The Glories of the Father are resplendent and they shall encircle us! There is no cause for anxiety and no reason for backwardness. *THE COMPANY OF FREE INDIVIDUAL BAH AIS*, which always has been in existence, must now become vocal, active, imperative; and let us remember, let us constantly remember that Abdul Baha anticipated us and spoke of our coming. He said:—

The hosts of the Kingdom of Abha are drawn up and filed in battle array on the plain of the Supreme Concourse and are expecting that a band of volunteers will step upon the field of action with the intention of service, so that they may assist that band and make it victorious and triumphant.

—*Bahai Scriptures*, pages 490-491.

The attitude to be taken and the services to be rendered by this *band of volunteers*, *THE COMPANY OF FREE INDIVIDUAL BAHAIS*, are outlined and enumerated by Abdul Baha. Addressing them he says:—

Be not seated and silent. Diffuse the glad-tidings of the Kingdom far and wide to the ears; promulgate the Word of God. . . . Arise with such qualities and attributes that ye may continually bestow life on the body of the world, and nurse the infants of the universe up to the station of maturity and perfection. Enkindle with all your might, in every meeting the light of the love of God, gladden and cheer every heart with the utmost loving-kindness, show forth your love to the strangers just as you show to your relatives. If a soul is seeking a quarrel, ask ye reconciliation; if he blame ye, praise him; if he give you a deadly poison, bestow an all-healing antidote; if he createth death, administer ye eternal life; if he becometh a thorn, change ye into roses and hyacinths. Perchance, through such deeds and words, this darkened world will become illuminated; this terrestrial universe will become transformed into a heavenly realm, and this satanic prison become a divine court; warfare and bloodshed be annihilated and love and faithfulness hoist the tent of unity upon the apex of the world.

—*Tablets of Abdul Baha*, Vol. III, pages 503-504.

Therefore, let *THE COMPANY OF FREE INDIVIDUAL BAHAIS* step upon the field of action with the intention of service so that the Hosts of the Kingdom of Abha may make it victorious and triumphant!

PART NINE

ACTION AND REACTION

22. Out of the Mail Bag

And ye are witnesses of these things.

—St. Luke, Chapter 24, Verse 48



DR. JOHN HAYNES HOLMES
Pastor of the Community Church of New York City

CHAPTER XXII

OUT OF THE MAIL BAG

While the articles which constitute this book were appearing in *New History*, the mail bag was becoming heavier than usual. Friends, strangers, and especially Bahais felt called upon to express themselves on the problems which the legal action had brought to light. Therefore, a great deal of interesting correspondence was carried on. All the letters received have been placed for reference in the office files. There were hundreds of these letters coming from all parts of the country and from abroad, expressing, naturally, different angles and shades of thought. Indeed, they comprise a slice of life on subject-matter that is seldom dealt with! For this reason, it has been deemed advisable to make some extracts for publication.

Communications, reproduced herewith either in part or in whole, excepting the four historic letters from Dr. John Haynes Holmes as well as a letter from Palestine and one from India, are presented without identification—the matter of moment being the content of the statements, rather than the status of the writers.

April 1, 1940

Dear Mr. Sohrab:

I have read with the greatest interest and with seething indignation your complete Statement with correspondence as published in the April issue of **NEW HISTORY**.

It's all news to me that Mr. and Mrs. Chanler have been victims of such cruel persecution from the Bahai authorities. This latest attack seems incredible, and I would regard it as such did I not see the actual documents as you print them. Alas, it is the same old story of ecclesiasticism—the Church arrogating to itself all power, and persecuting the prophets and the saints.

I have always known that Mr. and Mrs. Chanler were utterly devoted persons, the unselfish and self-sacrificing servants of a great cause which has become central in their lives; but I never realized at what a price they were standing firm by their ideals. You have done us all a great service in making public the details of this story. Please convey to Mr. and Mrs. Chanler my sympathy and reverent regard, which I share with you as their devoted associate.

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) *John Haynes Holmes.*

April 7, 1941

Dear Mrs. Chanler:

Thank you for letting me know the great victory you have won in the courts. I feel that this is a victory for us all, since it involves the great principle of freedom in religion. Imagine any group arrogantly claiming a monopoly in this great field. I congratulate you with all my heart, for I can realize what this long fight must have involved.

Believe me,

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) *John Haynes Holmes.*

April 21, 1941

Dear Mr. Sohrab:

I have read with absorbing interest your account of the famous lawsuit and the victory which has been won. More than ever do I feel that this is a victory for us all—a vindication in this country, in a trying circumstance, of our basic principle of religious liberty. There isn't one of us who doesn't owe an immeasurable debt to Mrs. Chanler and yourself. I hope this issue of *NEW HISTORY* together with the next issue containing your account of this affair, will be widely distributed in the libraries, for it is a document of genuine historical importance.

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) *John Haynes Holmes.*

Sept. 30, 1941

Dear Mr. Sohrab:

I am mighty glad that this book is in hand, for this Bahai lawsuit is a chapter in the history of religious freedom in America. . . .

We have trying and difficult days ahead, and must close up our ranks tighter than ever.

(Signed) *John Haynes Holmes.*

* * * * *

The wise ones in the Bahai Cause will arise and say: "Praise be to God that Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha have opened our eyes to truth."

Those of opposite mind will either come forward with co-operative endeavor, or thrust our beloved Cause into chaos and confusion. They *cannot* refute the Word, which is absolute authority in your wonderful treatise.

* * * * *

Your little magazine *New History*, containing reference to the trade-marking of the name *Bahai*, etc., came today, and I have read the same very carefully. Allow me to say that I agree with every word of it. I have no brief for or against any individual or group. However, I have watched for years conditions going from bad to worse without meddling, because I see the end of it all.

* * * * *

My sympathies are entirely with Mr. and Mrs. Chanler's great work—what does it matter which way the Light is spread.

* * * * *

I am stirred to surprise and regret by the information you have conveyed to me concerning the strangely inconsistent effort of some Bahai representatives, to appropriate to private use the truly world-universal name and beauty of the Bahai faith.

This narrow, and, it seems to me, fundamentally selfish attempt, is surely directly contrary to all that the Bahai fellowship and devotion stand for. One need only try to imagine, today, a single body of Christians seeking to *copyright* the name itself of *Christian*. The error and narrowness of this other effort is, by such comparison, made to appear in its real aspect.

With earnest hope and prayer that such attempts will be withdrawn voluntarily, or, if not, will be defeated in their purpose, and assuring you that we feel that such noble-hearted and pure-spirited loyalty and labor as you and Mrs. Chanler have devoted to the Bahai faith for many notable years of service, should be sufficient to convince any but the sadly bigoted, of the wrong of

trying to hamper your great self-sacrifice and witness of divine truth. . . .

* * * * *

I received your small booklet and have read it. You do not say anything about the Guardian of the Bahai Cause, Shoghi Effendi. The National Assembly do just as he suggests in all matters. I am surprised that Ahmad Sohrab, with his background, will not work with the main body of the Bahais.

* * * * *

I have never heard of it—I am re-reading and studying thoughtfully No. 7 issue (April). It has cleared up some subjects that were “foggy” to my way of thinking. I thank you.

* * * * *

I have just finished reading your statement in the April issue of the little magazine, *New History*, and am simply dumbfounded. The action described seems diametrically opposite to the fundamental teachings of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha, so far as I have learned from your compendium of their writings and teachings in your *Bible of Mankind*, *I Heard Him Say* and pamphlets.

* * * * *

Thank you for the April issue of *New History*. My reaction is twofold: interest in your side of the case as presented by you, which has all the earmarks of sincerity, genuineness and soundness, and bewilderment at the past and present action of the Chicago *authorities* in seeking and securing a patent on Bahai literature and trying to enforce their alleged rights. It is astounding. The legal aspects baffle my layman's mind. But,

the whole world seems to have gone *cuckoo*, and from this you and Mr. and Mrs. Chanler may draw some comfort.

* * * * *

I read with great interest your statement regarding: Horace Holley. It is an impeachment equal to that of Warren Hastings.

* * * * *

Just a word to encourage you in your fight against the orthodoxy which wants to copyright and nullify the words of the Prophet. It has always been that way. Those who can only travel with a collar around their necks have to have some place to go—the others who can think and act for themselves will follow you.

* * * * *

I have read your pamphlets and will say that they are very well written, and no doubt do much good. I am sure however, that a man with your attainments could do much more for the Cause if you would join up with them and become one of the gang.

* * * * *

After reading from cover to cover the recently written statement by your pen regarding the trade-mark, Bahai, I felt so touched by the spiritual tone and the profound declaration of your conviction for the truth to be proclaimed for the Unification of the people of the World and their Emancipation. I read carefully every line of this most explicit article. I pray that this article will bring a peaceful solution for the difficulties in the path of the Followers of the Divine Teachings, who see the *blood clot* in religious freedom that is

forming; an operation is necessary in order that the *Will and Testament* of Abdul Baha be obeyed.

* * * * *

Now Ahmad, I am speaking to you as a brother. I am for the underdog, but I want the Truth only. Mr. . . . and others stated that you denied the station and authority of the Guardian, and thus the Will of the Master. I defended you on the grounds that your present writing did not indicate it and that I had too much confidence in your loyalty to the Master to reject his specific command. The National Spiritual Assembly is determined to smash you on this rock alone.

* * * * *

I have read with interest the pamphlet you sent me concerning a very unusual court proceeding against The New History Society.

You have justice on your side, and I hope you will also have the law. I know comparatively little about trade-mark law, but my impression is that your contentions are sound. You evidently have good counsel.

* * * * *

Thanks, so much, for New History! It answers so many questions which I have been asked in regard to you and your connection with the National Bahai Organization so much better than I was able to answer them at the time. I have passed it on, to make the crooked thoughts straight.

Personally, I extend both hands to you both in understanding—understanding too deep for words.

* * * * *

I am praying that you will be vindicated in New York,

as I feel that Shoghi Effendi, were he in possession of all the things necessary in the case, would feel a debt of gratitude is due any soul who tries to spread the Teachings, whether through book shop, temples, churches or schools.

* * * * *

I have wanted to tell you ever since the April number of the magazine when the great *Silence* was broken, as I had never heard *one* word of *your side* of the *story*.

I want to tell you how much I appreciate the little magazine, and when it comes every month, I just have to stop whatever I am doing and read it from cover to cover. It just strikes the nail on the head, for me. It clears my mentality, and I can see the *whole Truth* as you have it, that never can be adulterated, or organized.

God bless you. I am with you heart and hand, and have been from the very beginning. Yours is the sense of universal justice that lifts my heart to where it soars and sings. We need a consciousness as high as heaven to see all life as Love, all men as kings.

* * * * *

I was dumbfounded when I read about what the so-called Bahais are doing. Baha-O-Llah in the *Hidden Words* says, "I made you free, why are you a slave?" I take the same view as John Haynes Holmes, who so well expressed himself in the Oct. issue of *New History*. It is a deplorable condition at this time and age to confiscate the Word of God.

* * * * *

I read your magazine from cover to cover—because I had a tired moment—and I kept going, because the subject matter proved interesting.

Do you mean to say that a certain *Bahai Cause* pursues you because you *independently* branch out to teach its principles and axioms? *Legally pursued!* (altho' you use your own money). You're *teaching* it right—aren't you?

* * * * *

Most Bahai followers are very much of the dilettante order—you know this as well as I. But I will not quarrel with them. Let each soul travel the pathway of his choice. The worst trouble makers are generally the *leaders*.

* * * * *

And you Sohrab, don't send me your magazines no more. They are thrown into a waste paper basket. I am very particular what I read, and I have no time for your stuff.

* * * * *

I greatly sympathize with you in your troubles with personalities. But, this is beside the mark. Personalities have no importance in the Cause! We are striving to build an organization that will stand intact throughout the future ages—and it will be done. And even though the material that we start with is only one degree above the baboon, we must accomplish this mighty task of consolidating the Baha'i forces for posterity. It may be that you are on the negative side in order to show the rest of the Bahais that *this divine cause cannot be divided*. There has of necessity to be an opposite in all things.

* * * * *

Just as soon as a soul accepts Baha'u'llah as the prophet of his age, and obeys His teachings, I think that person is as much a Bahai as he could ever be. Some

of the organized believers do this only in a very slight degree. The reward for following Baha'u'llah comes from a realm far removed from the world of man.

* * * * *

Your little magazine is very helpful and often has some valuable information in it. I can see your standpoint, and yet I do not approve of it for this reason: The people of the earth are not strong enough to walk alone in the world of spiritual thoughts. It is too foreign and contrary to that which they have been trained so far. You have been given the privilege of living with some of the highest Spirits that have manifested on the earth. Abdul Baha certainly was one of the greatest; Janabe Fazel was like Him in a lesser degree. Through the help of such souls you became free from the world of nature and the struggle for existence. Your life shows this.

* * * * *

We might say that most of the Bahai followers are like unto creatures shut up in an animal house—the world of nature is this animal dwelling. They have far to go before they can be free, soaring high in the sky of spiritual understanding. The freedom that you now have is unknown to these people, and they have no power to live and do as yourself.

* * * * *

I am not at all interested in your publication and must ask you . . . not to waste your postage by sending it to me. Should I ever want anything that you possess (which God forbid!) I shall quite cheerfully let you know.

* * * * *

Their stand was ridiculous. I am afraid many Christian denominations have hugged their good news to their hearts and kept others out. High fences are falling down.

* * * * *

Congratulations on bright victory achieved for humanity the American way.

* * * * *

Of course, I am *delighted*, but *not* surprised, that Mr. Shorab and you won the court decision. It seemed ridiculous to bring such a suit in a country *founded* at least on the principle, that men might worship in their own way. I should give it the utmost publicity.

* * * * *

I congratulate you and Mr. Sohrab upon your great victory. This world can never be a world of peace and happy brotherhood of mankind until cruelty to helpless creatures both human and dumb animals is controlled by righteous laws.

* * * * *

To you and to Mirza Sohrab my heartfelt congratulations for the successful defense of your case—which is a rare triumph indeed of tolerant, all-embracing, loving and warm-blooded religious spirit over narrow-minded formalism. Let us be generous in victory and concede to those forces which want to monopolize a living Creed that they mean well, but are victims of their own jealousy and fanaticism.

You, however, who have carried the torch without pretense, self-effacing and patient, and with such loving insight even into the hearts of your adversaries,

you have won the triple award: the outward recognition, the inward justification, and finally the spreading of your methods to settle conflicts, namely to conquer by Love; to prevail by Humbleness.

You might not be aware of the far-reaching effects which your example might cause in a world which needs must be convinced soon that war and riots and violence breed naught but injustice, hatred and despair.

With more than usual interest I have followed your articles in *New History* since you revealed for the first time the intimate growth of your movement. And you revealed much more. Unknowingly perhaps, you showed us the advantages of taking a higher, impersonal and unimpassioned perspective, even on matters which are closest to our hearts. There was not a single instance of over-enthusiasm, of artificial fervor in those accounts of your religious struggles. On the contrary, everything was told as if it all had happened centuries ago. (And indeed it seemed to me a brilliant mirror of the period when Christianity changed from being a Faith to becoming a Church.)

And again, what impressed me most was your sympathy with your very adversaries; not a single instance of anger, of contempt or even of what is called righteous indignation. Only now and then some subtle humor which so delightfully relieved the tenseness of the situation; some gentle way of poking fun at your adversaries as is the custom amongst good friends. But a greater amount still of self-irony as if to say: "We're all sinners and each of us the worst of all." There was a tenderness, a charm, a serene wisdom in those essays;—so that our souls were captured at once and our minds were calmed with the knowledge that your cause shall prevail. * * * *

Warm congratulations and felicitations upon the thorough and decisive vindication of your entire position, from the Court! The dignity and courage with which you have conducted your part in this debate are worthy of all praise and of this complete verdict.

* * * * *

With greatest satisfaction I got the news, that at last you won a full victory in the case you so valiantly fought for.

Let me congratulate you and Mr. Sohrab for this success. I know how much this means to both of you, and how much it must mean to you to fight for a just cause.

* * * * *

Congratulations! Thank you for the Press Comments on your success in winning the suit that the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the U. S. and Canada brought against you. It delighted me beyond words.

You have rendered a great service to mankind in unmasking the members of the National Spiritual Assembly as the prototypes of the bigots of the dark ages. Their utter lack of wisdom in bringing this suit to prohibit your using the name *Bahai*, is the strongest evidence of their lack of the Spirit of the Bahai Religion. It has hastened the day hinted at by Abdul Baha when he said:

“ . . . If we are not the instruments in spreading this Cause, others will be chosen. . . . God will raise up a people who will hoist the standard of God, who will ignite the Lamp of God, who will conquer the cities of the hearts, who will show forth the potency of the Word of God.”—(*Bahai Scriptures*, Page 374)

* * * * *

Heartfelt congratulations to you and to Mrs. Chanler on your Victory! . . . May your work now go forward with greater joy and greater achievement.

We are so happy that you have overcome the obstacles put in your pathway—but such has ever been the experience of the constructive peoples of the earth.

May the forces of evil grow a million times weaker each day and the forces of good a million times stronger until the victory of Light for the world is won.

* * * * *

I wish to acknowledge your faithful promise to send me a leaflet on the Court procedure, for which I thank you. The verdict is what I predicted to our Local Spiritual Assembly sometime ago.

Religious freedom has been the inheritance of every creature on the American soil. Surely it would not be denied a believer in Baha'u'llah and Abdul Baha and Shoghi Effendi.

* * * * *

I am grateful to you both for the good news you sent me. It was the best news I have had in a long time. Truth sure was mightier than the sword of Excommunication. I don't understand where Mr. Holley and Co. got their ideas from, except from the Roman hierarchy. Baha-O-Llah says, "Why are you a slave when I made you free?" We have been slaves long enough. I hope some of the folks that made up the parties in your house will return back again and enjoy your hospitality and not be afraid of Excommunication.

* * * * *

Please accept and convey to Mrs. Chanler my congratulations on the verdict, about which there was no doubt from the very beginning.

* * * * *

My heartiest congratulations. This news made my heart get into my throat. It was the best I have had for a long time.

Oh what shameless creatures, waiting in the ambush like wild cats for their prey, to devour it.

I am rejoiced over the way the Judge handled the case, putting on them the water hose. How they belittled themselves, walking out like wet rats. . . . So there's where some of the Temple money goes. . . .

Now, I hope and pray that the true believers will wake up,—shake the shackles off our necks. You broke those horrid links. Praise God. . . . How we innocently had suffered. . . .

Now, more than ever, I wish I could be in Chicago and hear what they have to say. Perhaps many will be glad that this happened. Is Shoghi Effendi getting this report? I hope he gets the newspaper clippings and sees that the Cause is in the hands of non-Bahais, and that he was deceived by the sweet tongue of Satan.

* * * * *

Most sincerely I offer my hearty congratulations upon your success in the full establishment of your claims:—

“To draw the thing as you see it.

For the God of things as they are.”

I enjoy the little magazine and read it carefully, and delight in the decision the Court has given you. I do not know all the reasons for the controversy, but I believe in you both; that is quite enough. If I ever return to New York City to reside, I shall follow your phase of the Call most earnestly.

* * * * *

Above all let me felicitate you and Mrs. Chanler on

the outcome of the court action which was so unjustly brought against you and your cause. Though I did not write to you for a long time, I have followed everything very closely in the writings you always send to me and which I always enjoy. Through them I never get out of touch with you, at least on my part.

* * * * *

You will forgive any undue delay in congratulating you and Mrs. Chanler on your victory for retention of individual freedom of conscience in religion as guaranteed by the Federal Constitution.

* * * * *

Congratulations. I have only just opened the Press Comments on April 1st and 2nd you so kindly forwarded. I am indeed rejoiced to know that religious freedom is still preserved, that formalism and tyranny are again defeated. The right to learn and spread Truth is the most precious part of Freedom and is the only right worth striving for. True religion is the only remedy for our war-torn world.

* * * * *

I spoke to some of the delegates about a girl who got married, and for a long time cooked steak, so her husband said, "Dearie, why do you not use your brain and cook up something else?" "I am trying," she said, "but it is always steak." So I said the same is with the election. They do not try to get someone else on the board of the National Spiritual Assembly.

* * * * *

What a glorious privilege was yours to vindicate the Truth of the Bahai Cause. "Justice is to be desired

above all things." You cannot organize the Bahai Cause, Abdul Baha told us in the very beginning of the Cause. So many things have crept into the method of teaching the Cause; but I have been thankful I heard, and was taught from the source, so I kept quiet, but I knew what Abdul Baha had said—so rested on His words. . . . God is not to be mocked nor hindered by man's interpretation, for He rules mighty and supreme.

* * * * *

It will give me the greatest pleasure if you will no longer send me your publication: in fact I request you to cross my name off your list entirely and oblige.

* * * * *

As the road is now clear to carry on with your teaching efforts, let every effort be given to the spreading of the Bahai Cause. The differences between a few people must be forgotten.

* * * * *

Grand too of you and Mr. Shorab to send me the copies of your periodicals that tell of your glorious victory for FREEDOM OF RELIGION. We congratulate you both.

Our best wishes in your great work for TRUTH and FREEDOM.

* * * * *

I was really happy when I read, the other day, in your magazine about the decision given by Justice Valente in your favor. It is really a triumph of Truth and Freedom over selfishness and bigotry. More Power to you! Please extend my heartiest congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Chanler also. Now, I am glad, you can

spread your message with more freedom and power than ever.

* * * * *

I want to register my satisfaction at the decision reached by Justice Valente in the long-drawn suit conducted to harass and hinder Mr. Sohrab and Mrs. Chauler. Any other decision would have struck a vital blow at the religious freedom guaranteed under the U. S. Constitution.

* * * * *

Permit me to congratulate you on your great victory. Although I have never doubted for a moment that the New History Society was in its rights and that this ugly controversy must be decided in your favor, I could not help feeling relieved when I received the printed announcement of the Court Decision and thus saw my expectation confirmed.

I read the May issue of your little magazine over and over; I was in my thoughts with you all, back in the New History office at 132 East 65th Street, and lived with you through the breathtaking minutes which you so masterfully described.

* * * * *

It seems incredible that the N. S. A. should appeal the case after such a clear cut decision made by Judge Louis A. Valente, and repeat the same mistake again in regard to the telephone book listing. It only goes to prove how veiled they are. Too bad you have to go all over the case again. They evidently cannot see that they are wrong. I think, perhaps after 5 judges give the same decision they will believe it.

* * * * *

Those people who use material ways and means are people of the earth or men of the world. Their comprehension is very limited in many respects. Instead of having appreciation for a gifted person they will be strongly inclined towards jealousy, as a rule. But, so they are and so they will remain—for a long time at least. This is one of the defects of the world of nature and only the powers of the spirit can change it. Certainly it is strange for anyone to think that they should, or could, take out a copyright or patent on God, the Creator of the Universe. I understand much of the Bahai teachings and I wonder how anyone would go about it to prevent me from obeying them! I am sure that they would fail, if they tried.

* * * * *

After reading most carefully the article "Fear" by *Mirza Ahmad Sohrab* in the September issue of *New History*, I venture to express an opinion.

First let me say—without any equivocation—that I think this subject is most convincingly stated, and shows a great deal of careful consideration.

As one of the first members of The New History Society, I know something of the bitter opposition with which the founders had to contend. I also know how earnestly and patiently they tried to unite and heal the breach within the Cause. I realize how impossible it was to do this, and remember the difficulties they encountered in their efforts.

When I first heard of the Bahai religion I was thrilled. I read everything I could find on the subject—for and against it. The words of the Master Baha-O-Ulah and the beloved Abdul Baha, written under the

inspiration of their high Spiritual Consciousness, made an impression on my soul that will remain there for eternity.

I met many Bahais—sweet, fine people, who tried to “live the life”, as set down by the Masters. Some of them were so wonderfully kind and good, one might wonder why the world generally shunned their way of living and failed to emulate their example.

And then—because I had the words written in my heart, and a mind that *must* think for itself—I began to question. For in this picture of simple love and kindness, there was an element that smacked of the Puritan and the Inquisitor.

An invisible wall seemed to have been erected, to shut out what these people called *evil*, so they might be kept pure—according to their own lights. Any who did not remain within this rigid wall was considered to be an enemy of the Cause.

This so-called persecution of the Bahais is—to a large extent—in the *minds* of this narrow-visioned sect. For in my travels—meeting all types of people—when I spoke of the great Teachers for whom I had such love—those who knew of them spoke only with deepest respect. However, the greater majority of people had *never heard of them*.

It has been my privilege to recommend the reading of the words of the Masters to many. And not once did I feel obliged to ask anyone's permission to initiate a soul into the glorious joy of these teachings. Neither did I feel it necessary to tell him or her that if he accepted these tenets, all sorts of calamities would befall him—to test his soul—as I was informed when I, in

a moment of great enthusiasm, tried to join the Bahai Administration.

In fact, since I have tried to live according to the teachings of the Great Masters, Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha, my heart has been lighter and happier, and I have—I am quite sure—led a more useful life than before contacting them.

As for the *Philosophy of Fear*—the fruits of which the world is witnessing in the horrible War that now rages—there can be no place for this most destructive of all forces in *any* religious movement. If the Bahais' idea of keeping their Cause clean and pure is to use Voodoo methods and shun the sinners of the world, for fear of contamination, it might be well for them all—no matter how exalted they have become—to go back to the First Source of their religion and read again and again the words of the Masters.

For in no single instance can I find any such threats against a so-called sinner—which seems to be the title bestowed upon someone who does not agree with them—in these teachings. Mind, I'm not speaking of things *written by others* than the Masters.

Religious vanity, the temptation to aggrandizement, spiritual pride, self-righteousness, the superiority complex, are all likely to be part of the ego, when one feels that *they alone* have any monopoly on the spiritual concept—and that *they alone* have the *right to interpret*, and, if you please, enforce the teachings of this spiritual idea.

We are all limited by our frail human nature. But even if we cannot be Gods we can *emulate* them, and try to be something better than we are. No one can

frighten any intelligent individual into *his* particular way of thinking.

There is only *one path* to spiritual growth:—The path of tolerance and love. Every man, woman and child alive has an inalienable right to seek God according to his or her findings and convictions.

It is my sincere hope that the Bahais will grow into this consciousness, until there is no longer room in their hearts for anything but the tolerance and love that was the keynote of the lives of their great teachers, Baha-O-Llah and his beloved son, Abdul Baha.

* * * * *

Many thanks to your kindness in mailing me a copy of the Bible of Mankind which reached me last evening. I appreciate your generous gift more than I can tell you. I know I shall find it a mine of inspiration for future messages I hope to deliver. It ought to broaden my intellectual and spiritual horizon and quicken my interest in the messages God has given through the prophets of other races.

I was greatly interested in the Quarterly *The Children's Caravan*.

I was amazed to learn of the lawsuit which you and Mrs. Chanler were compelled to face. How preposterous for any group to claim a monopoly on Religion! Truly their suit was the negative of all they pretended to teach.

* * * * *

My heart rejoices that justice has been done in the work of Baha'u'llah of which you are both such loving representatives.

You were sweet to let me hear at once—but my heart

knew it, Peace came like the ringing of a bell and I said—"The decision has been given and Justice has triumphed over lust and greed!"

* * * * *

I want to congratulate you because of your wonderful and well-directed opportunity regarding the Bab, Baha-U-Llah and Abdul Baha—and because of the wonderful *Bible* that you have given the world. I have read all the Bible carefully. I was reading it to a man (organist) nearly blind, who was deeply interested. We rejoiced over the wisdom of your just judge. And to-day, the paper came from you—and I am glad for you and with you. When the man afflicted with blindness, comes to me again, the news will make him rejoice.

* * * * *

This is all tommy rot. Jealousy is at the bottom of it. Ahmad Sohrab is not spiritually mature or he would never have caused friction. This is the Day of Judgment, heed ye foolish people, you are gloating now, the time is short, instead of co-operating you are tearing down. Shame on you all. Baha'u'llah suffered martyrdom to spread this message and you want to rest on your laurels. Pettiness, wake up and grow up.

* * * * *

Congratulations and many thanks for sending us the Press Comments on your success in the matter on the Decision of the Supreme Court against the National Spiritual Assembly.

This decision could not have been otherwise, else it would be an evidence that there was no sanity left in the world.

All success to you both and again with many thanks

for helping to free the Bahai Religion from its arch enemies, the Bahai organization.

* * * * *

In one of your articles you said something about being willing to do "for a Persian Cause" what you would not do "for an American Corporation." . . .

In your June article on The Name I found the closest approach to My thinking I have met for some time, yet I wish you had developed the subject matter. . . .

We have reached the final division in your Bible of Mankind. I read aloud to . . . as opportunity permits. We are enjoying the Bahai section very much. I blame Bahais for hiding their light under a bushel. In the movement in Australia I found the writings closely guarded, reserved for initiates only, instead of being broadcast so that he who runs may read. I am confiding this to you, because you and Julie Chanler have done so much to break down the barriers and get the message through to the world. I bless you for what you have done and I trust you will go on to complete the good work to which you have put your hand.

* * * * *

I want to thank you for sending me the magazines and newspaper items in regard to the case. I shall have to ask you to stop sending the magazines. . . . I assure you that not one copy of your magazine has gone into the waste-basket and I am very glad to know your side—it seems to be what Abdul Baha taught—yet He also said we must be obedient, and if we do obey the majority patiently, everything would be made right in time.

* * * * *

God works in mysterious ways, His wonders to perform.

And so you see, Ahmad, you were trained and prepared by Abdul Baha to vindicate the Truth of the Bahai message.

All must come under the Banner of Truth, Righteousness, Justice and Unity; all nations into one family of God. The Master warned us, if Bahais, so-called, did not fulfill the teachings of Unity, Justice, Peace and severance from all save God they would fail; others would arise, who would carry on,—so the Day of Revealing and Restitution is at hand. Only praise God you were chosen to vindicate the Truth. It was a shock and a revelation to me to find how the Cause had been misunderstood and dominated, until the vision was lost sight of. But the Cause is not lost.

* * * * *

Please discontinue sending me your magazine *New History*. Thank you!

* * * * *

My heartiest congratulations to you both upon the decision of the Supreme Court. You have nobly served the Cause of freedom of worship and the Cause of freedom of investigation and expression.

* * * * *

The mighty Excalibur has again been unsheathed, and consigned to the dark shades of Erebus at least one petty, selfish and hypocritical ego where inanely it now dazedly wanders about "unwept, unhonored and unsung." *Sela*. I tender both you and Mrs. Chanler my heartfelt congratulations for your valorous and successful fight over those who would strain at a gnat

as if it were a camel trying to throw into discard all fraternal and humanitarian principles not according with their peculiar whimsical ideas.

* * * * *

Please know that I am more than mildly interested in the Bahai movement. I do not know enough of its origin and prestige to fight for it as you are doing, but from my meager knowledge of world religions, I consider your own as the most fitting to human needs, extant today. Furthermore, I believe that transgression of the tenets of your faith is what has brought the world into its present horrible alternatives and actions. . . . In method also you are doing much to work out its problems in human progress. . . . I wish we might have a branch of your faith here, and believe the same could easily be organized.

* * * * *

Thank you for placing my name on your subscription list. I received your last two issues and today the June issue, just when I had begun to think you had forgotten, so thank you again.

I can only say I echo John Haynes Holmes and congratulate you and Julie Chanler (lovely name) on your victory. You know it's queer the answers I received to my inquiries about all this, as if I were a child and broaching something taboo. I am certain you will win the suit when it comes up before the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court.

Also I want to express my admiration of the next to the last paragraph in this issue, the English is exquisite poetry fit to express your feelings of the Most Holy Name.

* * * * *

Spoke to a small Bahai group in . . . 2 weeks ago. Congratulations on your victory over the orthodox.

* * * * *

Months ago when I was in San Francisco I met a Bahai, not one of your friends, I regret to state. She gave me your address, I wrote to you and received literature from you. Thanks, and please pardon the long delay, I intended to write to you before this.

I first learned about the controversy between "New History" and the Bahai Administration from a Bahai in San Francisco, one not friendly as I said; later, after receiving New History, October, 1940, I learned about your case, and immediately favored you, for I am an Independent myself, and I am most friendly toward you and all other Independents who affirm their Divine right to disregard "authorities" and carry on their own Spiritual Work in their own way. I wish you all success, I hope you have been or will be victorious. I hope that you and Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler have won or will win the right to give to the world the Bahai Teachings and the right to use the name Bahai.

I have read your magnificent paper "My Faith" and find myself in accord with you. . . .

I have met and known many teachers and "so-called" teachers. I have had many spiritual adventures in my Quest for Truth. I feel that I know you and it affords me joy. I hope to hear from you.

* * * * *

Kindly do not send any longer your publication "New History" to me. My husband and I regret so very much the course that you have taken and hope from the depth of our hearts you may not stay in it much

longer but come back to us very soon. The Guardian is your true brother and will help you, not hinder you.

* * * * *

The one thing in particular that is forbidden among the followers of Baha'u'llah is *contention*. If those who claim to follow His teachings engage in continual contention, then they are not His followers, but fakers. As long as humans cultivate the spirit of a mad dog there cannot be any unity among the human race. To strive and contend in the name of a religion, even the Bahai religion, will not exonerate anyone from this crime. I will say that your little magazine does some good teaching work, but why not let the personal disagreement drop into the background.

* * * * *

As far as the written word is concerned the Bahai Religion is complete. The mass of humanity will not have a true comprehension of much of that which has been revealed, for centuries yet to come. But it is necessary to promulgate all those parts of our teaching which can be understood by the mass of the people of the world. And to accomplish this great task we must discover the lowest common denominator of ordinary human intelligence. And that is quite low indeed. The organized Bahais, with the help of Shoghi Effendi, are doing just that—dealing with the lowest common denominator of understanding in the Bahai religion. When you undertake to teach a large number, it is certainly practical to offer only that which the greatest number of souls can follow and comprehend. Such being the case, the more advanced souls should not complain that the curriculum is not up to the standard

of their particular intelligence. The greater a soul's understanding the less need he will have for any human aid as regards the knowledge of spiritual things. . . .

The person of mystic knowledge is vastly impatient with the stock variety of human intelligence because he knows that it is only a stupid squirrel spinning around in its exercise-cage and then bragging about how great a distance it has traveled. This is a perfect simile of the world of nature-mind. Most of the things about which it thinks have no importance and really lead nowhere—except in an endless circle. Now just as the mystic mind is hostile to the operations of the earth-bound minds, so they are hostile to the condition of the mystic; they cannot understand anything of that world and therefore disapprove of everything related to it.

At the time that Christ questioned His followers as to what they thought about Him, Peter was the only one who said that he knew that Christ was the Son of the living God. Christ thereupon honored Peter above all the others, saying, "Blessed art thou, for flesh and blood have not revealed this to you." In other words, this kind of understanding could not be conveyed from one man to another, it was given by the Spirit of God to a man who was fit to receive it.

Long, long ago I read a little story titled, "In the Country of the Blind the One-Eyed Man is King." The setting of this story was in the Andes mountains in South America . . . I wish you would ask some of the literary searchers to hunt this up for you as it is really quite a little classic story and well worth reading. I am sure you can get something that you can use from it. The author certainly understood human nature.

That One-Eyed Man was very badly treated by the blind folks. They said he was a nut and only the removal of his one eye could bring about a cure.

* * * * *

It is not that we have failed to think of you often that we have not written to you or seen you for some time, but it is that our work is successfully demanding here and our visits to the city hurried and infrequent. Yet we have followed with interest and joy the latest adventure of New History and join in fervent thanksgiving with you for a taste of righteousness from the letter of the law.

* * * * *

I have long intended to write you congratulations on your victory for free speech, and the open mind. . . .
Hearty greetings to you all.

* * * * *

Please remove our names from your mailing list. The magazines have been destroyed without opening ever since they have been coming.

* * * * *

One of the most important points in the teachings of Baha'u'llah is the reference to the fact that the humans have always been unwilling to *think and understand for themselves*. This is by far one of the really vital things in the Cause, and when an organization made up of earthly minded souls comes into existence and seeks to destroy and eliminate this God-given privilege of every man—that is, to *see with their own eyes, hear with their own ears, and understand with their own minds*, then naught but evil can follow their efforts.

The human race can never be led into the Kingdom of Heaven unless and until they gain a certain understanding of the universal divine spirit by themselves. And to accomplish this important matter they must first learn to do their *own thinking and understanding*. Everything in the teachings of Baha'u'llah points to and leads to this necessary power of the human soul—to *understand for himself and not blindly follow the dictates of human leaders*. . . .

Baha'u'llah did not encourage His followers to contend with each other in courts, or to curse one another or that a small handful should strive to prevent all the others from making use of their own reasoning powers. This idea is only a repetition of methods and systems that have been a curse to mankind throughout the ages past. This does not belong to the Cause of Baha'u'llah! Nay! Nay! . . . Let us beware that this enemy does not destroy the good that Baha'u'llah has brought to the people of the world today.

“Verily, God hath made it incumbent upon every soul to deliver His Cause, according to his ability. Thus hath the command been recorded by the Finger of Might and Power upon the Tablet of Majesty and Greatness.”—Baha'u'llah.

Who shall deprive me of this right and privilege?

* * * * *

All the suffering you endured . . . so long ago was too much for you. But it had to be, and belongs to the crucible of tests in the life of every chosen one to be graced with honors from on high—not the honors that you now have—but the everlasting honors which I hope you will obtain.

I hope that nothing too serious has already happened through your attitude toward the National Spiritual Assembly that could not be rectified . . . It is of course a very serious thing to differ with the Guardian. If there were something radically wrong with the National Spiritual Assembly the Guardian would know it and would correct it. He would not let it stand.

At any rate, it is forbidden in the teachings to feel offended, that is to say, you must not let it be known that you are offended; let God alone know it, and God will be your Advocate. You have the power to transform your sentiments toward the National Spiritual Assembly—there is a point of mystery in our teachings that you have never yet seen, and that is the cause of our differences.

What excuse will you make in the other world when the Judge will ask you, why you did not believe that the National Spiritual Assembly should be obeyed? Your love for Abdul Baha will help you nothing after your making a break in the Cause which is about the last thing you should have done and which now makes it very hard for the 4,000 believers in this country, and very hard for the National Spiritual Assembly and very hard for Shoghi Effendi. Even here in . . ., the non-believers are telling us that a division and split had come into our Cause and that this Cause was therefore not the truth. The Minister of the Christian Church here has received your literature from a Minister of another church. Do you want this damage to the Cause? In the end you will regret having taken so much vengeance on the National Spiritual Assembly.

Do you not read and study the Testament of Abdul Baha? Everything is so clear there. For a believer like

you to differ with Shoghi Effendi is a great sin, an unpardonable sin; therefore turn to God to help you in the rectification of this sin. He will help you if you pray for it, *but do it before it is too late.*

* * * * *

What would be the price for New History for year 1941?

I would especially like to have copies of it beginning with March of this year and back numbers if possible. . . .

I see that the Bahais here in . . . are all split up (I am not a Bahai but am interested in all faiths). *It seems that there is some dissension among the Bahais here but I do not know the reason. . . .*

* * * * *

Some of the Bahai followers have on occasions told me that I had no right whatever to do any thinking for myself; that the National Spiritual Assembly would do all this for me. But as I remarked before, this idea is the very essence of hell and damnation as far as I am concerned and to bow down to such rot would be worse than death, a thousand times. How can a group of animalistic bodies and brains be a guide to any soul living in the kingdom. Why do they seek to take the place of God, and, furthermore what right have they to be greater than God, for such seemingly is their claim and desire?

* * * * *

To a certain extent you are justified in feeling the way you do. Being spiritual-minded you naturally think that the rank and file of the people should become the same way. But this is entirely beyond their power, the

animal propensities have full dominion over most of them. Even among the Bahai leaders of this time you find the main concern is simply gold and physical well being. They are not to be blamed over much because they do not know any better. They understand the work of organizing or gathering together in a crowd but the purpose for which they organize is a secondary concern with most of them. The average human has a mad desire to follow a human leader, Shoghi taking the place of a priest with many of them. Baha-O-Llah wrote often that one of the greatest failures with the human creatures was that they would not think for themselves. It is thus that we find the average Bahai follower today. . . .

Conditions are just as you have written in your magazine and some of the things that the Bahai leaders are doing are quite offensive to any person of real comprehension, but I would not venture to oppose or offend them. . . .

Shoghi is a human the same as the rest of us. . . . You must also consider that most of his impressions come to him from people who for various reasons color their communications to him and give their own particular slants and ideas. In other words, he is working under great difficulties and is able to see things only in part. . . .

Just as you write, the hodge-podge of stuff that is now given them to study is more or less clap-trap as far as the teachings of Baha-O-Llah are concerned and personally I consider it to be a lot of rot harmful to the mind of any soul. . . . As you are a free lance, it is possible for you to present the higher viewpoint of the teachings and I am sure this is just what you are

attempting to accomplish. The real acceptance of the Bahai spirit makes any soul a little sun or centre of power and these are the ones who will save the day in the end.

I really think that the vast verbosity in this so-called teaching of the Bahais originally came from legal profession in the ranks of the followers—I know some of them!!! They are always witch hunting and looking for some one to bounce out of the gathering.

* * * * *

If you confine your work to the purely spiritual phase of the Bahai teachings you can have a good effect but to try to make them (the Bahais) believe that they have no right to be organized is a waste of time. They certainly are now organized and strongly so, and will stand because it is in the nature of the earthly people to be organized.

* * * * *

I have been among the organized Bahais enough to know very well that a large number have their fingers crossed, even while associating in the ranks. Their God is not always the Bahai God.

* * * * *

I read with the greatest interest in the August issue of THE NEW HISTORY MAGAZINE the details of the decision, in your favor, of the Appellate Court against the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the U. S. and Canada.

Again I congratulate you both on your triumph over the organized Baha'is in their attempts to restrain the followers of the Baha'i Religion from practicing their

beliefs, except through the channel of the organization of the Spiritual Assembly.

You have both rendered a great and lasting service to mankind, the effects of which will become more apparent as time passes.

Do not permit the attempts of Shoghi Effendi to black magic you (as recounted on Page 12 of the September issue of the NEW HISTORY Magazine), or affect you in the least. Such language, as he uses, belongs to the bigots of the dark ages, and not to the teachings of Baha'o'llah and Abdul Baha.

* * * * *

It will give me a sense of real spiritual exaltation to be included in your list of the faithful. Seldom indeed have I encountered an occasion on which I would be so delighted to stand up and be counted as in this courageous movement inaugurated by Mirza Sohrab and yourself for the counteracting of the forces of disruption and degeneracy that has been set in motion, through a long term of years, against a noble movement, by the vain and stupid misconduct of a few misguided souls, who seem to have completely missed or forgotten the essential tenets of the Bahai Message.

I regard Sohrab's articles in New History as masterpieces of restrained but incisive arguments. They contain phrases that illumine their subjects like a flash of lightening. That a man not born to the English tongue should have produced such gems of English literature is to me nothing short of a miracle. Such articles constitute a strong confirmation of the Faith, proving that the Bahai Cause is under the special protection of the Supreme Concurrence.

Abdul Baha still lives!

* * * * *

Kindly refrain from sending your magazine "New History" and other publications to my mother. It would be better to use your postage on some one who appreciates your point of view. We do not.

* * * * *

I have had the opportunity to read several back numbers of New History, and I am so pleased to find such a marvelous magazine is in existence. In my opinion this publication will certainly establish the wonderful cause of Baha-O-Llah, firmly in the Western Hemisphere.

* * * * *

Please send with all possible haste your free literature to . . . I have had a long time with these Bahais. Like myself they have been very unhappy and bewildered in this beautiful cause and like myself they believe that you are the one who will lead us back to the teachings. . . . The world needs these teachings now, and I think that it is almost a crime that they are not widely known and correctly interpreted.

* * * * *

The literature that you promised me has just this minute arrived, and I cannot wait a second in sitting down to the typewriter and thanking you for same.

I cannot begin to tell you how happy I am. I have studied this cause for three years, and last March under pressure, I joined the Bahai Organization. But I have never been satisfied. In April, I attempted to break away and join the . . ., but this so disturbed my teachers, who had worked so hard and so lovingly with me that I did not do it. I knew too, that it would be wrong to join the . . . when I was so in love with the teachings of Abdul Baha and Baha-O-Llah. All I could

do was to simply "sit tight" and hope that I could somehow persuade my instructors and other Bahai friends to come around to my way of thinking, which seemed like an impossibility. If ever a person was unhappy and miserable, it was I.

Now that I have joined your New History Society, I feel as if I have come home after wandering in desolate and foreign lands. To be truthful with you, I have concealed the fact that I was a Bahai—yes I have been ashamed of it, but **NOW I AM PROUD** and so, so happy. Everything is going to come out all right now, I know it!

Now I am going to work for the Bahai Cause with all my heart. I am so pleased that you are a Pacifist. So am I!

* * * * *

Baha'u'llah explains in the *Ighan* that the worst single shortcoming that the human creatures have is: "That they will not try to understand things for themselves." Always they appoint some human creature to do *all their thinking for them*. Now I ask you, friends, are the organized Baha'is of America doing anything to help their followers to overcome this greatest of all handicaps? It seems they are doing just the opposite! My wish is to point out practices that are highly injurious to the seeking souls. The pure spiritual teachings of Baha'u'llah and Abdul Baha have simply gone *to pot* and been replaced by a system somewhat like unto dirty politics.

I have good will towards Shoghi as a fellow follower of the teachings of Baha'u'llah, but the man is young, immature and certainly liable to mistakes. He will overcome all this in time. God is a spirit and unless

we make every effort to get in touch with this Spirit—then we can never attain to a conscious realization of the nature of it. After a soul has attuned himself to the divine spirit, he comes under its guidance, which of course appears in the mind. Baha'u'llah writes in the *Ighan* that to reach to the understanding of the Spirit of God is a *step of the soul*, and is not a step of the body. Unless one will strive for the *Goal* which Baha'u'llah has marked out for us, we are just creatures running along the shores of a salty lake, getting no place and doing no act except running.

I write to so-called Baha'is and make every effort to point out the really worthwhile features in the teachings, but they all turn their backs upon it. The illuminated man who taught me said that if I were able to bring one single soul into the Kingdom, I will have accomplished the greatest deed possible in this life.

The organized Baha'is have put a checkrein on all their membership, and as far as I can perceive will not tolerate any spirituality. Prayer is a thing of the past, looked upon as something not needed or wanted. Two features only are enlarged, the worship of Shoghi and the giving of all their money to the Cause. The brains of most of the leaders simply boil if you venture to travel the spiritual pathway contrary to their desire. I realize that this is just a natural shortcoming of the natural man, a manifestation of the *carnal mind*, and we cannot place much blame on them.

I believe that the organized aspect should continue because it is suitable to a *certain type of mentality*, but I also believe that there should be an unrestricted body of the teachings open to a *much more advanced type of minds*. I believe that you are able to carry this along.

Why should anyone wish to curse and condemn those who promote the teachings of God! Surely this could be only the deeds of black hearts. Anyhow, those who serve God do not need the approbation of the *clay pieces of the world*. Why should they? The rewards for serving God, come from God, as He has made available the material means to carry on his work. Continue in this with undaunted courage. If God is with you who is able to stand against you?

* * * * *

Quite recently, my husband and I became interested in the teachings of Baha'U'Llah.

Two months ago we moved from . . . to . . . and here we found a group of people who meet to study these Teachings. At the same time we heard of a division taking place among those who are in authority in the United States.

We were informed that we could receive from you papers on the recent trial which would clarify the situation for us, for while interested in the teachings, we hesitate to tie ourselves to a school or group without knowing just what the general set-up happens to be.

We would be most grateful for any information which you could send us.

* * * * *

Bahai growth is strictly an inward process. It takes place within the mind. . . . There is much in Abdul Baha's teachings that is entirely ignored by the present followers. He has written that until one perfects himself in a high degree, he will not be able to reveal to others, how they may begin to perfect their own natures . . . It takes more than the casual reading of Bahai

writings to be a real Bahai. . . . Have you ever read the *Surat-ul-Hykal*? It tells you in that book that many of the attained ones walk the earth and "their number is known only to God." Shoghi hopes to locate some of them but he could not recognize them even when they stood before him?

* * * * *

Your September issue of *New History* is very good indeed. Since the advent of Shoghi, the Bahai teachings have been allowed to descend to a low level—that is, as far as the spiritual teachings are concerned. This is the main reason that I can find but little in common with the membership. I surely hope that you will bring back the teachings of Abdul Baha so that they will not be entirely lost to view.

The talk is always about a *world order*, but how can a world order be established if the Bahais will not obey the teachings of Abdul Baha and Baha'u'llah? If they allow these teachings to entirely die out of their minds they will go from bad to worse. As you have said, they are training their minds to behold enemies on every hand; in other words using a very harmful line of thought which can only poison their minds. I can no longer find many Bahai followers with whom I can enjoy talking, because they do not have much interest in the original teachings and in many cases are not very familiar with them.

Does the influence of Shoghi help them to look upon their fellowmen with kindness and friendliness? It certainly does not appear so to me. A Bahai who looks out upon the world of men with suspicion certainly is a very poor grade of a Bahai. Abdul Baha has had nothing to do with this attitude. I am sure, it is not

conveyed in His teachings. Certainly there is something radically wrong at this time. Also must all followers stop thinking and understanding for themselves—they have been so commanded by the present order. Why is this so?

Far be it from me to quarrel with anyone because of a difference of opinion, but I certainly will not allow anyone to prevent me from thinking for myself, seeing for myself and understanding for myself. Life would not be worth living if this came to pass. And really I consider that all others believe the same thing deep down in their hearts.

The aim of the Bahai Cause is to bring about the unity of all mankind. God the Father, revealed by His chosen teacher, Baha'u'llah, has given us all the information that we can possibly make use of in this day. Let us begin to use some of the most important of this great teaching. The most vital is certainly to keep in mind that humanity is all one family, regardless of the defects which may appear in the human creature. Not one of them is our *ENEMY*. There are plenty of humans who have gross defects, all will admit, but we must take it for granted that this is so because they do not know or understand any better. The punishment for wrong doing is absolutely certain to follow misdeeds, and surely no man likes to suffer. The Bahai teachings tell us that after we find our way into the Kingdom we will be free from error and affliction. This is the only condition wherein the human creature may find or have any peace, either on the earth or afterwards.

"The training of the people of the country of thought . . ." Baha'u'llah has written in the "Words of

Wisdom"—old *Hidden Words* and *Seven Valleys*! People seldom consider that they are creatures of thought and do not try to discipline their thinking activity; just allow it to run wild without any attempt at direction and pay the penalty for all which is not good. Pure thoughts keep us in contact with the higher planes, and then the spiritual forces are always near at hand to assist us; then they are able to work through us. But when we are dominated by negative thoughts, the forces of the higher planes cannot operate through us and we can get no help from them. The only difference between the spiritual masters and the ordinary person is that the spiritual masters or divine servants have attained the power to direct their thoughts and hold them within the field to which Baha'u'llah has directed all of us. Abdul Baha said that His mind was always in a state of prayer. This is the key. If we wish to gain first hand knowledge of this state, then, we likewise must pray until our defective human consciousness can rise above the world of nature in which nearly all are held prisoners. When we really make an effort, someone will contact us, who really knows and understands this matter. This is explained in the Bahai teachings and can be readily found by all. This is the master key. The rest is only trimmings.

* * * * *

The November 1941 issue of *New History* is Okay. Any and all Bahai ideas will act as a leaven in the world of thought, and as God has commanded that each soul promulgate these teachings to the best of his ability, I am sure that no collection of common humans can prevent us in this work. No one can successfully corrupt the teachings, because they are all in print and

broadcast to the world. Some day the present leaders will be replaced by spiritually evolved people and then the Cause will really expand as it should.

* * * * *

The *real teacher* of any soul is the divine spirit—holy spirit, or spirit of God. Call it what you will, it is the same. Until one has made a contact with this spirit, he is unable to really comprehend spiritual subjects of any kind. There is as wide a difference between material-minded people and the spiritual-minded type, as between darkness and light. The natural forces of the material-minded person are negative, while the forces of the spiritually enlightened soul are positive. Let me offer a simile easily understood. If one grasp a soft sponge in his hand and submerge it in a basin of water, it cannot absorb its full capacity of liquid as long as it is held in a contracted condition. But as soon as the pressure of the hand is relaxed, it immediately absorbs its full capacity of water. Now, you and I and all the rest are like unto this sponge; we are all submerged in an ocean of spirit which has always existed. Some, like the whale swimming in the sea, are continually asking: "Where is this ocean they talk about so much?" Until some of this water (spirit) penetrates into our consciousness, we remain in ignorance of its existence.

After a soul reaches the highest roadway he does not have much interest in the rag-bag concerns of souls still living in that which Baha'u'llah termed *the primary existence*. After a soul has learned to absorb this "water of spiritual life" he ceases to be concerned over the quarrels of those who do not know about the *spiritual ocean*, and do not wish to know.

When you say *Baha'i*, it really does not have any par-

ticular meaning as regards the station of any soul. I meet Christians who are as highly advanced as any *Bahai could be*. They have established themselves firmly on the true pathway. The Cause of God today is in the hands of earthly minded men and women and for this reason they must be bound and ruled by an earth-like organization—they are entirely unfit for anything else. . . .

One word of these new teachings of God has more value to the human race than all that has gone before, and they will lead humanity to maturity. Men will master the divine art of prayer and meditation, pass through a door within themselves and behold the Kingdom of God about them. Once the spirit is able to enter the reality of any soul, they have the power to direct it where they desire. Then, they are servants, and the ones Baha'u'llah writes about in the Surat-ul-Hyakal. The modern Baha'is dislike these people very much, because a divine servant is the killer of the human ego; it cannot function while exposed to positive spiritual power. As long as you promote the religion of Baha'u'llah, nothing can stop you.

* * * * *

Jerusalem, Palestine

Sept. 7, 1941

For three years I had the pleasure and the honour to share the work of the "New History Society." At the time being I am enjoying the great privilege of defending its founders against attacks. The 2 clippings enclosed originate from the only newspaper in this country that is being printed in English. You may believe me that my reply was written more fully and

BAHA'I VERSUS BAHA'I

Supreme Court in N.Y. Dismisses Suit

HAIFA — A suit brought by the organized Bahais in the U.S.A. against a Baha'i group in New York calling itself the New History Society was dismissed by the Supreme Court in New York recently.

The organized Baha'i sect complained that the unorganized Bahais were giving the erroneous impression that they were authoritative Bahais by conducting — what purported to be Baha'i meetings, lectures, classes and social gatherings. They also solicited contributions through the use of the name of Baha'i and listed the Baha'i Bookshop in the telephone directory over the name of the Baha'i Centre which is the office and bookshop of the organized Bahais.

The Court held that "the complaint fails to state a good cause of action. The plaintiffs have no right to a monopoly of the name of a religion." The ruling then dealt in detail with the complaints brought against the New History Society and pointed out that the defendants had the absolute right to practice Bahaism.

With this ruling, the New History Movement has launched an intensive propaganda campaign both in the United States and abroad.

Concord and Harmony

The Central seat of the organized Baha'i is Haifa, the home of Shoghi Effendi, who is the recognized "Guardian of the Baha'i Faith" and a direct descendant (grandson) of the founder of the religion, the sage Baha'u'llah who died in Acre in 1892. In the words of Shoghi Effendi, "the Revelation proclaimed by Baha'u'llah, his followers believe, is divine in origin, all-embracing in scope, broad in its outlook, scientific in its method, humanitar-

ian in its principles and dynamic in the influence it exerts on the hearts and minds of men. The Baha'i Faith recognizes the unity of God and of His Prophets, upholds the principle of an unfettered search after the truth, condemns all forms of superstition and prejudice, teaches that the fundamental purpose of religion is to promote concord and harmony, that it must go hand-in-hand with science and that it constitutes the sole and ultimate basis of a peaceful, an ordered and progressive society."

Asked about the "New History Movement" Shoghi Effendi informed *The Palestine Post* that the "Movement" was started by a Persian named Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, supported by funds provided by Mrs Julie Chanler of New York. The main difference between Sohrab and the Bahais was rooted in a conflict with the Baha'i administration and, according to Shoghi Effendi, the "Movement" had no support in the U.S.A. except that of Mrs Chanler and a few isolated followers.

From Cook to Divine

The career of Sohrab, who is about fifty years old, was described as that of an ambitious self-made man. He was formerly a servant of Shoghi Effendi's uncle in Port Said, and was later sent to America as the cook of Mirza Abu Fazl, one of the Baha'i teachers. Later he went to Hollywood, where he wrote cinema scenarios.

According to Shoghi Effendi, the New History Movement, started by Sohrab, abused the Baha'i name, and to stop this, the suit was brought against him and Mrs Chanler.

The dismissal of the suit by the Court, it was stated, has been appealed.

NEW HISTORY SOCIETY

To the Editor of The Palestine Post

Sir, - Please permit us to add somewhat to your information on the 'New History Society' in New York referred to in your issue of August 22, under the heading 'Bahai vs. Bahai', in which the amazing statement was made that this movement had 'no support in the U.S.A. except Mrs. Chanler and a few isolated followers'.

Anyone who knows the work of this Society, as we, the undersigned, who frequently heard the Society's speakers at the crowded 'Caravan Hall', will know that this statement is inaccurate. Among these speakers have been some of the most prominent personalities of American religious, scientific and political life. Among lecturers you could have heard there were Albert Einstein, Norman Thomas, a former German M.P., Gerhard Seger, who escaped from a German concentration camp, and John O'Neill, scientific editor of the 'Herald-Tribune'.

During the past ten years the 'New History Society' has gained a world-wide reputation as a forum open to all working for the betterment of human relationships. It has friends and followers all over the world.

The biographical data on the founder of the Society, Mirza Ahmed Sohrab, is likewise inaccurate and the description 'From Cook to Divine' is accurate concerning neither his origins nor his career. Sohrab came of an aristocratic Bahai family in Persia, and graduated at the Imperial University in Teheran. In 1908 he was sent to Washington as interpreter to Mirza Abdul Fazi by the Bahai leader, Abdul Baha, and it is not particularly relevant whether he also cooked for him or not. Later Sohrab served for some time as Secretary to the Minister at the Persian Legation in Washington. From 1912 to 1918 he was closely associated with Abdul Baha and became a member of his household at Acre.

In 1929 Sohrab founded the 'New History Society' with the support of Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler and Mr. Chanler, a great-grandson of John Jacob Astor and former Lieut-Governor of the State of New York.

The importance of Sohrab as a religious thinker is fully appreciated in the U.S.A. by such outstanding religious leaders of Christian, Jewish and Moslem communities as the Rev. Eliot White, Rabbi Louis I. Newman and Dr. Edward J. Jurji, who gave him their support for his work 'The Bible of Mankind'.

Yours etc.

Mrs. Erna Straus
H. W. Loewenthal

Jerusalem Sept 2

Reply by Mrs. Erna Straus and Mr. H. W. Loewenthal to article dated August 22, 1941, in 'Palestine Post.'

detailed. The editor, however, shortened it. Maybe this was a necessity. . . .

Next month I shall be speaking on the "Bible of Mankind" in the best bookshop of the city.

Erna Straus.

* * * * *

I have received your magazine and the article published in Palestine Post. It is astonishing. The article *stupefied me and stopped my brain from thinking*, my heart from breathing. I was paralyzed. I could not believe my eyes in reading such false statements! . . .

The statement that Shoghi Effendi made to the Palestine Post regarding Ahmad Sohrab is not based on his knowledge. I am sure of that; for he, by his own free will, will never stoop to make such a statement, that The New History Society has no support. . . .

I believe that Shoghi Effendi is not told the truth. I do not believe that Shoghi Effendi will do anything contrary to the teachings of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha. . . .

The Guardian does not know the true facts and therefore he believes in what is being written to him by the National Spiritual Assembly. He should come to America; that is, if they let him out and do not keep him a prisoner. Then he can see and hear everything with his own eyes and ears. So far as I am concerned I am ready to offer up my life to Baha-O-Llah, Abdul Baha and Shoghi Effendi, and I am sorry that he puts so much confidence in the National Spiritual Assembly. . . .

I have known Sohrab for many years and I have found him trustworthy, honest. If Mrs. Julie Chanler has seen in Sohrab the good that others were blind to;

and if she, being spiritual and full of love for the Cause, discovered the same qualities in him—then blessed be the pure in heart, for they shall inherit the kingdom. . . .

Well, maybe, the members of the National Spiritual Assembly will become the substitutes for Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha and in time, if possible, *they will push out the Guardian. It seems the Cause is in danger. The newcomers do not realize this, for they have not lived in the glorious days of the Master. The old believers are discarded, in order that they may not inform the new ones.*

* * * * *

Your magazine and writings are instructive and interesting to an unbiased mind. I was saddened to read the Palestine Post and I was dumbfounded at such foolish statements. I know that God would right the wrongs done to his true and sincere servants. He will not forsake those that love him. I put my trust in him. I cannot believe that Shoghi Effendi would stoop to misrepresent and humiliate you. I am sorry to see that the Guardian places such confidence in the National Spiritual Assembly and yet he cannot see that they are undermining him by misinforming him regarding the true facts.

I can clearly see why they instituted this lawsuit. This false propaganda was hatched by the bosses in the National Spiritual Assembly to discredit Shoghi Effendi, in order that the true and well-informed Bahais may rise against him on account of his making such a statement about you. The Guardian is well-informed regarding your services to Abdul Baha. You were with him for many years, serving as secretary and interpre-

ter. You travelled with the Master everywhere. You were with him in America in 1912. You have been his right hand, you travelled with him back to Palestine. Abdul Baha instructed you for his holy Cause. He sent you back to the United States after the first World War and intrusted you with valuable documents for the friends. You have translated a great many of the Tablets. The Guardian knows all this. He knows that you served in the Persian Legation in Washington in 1907-11 and that you served the Cause and still are serving and upholding the Words and the Divine Teachings of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha while the National Spiritual Assembly are trying hard to turn the Bahais against him, so that they may blame him with their false propaganda. That is how they are making an effort to undermine the Guardian; to make it look as though he is not trustworthy; so that they grab the Cause and credit it to themselves.

The Guardian will never do this; never, never, for he knows your services and activities.

Do not be down-hearted. Soon they will be found out and then they shall be driven away. I trust the Guardian will act before it is too late . . .

Other religions increase in number; they make progress; they spend what they have to promote what they believe to be true; but the Bahais are standing still. Why? The Cause is chained and every one is blocked from entering the field of teaching. Only *through us must you speak*, the National Spiritual Assembly commands. So, we must close our mouths, say nothing and let them corrupt the cause and hinder its promotion.

Now, Sohrab, do not believe that Shoghi Effendi

would make such a statement. If he did, it would be *contrary* to the wishes of the Master who appointed him in his Will and Testament as the Guardian of the Cause and also guardian of every individual believer. He should uphold and protect them impartially and without any favoritism. If he failed in doing this and neglects the rights of one believer, because of slander and calumny, then he has failed to carry out the wishes of the Great Masters.

I still believe the guardian is not guilty.

* * * * *

FOREIGN COMMUNICATIONS

England.

Am so glad your law case is satisfactorily ended—that is *another* *shackle* loosened in the fight against those who want to pin down truth with the limitations of human minds. Truth can only be itself when it is free as the winds to express the divine urge of the moment.

* * * * *

England.

You are doing a great work and I am tremendously pleased by the very satisfactory decision of Justice Louis A. Valente. This constitutes another milestone in the journey to freedom and true civilization; and truly makes *New History*.

I will shortly be submitting to you an article for publication in the monthly, showing how the Unitarians in England ensure freedom of worship while they build and establish churches to worship in. I feel sure it will interest you.

* * * * *

England.

It was excellent ~~that~~ you had so much notice taken of the law case in which you were involved; my own feeling was "there's another bit of dictatorship nipped in the bud." Long may you continue on the road which leads to freedom on every level, but most precious of all is freedom of thought.

* * * * *

England.

I was so pleased to receive the notice of your success in the appeal against the Judge's decision on the Bahai case. This must be final—I should think it has given Horace Holley & Co. a headache. How delighted you must all feel! . . . I'm sending the copy of the Supreme Court's decision to the Bahai Centre in London.

* * * * *

England.

You have gone through an ordeal personally and have emerged victorious through the test which only means you have reached a higher state of initiation. Persecution is not without its compensations, especially *spiritual ones*. I hope you have a long period of smooth waters with a harbor of tranquility ahead.

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Canada.

My congratulations on the outcome of the legal case against The New History Society. The outline of its course, and the origin of the Bahai movement were most interesting, especially as an example of the development among the followers of any great leader.

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Canada.

I am just now in receipt of the April issue of *New History* and learn for the first time of the division in the Bahai ranks. I am very much interested in knowing this, as I can now whole-heartedly express my sympathy for, and participate in your kindly and inspiring movement, knowing that it is broad and liberal and leaves me quite free to also join in other liberal and humanitarian causes.

* * * * *

Australia.

Last week, I received the monthly publication of your society together with printed copy of ruling Justice Louis A. Valente has recorded upon your momentous case at Law, which has such farflung results for people allied to your Cause. Need I, a veritable Bushman far from the seething chiaroscuro of New York, comment upon a verdict so close to your heart?

This would be idle, for my part; but I may at least offer sincere felicitations to those who, with you, have suffered so long torture.

* * * * *

Australia.

Your two recent publications have reached my hand together with reproductions of press cuttings announcing the award of civil justice in favor of Mrs. Chanler and your society.

The decisions are momentous in your New York life and circle of adherents, so that, while I am unable to comment fittingly, I can assure you personally that I esteem the spirit which impels you to resist the impositions of greater organizations upon you and at the

same time find space for "outsiders" like myself in so wide an outer circle of the inhabited world.

* * * * *

Sweden.

You can imagine my joy when I read your news about the jurisdiction of your process with the Bahai Administration.

It is very indicative that, even in this time, when only rough force and falsehood everywhere is winning ground, your case still could find JUSTICE.

I think your efforts in writing so very detailed about the Bahai movement *en grande*, and with your authority, as a man who lived so close to Abdul Baha many years, had its good effect and the Justice could really see and feel WHERE TRUTH is to be found.

The old history is repeating itself always, and after the passing away of the Master, the disciples, in most cases, are tempted to create a NEW CHURCH, and to be themselves the new chosen bishops.

You are surely not one of them, this I felt since I first read your paper and accepted that *New History Society* is not going to start a *new religion* and you not the *bishop* of it.

Freedom is the condition *sine qua non* of Love and also for a true RELIGION, and I feel so well you are the real GUARD of this Freedom and do not try to create new dogmas and fix anything.

* * * * *

Guatemala.

I have received your magazines and I was very surprised to read all these things which happen between The Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United

States of America and Canada and you; it is ridiculous and absurd, because between real, true, sincere and spiritual people, these things never happen; much less taking it to the court. In my humble point of view, all this only proves to me once more the kind of people who call themselves spiritual; and they are not. The Truth and God has nothing to do with all those societies which only exploit the ignorance of the people. There is only One Truth, veracity and verity, and it is not limited by a group nor by any organization or any orders. There is Only One Lord, and One Law. But what most of the societies do, is business and they are based on interest created. They don't do what they say, and they call themselves spiritual, and brothers, only by name, but not in facts. I don't believe in them, only I believe in the Truth, and what I see they do. I say it of any societies, by the fruit you know the tree, by the facts you know the man, so don't worry for what they may say, because if you live a real and true life you are on the way to the Great Truth, and you will help others, without those societies who are only exploiting the *ignorance of the people*. The Truth is in you, the Light is in you too, but you must look into yourself deeply, and you will find it in yourself.

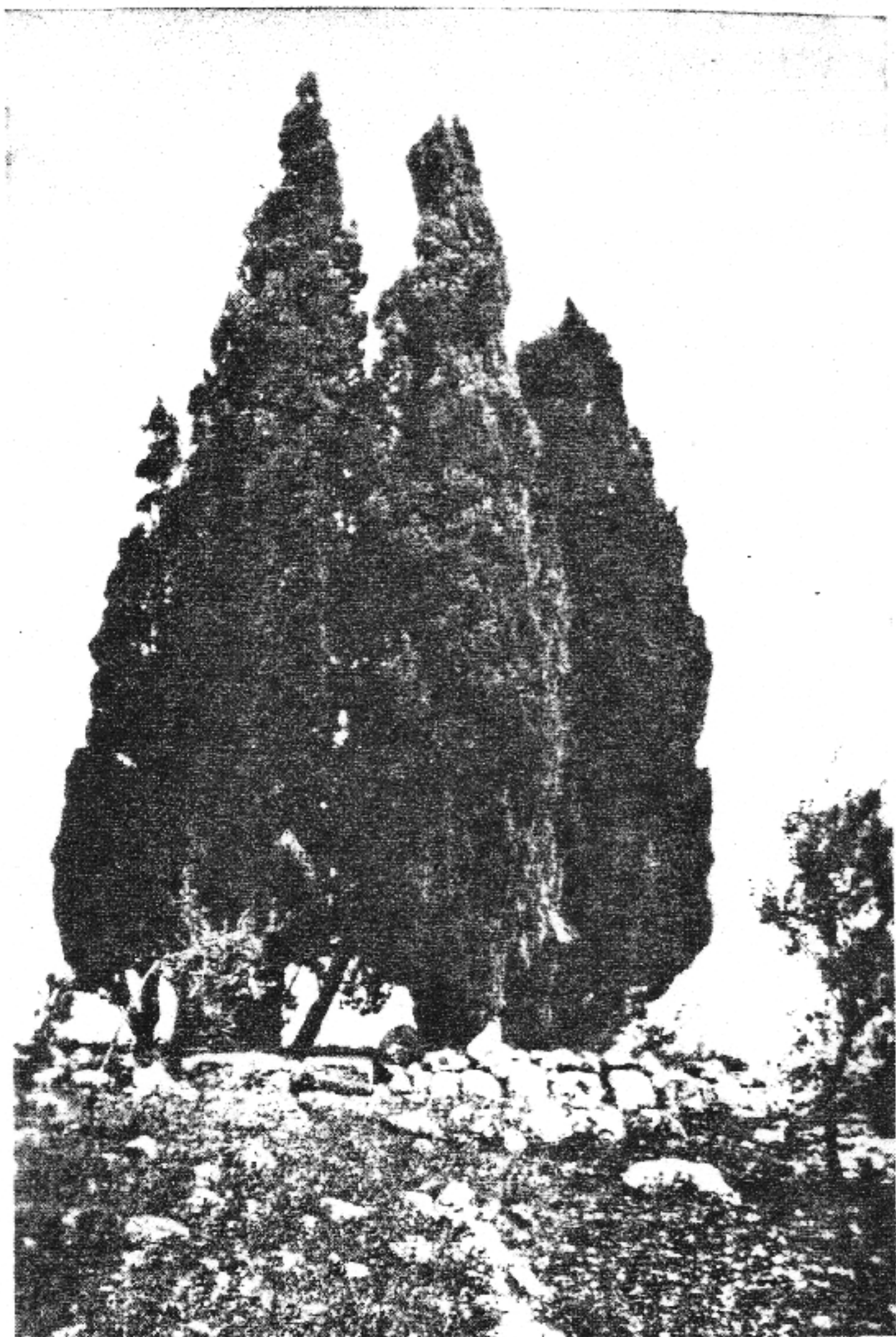
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Haiti.

We note in your last issue of your magazine that you will be willing to remove from your list the names of those who do not wish to appear thereon.

Will you kindly remove our names and we thank you for this favor.

* * * * *



Cluster of cypress trees on the slope of Mount Carmel, in the shade of which some of their great teachings were first given to the world by Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha.

Calabar, Nigeria, West Africa.

I thank God that the Cause through His justice is made free from the thralldom of limited minds in the National Spiritual Assembly and the Supreme Court of New York County decided the case in your favor. May God who is the very Cause of New History take upon Himself all the affairs!

* * * * *

Palestine.

I wanted to answer your kind letter immediately in order to tell you that I feel awfully sorry that your activity—I am admiring so much—got you into trouble, initiated by Bahai Organization. I really cannot understand this. It is evident they do not understand the Cause at all. If they did, they simply could not act like this. But I doubt, they will ever go to court. It would be too ridiculous.

* * * * *

Palestine.

I am watching your discussion with the Bahai Organization with great interest; disagreeable as it may seem to you, it is instructive to the observer. It seems so difficult to mankind to behold great ideas in their genuine purity.

* * * * *

Philippine Islands.

I noticed in one of the *New History* copies, April 1940, an article *Regarding the Trade-mark*. It was of great interest to me. Ever this play of opposites! When a constructive movement is launched upon the world, pushing forward, right beside it—in its wake rather—rises, and wrathfully so, its opposite. . . . In fact, the

cause of Baha-O-Ulah thrives on these opposite stirrings—to a great extent, dont you think? As we say in English: "Persecute a thing if you want it to live."

* * * * *

Tokyo, Japan.

I thank you for the printed sheet which brought the news of your victory in the court. I congratulate you and your colleagues! Indeed, it is said that those days would mean the end of the world when religion would be set for sale! In other words, an age ends and another starts when the spiritual belief is so much degraded that it becomes just a commodity to make profit! I hope, this trade in religion ends, and that a New Era starts, making heaven of this earth. Let us do our duty in the great transformation.

* * * * *

India.

The attitude of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada is deplorable; yet one may pour one's blessings and sympathies on those misled brothers and sisters who are mentioned, no doubt under provocation, as sorcerers, necromancers, etc., in the statement. They will need a great help and prolonged guidance before they can turn back from the path which they are unfortunately treading.

* * * * *

India.

It was with great relief and joy that I read your notice of the outcome of the long controversy. I have waited so far, preferring to wait till the allotted ten (I believe it was ten) days had elapsed and I might have other news from you; but I cannot wait longer to hear. I am

too anxious to express my congratulations for the first verdict, believing they will not trouble you further.

* * * * *

India.

I have been receiving your inspiring magazine, "New History," which is serving as a personal communication from you. I have followed the whole case in which you have had your legitimate triumph. It is a triumph of the Cause of truth and love of service to humanity. Your recognition of the fact that the best service to mankind is the pursuit of establishing permanent peace has given you the courage and the rare tact of attending to your work in the singular way you have been doing. My warmest thanks are due to you for the yeoman's service you are rendering the world and the cause of World Peace.

Allow me to congratulate you and Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler on the unique success you have earned for the independence of religious thought. . . . It is when we can establish such a common culture for the whole of humanity, that there can be unity, peace and bliss. I thank Providence for having given you both the courage and godliness to stand by the real Cause in the right spirit. That is the best spirit that Baha-O-Llah taught us; let us be his faithful followers!

* * * * *

Ajitashram, Lucknow, India
July 23, 1941.

Dear Brother-in-Truth,

I have been a lawyer since 1895. I have argued many an uncommon question in Courts of Law, and have read through many more curious cases in Law Reports.

The "Bahai" injunction matter discussed in the May and June issues of "NEW HISTORY" was, however, uncommonly curious. What induced the Solicitors and lawyers to take up the Plaintiff's cause is difficult to imagine; but an appeal against the decision is quite unthinkable to my mind. Going to law in order to prohibit another from using a sacred name, demonstrates an utter absence of faith in the healing power, the beneficial effects, and the spiritual sanctity of the name. A really religious body should, however, feel overjoyed at the growing popularity, publicity, and use of the name it holds sacred. A reservation of spiritual benefit is irreligion, heresy, apostasy, and a sinful act. And the New York Court has found, as a fact that there was no mercenary motive, no dishonest intent, no idea of causing wrongful loss to Plaintiff in the Defendants' use of the name "Bahai" to denote their propagation of the Bahai faith.

I congratulate you and Mr. and Mrs. Chanler and your lawyers on the bold and noble stand made by them in the Cause of Truth and Freedom of thought and action in matters spiritual or religious.

Yours sincerely,

Ajit Prasada, M.A., LL.B.
Editor: *The Jaina Gazette*
Ex-Judge, Jaora State, C. I.

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**ABDUL BAHA
IN EGYPT**

By
MIRZA AHMAD SOHRAB
Author of "The New Humanity and
"Heart Fantasies"

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Bahais of the United States and Canada.*

THESE RECORDS
OF THE PERFECT LIFE
OF ABDUL BAHA
ARE DEDICATED
TO HIS EVER-PRESENT SPIRIT

FORWARD

*Around the great figures of the Prophets in all ages have been
woven stories and records, often in the remote past clouded by myth
and allegory, which nevertheless, constitute a witness to the light.*

*In this age when the influence of Baha-Ullah and Abdul Baha is
universally felt and their writings are being studied and translated into*

many languages, this intimate diary record should meet with wide response.

Mirza Ahmad Sohrab served for more than eight years as one of the private secretaries and interpreters of Abdul Baha; he accompanied him on his journey throughout the West in 1912 and was with him during the World War. In this diary he has vividly portrayed certain aspects and events in the daily life and surroundings of the "Master" not found elsewhere, thus adding a document of human interest and appeal to the ever expanding literature written around the Bahai Cause.

Through his great love for Abdul Baha, Mirza Ahmad Sorab [sic] has given us a glimpse into that divine life of servitude and sacrifice, whose imperishable traces are written in the history of this age.

PREFACE

Abdul Baha Abbas, a Persian, to whom millions turned as the prophet of International Peace and Brotherhood and who was hailed both in the East and in the West as the teacher of Love and Goodwill among mankind, was one of the outstanding spiritual figures of the 19th and 20th centuries.

His were inspired words, and men of all ranks obeyed him and carried his precepts in their lives, because they realized that here lived among them a godman — as 2000 years ago there lived another godman in the midst of another people and another race.

To the students of the origin and growth of religions, the lives of the founders of those religions have been the sources of the most fruitful and searching studies, and here in the 20th century, we saw with our own eyes a man who embodied in his life and practiced in his daily association with his fellowmen, the highest ideals of truth and beauty; laying the foundation of a Universal Faith to which an ever increasing number of people from every religion, and no religion have subscribed with unflinching loyalty.

Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, also a Persian, lived and traveled with Abdul Baha throughout America, Europe, Egypt and Palestine. As his secretary and interpreter,

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from 1912 to 1919 he was with him during eventful years which included the World War. Thus he became a close observer of the events that transpired around this great teacher of Universal Ideals and recorded daily his most salient remarks, talks and utterances. Besides

this, he translated into English thousands of Abdul Baha's "Tablets" or letters to his followers, scattered in all parts of the Western hemisphere.

Thus the Diary, kept by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, during those eight years, is no other than a compendium of Bahai Ideals, principles, events and stories, interspersed with general reflections and descriptions of the countries through which they traveled. It is a treasury of hopeful things for the sore-footed traveler along the path of spiritual search.

When the Diary was being written, the Manuscript was regularly mailed to Mr. and Mrs. Joseph H. Hannen of Washington, D. C., who faithfully made typewritten copies and forwarded them to all the Bahai Centers throughout the world.

In this manner, for years, extracts and quotations have been circulated and published in all the Bahai literature and books from what has become popularly known as "Ahmad's Diary of Abdul Baha."

At different times in the past years, efforts have been made to publish the Diary in its entirety — so that it may become available not only to Abdul Baha's followers and admirers, but to students of religions and philosophy as well; but the psychological hour had not yet arrived. Praise be to God. these obstacles are at last removed

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and God in His mysterious way has provided the means through the instrumentality of "The New History Foundation" — so that the Diary may be given to the world in a series of uniform volumes.

The present book covers a period of three months — from July 1st to September 30th, 1913. It is hoped that the second volume will be ready for publication at an early date and so, with the help of God, from time to time various volumes will be given out until the whole series is complete.

In the course of writing the Diary, the author often refers to Abdul Baha Abbas as the "Master" or the "Beloved." This title was one of the many given to him by his Father, Baha-Ullah, the founder of the Bahai Movement. "Aga" is the Persian word for the "Master" or "Lord" and by this title, he was known to all the Bahais, up to the year 1892, when Baha-Ullah departed from this life and then, he took to himself the name of "Abdul Baha" — the Servant of God. But to the people outside the Bahai community, he was ever known as "Abbas Effendi."

The author in presenting this Diary to the world in its original form written some twenty years ago hopes that the reader will be able to conjure a picture of Abdul Baha's life and ministrations among the early adherents of the Bahai Movement.

I arose next morning (Tuesday, April 14th) after a most refreshing sleep, and was served with tea by the old man with spectacles. Soon after this a sudden stir without announced the arrival of fresh visitors, and a moment after my companion of the previous evening entered the room, accompanied by two other persons, one of whom proved to be the Babi agent from Beyrout, while the other, as I guessed from the first by the extraordinary deference shown to him by all present, was none other than Baha's eldest son Abbas Effendi.

Seldom have I seen one whose appearance impressed me more. A tall strongly-built man holding himself as an arrow, with white turban and raiment, long black locks reaching almost to the shoulder, broad powerful forehead indicating a strong intellect combined with an unswerving will, eyes keen as a hawk's, and strongly-marked but pleasing features — such was my first impression of Abbas Effendi, "the master" (Aga) as he par excellence is called by the Babis.

Subsequent conversation with him served only to heighten the respect with which his appearance had from the first inspired me. One more eloquent of speech, more ready of argument, more apt of illustration, more intimately acquainted with the sacred books of the Jews, the Christians and the Muhammadans, could, I should think,

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scarcely be found even amongst the eloquent, ready, and subtle race to which he belongs.

These qualities, combined with a bearing at once majestic and genial, made me cease to wonder at the influence and esteem which he enjoyed even beyond the circle of his father's followers.

About the greatness of this man and his power no one who had seen him could entertain a doubt.

EDWARD G. BROWNE, 1891.

(Fellow of Pembroke College, Cambridge,
and Lecturer in Persian in the University of
Cambridge.)

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RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 26, 1913

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| 1. The Bahais must raise a new voice. 2. The article of Arthur Brisbane on "Science" translated and published in Arabic daily and discussed by students. 3. This world is dark, it must be changed into a universe of light. 4. Attraction is not realized save through teaching the Cause of God. 5. Confer upon everyone spiritual joy. 6. A poetic tablet like a bouquet of fragrant flowers. | 240-
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RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 27, 1913

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RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 28, 1913

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| 1. The life of the East and the West, and of how the Bahai movement unites them. 2. Abdul Baha writes on the future condition of women. | 248-
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RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 29, 1913

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| 1. The college life and its expected results. 2. A talk by an old Bahai on the sins of backbiting. 3. Permission given to Persian Bahai students to come to Ramleh. 4. Abdul Baha praises Mrs. Besant, President of the Theosophical Society. | 251-
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RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 30, 1913

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| 1. Spread of the Bahai Cause in the interior of Turkey. 2. Let the American friends wait. 3. Story of how a Bahai feast was given in Bagdad. 4. Abdul Baha writes on nineteen day feasts. 5. The Mohammedan month of fasting comes to an end. | 255-
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RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 31, 1913

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| 1. The story of the blind man and the serpent. | 258- |
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RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 1, 1913

1. The watermelons of Acca. 2. Abdul Baha and the story of the policeman of Ramleh. 3. Abdul Baha talks on the power of imagination. 4. Oriental Bahais portray natural spirituality.

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RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 2, 1913

1. Moving picture theaters in Egypt. 2. The feast of Ramadan and its spirit of joy. 3. Talk on education and the story of the selfish mother. 4. Story of the theologian and the sea captain. 5. Story of a meta-physician and the correction of his book by a teacher. 6. Study of science and true religion must be combined.

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RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 3, 1913

1. Persian Bahai students of the American college arrive. 2. Persian students in Paris and London. 3. Abdul Baha tells the students how to study. 4. The students read Abdul Baha's talks in America. 5. Abdul Baha calls on the Persian Consul.

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RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 4, 1913

1. The story of the royal bird of Gedam. 2. Purity and chastity are foundations of spiritual life. 3. The brother of the Khedive calls on Abdul Baha. 4. American ice cream for the students; their visit to the national park. 5. Their love for the Bahai Cause.

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RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 5, 1913

1. Who is Abdul Baha and what is he doing? 2. The Persian students and prayers. 3. The story of a man who was hired to build a wall around the garden. 4. In the Cause of Brotherhood there are no titles. 5. Abdul Baha inquires from the Persian students about their teachers. 6. People are not awake to the danger of war. 7. Abdul Baha dictates Tablets for the American Bahais. 8. Program of a national or religious feast. 9. Driving around with Abdul Baha.

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RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 6, 1913

1. The American Bahais must make great efforts in teaching the Cause of Peace. 2. Prof. Armenius Vamberg's letter to Abdul Baha. 3. The Persian students meet Mrs. Getsinger. 4. Abdul Baha speaks to them on the Power of unity.

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RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 7, 1913

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| 1. The story of the mythical republic and a curious way of electing a president. 2. Abdul Baha spends a busy day. | 287-291 |
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RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 8, 1913

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| 1. The Arab Bahais give a feast to the Persian students. 2. How an Arab became a Bahai. 3. Importance of agriculture. 4. A prayer for the illumination of mankind. 5. The object of the coming of Baha-Ullah. | 291-295 |
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RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 9, 1913

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| 1. A bird's-eye view of the general conditions of the world. 2. The spread of the Bahai Cause in Germany makes Abdul Baha happy. 3. Photographs received from America and Germany distributed among Persian Bahais. 4. The silence of Abdul Baha is eloquent. | 295-299 |
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RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 10, 1913

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| 1. Good news received from America and Europe. 2. A few Arabian proverbs. 3. A prayer by Abdul Baha for detachment. | 299-302 |
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RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 11, 1913

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| 1. How the Persian students lived together. 2. An important Tablet revealed by Abdul Baha for China. | 302-307 |
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RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 12, 1913

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| 1. Departure of the Persian students. 2. Russian Count meets Abdul Baha and talks on the two aspects of reincarnation. 3. Strive that love may increase day by day. 4. Tablet of Abdul Baha to the author of "Modern Social Religion." 5. Pure intention is the magnet of heavenly assistance. 6. "Strive to quicken the dead souls." | 307-311 |
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RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 13, 1913

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| 1. From Ramleh the mysterious power of God is silently quickening the world. 2. Story of the German Consul in Haifa and how he became the victim of "Bravo." 3. Abdul Baha dictates many Tablets for Russia. | 311-314 |
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RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 14, 1913

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| 1. The law of Universal Love and the Bahais. 2. Tablets for German Bahais. | 314-316 |
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RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 15, 1913

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| 1. A busy day for Abdul Baha. 2. The story of the king and | 317- |
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the thorn picker.	321
RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 16, 1913	
1. Arrival of pilgrims and other incidents. 2. Translation of a Tablet giving the keynote of the Bahai movement. 3. Give hearing to the deaf, sight to the blind and speech to the dumb.	321-324
RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 17, 1913	
1. The spiritual palace of International Brotherhood is being built by the peacemakers. 2. "Christian Commonwealth" and Bahai articles. 3. Tablet to the Editor of the "Christian Commonwealth." 4. The sojourn in Ramleh has been fruitful.	324-327
RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 18, 1913	
1. Abdul Baha writes to the believers in Russia. 2. In the Bahai Cause there are no salaried teachers. 3. Wit is the salt of conversation. 4. The second party of the Bahai students arrive. 5. Mrs. Fraser arrives from America. 6. Mrs. Fraser is welcomed at the station by Shoghi Effendi.	327-330
RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 19, 1913	
1. The American Bahais will be going to India. 2. The importance of the art of translation. 3. The past glory of Persia and her future opportunity. 4. The Bahai students meet Mrs. Getsinger and Mrs. Fraser in the home of Abdul Baha 5. Bahai meeting for the Americans. 6. Abdul Baha amid a profusion of thousands of roses. 7. Description of the garden of Baha-Ullah in Teheran. 8. A single rose in the garden of Constantinople.	330-336
RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 20, 1913	
1. Thoughts on the Mediterranean shore. 2. Abdul Baha talks to Mrs. Fraser and Mrs. Getsinger about their trip to India. 3. Mr. Hooper Harris and Harlan Ober's journey to India.	336-338
RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 21, 1913	
1. The story of the king and his search for the fountain of life. 2. The simplicity of life and how the Arabs live in the desert. 3. Abdul Baha talks with Mrs. Fraser.	338-344
RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 22, 1913	
1. Abdul Baha's spiritual moods. 2. Dr. Getsinger's arrival in Alexandria. 3. Tablet from Abdul Baha to Bahais in	344-347

Leipzig, Germany. 4. Another Tablet to a German Bahai asking him to teach.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 23, 1913

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| 1. Speeches to be delivered at public meetings. 2. History of the life of Armenius [<i>sic</i>] Vambery. | 347-351 |
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RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 24, 1913

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| 1. A Persian Bahai student delivers a lecture in English. 2. Abdul Baha wishes the Bahai students to take postgraduate courses. 3. The mission of the Bahai Cause is universal, not local. | 351-355 |
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RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 25, 1913

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| 1. An Analysis of the Letters of Unity by a Persian student. 2. Story of the stork, fish and prawn. 3. Letters received from and tablets written to different parts of the world. | 355-357 |
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RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 26, 1913

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| 1. Ishkabad, Russia, an important center of the Bahai Movement. 2. Tablets for the Bahais of Ishkabad. | 357-361 |
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RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 27, 1913

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| 1. Tablet in handwriting of Baha-Ullah. 2. Prayer for spiritual strength by Baha-Ullah. 3. Someone must arise to write the life history of Baha-Ullah. 4. Pilgrims arrive from India, Persia and Russia. 5. Abdul Baha urges the students to practice public speaking on all subjects. | 361-364 |
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RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 28, 1913

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| 1. Farewell words to the students. 2. I desire that thou mayst be filled with Baha-Ullah. 3. Mrs. Stannard an earnest Bahai. 4. An address delivered to the students. | 364-369 |
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RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 29, 1913

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| 1. The Persian Bahais are anxious to know all about the Western Bahais. 2. "Mahmal" or the Holy Carpet. 3. Abdul Baha speaks to the students before their departure for College. 4. Mirza Jalal and wife arrive from London. 5. All the pilgrims are gone and the house seems deserted. | 370-372 |
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RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 30, 1913

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| 1. The procession of Mahmal in Alexandria. 2. Mahmal, a great annual event. 3. Koran verses woven in Mahmal. 4. Mahmal or Carpet, is a sacred object. 5. People from all over | 373-379 |
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Egypt come to visit and touch the Mahmal. 6. How Mahmal was originated. 7. Many Mahmals mentioned in history. 8. Hardships of Baha-Ullah to become the cause of the awakening of the people.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 1913

1. What it means to be with Abdul Baha. 2. The students consist of a large delegation. 3. The students sing Mrs. Shahnaz Waite's anthems. 4. Happiness and tranquillity of heart. 5. Lasting enjoyment is for the moral man. 6. The meaning of Faith. 7. The basic principle of the good-pleasure of God. 8. The successful student. 9. Light and Knowledge. 10. Letter to the students from the President of College. 11. The Bahai Cause as interpreted by Abdul Baha.	379-390
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ABDUL BAHÁ IN EGYPT

PORT SAID, EGYPT, JULY 1, 1913.

1. To look back and survey the activities of the month. 2. The Bahai path and its pilgrims. 3. Tablet of Abdul Baha to the "Theosophy" in Scotland in regard to Divine Civilization. 4. Article in "Egyptian Gazette" about the Bahai pilgrims. 5. Home of Baha-Ullah in Bagdad and its keeper. 6. Abdul Baha's talk to the pilgrims on the evidences of the Cause. 7. Experiences of a pilgrim and how he was robbed on the way.

1. To Look Back and Survey the Activities of the Month

I believe it would be a good practice if, on the first of every month, we would survey the collective activities of the days just past, to see whether we have accomplished anything either beneficial or harmful to our fellow men; if we find the former, we should make these actions stepping-stones for greater things; if the latter, we should try to turn into the right pathway. For those who have just accepted the Bahai Revelation there is nothing more useful than retrospection. In this day the Highway of the Lord of Mankind is plain. Many of the past obstacles are removed, and the hollow places and marshy grounds are filled. If we start walking in His path we shall surely reach our destination, behold the Countenance of the Beloved, receive His benediction and ever afterward commune with the Holy Ones.

2. The Bahai Path and Its Pilgrims

The Bahai path is one which leads us to the Kingdom of Eternity.
God has illumined it with the Light of His

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face. Hundreds and thousands are joining those who have begun their pilgrimage upon the Highway of Abha. As they go along they raise their clarion voices in thankfulness and praise. They sing the songs of Peace and Spiritual brotherhood. They know that theirs is the victory of attainment. What a happy band of pilgrims they are! Their faith is superhuman, their energy extraordinary, their faces illumined, their feet untiring, their conviction contagious, their love unselfish, their hope transcendent, their sincerity unquestioned, their integrity unimpeachable and their devotion to the Cause attested! My friends! let us join this holy band of pilgrims!

Last night Abdul Baha told me to come to him in the morning with a number of petitions just received; so I was there quite early. While He was dictating Tablets he carried on different lines of conversations with a stream of callers and pilgrims. Tablets were revealed for a large number of friends in Europe and America, and a wonderful article for the “Theosophy” of Scotland in Edinburgh, the Editor of which is Mr. Graham Pole.

3. Tablet of Abdul Baha to the “Theosophy” in Scotland in Regard to Divine Civilization and Man’s Illumination

“TO THE SECRETARY OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
AND THE EDITOR OF ‘SCOTLAND THEOSOPHY,’
EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND.

“He is God!

“O THOU BELOVED AND RESPECTED FRIEND: —

“Your letter written to Aga Mirza Ahmad was received. I likewise read it. Its contents imparted happiness, for it was an indication of the magnanimity of your effort and of your philanthropic intention. The

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Articles which you have published in the Theosophical magazine bear testimony to your lofty aim.

“A wise and sagacious writer pens such articles — the results of which are eternal, and its benefits universal; thus the world of humanity may advance toward the kingdom of Mercifulness and divine

susceptibilities may shine and gleam like unto radiant lamps from the reality of man.

“To-day humanity is in need of heavenly teachings, which are the spirit of this age and the light of this cycle. Material, physical civilization has made extraordinary progress, but Divine Civilization is totally forgotten. In truth, Divine Civilization is like unto the light, whereas material civilization is similar to the glass. The glass without the light will be dark.

“Therefore, great effort must be made so that the heavenly lamp may become ignited, the world of morality illumined and the inexhaustible virtues which are the decorations of the reality of mankind revealed as glowing stars.

“The world of nature is the arena of the animal kingdom. Look thou upon any one of the animals and thou will realize that the virtues of the world of nature are fully manifest in it with the utmost perfection — to an extent that it would be impossible for man to attain. Consider thou a sweet singing bird, beautiful and harmonious, that builds its nest on the topmost branch of a tree growing on the slope of a mountain! In reality this nest is preferable to the palace of the king. The weather is of the utmost delicacy, the panorama indeed entrancing, the water most salubrious, the mountains green and verdant, and the harvest in the valley and on the plain is the wealth of the bird! It has no trouble, no hardship, no thought, no scheme, no sorrow, no grief, no remorse and no regret. Day and night this bird lives with the utmost

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joy and happiness in its own royal nest! It becomes evident that the virtues of the world of nature are most complete in the animal kingdom.

“But look at the condition of the poor man! Now he is exiled, again he is sick, then helpless or perhaps a prisoner, now he is afflicted with poverty and penury, and then thrown amid dangers. Day and night he is striving, so that he may gain his livelihood through toil and turmoil. With your own reason compare the difference between the life of man and that of the animal! These things demonstrate that the virtues of the world of nature are more apparent in the animal kingdom.

“On the other hand, although man does not seem to enjoy a complete share or inexhaustible portion of these natural bounties, he is, in the Divine World, the center of infinite Bestowals, the lamp of the light of Reality, the shining mirror of the Beauty of God, the manifestor of human perfection, the dawning place of celestial rays and the possessor of the “holy power” which penetrates into and surrounds the essence of all phenomena.

“Man discovers the reality of things, and governing the world of nature, brings its secrets out of the world of the invisible into the realm of existence. Now, like a bird, he soars through the air and again he

swims on the surface of the ocean; he travels hither and thither, then dives under the sea with great power. Thus he causes the revelation of all the laws of nature out of the unseen into the seen realm.

“For this reason, he is endowed with a higher power to make use of this knowledge to benefit the world and stimulate its progress. This “power” is reserved for man, and by it he is distinguished from the animal.

“Inasmuch as man is endowed with such a power, he must become the manifestation of divine civilization, the dawning-place of the light of reality, the founder of

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heavenly perfections, the spreader of spiritual teachings and the servant of the world of morality. He must rejoice the spirits through the Divine Glad-tidings, free them from discouragement and grant them the hope of Everlasting life.

“This is the excellence and glory of the human world! This is the Everlasting Prosperity.

(Signed) “ABDUL BAHA ABBAS.”

4. Article in the “Egyptian Gazette” about Bahai Pilgrims

An article published in the Egyptian Gazette, date, Friday, June 27th, on page three, entitled: —

“ABDUL BAHA IN EGYPT.
WONDERFUL SCENES IN PORT SAID.
EASTERN BAHAIS ASSEMBLED IN FORCE.”

The description of the Persian believers “who are curiously dressed in great lambskin hats and long divided skirts with enormous pleats” was specially graphic. Here is a quotation giving another sidelight of the manner in which these “Converts” lived: —

“At Port Said the pilgrims have erected a huge tent on the roof of a native hotel and there they gather and sing with touching devotion.”

5. Home of Baha-Ullah and Its Keeper

Mirza Nourallah Vakil is an old believer from Bagdad. He has been in Haifa and Alexandria for ten months awaiting the arrival of the Beloved. He is a patient, true Bahai, ever ready to fulfill the desire of the Lord. He is the keeper of the House in which Baha-Ullah and his

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family lived for eleven years. This house, owing to lack of attention, has fallen into ruin, and for the present there are no means at hand to either rebuild or to repair it. In speaking with him upon this matter he said that with a sum of 500 pounds sterling the house could be suitably repaired. The above answer was given through my own solicitation; but I believe it would cost at least 1,000 pounds sterling to reconstruct the house upon its old plan without any architectural innovation, thus keeping the original form of the time of Baha-Ullah. Abdul Baha spoke to Mirza Nourallah and to a number of Bahais from Bagdad. He made it plain that he has great love for the believers of Bagdad, and that they are ever in his heart. Let them not be sad owing to the present ruin of the house. The time for its building will come very soon. It may have to be destroyed and rebuilt but its first form must not undergo any change. Let them rest assured that it will be constructed most solidly. This is a Blessed House; do they not realize it was the home of Baha-Ullah? All that quarter in which the House is situated will be destroyed and then transformed into wonderful Parks and gardens. It will become most heavenly. The Holy Sepulcher of Christ was for three hundred years a place for dumping all kinds of rubbish, then St. Helena came, cleared the ground and built over it a most wonderful church. However, these times are different, and the Places wherein the Blessed Perfection has lived will be fully preserved.

To-day two pilgrims arrived, Mirza Fazlollah, the son of the oldest brother of Baha-Ullah from Persia, and a young Bahai from Damascus.

Upon hearing of the arrival of the son of his uncle, Abdul Baha called him into his presence and showered much love upon him. I was not there to witness the scene and to hear his words, but Ali Akbar told me that the

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Master spoke about his childhood days. Things that I should like to have heard.

6. Abdul Baha's Talk to the Pilgrims on the Evidences of the Cause

In the afternoon we were all invited to the Master's house for tea. We waited a few moments downstairs, and as soon as we heard his footsteps everybody arose. He sat on a chair in front of the window and spoke feelingly.

He stated that the majority of the inhabitants of Persia are yet asleep, although God has demonstrated His Cause to them in so many ways. ... If this Cause had appeared in Europe or America, those regions would by this time have become illumined and countless souls awakened. So many were martyred in Persia, so much blood has been spilt! If one of these events had transpired in another country, the effect

would have been marvelous! Nevertheless there were many people in Persia who became illumined and celestial, and cried out in order to awaken their fellow men! ...An infinite number of these believers of God have been examples of severance, incarnations of devotion, and flaming candles; they have embodied in the world of humanity the Teachings of God, and have become demonstrations, showing how man could be pure, sanctified, attracted, enkindled and honest! The evidences of God they wrote with their own blood upon the earth.

Then he went out to take a walk, telling us to follow him. As the "Greatest Holy Leaf" (Abdul Baha's sister) will arrive from Haifa to be with the Master, and as the present house is small and rather unfurnished, another apartment consisting of four rooms and a kitchen is rented for us. "Us" means Mirza Mahmoud, Sayad

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Assad-Ullah, Mirza Moneer and Ahmad Sohrab. The Master therefore walked to this apartment to see if it was ready. On the way he told us two stories of his childhood, one about the Mohammedan clergy and the "big paradise," another about a bare-headed Mullah before a large crowd of people, the sudden shower of hail upon his head and his precipitated flight.

7. Experiences of a Pilgrim and How He was Robbed on the Way

Coming out of the apartment Abdul Baha ordered a carriage and with Mirza Fazlollah they were driven away. We returned to the hotel and had an interesting conversation with a young Bahai from Damascus. Having been in Teheran during the Parliamentary period, he gave us a thrilling account of the victory of the Nationalist Cause, and of his journey from Teheran toward Shiraz, and how a large Caravan which included himself was attacked and robbed. He and his friend had to walk six days through mountains and uninhabited places, bedraggled and with large blisters on the soles of their feet before they reached their destination. Although he had suffered much, yet he was very cheerful and happy because to-day he was privileged to look upon the face of Abdul Baha — the lover of humanity.

PORT SAID, EGYPT, JULY 2, 1913.

1. Talk of Abdul Baha on Spiritual Cultivation and teaching.
2. Departure of the pilgrims and remarks of Abdul Baha on music.
3. Quiet association with Abdul Baha.
4. Progress of the Bahai Cause in Germany and letters from that country.
5. Appearance of Truth.

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1. Talk of Abdul Baha on Spiritual Cultivation and Teaching

Toward the end of a wonderful talk given this afternoon to the Persian Pilgrims, Abdul Baha stated that it was not his duty to command particular persons to teach the Cause. Whosoever arises to spread the Word and to perform this service, will behold the Doors of Confirmation open wide before his face. This is the time for teaching and therefore results will be achieved. In every season a particular service will be productive. If, during the seed-sowing time we want to gather the harvest we shall be unsuccessful, if at the period of irrigation we desire to do something else, failure will be the result. Now this is the divine season of seed-sowing. Every Bahai must become a heavenly Cultivator, or at the appointed hour the prayers of all the past and future ages, will yield no fruit. In his long trip throughout Europe and America Abdul Baha's primal object was to show the friends of God by deeds that now is the hour for teaching the Cause. Although Acca and Haifa are the headquarters of this movement and he had many reasons to stay there, and from that center administer the affairs of the Cause, yet, he left everything and traveled throughout the earth to herald the coming of the Kingdom of Abha. Any person desiring to be surrounded by the Confirmations of the Blessed Perfection, must arise and teach the Cause. This is the path.

2. Departure of the Pilgrims, and Remarks of Abdul Baha on Music

Seven more pilgrims left for Haifa and Alexandria. Except one Zoroastrian who will depart for Bombay on the 5th, no one is left of the large number of

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pilgrims. To-day two fine young Bahai students arrived from Beirut. They are the advance guard of the rest of the students who will be here soon. These two are very polite and speak English fluently. One of them is the son of Mohammad Taki Esphahani of Cairo — his name is Abdul Hossein. He has a fine voice and chants the Bahai Communes most effectively. He chanted to-night for the Beloved who was very pleased with him.

Abdul Baha wishes the believers to cultivate their voices so that they may sing the Bahai songs and chant with effect the Prayers of the Blessed Perfection; for Prayer is the food of the spirit.

3. Quiet Association with Abdul Baha

In the evening, at the end of a long walk, the Master came to our hotel. He walked down the veranda where I was sitting alone, opened the door and entered one of the rooms. Little by little the friends gathered around him. Down in the street a motley crowd of Arabs were passing along; above our heads, the stars shone with utmost brilliancy, while at our left the Mediterranean lay smiling. We were all very happy in the Presence of the Master of Illumination. In the darkness his face irradiated like an orb of light, and his tongue uttered such words of guidance and truth as the “Man of Sorrows” spoke 1900 years ago on Mount Olivet.

4. Progress of the Bahai Cause in Germany and Letters from That Country

In the morning we drank tea in Abdul Baha’s presence. He sent for us very early. It seemed that he had slept last night in Ahmad Yazdi’s apartment, so we all went there. After our arrival he spoke about the progress of

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the Cause in Germany. He had some letters from Mirza Ali Akbar and Mirza Lotfollah Hakim giving the description of the meetings in Stuttgart during their one week’s stay there. He read the former aloud, and gave me the latter to read to the friends.

There were also letters from the German friends and these he gave me to translate and send to the Star of the West, for publication, which was done on the same day. Then he spoke very enthusiastically about the German believers, their firmness, and their devotion. For more than one hour he talked about Baha-Ullah and about the enemies of the Cause, who had at every turn tried to stop its influence, but who had all failed. And he also related several historical incidents of the early days of Bagdad.

5. Appearance of Truth

In concluding his remarks he told us that along with the appearance of Truth, the point of opposition raises its head. The former gains signal victory, the other goes into crushing defeat; the first upraises the standard of guidance, the other unfurls the banner of error; one is divine revelation, another is satanic suggestion; the first leads us into the paradise of Peace, the second hurls us headlong into the hell of war.

PORT SAID, EGYPT, JULY 3, 1913.

1. The Bahai Cause is in need of earnest workers who will defy all opposition. 2. Life in Port Said and fleas, but no mosquitoes. 3. Hossein Rouhy and his Bahai School in Cairo. 4. Palace of Baha-Ullah in Nur, Persia. 5. Talk of Abdul Baha on his and Baha-Ullah's imprisonment in the prison of Acca, and on real happiness. 6. Remarks on the war waged between Greece and Bulgaria. 7. Story about Baha-Ullah's shepherd. 8. A joke with Hossein Rouhy.

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1. The Bahai Cause Is in Need of Earnest Workers Who Will Defy All Opposition

We are living in the days in which the Spirit of the Lord is manifest, and the rays of the Sun of Reality evident. The divine Jerusalem has descended from heaven and the Glorious Glad-tidings are proclaimed. We must fashion our lives according to the heavenly teachings, live in a state of internal contentment, peruse the Holy Writings and practise that which will be conducive to our own and to the world's prosperity. The Bahai Cause is much in need of real, earnest workers — workers who will defy all opposition, meeting their antagonists with smiling faces and standing as firm rocks before the blowing of the winds of tests and of the storms of trials. How many old trees are uprooted by one wind and how many ships have been wrecked by one storm! There are many lands athirst for the water of life, let the friends of God irrigate them with vernal showers from the Kingdom of Abha. There are many persons hungry for the heavenly bread, we must invite them to the Banquet of the Lord. The lethargic must become active, the sleepy awakened; the deprived must receive a share of the inexhaustible Favors, and the sweet music of the Supreme Concourse must be heard. We should be up and doing some kind of service no matter how slight it is. Praise be to God that the orb of the Center of Covenant is shining and that His Mercy is all-encompassing. He is teaching and gently and lovingly guiding us in the Right Path. We all desire to serve him in some way and win his good pleasure by sincerely walking in his footsteps; we

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hope to become the signs of his compassion and the humble followers of his eternal law!

2. Life in Port Said, and Fleas, But No Mosquitoes

All this morning and part of the afternoon we were left to ourselves. The Master was busy in other directions and could not call us to his presence. Meanwhile we found time to pack our trunks and move from the hotel into our new apartment. It is unfurnished but as we do not know how long we will stay in Port Said, it is not necessary to purchase many things. I have one large black kitchen table on which I do my writing, a chair and a bed. The apartment is airy and has a wonderful side view of the Mediterranean. It is in the Arab quarter and rented for nine dollars a month. Port Said is famous for its fleas. They bother us to death all night. Those who have mosquito nets escape the attacks of the fleas and sleep comfortably, but I happen not to have any and have to carry on an offensive and defensive war with the swarming army. Several years ago when I lived here, there were many mosquitoes — not as bad as New Jersey ones — but quite ferocious. However, the Egyptian Government organized a Sanitary Commission who undertook the filling of the marshy grounds and thus exterminated the breeding of mosquitoes. During the spring and summer there is not a drop of rain. All that we see is an occasional patch of cloud aimlessly rambling in the sky. Our apartment being very near the Mediterranean, we enjoy a fresh, vitalizing breeze all the time, especially in the evenings. Many people sleep on the roofs which are flat and paved like the floor of a room.

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3. Hossein Rouhy and His Bahai School in Cairo

About 5 o'clock Khosro, Abdul Baha's attendant, brought the good news that we were called by the Master to the new house. The believers with others just arrived from Cairo, were already assembled when we entered. Hossein Rouhy who years ago was in America with Khorassani, was present with his three sons. He is a short man and knows English and Arabic very well. He keeps a private school in Egypt, the pupils numbering about a hundred and sixty children; the majority being orphans. The school is named "Abbas" and the master's photograph is hung in a prominent place in every classroom. Hossein Rouhy is an active young man, and I believe that he is doing much good.

4. Palace of Baha-Ullah in Nur, Persia

The Master had asked Mirza Fazlollah — the son of his great uncle — to draw the design of the house of Baha-Ullah in Nur. Therefore, he, with the assistance of Mirza Ali Akbar, was busy all day making this plan which was completed this afternoon. It must have been a palatial

residence according to the architectural conception of the East. The Master, holding the various papers in his hands, described the different parts of the house as though he had left it yesterday. Then with his matchless power, he contrasted this palace of luxury and worldly comfort with the barren and ruined barrack of Acca.

5. Talk of Abdul Baha on His and Baha-Ullah's Imprisonment in the Prison of Acca, and on Real Happiness

Abdul Baha spoke on happiness, saying that the soul of man must be happy, no matter where he is. He must

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attain to that condition of inward beatitude and peace, where outward circumstances can not alter his spiritual calm and joyousness. No one can imagine a worse place than the barracks of Acca. The climate was bad, the water no better, the surroundings filthy and dirty, and the deportment of the officials unbearable, while he and his family were looked upon as enemies of religion and destroyers of morals. The Government had given orders that no one should address them during their stay in Acca and that they should not be allowed to converse with each other.

Upon their arrival, the officials found that there were not enough rooms in the barracks to imprison them separately, so all were put into two bare rooms. The court had a most gloomy aspect. It contained three or four fig trees, in the branches of which several ominous owls screeched all night. Everyone became ill and there were neither provisions nor medicines.

At the entrance to the barrack there was an undertaker's room. It was a horrible looking place, yet Abdul Baha lived there for two years with the utmost happiness. Up to that period he had had no opportunity to read the Koran from cover to cover, but here he found ample time and used to study this Holy Book with fervor and enthusiasm, going over the incidents and events of the lives of former prophets and finding how parallel they were with the events of these latter days. Thus he was consoled and encouraged. He would read, for instance, the following verse:

“How thoughtless are the people! Whenever a prophet is sent unto them they either ridicule him or persecute him.”

And then he read this verse:

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“Verily our host is victorious over them.”

He was very happy, because he was a free man. Shut off in that room his spirit traveled throughout the immensity of space. At night he went up on the roof and communed with the countless brilliant stars. What a divine feast! What a heavenly procession! What spiritual freedom! What beatific bliss! What celestial Sovereignty!

6. Remarks on War Waged between Greece and Bulgaria

Then he spoke in detail about the present war between Greece and Bulgaria, and the utter folly of shedding the blood of innocent people. There is no benefit in this human butchery, this spoilation [*sic*], this destruction! Mankind must learn the lesson of Peace; they must be instructed in the school of love. What is this insanity? What is this fratricide? What is this ruthlessness? Away with the nightmare of war! Banish the thought of strife and sedition! Are we not brothers? Are we not the sheep of one shepherd? How long shall this blindness continue; how long this military lunacy? Then he spoke about the restlessness of kings and rulers and gave us the instance of one Mohammedan Kaliph who, although he had many countries under his dominion, yet could not be happy.

Divine happiness, he said, is obtained through servitude at the Threshold of God, through evanescence, detachment, sincerity and severance from all else save Him.

7. Story about Baha-Ullah's Shepherd

Before he left us he recalled to his mind the name of the head-shepherd of Baha-Ullah and related many stories about him. He asked Mirza Fazlollah whether he were

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still alive and received the answer: "He is dead, but his daughter is living."

One day this head-shepherd came to the Blessed Perfection and said: "My Lord! I have one piece of advice to give unto you."

"What is it?" Baha-Ullah asked.

"Never trust the Ulemas."

Baha-Ullah loved this man because of his simplicity and faithfulness. We were then given permission to retire.

8. A Joke with Hossein Rouhy

Abdul Baha asked Hossein Rouhy how many pupils he had in his school. "One hundred and sixty." Abdul Baha said laughingly that Hossein Rouhy was rich and that his hands were certainly full! He

himself did not have one pupil. Could Hossein Rouhy find some students for Abdul Baha?

PORT SAID, EGYPT, JULY 4, 1913.

1. Story of the old Haji Abdullah and his conversation with Abdul Baha. 2. Abdul Baha dictates Tablets for many Bahais. 3. Tablet to the International Congress of Free Christians and other religious liberals held in Paris. 4. Poem by Mr. Thornton Chase read to Abdul Baha. 5. Story about Abraham's hospitality.

1. Story of Haji Abdullah and His Conversation with Abdul Baha

Haji Abdullah is a Bahai of eighty years of age. He has lived fifty years in Egypt and has ever been a devoted Bahai; and a sincere believer. He is dressed in Eastern robes and has a long gray beard. Although advanced in

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age, he is vigorous and in good health. He has seen Egypt become most prosperous through the opening of the Suez Canal. He lives in one of the small towns in the interior of the country and having heard about the arrival of the Master has come to see him. To-day he received permission to return to his work. He had a conversation with Abdul Baha.

Abdul Baha asked him how old he was.

He said he was over eighty years old.

Well! He had lived a good long life and now he looked younger than Abdul Baha!

It was through the Favor of Baha-Ullah, voiced the old veteran.

It was true! Abdul Baha told him, and wished to know whether he desired to live much longer.

Haji Abdullah gave an affirmative answer.

Abdul Baha was surprised.

What? Was this life so sweet to the old man's taste for him to long for an extension of it? Why was this? As to Abdul Baha he was ready to leave this ephemeral world. It contained no attraction for him. Abdul Baha likened himself to a man who has heard that he must travel twenty days before reaching his destination. Having traveled already fifteen days, he is eager to hasten his trip and arrive at his goal. He is anticipating the eternal union with the Beloved at the end of his journey; therefore he is impatient!

The old man was deeply moved and spoke in a tremulous voice. He did not want to live for himself. Looking back at the map of his life, he saw many barren years stretching before his eyes, for he had not been confirmed in the service of the Cause. Therefore he desired to do something. He was hoping against hope that he might yet be enabled to render a great service to the

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Cause. He knew that he was very old, but his hope was young, and his eyes were filled with tears.

2. Abdul Baha Dictates Tablets for Many Bahais.

This morning the Master received in private many of the Egyptian friends who had just arrived to meet him for one day. Meanwhile he found time to dictate Tablets to many of the friends in America and England and an important one to the International Congress of Free Christians, and other Religious Liberals, holding its Congress in Paris from July 16th to 22nd. Let me share with you the contents of the last.

3. Tablet to the International Congress of Free Christians

“TO THE SECRETARY OF THE SIXTH INTERNATIONAL
CONGRESS OF FREE AND PROGRESSIVE CHRISTIANS, AND
OTHER RELIGIOUS LIBERALS, HELD IN PARIS, FRANCE,
JULY, 1913.

“He is God!

“BELOVED AND RESPECTED FRIEND: —

“Your letter was received. Its contents became conducive to happiness of conscience, for it indicated that a group of the well-wishers of the world of humanity have displayed an effort to bring about a Congress of Religions, so that this may become the means of establishing affiliation among those religions, in order that the reality and the foundation of the Divine Religion be disclosed, and the causes of misunderstandings be removed. This is indeed an exalted intention; it is a service

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to the world of humanity and is conducive to the unveiling of merciful susceptibilities.

“I hope that that Congress may be confirmed in affiliating the hearts of the people of the world, and be the means of the creation of peace between religions, so that the darkness of estrangement may be dispelled from amongst mankind and the followers of all religions may be ushered into the world of Unity — that is, accept the principles of the Oneness of the word [*sic*] of humanity.

“It has been my greatest longing to be present at that International Gathering, but now I live in Egypt, my physical constitution is weakened, and other infirmities of age prevent me from attending the Congress. Therefore, begging your pardon for this shortcoming, I write a few lines on this subject: —

“It is well known and evident to the wise men of humanity — the wooers of Truth — that the aim of the appearance of the Holy Divine Manifestations, the revelation of the Book and the establishment of the Spiritual Religion, has been no other than to create affinity amongst the children of men, and to found the law of Love between the individuals of the world of humanity. Religion is the basis of spiritual Unity; it is the oneness of thoughts; the oneness of susceptibilities; the oneness of morality; and the necessary connection between all the people of the world — so that minds and souls may grow and develop through divine Education, in order that they may investigate reality, ascend to the lofty heights of human perfection and found on this terrestrial globe a Divine Civilization.

“In the world of existence there are two kinds of Civilizations: a natural and material civilization which serves the physical world; and a divine and heavenly civilization which renders service to the world of morality. The founders of natural civilization are the scientists

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and philosophers of the earth. The establishers of divine civilization are the celestial Manifestations of God. Religion is the basis of Divine Civilization. Natural civilization is like unto the body. Divine Civilization is like unto the spirit. A Body without spirit is dead, although it may be in the utmost beauty and comeliness. In short, by religion we mean those necessary bonds which unify the world of humanity. This has ever been the bestowal of God. This is the object of Divine teaching and law. This is the light of everlasting life. But alas, a thousand times alas! for this solid foundation is abandoned and forgotten; the leaders of religion have fabricated a set of blind dogmas and rituals which are at complete variance with the foundation of divine religion. As these dogmas differ from each other, they cause differences; differences breed strife, and strife ends in war and bloodshed; the blood of innocent people is spilled, their possessions are ransacked and pillaged and their children become captives and orphans. Thus religion, which was designed to become the cause of friendship,

has become the cause of enmity. Religion, which was meant to be sweet honey, is changed into bitter poison. Religion, whose function was to be the illumination of the world of humanity, has become the factory [cause]of obscurantism and gloom. Religion which was meant to confer everlasting life, has become the fiendish instrument of death. Consequently, as long as these blind dogmas are in human hands, and these nets of dissimulation and hypocrisy in their fingers, religion will be but a harmful agency in the world of humanity. Hence these superannuated and tattered dogmas which are current among present day religions must be totally abolished, and, thus, freed from past traditions, mankind will be able to investigate the real objects of divine religion; for inasmuch as the foundation

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of the religion of God is One, and that One is absolute reality, and reality is indivisible and not amenable to multiplicity, therefore complete unity and amity between all religions shall be instituted and the true religion of God shall become unveiled with the utmost beauty and sublimity in the assemblage of the world of humanity.

“Thence, it is the duty of this honorable Congress to rend asunder these veils of imitations, to remove these non-essentials and to disperse these dark clouds that the Sun of Truth may dawn from the Everlasting Horizon with the utmost brilliancy.

“Praise be to God, that this century is the century of success! This Cycle is the Cycle of Reality! Minds have developed, thoughts have taken a wider range of vision; intellects have become keen; emotions are sensitized; inventions have transformed the face of the earth and this age has acquired a glorious capacity for the majestic revelation of the oneness of the world of humanity.

“Should this honorable Congress display an extraordinary effort in the promotion of altruistic aims, and remove these dogmas which are in the hands of the religionists — such dogmas as are in opposition to the Divine Ideals — this world will become another world, the physical earth will be changed into the universe of the Kingdom, the world of humanity will become an arena for the revealing of the mysteries of Truth; the rays of the Sun of the Divine Firmament will shine upon it; East and West will become illumined; North and South will embrace each other like unto two beloved ones; the followers of all the religions will become investigators and champions of Reality, new eternal Institutes will be founded in the human world

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and the Palace of the oneness of the realm of humanity raised higher and higher, day by day.

“These are the hopes of this Wanderer. I beg of God confirmation and assistance for you, — so that you may be inspired with such a spiritual vision: the appearance of which is looked upon as impossible and unrealizable from the very foundation of the world; but which in this glorious Cycle will become manifest in the utmost beauty and perfection.

“Upon you be greeting and praise.

(Signed) “ABDUL BAHA ABBAS.”

Although at this time the Master was not feeling well he continued to dictate Tablets and when he was thus occupied, he entered into a spiritual state, and his bodily weariness completely disappeared, and for the time his health was absolutely restored.

For the last few days he has been complaining about the weather and he may shortly leave for Ismailia, which is the summer resort of Egypt. The Port Said weather at this season is most humid. I don't think he will keep all of us with him, but he may take one or two; probably Mirza Moneer. In the afternoon, while the believers were sitting in his presence, he dictated many Tablets and they listened most carefully. To them, this is more significant than a talk, because they consider it the greatest privilege of their lives to be present while the holy Tablets are revealed. After an hour or so he said it was enough, and for nearly thirty minutes he related many stories about the futility of studying Mohammedan theology which is nothing more than traditions and prejudiced dogmas.

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4. Poem by Mr. Chase Read to Abdul Baha

The poem of Mr. Chase written on August 9, 1912, San Francisco, California, was read to the Master and he gave his permission to publish it in the *Star of the West*. It was composed just before his death, begging the Beloved to go to California. The first line of it is: —

“O Thou David of the Promised Kingdom of God.”

5. Story about Abraham's Hospitality

Another interesting story about Abraham was sent from [San] Francisco by Miss Bijou Strawn who is preparing a book of the Master's addresses for publication. She desires to include this story as a footnote. It was read to the Master. He gave the source whence the story came. First I will copy here the story as reported in M. K. Schermerhorn's book, and then I will give the version as the Beloved told it:

“Abraham would scarce break His Fast for one week, lest some hungry traveler should pass who might need his store. Ever he looked out upon the desert, and one day he beheld an aged man, with hair white as snow, tottering toward his door. ‘Guest of mine eyes!’ exclaimed Abraham, ‘enter thou with welcome, and be pleased to share my bread and salt!’ The stranger complied and the place of honor was given to him. When the family gathered round the board, each one of them said: ‘In the name of God!’ — but the aged guest uttered no word. Abraham said: ‘Good man! when thou eatest food, is it not right to repeat the name of God?’ The stranger replied, ‘My custom is that of the Fire Worshipers!’ Then Abraham arose in wrath, and drove the aged man from his house, but even as he did so, a swift-winged

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Spirit stood before the patriarch and said: — ‘Abraham, for a hundred years hath the divine bounty flowed out to this man in sunshine and rain, in bread and life. Is it fit for thee to withhold thy hand from him, because his worship is not thine?’ ”

According to Abdul Baha, this story is recorded in the Masnavi. It is related that an aged and decrepit man visited His Holiness Abraham, and was received with the utmost hospitality and courtesy. When dinner was served, His Holiness Abraham uttered the name of God and then began to eat. His guest, on the other hand, pronounced the name of an idol and also began to eat. His Holiness was grieved, and arose in wrath rebuking his guest most severely; but even as he did so, God’s revelation descended upon him: —

“O Abraham! For a hundred years this man has been an idol worshiper and I have been patient with him; I have nurtured him; I have protected him; I have taken care of him; I have trained him; I have showed him with many bounties and have been kind and loving to him; but thou wert not able to endure his society even for one night!”

His Holiness Abraham was deeply touched by this address and begged his aged guest to pardon him.

When we left the Master’s presence he kept Mirza Fazlollah and later on, as they were walking together in the avenue, the Editor of “Peesah Akbar,” an important Indian newspaper, met him. This journalist happens to know a great deal about the Cause through the American press notices which were sent to him by Mirza Mahmoud who met him while traveling and teaching in India. He has already written several articles about the Cause in his own journal.

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PORT SAID, EGYPT, JULY 5, 1913

1. World's conflict and its remedy. 2. The departure of a Zoroastrian Bahai for Bombay and Abdul Baha's Tablet about his Western trip. 3. Interview of Abdul Baha with the Indian Editor.

1. World Conflict and Its Remedy

Whether we live in the East or in the West, the invisible Power of God is unifying our scattered forces, and training us for the service of His Kingdom — the Kingdom of Universal Love and inter-racial Amity. To-day, more than at any other time, the world of humanity is in need of this Power. The keen competition which is carried on by the captains of industry and finance, the rumbling discontent and social unrest of the laboring class, the bigotry and fanaticism of some of the religions, the heat and bitterness with which fanatic controversies are upheld between the sectarians, the spirit of superiority with which some nations look upon others, the lust of conquest, and the desire for the extension of territory, the social and political rivalries between nations and governments and the hatred and enmity existing between antagonistic races: — all these forces clashing against each other, apparently aggravate the situation and make confusion more confounded. But the Power of the spiritual conscience has come to stay, bringing healing under its wide-outstretched wings. Abdul Baha believes that this power alone is the solvent for all these puzzling problems. Here and there may be found some medicine to give temporary relief, but the lasting and permanent cure is the spiritual Power of Love which unites all people and sets at naught their seeming differences. This Power alone transforms hearts, inspires

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spirits, uplifts minds, reveals the secrets of Truth and unfurls the Banner of divine brotherhood.

2. The departure of a Zoroastrian Bahai for Bombay, and Abdul Baha's Tablet about His Western Trip.

Our last pilgrim, the Zoroastrian from Bombay — Mehreban — has left today for his home. He was an old man with a bushy round, gray beard. He spoke very little, but his eyes were fresh springs of love and gentleness. The Master has been especially kind to him and often praised his race for their uprightness and charity. He called him, this morning, to his presence, and after a few words of farewell, gave him a short Tablet written with his own hand, the translation of which is as follows:

“O thou Mehreban! Praise be to God that through the Protection and Favor of the Omnipotent God thou didst reach the Illumined spot, have kissed the Threshold of the Kind Friend, and have become confirmed and assisted in that which is the highest desire of the angels of the Universe of heaven. Now thou hast for several days been my associate and my companion, therefore return to India and convey the greeting of this Friend to each and all the believers and say: —

“ ‘This indigent one does not enjoy one moment of peace. In the evening he is restless, by day he is full of acclamation. He undertook the long trip to Europe and America and cried out over the mountains and on the plains. Now the time has come when the friends may raise their mighty voices and fill the world with the melody of the Kingdom of Abha. They must show an effort, render some kind of service, create a whirlwind of ecstasy and appear with manifest signs and power, so that Abdul Baha may obtain peace of mind and of spirit....’ ”

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3. Abdul Baha's Interview with the Indian Editor

This morning the Beloved sent for Mirza Moneer and dictated several Tablets to the Persian believers, many of them having long or brief accounts of his western journey. Later in the day, Mirza Mahmoud called on Moulavi Mahboud Alam, the Indian Editor, and together they visited the Master. As he was a Moslem, the discussion dealt purely with the Mohammedan world and made an exposition of the means through which the different sects might be brought closer together. The journalist was much impressed by the talk of the Beloved and took notes so that he might write a few articles on the Cause.

About six o'clock we gathered in front of the hotel to bid farewell to our Zoroastrian brother. Then we accompanied him to the pier and while he was leaving in the little boat to be conveyed to the steamer, I looked up, and there in the heavens, beheld the most luminous crescent that I had ever seen! It was small, semi-circular, silvery, and so delicate! For a long time I looked at it, and the hunger of my eyes could not be satisfied. It was the silvery bow of the angels of God, the arrows of which are meteors of Truth to disperse the hosts of ignorance and intolerance. Returning to the hotel, we sat around the table and looked into one another's faces. For the first time we were only five, and not only did we miss our many pilgrims, but also the beloved friends beyond the seas in Europe and America!

PORT SAID, EGYPT, JULY 6, 1913.

1. The Bahai heart is a cool fountain. 2. Another interview with the Indian editor and Abdul Baha's talk on education. 3. The Bahai Cause in Paris and Tablets for the friends.

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1. The Bahai Heart Is a Cool Fountain

The heart of a Bahai is a cool spring from which eternally gushes forth the pure water of divine knowledge and heavenly wisdom. This water irrigates the soil of humanity which is parched through the heat of dogmas and the fire of superstitions. Immediately after the distribution of this water, the flowers and anemones of love and affection become manifest and the nostrils of those who are remote and near are perfumed. Barren ground is changed into a luxuriant garden, sterile soil is made productive, bare trees are clad with verdant garments, the silent nightingales break forth into songs of gladness, the frost of the winter is transformed into winsome spring, and the stillness of death is changed into the buoyancy of life!

The Bahai heart is a garden. Its gardener is Abdul Baha. With his tender hands he plants roses and violets, carnations and tulips, chrysanthemums and lilies of the valley. The beauty of these ideal flowers is in their imperishableness and in the sweetness of their fragrance. Day and night he sows the seeds from his never-ending store. To him, the ground of every human heart is susceptible to Divine Cultivation. That is why he has so many gardens. He is the most successful spiritual gardener that the world has ever seen! He knows the composition of the soil and the chemical ingredients of every part, and he applies his indisputable knowledge with real success. Give to him the most barren, sterile patch of ground, and before long it is a mass of flowers and an orchard of fruitful trees.

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2. Another Interview with the Indian Editor, and Abdul Baha's Talk on Education

This morning the Beloved had a most interesting interview with the Editor of "Peeseh Akbar." The Editor propounded many questions concerning the return of the old glory of Islam, the education of the Eastern women, the matter of the veil for women, etc., to each one of which the Master gave detailed answer. The Editor was carried away with enthusiasm, because he found all his difficulties removed with such simple, yet eloquent expressions. He wrote down all the Master told him. He understands Persian quite well and is a progressive and intelligent journalist. He has been out of India for nearly seven months

and expects to go to Tunis, Europe and New York before returning to his native land. The Master has given him an introduction to the Persian Chargé d’Affaires in Washington, D.C., so that he may be shown all due respect and proper hospitality.

Toward the end of his talk to him, Abdul Baha stated that we must ever think of the education of the public and try our utmost to improve the conditions of the submerged classes and to lay a solid foundation for the erection of the Temple of human happiness. For the realization of this hope, divine Education is essential, and the inculcation of the idea of the oneness of the world of humanity is necessary. We must deal with all with loving kindness and be the real well-wishers of mankind. They are the sheep of God and God is the Universal Shepherd. He is compassionate to every member of His flock. He trains all, He feeds all. He protects all. We must free them from the old prejudices. We must confer upon them a new life, which is cordial love, good-fellowship, amity and unity, amongst the children of men. Our behavior and conduct must be an example to them. We

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must abandon all forms of prejudice, religious, racial, sectarian, and national. The object of all the religions has been the moral progress of the race. Only by walking in this path can the illumination of the world be assured, and the prosperity of mankind obtained.

3. The Bahai Cause in Paris and Tablets for the friends

Abdul Baha dictated several beautiful Tablets for Miss Sanderson, Mons. et Madame Richard, Mons. et Madame Bernard and Mr. and Mrs. Scott of Paris. He expressed hope for the future illumination of Paris and exhorted these friends to continue the spreading of the message.

PORT SAID, EGYPT, JULY 7, 1913.

1. Importance of correspondence between the friends. 2. Abdul Baha’s talk on the enemies of the Cause. 3. Arrival of Haji Niaz, the old patriarch. 4. Tablet to the editor of *Christian Commonwealth* in London on “Universal Peace.”

1. Importance of Correspondence between the friends

Often a letter from a far-off friend gives one good cheer and encouragement. This is part of that invisible chain which unites all

mankind; more especially is this the case with those who are working for a common Cause. Thousands of miles, oceans and lands may divide them, but when the word comes, the hearts are united, space and time annihilated and they live as though in one room, talking and conversing together and creating an atmosphere of uplift. This in itself is a sufficient reason why the Bahais from various countries and out-of-the-way places should correspond one with the other and keep

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themselves informed, not only of the progress of the Cause, which, is of course, the most important thing, but of other current events which would be of interest.

2. Abdul Baha's Talk on the Enemies of the Cause

This morning I was summoned to Abdul Baha's presence. Mirza Fazlollah was there. Packages of letters were all around the Master. He was writing, and now and then he raised his head and spoke, evidently following the thread of a long conversation. When I arrived he was saying that the Cause has many enemies! The Bahais must be very happy. The priests and the Ulemas, the Rabbis and the Mobeds are attacking the Cause right and left, but their attacks make it stronger and more powerful. We are invulnerable. We know no defeat. We are fighters to the very last. There are no deserters in the Grand Army of Abha! They are all good fighters! One of the missionaries in Beirut in his sermon cried out in wrath and hopeless anger: — "We always thought that the Bahais would be a good, wholesome influence for civilizing Islam alone, now they have started to civilize us and are trying to teach us by demonstrating a plan of propaganda, the like of which has never been seen since the time of Christ and His Apostles!" Ah, me! We have many enemies, bitter, dangerous and revengeful! But we defeat them through the Power of Love! This is our only weapon. The Ocean of the Cause is limitless, shoreless, depthless. One wave and all these foams will be scattered to the four corners of the sea. Abdul Baha did not look at the present disturbed conditions of the ocean. His heart was assured and confident as to the future of the Cause. No person, no matter how powerful, can shake the foundation of the Bahai Faith. It rests upon the Eternal Rock of Ages. After the departure

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of His Holiness Christ, there were only eleven disciples. These were of the humble class, deprived of any social distinction and yet their faith was often shaken, but behold the result of their work! Now after the departure of the Blessed Perfection there were more than one million

Bahais scattered all over the earth, each one faithful, sincere and self-sacrificing. Praise be to God, that singly and alone, without any helper or assistant, we are attacking the trained army of darkness and have come out of the field victorious!

Such is the sublime faith of Abdul Baha that must animate and quicken all the Bahais throughout the world.

3. Arrival of Haji Niaz, the Old Patriarch

In the afternoon we were called again. Haji Niaz had just arrived from Cairo. He has been many times in the presence of Baha-Ullah. He is a venerable Bahai, about eighty years old, and has lived in Egypt for the last thirty-five years. He is tall, has a long white beard and wears a turban like the Master. He has a gentle personality, and all the American Bahais who have passed through Cairo, have made it a point to see Haji Niaz. The Master loves him very much, and welcomed him with open arms. He talked with him about the believers in Cairo. Then the Master dictated several Tablets, including a long one on “Universal Peace” for the Christian Commonwealth. From this time on the Beloved may write more Articles for the Western press to be read by many thousands of people who cannot be reached otherwise.

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4. Tablet to the Editor of “The Christian Common wealth” on Universal Peace

“O THOU ESTEEMED KIND FRIENDS: —

“After journeying throughout the United States of America and the great capitals of Europe, I have returned to the East. I am most pleased and well satisfied with the result of this journey — because I met noble people and associated with worthy souls, who are the cause of honor and glory to the world of humanity. They are learned and wise, well informed about the realities of events, well-wishers of the human world, especially they are advocates of Universal Peace.

“In these days, the world of humanity is afflicted with a chronic disease. It is one of bloodshed, of the destruction of the divine edifice, of the demolition of cities and villages, of the slaughter of the noble youths of the world of humanity making children become orphans and women homeless. What calamity is greater than this? What crime is more heinous than this, what disease more dangerous, what folly more direful?

“Consider that in former days there were only religious wars, but now there are racial and political wars, fought at staggering expense

and sacrifice. A thousand times alas for this ignorance, for this bloodthirstiness and ferocity!

“I am pleased and grateful to the Societies which are organized in the west for the promotion of universal peace, with whose presidents, officers and members, I have frequently conversed. I hope that the sphere of their activities may from day to day, become enlarged, so that the lights of higher ideals may illumine all regions, the oneness of the world of humanity be proclaimed in the East and in the West, and men attain composure and

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well-being. These revered souls who are the servants and the promoters of the cause of universal peace shall ere long shine like brilliant stars upon the horizon of mankind, flooding all regions with their glorious lights. In the past century freedom was proclaimed and the foundations of liberty were laid in all the western countries. Praise be to God that the sun of justice has shone forth and the darkness of despotism and tyranny has disappeared.

“Now in this radiant century in which the world of humanity is being matured, it is assured that the flag of universal Peace shall become unfurled, waving over all the regions of the globe. This is the most great principle of Baha-Ullah, for the promotion of which all the Bahais are ready to sacrifice their possessions and their lives.

“Notwithstanding my bodily weakness and infirmity, I have traveled East and West for the last three years. In many temples I have cried out, and before many audiences raised my voice for the enlistment of their sympathy. I have declared the evils of war and explained the benefits of Universal Peace. I have elucidated the causes which lead to the honor and glory of the world of humanity and told of the ferocity and bloodthirstiness of the animal kingdom; I showed the defects of the world of nature and made an exposition of the means whereby the illumination of the world of humanity can fully be realized. I unfolded and disclosed the foundations of divine religion and proclaimed the teachings of His Holiness Baha-Ullah. I demonstrated the existence of God by irrefutable, rational proofs, and proved the reality of all the prophets of God. I gave utterance to my inmost conviction that the verity of the religion of God is the cause of the life of the world of humanity; it is divine civilization and pure enlightenment.

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“In giving the explanation of these principles, my object has been no other than the desire to promote Universal Peace. Praise be to God, I

have found hearing ears, observed seeing eyes, and discovered informed hearts. Therefore I am well pleased with this journey.

“But on the other hand the well-wishers of the world of humanity and the advocates of Universal Peace must make an extraordinary forward step, organize important international congresses and invite as delegates progressive and influential souls from all parts of the world; — so that through their wise counsels and deliberations this ideal of Universal Peace may leap out of the world of words into the arena of actual and practical demonstration. This question is of paramount importance and will not be easily realized, but we must take hold of every means until the desired result is obtained.

“Fifty years ago, whosoever talked about Universal Peace was not only ridiculed, but called visionary and utopian. Now, praise be to God! it has assumed such importance that every one acknowledges that this question of Universal Peace is the light and spirit of the age.

“I hope the noble leaders of the world of humanity who are the divine bestowals among the people, and the means of pacification among the nations, will arise with the utmost effort and with whole-hearted resolution extinguish this world-raging conflagration, especially now that the blood of innocent people and the cries of orphans are reaching to the very gate of heaven, while the harrowing sorrow of mothers penetrates souls with the irresistible force of human tragedy. Thus through the endeavors of these guardians of the rights of mankind, the world of creation may enjoy the repose of conciliation, the banner of Universal Peace be unfurled, the tabernacle of the oneness of the world of humanity be pitched, all mankind be gathered under its protecting shade and the

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shining star of eternal felicity and happiness of the world of humanity will dawn with the utmost brilliancy from the horizon of international comity, while the luminous arks of spiritual brotherhood of all races and tongues will illumine the united gathering of mankind with the ineffable lights of God throughout countless ages and cycles.

(Signed) “ABDUL BAHA ABBAS.”

PORT SAID, EGYPT, JULY 8, 1913.

1. What is the function of real religion? 2. Abdul Baha’s perennial cordiality and courtesy. 3. The joy of serving Abdul Baha. 4. There is a power in this Cause. 5. Haji Niaz and the story of the king and Ayaz related by him.

1. What is the Function of Real Religion?

Pure religion, free from dogmas, contributes to the happiness and progress of a people, suffering them to attain to the highest summit of democracy and brotherhood. Religion, hampered by the chains of fossilized traditions will keep mankind within limits of intolerance and prejudice. Religion must be as pure as the breeze of the early morn, as bright as the stars of heaven, as fragrant as the sweet flowers of spring, as clear as the limpid and cooling water of the fountain, as verdant as the delectable paradise, and as universal as the rays and the heat of the sun.

Therefore, when religion does not perform these functions, it is not fulfilling its mission. In this connection Abdul Baha, in a Tablet just revealed to the Sixth International Congress of Free and Progressive Christians and other Religious Liberals to be held in Paris, July 16-22, 1913, says:

“Thus religion, which was destined to become the

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cause of friendship, has become the cause of enmity. Religion, which was meant to be sweet honey, is changed into bitter poison. Religion, whose function was to be the illumination of the world of humanity has become the factor of obscurantism and gloom. Religion, which was to confer Everlasting Life has become the instrument of death.”

The duty of every one of us is, therefore, to spread the principles of Pure religion, in accordance with the needs of this age.

2. Abdul Baha's Perennial Cordiality and Courtesy

When one enters the presence of the Beloved, even if it is for the thousandth time, one feels quickened by the spirit of reverence, humility, and evanescence. When this morning I found myself, standing before him and heard his rich vibrant voice greeting me: “You are welcome! You are welcome!” I felt as though this was my first visit to him. He always receives every one, even his servants, with heavenly cordiality, a sweet smile, divine courtesy, and inimitable friendship, making them feel as though they were his own sons and daughters.

3. The Joy of Serving Abdul Baha

With his discourse, his remarks, and his teachings, he uplifts one's heart and makes one long to sacrifice everything in his path. Really to be with him for one hour is more glorious than a long association with all great men of the world; and to render service to him is better than serving kings. To win his good pleasure is a source of eternal joy; to

upraise the flag of his truth is more wonderful than all the wealth of this earth! May we all remain faithful to him and live and act in such a manner as

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to win his approval! If we continue to be firm in the Cause and pray every morn and eve for this pearl of great price our brows will be crowned with the diadem of God's Bestowals! The Cause of humanity must become a glowing fire in our hearts and not a flickering flame in our minds. It must become a flowing fountain, ever gushing forth from the innermost part of our beings! No obstacle must seem to us insurmountable and no difficulty discouraging. We must face all the problems, try to solve them and encourage others through deeds and sympathy! What if the whole world be against us! We may be in the minority — the Christ and His Apostles were in the minority 1900 years ago — but whenever God is on the side of the minority it will become the majority.

4. There Is a Power in This Cause

After dictating several wonderful Tablets Abdul Baha laid stress upon the fact of the great power existing in this Cause, a mysterious power, far, far, beyond the ken of men and angels. That invisible power is the source of all these outward activities. It moves hearts. It rends mountains. It administers the complicated affairs of the Cause. It inspires the friends. It dashes into a thousand pieces all the forces of opposition. It creates new spiritual worlds. This is a mystery of the Kingdom of Abha.

The Tablets were for Mrs. Harriet C. Cline, and Mrs. Mabel Rice-Wray of Los Angeles, Calif.; Miss Harriet Magee of New York, Mrs. Dixon of Washington, D. C., Miss Dorothy Hodgson of Paris and Miss General Jack of London.

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5. Haji Niaz and the Story of the King and Ayaz

Leaving the Beloved to his divine contemplation, I went to the hotel and there had a talk with Haji Niaz. I knew him before my trip to America several years ago. Through him I had received my first Tablet from the Master and because of this I love him very much. In fact everybody loves him. He is a veteran in the Cause. He related in his rich language, the story of a king and his ministers and courtiers.

Once upon a time the king went out to hunt with the members of his Cabinet, the Diplomatic Corps, the officials of the Court and a large

number of important personages, especially invited for this occasion. As the king intended to stay in the country, he ordered the Master of Ceremonies to take the Imperial Tent which was a wonderful work of art. On important occasions he had in past seasons caused the inner walls and ceiling of this royal tent to be decorated with hundreds of precious jewels. This year also he asked the Minister of Finance to take with him the casket of jewels. After many days of preparation, the Imperial Caravan, which was more than a mile long, set forth. The King headed the procession. After him came the Cabinet Ministers, the Diplomatic Corps, the courtiers and the guests. They had to travel six days before they could reach the hunting ground. After four days it so happened that the horse carrying the box of jewels lagged at the end of the Caravan. Three hours march, and the king looked around, when to his apparent surprise, he found no one with him except Ayaz, and observed the Caravan more than a half mile away, surrounded with dust and great confusion.

“What is this?” asked the king.

“Half an hour ago,” Ayaz humbly and serenely answered,

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“The casket of jewels fell from the back of the horse, and all of the precious stones were scattered on the ground, and in the wild scramble that followed, everyone forgot his duty, and tried to seize the jewels.”

The king did not move or speak to show that an extraordinary event had happened.

But after a few moments of reflection, he said “Ayaz!”

“Yes, my Lord.”

“Why didst thou not join them to get a portion of the spoils? Are they not precious jewels?”

“Yes, my Lord. These jewels are good for them, but I preferred to remain with thee. Thou art the greatest Jewel of my life!”

PORT SAID, EGYPT, JULY 9, 1913.

1. Our life in Port Said. 2. The death of a Bahai child and the ceremony of her burial. 3. The Christian and Mohammedan cemeteries. 4. Visiting Taki Menshadi's tomb in the cemetery. 5. Outline of the history of Taki Menshadi and his services to the Bahai Cause. 6. Menshadi's epistolary style and his peculiarities. 7. How to conduct Bahai meetings and the importance of public speaking. 8. Tablet by Abdul Baha regarding delivery of eloquent speeches.

1. Our Life in Port Said

My room has two doors which open on to the veranda and at night there is always a cool breeze from the Mediterranean which is not more than a thousand feet away. At midnight I get up and go out and listen to the music of the waves, played for the bright stars. To-night, the moon is shining. The voices of the Arabs chanting their Koran come to my ears. It is a weird, monotonous sound, but very soothing. My table is covered with

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papers and letters; Mirza Mahmoud, a few steps further, is writing and copying Tablets. My light consists of a dear little lamp. I am indeed happy.

2. The Death of a Bahai Child and the Ceremony of Her Burial

We have just returned from a memorial meeting, held on account of the death of Mirza Jalal Afshar's little daughter, he is one of the Port Said Bahais. We were invited at 5 P.M. to go to the funeral. Mirza Mahmoud chanted one of the prayers of Baha-Ullah then the little body was washed, wrapped in silk, and as there was no ring for her finger, the prayer was written on a piece of paper and put in the palm of her hand. The second ceremony, the Mohammedan, consisted of the coming of the Mullah, and the chanting of prayers and then they carried her body by hand to the near-by Mosque. All those who entered the Mosque left their shoes at the door. The body was laid on the floor, the tall Mullah before it. We stood behind the Mullah. He began then to read the prayer for the dead with the rapidity of lightning, and from time to time raised his two hands to his face and ears, which exercise was copied by us automatically, according to custom. All this, however, did not take more than five minutes. Several carriages were ready at the door of the Mosque, and as soon as we came out, Mirza Jalal, his brother, the Mullah, carrying with both hands the body of the child, and another relative got into one carriage, and we followed in the others. We were driven posthaste toward the cemetery, situated in the west of the city. The Mediterranean was on our right and always very near. On the way we observed many little hills of soft silk-like sand, formed by the winds. Often one observed the extremely soft sand trickling

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down from the upper part of the little hills exactly like the flowing of a tiny rivulet. It was a strange sight, and reminded one of the passing of our own lives.

3. The Christian and Mohammedan Cemeteries

First we drove by the Christian Cemetery, surrounded by a wall. We saw the cross in all forms — large and small — defying the crescent of the Mohammedan burying-place. I had to stand up in the carriage to see the Christian Cemetery. It was not as beautiful and flowery as the Cemeteries of America — because it is most difficult, in this land of sand, to raise trees and flowers — but it was fairly clean and one could see patches of green and there were flowers here and there. Finally, we reached the Mohammedan cemetery! It was very unclean. Shrieking Arab men and women were in evidence. The tombstones are made of wooden boxes, and I believe a spark of fire would burn the whole place. The dead girl was interred beside her grandfather, buried here a few years ago. The poor father was weeping and quite inconsolable. Haji Niaz, being the oldest man, tried to comfort him.

4. Visiting Taki Menshadi's Tomb in the Cemetery

Probably many of the American friends remember the faithful Taki Menshadi through whom the East and the West carried on a large and voluminous correspondence with Abdul Baha. He died a few years ago and his body is buried in this cemetery. I met him during my first visit to Acca, and from that time till the day of his death corresponded with him. I expressed a desire to visit his tomb. Yousoff directed us to it, and we offered a prayer. Unless one knows the place, it is not possible to

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find it, for there is no tombstone, a piece of wood without an inscription is its only mark. Haji Niaz knew Taki Menshadi well. The brief outline of his life is as follows:

5. Outline of Taki Menshadi's Life and His Services to the Bahai Cause

He was from Menshad, a little village near Yazd. In his early youth he had accepted the revelation, but had found the people of his own village extremely fanatical and dogmatic, and as the rabble threatened to kill him, finally left the place and moved to the city of Kerman. There he began to teach the Cause but when the Ulemas received news

of his presence, they sent word to him that he must leave the city immediately or they would take the law into their own hands. So with much difficulty and privation he came at last to the city of Shiraz. After some time, with the object of visiting Baha-Ullah, he made a pilgrimage to Mecca, and thus acquired the much-respected title of "Haji." From Mecca he went to Alexandria. It was before the Arabi Revolution. Here, with a number of other Persians, he engaged in business, but not being constitutionally fitted for that kind of work, and having always the hope of serving the Cause, and of beholding the Face of the Blessed Perfection, he one day left everything and went to Acca. After attaining the supreme desire of his heart, he made Acca his final home and there tried to seek congenial occupation. Little by little, his eagerness to serve the Cause, and his longing to devote his whole time to the Movement, was demonstrated, and Baha-Ullah from time to time gave him a packet of Tablets to mail to different parts of the Orient. When the believers from all over the world observed that they received their Tablets through him, they began directing

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their petitions in his care so that he might give them personally to Baha-Ullah and intercede for them. Thus, without any ceremonies or formalities, Taki Menshadi became the most well-known and talked of Bahai. Every one was eager to receive his letters. It has often been stated by those believers who are familiar with both Persian and English writings, that Taki Menshadi and Mr. Chas. Mason Remey were brothers in calligraphy, only Taki Menshadi was an older brother.

6. Menshadi's Epistolary Style and His Peculiarities

Menshadi's letters are well preserved by all the Persians. Haji Niaz tells me that he has 500 of them. I may have two hundred or more. These letters are masterpieces of news writing. He had a sense for bare facts and news and he knew that no one expected philosophy from him or the literary style of Oriental compliments. He had done away with all this form. It was really a radical departure from the established rule and many young people, seeing the wisdom of his course, followed his epistolary innovations. The letters generally opened with a few sentences about the Master's health and his family. This, to the Bahai world, was considered the most important part. Then the record of the arrival and departure of the pilgrims, their names, the events in Acca, a general outline of the progress of the Cause in other parts of the world, etc. They were indeed "newsy letters." After the ascension of Baha-Ullah the activities of the Cause increased a hundredfold, the number of the believers became considerably larger, the movement spread in America and Europe and the matter of correspondence with all these

heterogeneous elements became of the utmost importance. The Master looked about for an efficient experienced man, who could hold in his hand

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the helm of the ship of correspondence, and who with a cool head and infinite patience, could direct it through the tempestuous seas of difficulties. In the whole Bahai world, there was no one more fitting than Taki Menshadi, and he was selected for the position. For many years he worked untiringly, unceasingly, ever receiving assistance from the Supreme Concourse. In his early days at Acca and Haifa, his room became a general meeting-place for all the Bahais. "I will see you to-night at Menshadi's home at such and such an hour," was an oft quoted expression. The door was open to everyone. All pilgrims were welcome. He was always the first to go to the steamer to greet the newcomers or say farewell to those who were returning, laden with the spiritual gifts from the Presence of Baha-Ullah. Haji Niaz says: —

"Taki Menshadi was well known amongst all the Bahais for his fidelity, simplicity, loving disposition, truthfulness, sincerity and above all, for his ability to serve everyone with gentleness, courtesy, and marvellous patience. His room was furnished with simplicity. He always sat on the floor, surrounded with a pile of letters. He was often literally buried in them. He smoked a 'water-pipe' all the time, and an over-indulgence in this, finally caused his death."

When Sultan Abdul Hamid sent several commissioners to Acca and conditions became intolerable, the "Beloved" sent Taki Menshadi to Port Said — so that from this place he might carry on his work, it was in this town that he passed away at the age of sixty, serene and happy. The Master was much grieved when he heard the news, and after a while appointed Sayad Assadullah in his place, this position he has filled with credit to the Cause and to himself. I hear however, that Sayad Assadullah is going to leave for Russia to-morrow to teach the Cause. After the wonderful trip through America

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and Europe he will no doubt be confirmed in attracting many souls to the Kingdom of Abha! The Master, before long, will appoint another person to carry on his work.

7. How to Conduct Bahai Meetings, and the Importance of Public Speaking

This morning, I called on the Beloved. He had received packages of letters, some from America. There is one point which has been

brought to his attention of late. It is this: — In certain Assemblies in America a number of the believers desire to exclude all public speaking and to confine themselves to the reading of Tablets, etc. This is positively not in accordance with the Bahai Plan of teaching, nor with the instructions of Abdul Baha. To read Tablets, and the Holy Writings is only half of the aspect of the question; the other aspect is the delivery of eloquent addresses and fluent talks elucidating the spirit of the Cause. The Master's wish is always to encourage the believers to speak at the meetings. This I know is his will. When to-day the subject was again presented to him in a letter from America, he told me that he had written in many Tablets that the friends must speak at the meetings. We must encourage public-speaking, especially in those who have this talent. The Cause must be spread through eloquent, sincere addresses. We must unloose the tongue, spread the Fragrances of God and diffuse the words of God. We must present to the public the proofs and evidences of this Cause with a language of fire — so that souls may be exhilarated, and minds become full of tumult and of acclamation. With words of Love and illumination we must set the hearts aglow with this Fire of Divine Truth, and enkindle the spirits with this Power of the Kingdom. We must explain the Teachings orally, so that the consciousness of men may be stirred; then

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invisible inspirations will descend, Bounties from the Holy Spirit will be revealed, rays from the Sun of Reality will shine forth, Breezes from the Paradise of Abha will waft abroad and the Glad-tidings of the Kingdom spread throughout the world.

8. Tablet by Abdul Baha Regarding the Delivery of Eloquent Speeches

Then he revealed a Tablet on this subject and may issue others before long: —

“Thou hast written concerning the spiritual meeting. The spiritual meeting must be in the utmost state of ecstasy and tumult. Prayers may be recited, Tablets and verses read, eloquent speeches delivered and divine proofs explained. Then the audience may be encouraged and incited to enter the Kingdom of God, news received from different countries may be imparted and at the end they may repeat collectively a supplication.”

PORT SAID, EGYPT, JULY 10, 1913

1. Sayad Assadullah departs for Russia to spread the message. 2. His talk with Abdul Baha and his glowing resolution. 3. Farewell to him. 4. Abdul Baha's expectation to go to Ismailia. 5. Poems of Mr. Moxey read to Abdul Baha. 6. Abdul Baha speaks about the "Star of the West." 7. His talk on His tour in America.

1. Sayad Assadullah Departs for Russia to Spread the Message

Our traveling companion, and fellow-worker, Sayad Assadullah Gomi, who has been with Baha-Ullah and the Master for many years and traveled with the latter throughout America and Europe, left to-day for the Caucasus

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to teach the Cause. We will miss him. He has been like a father to us during our wanderings and although Mirza Mahmoud wrote the official report of the trip of the Beloved, yet Sayad Assadullah corresponded with the friends in small assemblies all over the East. They could not receive any direct news, were he not traveling with us. Now, detached from all else save God, alone, at the age of seventy-six, he faces the world. Carrying in his hand the Ideal Banner of the Cause, he leaves Port Said with a firm confidence and trust in Abdul Baha.

After the ascension of Baha-Ullah he made a trip through Persia, taught many souls, and was bitterly persecuted for his glorious faith. Last night and this morning he went to Abdul Baha and no doubt received his orders and heavenly benediction. To-day at one o'clock we were all gathered at the station, to bid him farewell. He goes first to Alexandria to meet Mirza Abul Fazl and then taking a ship, will sail for Constantinople.

2. Sayad Assadullah's Talk with Abdul Baha and His Glowing Resolution

I confess that nothing has so deeply stirred me in my whole Bahai career as the heavenly resolution of this old man to go alone into the world and teach the Cause! He himself went to the Master and begged for his permission. He said: "I have heard thy glorious proclamations from pulpits and platforms. I have seen wondrous scenes of the Majesty of Our Lord. I have hearkened to the divine words falling from thy blessed lips. My Lord! My cup is full to overflowing. I am an old man. I question if I can accomplish anything in thy cause, but I supplicate thee to let me try. I can contain myself no longer. I do not wish to flicker out on the couch of rest, but long to end on the battlefield. I would love to die as a soldier,

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fighting the good fight to the very last moment, and not as a pensioner.”

And so he went! With such a superhuman example of deeds and self-sacrifices does anybody wonder why the Bahai Cause has such stupendous power? All the friends in America and Europe who have met our dear brother Sayad Assadullah love him, and I know that from the depth of their hearts they will pray that the Lord may keep him and protect him many years yet for the service of His Cause, and as a witness to His Power.

3. Farewell to Sayad Assadullah

My beloved Sayad Assadullah farewell! You have been a loving companion and a faithful attendant to our Beloved! Your cheerful face and disposition shall never be forgotten! Your memory will shine in our inmost hearts as a radiant star! Your faith will be a glorious example for all the younger generations. During the years of your life you have served your God to the best of your ability! You have suffered and accepted much persecution in the Path of Baha! And now, although a veteran of many wars, you are again enlisted in the ranks of active work and are entering on a new campaign! Farewell!

4. Abdul Baha's Expectation to Go to Ismailia

For a few minutes we were privileged to see the Master in the morning. He said that the weather in Port Said had not agreed with him, and that he expected to leave tomorrow for Ismailia, a town about one hour and fifteen minutes from this city. He is going there for two or three days and if all goes well, he will send for us. Ahmad Yazdi and Khosro will accompany him.

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5. Poems of Mr. Moxey Read to Abdul Baha

In the afternoon Mirza Abdu'l Gasim Isfahani and Mirza Mahmoud, two merchant Bahais from Cairo arrived with their wives to see the Master. They accompanied me into his holy presence. He was dressed in spotless white and looked very beautiful. A large envelope containing the poems of Mr. Frank K. Moxey of 575 Riverside Drive, New York City, had just been received. The Master gave them to me to read. After looking over the title of each, I told him about them. He then asked me to translate the poem on the Báb, which I did immediately. He was most pleased and praised it very highly. The

poem is very eloquent and shows true inspiration. It is hoped that he will continue to write upon such soul-stirring ideals. A Bahai poet is needed in America. There are many in Persia.

6. Abdul Baha Speaks about the “Star of the West”

Then the Master took from the table the “*Star of the West*,” No. 5, and showed all those who were present the photograph of the Mashrekol Adkar Convention in New York City. He was very happy, saying: “Look at this photograph and wonder at the penetrating influence of the Bahai Cause.”

He expressed the hope that the “Star of the West” would, little by little, widen its field and become a power for good in the Cause and in humanitarian activities. Its Persian section is eagerly read by all the Bahais.

7. Talk on His Tour to America

Then, referring to his arduous tour through the United States, he mentioned that the confirmation and assistance

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of the Blessed Perfection were his companions; otherwise his body could never have stood all the difficulties of the voyage. He did not feel well, yet he worked. He traveled. He went there. He came here. He did not give any importance to his body. The wisdom of this was that the believers might see with their own eyes that he was rising above hardships, vicissitudes, sickness and troubles so that the Cause might prosper. Except for the diffusion of the Fragrances of God, he desired nothing. Except for service at the Threshold of Abha, he cared for nothing. His hope was to teach the Cause, to proclaim the Glad-tidings of the appearance of the Kingdom of Abha, and to advance the Cause of International peace and human brotherhood.

PORT SAID, EGYPT, JULY 11, 1913.

1. Abdul Baha’s departure for Ismailia. 2. He praises the American Bahais. 3. He tells the Persians how Fred Mortenson traveled from Minneapolis to Green Acre in order to see him. 4. The absence of Abdul Baha is noticed everywhere. 5. Extracts from tablets regarding his journey to the West. 6. The Power of the Bahai Cause.

1. Abdul Baha's Departure for Ismailia

Knowing that the beloved departs today for the city of Ismailia, we called on him about 6:30 A.M. The train leaves at eight, so we had ample time to have our last meeting. There were several pilgrims, who had just arrived, and to them he expressed his regrets. He will stay there two or three days. If the weather agrees with him, he will rent a house and send for us. If not, he will return, and go either to Alexandria or Ramleh.

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2. He Praises the American Bahais

He spoke about the innumerable meetings he had attended in America, and how he found in the believers a true spiritual sense, and a divine and heavenly attraction which made them strive upward; how the paeans of their glad praises were raised to the supreme Concourse; how they were making great efforts to bring into being the spiritual consciousness of mankind; how they were servants of the oneness of the world of humanity, the promoters of universal Peace and the standard-bearers of the spiritual brotherhood of man.

3. He Tells the Persians about Fred Mortenson Who Traveled from Minneapolis to Green Acre in Order to See Him.

Then he told the Persian friends about Fred Mortenson, a young Bahai from Minneapolis, who had been so anxious to meet the Master that he risked his life by concealing himself under the train till he reached Green Acre, Maine.

Praising the courage of this fine clean fellow Abdul Baha said that when he passed through Minneapolis he had again met him and his wife. Such events could not happen by the effort of any human being, but they are the confirmations of the Holy Spirit and the marvelous signs of this Dispensation!

About 7:45 the carriage was ready, the two small satchels of the Beloved were brought down, and after saying farewell to each one of us, he was taken to the station, Ahmad Yazdi and Khosro accompanying him.

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4. The Absence of Abdul Baha is Noticed Everywhere

We returned home saddened because we could not go with the master, but were consoled by looking forward to our reunion, which would not be long.

A young Persian Bahai, by the name of Aga Jamal, arrived yesterday from Haifa, and he will cook for us in our own apartment as long as we are here. He is a tall, quiet man, very willing to serve and to please everybody.

Mirza Ali Akbar, Haji Niaz and Mirza Fazlollah live in the hotel, but for their board and tea they come to us. Haji Niaz is a good conversationalist and knows many anecdotes and stories. While I was writing in my room, they had gathered around him on the veranda and he spoke to them about many things of interest. At noon we received a telephone message from Ahmad Yazdi assuring us of the master's safe arrival and that he is stopping at the Hotel Vaseteef. He is pleased with the place and is well.

In the afternoon we were again gathered on the veranda, drinking tea and talking about the Cause; Haji Niaz described his meetings with Prof. A. G. Browne [*sic*] of Cambridge University, when he was in Egypt, when the latter was invited to the house of Khorassani, where all day one of the Bahai teachers discussed with him aspects of the Cause referring to rational and scriptural proofs.

Let me translate for you a few extracts from recent Tablets: —

5. Tablet on Abdul Baha's Trip in America

“Less than a year, Abdul Baha raised the cry of ‘Ya Baha El Abha’ from his heart and soul as he crossed the mountains and deserts of that continent! In churches

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and meetings he imparted the Glad-tidings of the appearance of the Kingdom of God. With a resonant voice he announced the dawn of the Sun of Reality and explained divine proofs and evidences. With a heart and spirit overflowing with the Love of God he raised the New Wonderful Melody. Undoubtedly it will have great effect. Consider that the soul-imparting Melody of His Holiness Christ, (may my life be a sacrifice to him!) became effective and world-conquering after three hundred years, but in a short space of time the Song of the Kingdom of Abha has quickened the East and the West!

The future of the Cause in Stuttgart:

“I hope that the Ensigns of Divine Verses may be upraised in Stuttgart; the Fire of the Love of God be so enkindled as to set all those parts aglow, and that each one of those blessed souls may become as a bright candle, shedding the light of guidance in every direction.”

6. The Power of the Bahai Cause

“The Glad-tidings of the Kingdom of Abha can overcome hard stones and resuscitate dried bones. Like unto the downpouring of the vernal shower, they cause the growth of roses and hyacinths, jasmine and jonquils to come forth out of black soil! Likewise if the inhabitants of a city are submerged in the sea of materialism, it may take some time to awaken them, yet the Melody of the Kingdom of Abha shall finally quicken them; the cup of the Love of God will become full to overflowing, imparting a wonderful exhilaration to allay the thirst of the thirsty ones.”

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PORT SAID, EGYPT, JULY 12, 1913.

1. Telephone message from Ismailia about Abdul Baha. 2. Mirza Mahmoud prepares three volumes on the tour of Abdul Baha throughout Europe and America. 3. Tablet on the Glad-tidings of the Kingdom to the believers in Kerman, Persia. 4. How to deliver Bahai Public address. 5. How great Movements have advanced. 6. About Abdul Baha's American tour to a Persian Bahai.

1. Telephone Message from Ismailia about Abdul Baha

To-day at noon we received a telephone message from Ismailia giving us news of the master's improved health and wishing us to give his greeting to each one of the friends. Two Bahais arrived from Cairo, not knowing that the Master was not here. We entertained them to the best of our ability with stories of the spiritual Conquest of the Beloved in the West. As one of them had only two days leave from his work, we got the Master's consent by telephone, that he might be permitted to see him in Ismailia.

Everybody was here as usual talking about the Cause; Haji Niaz told us about some incidents in the life of Baha-Ullah. Toward evening we walked to the quay where the Casino Palace Hotel, the small municipal garden and DeLessep's statue are situated. We observed great preparations for festivities and upon inquiry were told that the French were celebrating their Independence Day, 14th of the month.

As there is a strong element of French in the Canal Company, they seem desirous to impress the Egyptians with their patriotism, and they are making very elaborate preparations. In Cairo they celebrate this Feast on a much larger scale.

2. Mirza Mahmoud Prepares Three Volumes on the Tour of Abdul Baha Throughout Europe and America

The last few days Mirza Mahmoud is preparing Abdul Baha's addresses from the time he sailed from Alexandria to America. These addresses will form the first volume; the second will be his diary in Persian of the journey, and the third the translation of the articles which appeared in the principal papers and magazines of America and Europe. Once these books are published and circulated in the Orient, they will have great effect in furthering the Cause of the Kingdom of Abha!

3. Translation of a Tablet to the Believers in Kerman, Persia

The following is a Tablet to the believers of Kerman, Persia:

"O ye kind friends ! A letter was received from Kerman giving you utmost praise and saying, the friends of God are like unto flames of fire and radiant lamps of the Kingdom; they are as fire-temple of spirituality and brilliant stars of heaven. This letter has become the cause of happiness to my heart, for praise be to God, the Fire of the Love of God is set aglow in Kerman, the veils which have covered their eyes are burned away; the believers are attracted and stirred into gladness, and the friends are in a state of supplication and invocation. Therefore, I prayed and implored at the Divine Threshold and wished for the beloved ones a cup overflowing with the Grace of God, so that, in Kerman, the day of resurrection may be set up, the hearts become exhilarated, the city moved by the resounding voice, and the world stirred with the power of the Holy Spirit!

"Praise be to God! The Eastern horizon is luminous

and the nostrils of the people of the West are perfumed. The splendor of the luminary of the East has cast a reflection upon the West which has illumined it. The Voice of the Almighty is raised in these regions and the Pure Religion of God is being promoted. Ere long it shall yield important results and the ensign of 'Ya Baha El Abha' shall be lifted so high as to wave over all the continents."

4. How to Deliver Bahai Public Addresses

"The basis of this divine call (teaching and delivering addresses) must be the oneness of the world of humanity; so that religious fanaticism, sectarian bias, racial prejudice and political rivalry may be removed, so that all mankind may enter under the uni-colored tent of

the oneness of the world of humanity, and hearts may affiliate with each other, souls be attracted and East and West embrace each other. This must be the basis of your addresses in public meetings.”

5. How Great Movements Have Advanced

“All great movements have advanced through altruism, selflessness, and self-sacrifice and not merely through an interchange of public opinions. It is my hope that all may arise with the greatest power to serve this most important Cause (Universal Peace) and become the means of the welfare of the world of humanity.”

6. About Abdul Baha’s American Tour to a Persian Bahai

“It is nearly two years and a half since I have been a wanderer over mountains and deserts and a traveler over seas and lands. The journey was extended to many

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climes.... The penetrative power of the Holy Cause has stirred the columns of the world. In many cities of America the Divine Call was raised. Likewise in the countries of Europe. In numerous churches, clubs, groups and Universities of America the Glad-tidings of the Kingdom of Abha were explained precisely with resonant voice, and no one arose to make opposition. They listened most attentively and afterwards expressed their pleasure. Ere long this Call shall yield glorious results and will fill the world with its fruits.”

PORT SAID, EGYPT, JULY 13, 1913.

1. Tablet of Abdul Baha on progress. 2. Another Tablet on personal illumination. 3. The day of the invisible bounty of the Kingdom of Abha. 4. Mrs. J. Stannard may go to India to teach the Bahai Cause.

One of the believers, Mirza Abul Gasem Esphahani coming from Cairo a few days ago brought with him a package belonging to Sayad Assadullah. This package among other things contained three precious volumes of Tablets from the pen of Abdul Baha. They are copies of very old letters, some of them addressed to the believers in America. Herein I will translate a few. The following may have been revealed to one of the American Assemblies and probably is sixteen years old: —

1. Tablet of Abdul Baha on Progress

“He is El Abha!

“O YE FRIENDS OF THE BLESSED PERFECTION!

“This century is the century of attraction. This Cycle is the Cycle of His Highness the Lord of Lords. The

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East and West are in commotion and acclamation and the North and South in ecstasy and tumult. The world is progressing with marvelous acceleration and the realm of existence is growing and developing with an eternal velocity and at geometric ratio. Mankind, like unto a suckling babe is being trained in the Arms of Providence, and humanity like unto a newly planted tree in the ground of the world, is waxing in stature and size, becoming more beautiful and lovely through the downpour of the rain of Grace. The greater the exertion, the more the descent of the divine Bestowal. The more we ascend heavenward, the greater will be the realization of universal progress from all directions.

“Therefore, O ye friends of the Ancient Beauty and ye beloved ones of the Most Great Name! Make an effort, so that in all the grades of Human existence, whether spiritual or material, ye may make extraordinary advancement. The Mercy and Favor of His Highness, the One is with us!

(Signed) “ABDUL BAHA ABBAS.”

Here is another Tablet which was revealed probably thirteen years ago to (Mrs. Helen G. Goodall), a believer in San Francisco, California, the contents of which shows how the Master’s prayers are fulfilled in her behalf: —

2. A Tablet by Abdul Baha on Personal Illumination and Guiding Others to the Truth

“O thou spiritual pearl and leaf stirred by the wafting of the Breeze of God! Verily with a heart overflowing with love and affection I perused thy letter which was an eloquent expression of thy praise for the love of God, of thy firmness in the Covenant of God, thy gladness

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through the Fragrances of God and thy great exertion in the guidance of the servants of God!

“Verily I supplicate God to confirm thee with the Breaths of the Holy Spirit, to dilate thy breast with the Zephyrs wafting from the direction of the Paradise of Abha and to suffer thee to become a light from which radiates the rays of supplication, invocation and prayers toward the Kingdom of God: — so that thou mayest become a Cause of the awakening, mindfulness and quickening of the servants and maid servants of God, and a means of giving them of the wine of knowledge and of summoning them to the Kingdom of the Merciful with evidences and proofs....”

I will close this day by the translation of another wonderful Tablet:

3. The Day of the Glorious Bounties of the Invisible Kingdom of Abha.

“He is El Abha!

O YE REAL FRIENDS!

“This day is the day of the Glorious Bounties of the Invisible Kingdom of Abha and of the tumultuous waving of the seas of the Inexhaustible Bestowals of the Supreme Countenance. The rays of his effulgences have dawned from all directions and the breezes of His generosity and compassion are wafting from all parts. The doors of His kingdom are flung wide and the verses of His Omnipotence are spread abroad. His ancient Grace like a mighty torrent is flowing with great impetuosity, and His manifest light is apparent from the horizon of Certainty like unto a shining moon.

“But these servants must appreciate the value of this

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Eminent Grace and consider this sublime generosity as the most great Bounty; — so that we may become its signs and be illumined with its rays. When vernal showers descend [*sic*] upon good and pure soil, flowers will grow therein and the black earth will become a delectable Paradise.”

4. Mrs. Stannard May Go to India and Teach the Bahai Cause

Mrs. J. Stannard, an English Bahai, is back in Port Said and may stay with us for several days. I had a most pleasant conversation with her about the progress of the Cause in Germany and England. The Master may send her to India. She is a very active and energetic worker

and no doubt will be able to spread the Bahai movement very effectively.

PORT SAID, EGYPT, JULY 14, 1913.

1. The French Day of Independence in Port Said. 2. Abdul Baha's life in Ismailia. 3. What constitutes everlasting Fame.

1. The French Day of Independence in Port Said

The European part of Port Said is decorated with thousands of Japanese lanterns, the French flag is seen everywhere, and everybody seems to enter into the spirit of celebration on this National Feast of the Republic of France. After sunset the principal avenues, the French Consulate, the Banks, firms and buildings are lighted up by electricity. The street in which the Eastern Exchange, Continental and Casino Palace Hotels are built, is a riot of music promenaders, Arabs, Greeks, Italians, English,

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German, and French. Everybody is out to have a good time and to see the sights. The avenue from one end to the other is wired, and a roof is constructed of Japanese lanterns. The trees also bear such luminous fruits. During the day there have been many public functions and receptions in the Consulate, in the government house and in the Canal Company headquarters. Last night there was a grand Ball in the Casino Palace Hotel. About eight o'clock we left home, our destination being the Municipal Park. The Casino Palace Hotel is so built that it fronts the Mediterranean and on the other side faces the Park. The hotel was illumined from top to bottom with electric festoons and it was indeed a glorious sight to thousands of Arabs, men, women and children — who had come to see what wonders these “strangers” have wrought! The weather was cool, a brisk breeze was wafting from the sea. The heaven was clear and the soft silver rays of the Queen of night streamed down upon a merry-making population. The search-light, built upon a high pillar to guide ships into the harbor, revolved round and round, sending its powerful rays into the remote distances of the sea. At nine o'clock a cannon boomed forth, and the display of fireworks was started. More than twenty coal barges were tied together at the wharf. People crowded near the harbor. The fireworks were on these barges and hundreds of rockets ascended to the skies displaying many colors. Some strange, fantastic contrivances, were displayed on the water, which ran hither and thither like lizards. For one hour and a half the

display of pyrotechnics continued, showing all the original devices and magical works that a French mind can invent.

As soon as the fireworks started, three ships illuminated from top to bottom, came into view from the other side of the port. These were followed by more than one

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hundred boats in an orderly line, all brilliantly lighted with electricity. It was really a very imposing naval procession, fairy-like, picturesque and beautiful. Beside these boats there were several hundred others belonging to the merry-makers, afloat on the calm sea. Now and then the air brought to our ears the sweet notes of a mandolin or guitar.... It was half past eleven when we returned home!

2. Abdul Baha's Life in Ismailia

This morning Ahmad Yazdí returned from Ismailia and brought good news of the Beloved. The first two days he had not felt well, but now he is resting better. While there he had met an old friend of his, a famous doctor who had prescribed a regime of rest and diet to be followed strictly. The Master has decided to remain a week; if the weather agrees with him he will send for all of us, if not, he will return and then may go to Ramleh. He has sent for Mirza Fazlollah to go to him as soon as possible. So he left at seven P.M., and will be in Ismailia at 8:15 P.M.

To-day I will translate another Tablet to an American Bahai:

3. What Constitutes Everlasting Fame

“O THOU WHO ARE ATTRACTED BY THE LIGHTS SHINING FROM THE KINGDOM OF GOD!

“Verily I have read thy eloquent letter and wonderful epistle expressing thy excessive joy through the divine Glad-tidings, and reflecting the susceptibilities of thy conscious and spiritual emotions through the Bestowals of His Majesty the Lord of mankind. Blessed art thou for this Bounty! Gladness be unto thee for this Gift! Rejoicing be thine for this confirmation. Happiness be

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unto thee for this assistance. Ere long thou shalt behold with eyes of beatitude the signs of success and prosperity because of thy firmness in the Love of God, thy steadfastness in the Covenant of God, thy superlative attraction to God, thy unwavering perseverance in the

diffusion of the Fragrance of God and thy source of joyousness through the Glad-tidings of God!

“Know thou, verily I say unto thee that the condition of this mortal world, even if it is the kingship of the whole expanse of the Globe, is ephemeral. It is an illusion. It ends in nothing, neither does it contain any results nor in the estimation of God is it equal to the wing of a mosquito. Where are the kings and the queens? Where are the palaces and the empresses? Where are the imperial thrones and jeweled crowns? Where are the mighty rulers of Persia, Greece and Rome? Verily their palaces are in ruin and desolation, their thrones destroyed, and their crowns cast in the dust. But any one of the maid-servants of God who has arisen in the diffusion of the Fragrances of God, serving the Kingdom of God, summoning the people to the Word of God, eternally her signs shall be widely spread and handed down through centuries and cycles; her dawn shall ever be luminous; her star always shining; her flag continually flying; her station divinely glorified; her crown scintillating; her message living; her fame immortal; her voice resonant; her spirit in the apex of the Kingdom; and her effulgence in the horizon of the Realm of Might. I beg of God to make thee one of these maid-servants.”

PORT SAID, EGYPT, JULY 15, 1913.

1. The Message of Abdul Baha to the Unitarians. 2. Abdul Baha's conversation with Bishop Birch of New York City. 3. Some churches are free from prejudices.

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4. Abdul Baha expresses the desire to visit the Shrine of his father in Acca. 5. Abdul Baha praises the faith of the Germans.

In the Persian notes of our brother Mirza Mahmoud I find a glorious message to the Unitarians of America which I am sure was not translated at the time: It is the second day after the Beloved's departure from Alexandria, March 26 or 27th, 1912. An American woman expresses her interest in the Cause, saying that she is a Unitarian and requesting the Master to send a message to them in the United States. Then Abdul Baha utters the following words: —

1. The Message of Abdul Baha to the Unitarians

“Convey to the Unitarians my loving greetings and say; The most exalted aim in this world is the promotion of the Love of God and the

establishment of good fellowship and unity between the people. This is the signal distinction between man and beast. When thou reaches America, announce to the Unitarians: —

Glad-tidings! Glad-tidings! The Sun of Universal Love hath dawned;

Glad-tidings! Glad-tidings! The Banquet of friendship and divine association is spread.

Glad-tidings! Glad-tidings! The Banner of the Kingdom of God is unfurled!

Glad-tidings! Glad-tidings ! The heavenly Spring hath appeared.

Glad-tidings! Glad-tidings! The Cloud of spiritual Grace is pouring down!

Glad-tidings! Glad-tidings! The trees of the orchard of humanity are verdant and abloom.

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Glad-tidings! Glad-tidings! The Herald of the Kingdom hath become manifest.

Glad-tidings! Glad-tidings! The prophecies of the holy Books have been fulfilled.

Glad-tidings! Glad-tidings! The age of human brotherhood is dawning upon mankind!

Glad-tidings! Glad-tidings! The Century of light and Universal Peace hath come!”

As I read these vital words it seemed to me that they were a most significant prelude to the enthusiastic reception given to him by the Unitarians of America at their Convention in Boston, in the Tremont Temple.

Another beautiful talk that I may be permitted to translate here from the Persian notes is the Beloved’s words to Bishop Birch of New York, who came to call on him at the Hotel Ansonia on the sixth day of his arrival. After a preliminary conversation he said:

2. Abdul Baha’s Conversation with Bishop Birch of New York City

“Praise be to God that stupendous material developments are obtained in this country; but material civilization alone does not safeguard the progress of a nation; because through material civilization, dynamite, Krupp guns, projectiles and Mauser’s rifles are invented: thus the infernal instruments of human fratricide are multiplied and constantly perfected. Therefore, natural civilization fosters both good and evil. All this warfare, and bloodshed, and all this feverish multiplication of military armaments are the results of material civilization. When material civilization joins hands with spiritual

civilization, then it will be perfect. In former times a wooden box may have protected your objects from the thief. But

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now safes with their complicated keys and signs do not daunt the robbers. Consequently just as ‘good’ is advanced through material civilization, ‘evil’ has taken the same pace. Earthly civilization must become the handmaid of heavenly civilization. Natural civilization is like unto the body of man. If the body is animated by the spirit, it is alive, otherwise it is a corpse which in time will become decomposed.”

The Bishop expressed his pleasure and delight at hearing the above words of truth. The Master replied:

3. Some Churches are Free from Prejudices

“I am likewise very grateful to you. Praise be to God that your churches are free from prejudice. They are not so creed-bound as to be unable to breathe. Many Christian Churches in Europe are as yet extremely dogmatic, but I have already spoken in churches belonging to your denomination. The congregations consisted of most delightful and intelligent people. This is a great distinction. I love you with all my heart and soul. My chief aim is to remove the present misunderstanding between the nations of the East and the West: — so that we may express love toward each other and promote the essentials of heavenly civilization. I hope that such a confirmation may be vouchsafed, so that we may become united.”

The Bishop said: —

“Up to this time no one has come from the East to the West with such power, such lucid teachings and such exalted aims. Therefore I am very grateful to you and most pleased to have met you.”

The third contribution for to-day is going to be a part of a touching Tablet revealed by the Beloved to a friend in Acca, on the fourth of this month. He says in part:

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4. Abdul Baha Expresses Desire to Visit the Shrine of His Father in Acca

“Truly I say, the extreme desire of my heart and soul is to be present at the Court of Baha-Ullah, so that I may perfume my face and my locks with the dust of the Holy Threshold. It is now three years since Abdul Baha has been deprived of this Favor and has remained too far to become the recipient of the dawning lights of that brilliant spot. Day and night he has suffered from regret and deprivation. It is hoped

from His Highness the Desired One, that this weak body which through the effect of the long journey has come to the verge of complete disintegration, may before the cessation of breath, become so assisted as to throw itself upon the Dust of the Holy Threshold. May this servant attain to a new life, illumine his eyes, and transform his heart and spirit into a rose garden and meadow, start on his journey to reach the Abode of the Friend and haste from this to another world.”

5. Abdul Baha Praises the Faith of German Bahais

In a Tablet revealed on the same date to Mirza Ali Akbar he says about Germany: —

“In short, Germany shall become illuminated; because its inhabitants are religious and not submerged in the sea of materialism. Those souls who travel along the path of nature are like unto dead people; the breath of life does not play upon them to any effect. Praise be to God that you have become assisted in service and that you have ignited the candle of guidance before the eyes of all. It is hoped that most weighty results may become apparent. The German believers are in a state of real

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enkindlement; firm and steadfast in the Cause of God; therefore their influence will be very great.”

To-day a letter was received from Mirza Moneer who is in Ismailia, giving the news of the well-being of the Master, and saying that he will soon send for us; he is looking for a house large enough to accommodate all. In the morning we called on Ahmad Yazdi at his store; in the afternoon Madame Stannard came to see us and we talked a great deal about the probability of the Beloved’s trip to India. She has lived in that country for a long time, and is thoroughly familiar with the situation. To-day several letters arrived from America imparting cheer and happiness. Through the golden chain of correspondence hearts are united even if seas and lands separate them.

PORT SAID, EGYPT, JULY 16, 1913.

1. The scope of Abdul Baha’s talks in California.
2. The program of a day’s activity in Port Said.
3. Permission comes to visit Abdul Baha in Ismailia.
4. What is real friendship?
5. A prayer for the friends.
6. For me to be silent, for you to be singing.

1. The Scope of Abdul Baha's Talks in California

Now that we are temporarily separated from the Beloved, we occupy our time with the past, working upon the notes of his American tour. I am copying all the Master's public and private talks given in California, so that when I am with him, he may correct them for future publication. The Master's talks in California reached the high water mark of his trip, showing the wonderful versatility of his divine mind. During those days, a

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flood of teachings was poured from his tongue, irrigating the soil of hearts.

2. The Program of a Day's Activity in Port Said

Mirza Mahmoud is busy writing the diary of Abdul Baha's tour in America. Mirza Ali Akbar copies the Tablets and addresses of the Beloved. He is eager to have these heavenly words to read in the Bahai meetings which he will attend on his way to Persia. For the present our group consists of only these three persons. We live very quietly. Seldom anything or anybody disturbs the peacefulness of our abode. I get up at five o'clock and after reading a few prayers, go out on the veranda and look at the Mediterranean, sometimes perfectly calm, and again rough. Then I work for an hour or two, till my friends are awake. Mirza Jamal, our Bahai cook, has by this time prepared our breakfast, which consists of tea, bread and cheese. Then we work again till noon, and now and then one of us may go upon some errand or to visit Ahmad Yazdi's store to receive the news. For lunch, often we have bread, cheese, cantaloupe or watermelon, and if not these, "abgousht" or "Persian stew." Our friends take a nap. I work. At four we have tea. At six we take a walk and call on Madame Stannard at the Eastern Exchange Hotel. Generally we are back by eight. Between nine and ten we have our supper, sometimes rice or meat. Then we sit on the veranda for about an hour, speaking about the Cause, and enjoying the moonlit night, then we return to our room to work until eleven or twelve o'clock, after which we retire. This is the program of our life for the present. A great contrast to our strenuous activities in the West.

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3. Permission Comes to Visit Abdul Baha in Ismailia

This morning Mirza Fazlollah returned from Ismailia with a package of Tablets from the Beloved for me to translate. On the envelope the Master writes with his own hand:

“Translate these Tablets immediately. We hope soon to rent a house. As soon as it is prepared, we will send for you.”

This message danced before my eyes and I started on my translations. Our happiness was complete when Mirza Ali Akbar brought us permission to leave for Ismailia to-morrow, to spend the day. The anticipation of meeting the Master gave us a new vigor and all day and night we walked on a cloud of joy and happiness... Mirza Fazlollah has received permission to leave to-morrow for Persia.

The following is the translation of a Tablet revealed for the Persian believers on July 4th, which may be of interest: —

4. What Is Real Friendship

“O YE FRIENDS OF ABDUL BAHA! Material friendship is not permanent; for every kind of love which is not purely for the sake of God is ended in hatred. Amity which is not for the sake of the Lord, changeth into enmity. But the divine friends are the faithful ones. They are the consolation of the heart and the peace of my spirit. They are spirit embodied, love personified; sincerity incarnated, loyal friends and staunch lovers. Therefore they are the cause of the happiness of the heart and the soul.

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5. Prayer for the Friends

“During this long journey, whenever the memory of the friends crossed my mind, hardships were forgotten, inconceivable joys were realized and vicissitudes and inconveniences changed into composure and tranquillity. Then I supplicated toward the Kingdom of Glory, saying:

“ ‘O thou kind Beloved! Be thou the associate of the hearts and the souls of the friends; send them at every moment dew from the sea of thy bestowals; exhilarate them every second with new wine and cause them to become intoxicated with thy cup; so that they may take the divine goblet in their hands, give the choice wine to the seekers and confer the exhilaration of the wine of ‘Am I not your Lord?’ upon the wooers!’

6. For Me to Be Silent, For You to Be Singing

“In short, during this trip you were all with me and were visible before my sight. In my wanderings, the Melody of this divine bird

reached the apex of heaven, and the cry of “Ya Baha El Abha” was heard by the people of the world. Now it is the turn of the believers of God. I will be silent and they must sing with acclamation and joy: — so that they may awaken the heedless ones.

(Signed) “ABDUL BAHÁ ABBAS.”

PORT SAID, EGYPT, JULY 17, 1913.

1. A Prayer for illumination. 2. The Dawn of the Sun of Reality. 3. People are heedless. 4. The duty of the followers of Truth. 5. Our journey to Ismailia. 6. Visit to Abdul Baha in the hotel room. 7. Formation of habits. 8. Baha-Ullah’s life in the prison barrack of

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Acca. 9. Abdul Baha’s room in prison. 10. The fleas of Acca. 11. Abdul Baha leaves for Alexandria. 12. Ismailia is a clean city.

To begin this day with thanksgiving on my lips and in my heart, I will translate a Tablet revealed by the Master many years ago to the Persian believers. It is from one of the books of Sayad Assadullah.

1. A Prayer of Illumination

“I praise Thee, O Thou Remover of Sorrows, Overlooker of faults, Rejoicer of hearts and Illuminator of faces! Verily to the beloved ones at the door of Thy oneness, the worthiest amongst Thy people, the noble ones amongst Thy creatures and the righteous ones in the congregation of Thy servants, are evidences of the manifestation of Thy singleness. Verily Thou hast chosen Thy believers for the sake of Thy Love, elected them for Thy Knowledge, appointed them as the custodians of Thy Mysteries and exalted them above all Thy other servants, under all circumstances, and conditions.

“O Lord! O Lord! Illumine their eyes with the beholding of Thy Lights, refine their consciences with the appearance of Thy Mysteries and enlighten their hearts with the traces of Thy Names! Suffer them to become the signs of Thy Unity, and the Banners of Thy singleness, the stars of Thy Graces and the candles of Thy Assemblages; so that they may arise to serve Thee and be steadfast in Thy worship. Verily Thou art the Merciful, the Giver, the Mighty and the Generous.

2. The Dawn of the Sun of Reality

“O ye kind friends of Abdul Baha ! It is night. The impenetrable darkness hath covered all regions, but the

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hearts of the yearning ones are illumined and enlightened by the rays of the Bestowal of the Clement. The effulgence of the Morn of guidance is manifest and clear and the brilliant rays of the Sun of Reality are diffused throughout all Continents. The verses of the divine Majesty of the Most Great Name are read by all the people in all tongues; and through explanations, the evidences and proofs of the Blessed Perfection are demonstrated. The Melody of Holiness ascends to the ethereal sphere and the songs of Unity descend from the Kingdom of Singleness. The Breezes of the most eminent Guidance confer life, and the sweet Fragrances of the Paradise of Abha perfume this world and the world beyond.

3. People Are Heedless

“Notwithstanding this effulgence and this diffusion of the Fragrance of the Rose garden of the Covenant, innumerable souls are yet afflicted with the sleep of negligence. Their eyes are veiled and their nostrils do not inhale its fragrant perfume. What negligence, what inadvertence, what ignorance and what heedlessness is this! Verily this is the condition of the deprived ones in this Most Great Dispensation!

4. The Duty of the Followers of Truth

“But as regards you, turn your faces toward the Kingdom of Abha and join your voices in anthems of thanksgiving and glorification! — that, praise be to God, the Sun of Unity hath so illumined the hearts of the righteous ones as to cause them to become the envy of the dawning-places of light and this is only through His all-comprehending Mercy and special Favor! Its source is: —

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‘He chooseth for His Grace whomsoever He willeth,’ and its mainspring is: — ‘This is through the Bounty of your Lord, He bestoweth on whomsoever He desireth.’

“Therefore, appreciate the value of the Most Great Bestowal of this ineffable Grace, and of this manifest Favor and Bounty which has been given to all the inhabitants of the world; so that by this appreciation and thankfulness the Mercy of the Peerless Lord may be increased, the Ancient Grace be revealed in the hearts and souls and spiritual outpouring be vouchsafed.

“Upon ye be greeting and praise!
(Signed) “ABDUL BAHÁ ABBAS.”

5. Our Journey to Ismailia

As we were leaving this morning for Ismailia we arose early. The train left at eight o'clock. In our company there were several other Bahais with their families who planned to stop over at Ismailia, to meet the Master and then continue upon their journey to Cairo. All along the road the mighty Canal joining the two seas was visible, and now and then great ships passed before our eyes. On the other side was the barren desert with its lack of vegetation. We also passed by a great salt lake, the whiteness of which dazzled us in the light of the sun. The train stopped at many stations, allowing passengers to get on or off as the case might be. By ten o'clock we reached Ismailia. It has a small, up-to-date station. As it is practically inhabited only by Europeans, it is one of the cleanest spots in Egypt. It has, of course, an Arab quarter, but in comparison with other Arab quarters I have seen this one is quite clean. Ismailia is a new town.

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6. Visit to Abdul Baha in the Hotel Room

As soon as we reached the station we hurried to the hotel of J. Bosta. The first persons we met were Mirza Moneer and Khosro, who have been fortunate enough to be with the Master. One of them conducted us to room 13 where the Beloved was living. When we entered we found Abdul Baha in bed in a weakened condition. He welcomed us and inquired about our health. One of us had brought a package of letters and after a few minutes it was delivered to him. For a while he read them. There was one from an American believer (Miss A. Boylan) announcing the sad news of the death of her mother; another from India welcoming him to Egypt and inviting him to visit the former country. There were many more letters and cablegrams which for the present were left unread.

7. Formation of Habits

He raised himself and sat up in bed. He complained of the hardness of the cushions, saying, that when he was in Paris one of the believers had brought him a soft cushion and had urged him to put it under his head. He had become accustomed to it, and as there was none in the present hotel his neck consequently suffered pain all night. He said it was very bad to become the slave of habit, and that when he was young he often had a brick or a piece of rock to rest upon and slept soundly.

Haji Niaz said he had a soft pillow with him and begged to be allowed to go out and bring it. Abdul Baha would not have it, because he wished to get accustomed again to his old habits. One must never habituate himself to anything the absence of which may affect one's comfort.

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8. Baha-Ullah's Life in the Persian Barrack of Acca

Then he related the story of Baha-Ullah's cruel incarceration in the barracks of Acca, substantially as follows:

When two years had passed, a regiment of soldiers was assigned to Acca. Of course there was only one place for them to live and that was the barracks. Therefore they had no alternative other than to turn out the Bahai prisoners. At the time there was an inn in Acca which was inhabited by different people. In after years this inn became an hospice for the pilgrims. Abdul Baha went to the innkeeper, stating, that inasmuch as the Bahais were numerous and included several families, he desired to rent the inn and if it were possible for the present inmates to lodge themselves elsewhere.

The innkeeper agreed to accept this offer, but when after a few days he came back to draw up the papers and to sign the document, the Master observed that one of the rooms was still inhabited.

"Who is here?" he asked.

"It is the German Consul," the innkeeper replied.

"He must leave the premises, otherwise I will not rent the place. It is impossible for an outsider to live here."

The innkeeper looked at him with ridicule and contempt.

"Ha, ha!" he laughed. "And they say you are a prisoner! You talk to me as though you are my lord and master. What do you think, Mr. Prisoner! Do you expect to get an exclusive palace in this prison town? Not much, not much. This man is the German Consul. I cannot drive him out." To which Abdul Baha replied: "There are many palaces in the outside world! If a prisoner can find a palace in a prison town, he has indeed accomplished something."

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9. Abdul Baha's Room in Prison

Finally the German Consul left of his own accord, only requesting the use of the room for two hours a day so that he might attend to his official duties, to which proposition Abdul Baha consented cheerfully. Then the Bahais began to repair the rooms, but one of them had to be left untouched because their funds were exhausted. The rooms were

then assigned to the various families and friends, and Abdul Baha chose the unrepaired one for himself. This room was so damp that grass had grown on the walls and there were several cracks in the ceiling which gave free admittance to the rain. The floor consisted of humid earth, and was a breeding place for fleas.

10. *The Fleas of Acca*

Abdul Baha had a mat and a long Persian fur coat. The latter was his garment by day and his blanket by night. When he covered himself with it, an army of fleas, hiding in the ambushade of fur, attacked him and did their best to defeat him, but he outwitted them by turning the coat and by using its other side. Then for an hour he slept, until the wily, indomitable fleas would find their way again to the inner side. Every night he had recourse to this maneuvering eight or ten times, yet notwithstanding this, he was by far happier and more joyful then than at this time, sleeping on a fine bed in the hotel.

11. *Abdul Baha Leaves for Alexandria*

Then to our surprise he informed us that he would leave to-day for Ramleh, and stay there for one week.

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If the weather agreed with him, he would send for us; if not, he would return to Port Said and together we would all go to Haifa. Therefore at 2:30 P.M., accompanied by Mirza Moneer and Khosro, he left for Alexandria and Ramleh. The station master was a European, and when the Beloved reached the station a few minutes before time, he was conducted by him to his private office to rest. When the train arrived, this station master followed him very politely to the first class compartment. This sign of distinction was great enough in the eyes of the natives and officials of the railroad to excite their wonder and curiosity. Then as the train pulled out from the station we were once more separated from the Master. Our train leaves for Port Said at half-past nine, and therefore we have several hours on our hands.

12. *Ismailia Is a Clean City*

In order to pass the time profitably we took in the sights. There is a beautiful large park, lovely buildings, clean avenues and many electric lights. I was quite surprised at the size of the park with its big pine trees and flowers. We saw also the native quarter. The goats, the hens, the donkeys and the other animals live in the same room with the Arabs, making a peaceful family. When we set our feet in the Port Said station,

familiar faces greeted us. Ahmad Yazdi, Ibrahim Effendi and Aga Jamal. They were, of course, surprised to hear that the Master had left Ismailia, but they said quietly: “He doth whatsoever he willeth.”

PORT SAID, EGYPT, JULY 18, 1913.

1. Abdul Baha’s bust, taken in Vienna, is sent to Port Said. 2. A prayer for the success of the Bahais. 3. Prayer for illumination. 4. The Covenant is a lamp.

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1. Abdul Baha’s Bust, Made in Vienna, Is Sent to Port Said

I have no news to write. We did not hear anything from Ramleh. It was a hot day so we stayed at home and worked until 7 o’clock P.M. Then we paid a call on Madame Stannard and returned by way of Ahmad Yazdi’s store. He had received the Master’s little bust from Stuttgart. Mr. Herrigel has sent one to Mirza Mahmoud and one to me. At present, mine is on my writing table and is a reminder of his wondrous personality and heavenly Love. “His spiritual face” is printed on the Tablets of our hearts. We think of him and work for him, for “his spiritual face” is the Love of God, is the Knowledge of God, is the Breath of the Holy Spirit, is the Divine Inspiration and love for all mankind.

2. A Prayer for the Success of the Bahais

The following is a prayer revealed from the tongue of the Beloved many years ago: —

“He is Glory, the Most Glorious!

“O God! O God! Behold Thou these radiant faces made joyous through the Fragrances of the flowers of Thy Kingdom, El Abha, and illumined with the lights of Thy Supreme Concourse. Verily Thou seest that the temples of the believers are stirred by the fresh breezes of the Morning of Eternity and that the hearts of the pure ones are attracted by the signs of the Sacred Mysteries!

“O Lord! Fill for them the cups of joy; enlighten their faces by the rays emanating from the lamp of divine prosperity; cause them to hear the sweet songs of the

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birds of Holiness in the rose garden of Spiritual success; gladden them by allowing them to listen to the melodies of the Doves of light in the delectable heavenly fields, and suffer them to enter into the Paradise of Abha, Thy Celestial Garden.

“O My Lord! O My Lord! Intoxicate them with the Wine of Knowledge, sweeten their taste with the delicacies of prayer in the early morn and eve; gather them together into one congregation; confer upon them a shelter; protect them in the cause of Thy Covenant and Testament; shield them from doubts and from the evil suggestions of the waverers; make them Mines of Knowledge, of Wisdom and of Assurance, cause their feet to be firm and steady in the Straight Path, and grant unto them prosperity in whatever country they call the people to Thy Name! Verily, Thou art the Lord of the Cause and Thou art Powerful to do whatsoever Thou desirest!

(Signed) “ABDUL BAHA ABBAS.”

Here is another prayer. It may have been revealed for the American believers.

3. Prayer for Illumination

“He is El Abha!

“O Thou Incomparable God! Make Thou these hearts intimate with Thy Mystery; suffer them to be detached from the known and from the unknown; cause them to drink from the overflowing cup of the morn of Unity and intoxicate them with the wine of ‘Am I not your Lord?’

“O Lord! These servants are captivated by Thee. These longing ones are attracted and enthralled by Thy Beauty. They are wanderers about Thy abode; lovers

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of Thy Countenance, and the flocks of gazelles of Thy meadow.

“O Lord! We are stumbling in the desert of remoteness and are scattered in the valley of deprivation! Send Thou to us the Messenger of Providence and the Angel of Guidance: — so that the Fragrance of Thy Garden may reach unto our nostrils, the refulgent light of Thy Countenance illumine the ‘house of sorrows’ of these grief-stricken people; the darkness of night be changed into the sunlight of day and the thorny place of regret transformed into the garden of hope. Verily Thou art the Mighty, the Seer and the Hearer!

“O ye believers of God! Rejoice in the Most Eminent Bounty of your Lord! Be happy; for the Favors of the Glad-tidings of the King of the Kingdom are unlimited. Be ye prepared for the downpouring of the

Cloud of Mercy. Upon you be the Bestowals of your Lord, the Ancient! Dilate your breasts, increase your fervor, exalt your ambition, add to your yearning, and be rejoiced in heart, for God hath chosen you from amongst His creatures, for the sake of His Love. Verily He is Merciful and Clement to you.

(Signed) “ABDUL BAHA ABBAS.”

I bring this day to a close by translating another Tablet revealed to an American Bahai several years ago: —

4. The Covenant Is a Lamp

“O thou spiritual leaf, which is verdant and fresh through the downpourings of the Kingdom of God!

“Verily I pray at the Threshold of God, the Mighty, the Powerful, that He may illumine thy heart with the light emanating from the height of the kingdom, cause thy tongue to speak the praise of the Living, Self-subsistent,

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Eternal Lord, and suffer thee to become a light shining with the rays of Knowledge, so that thou mayst enlighten those vast cities and great states.

“Verily, Verily, I say unto thee, the Covenant of God and His Testament is a lamp with world-illuminating rays which from the Supreme Concourse enlightens the horizons of the earth and heaven. Whosoever stations himself before this divine light, will be illumined with Manifest Glory, his speech will become effective in the hearts and spirits, and God will reinforce him with a power which will penetrate through the realities of all things. Upon thee be Bahai!

(Signed) “ABDUL BAHA ABBAS.”

PORT SAID, EGYPT, JULY 19, 1913.

1. Arrival of Abdul Baha in Ramleh. 2. The presence of Abdul Baha holds the people together. 3. Brahma, Krishna and Buddha taught the Oneness of God. 4. The law of change is universal. 5. In the Bahai Cause no one holds religious offices, titles and ceremonies. 6. Who are the sanctified souls?

1. Arrival of Abdul Baha in Ramleh

This morning we received a short note from Mirza Moneer telling us about the safe arrival of the Master in Ramleh where he has taken rooms in the Hotel Victoria. Unfortunately owing to the fatigue of the journey and to the recurrence of fever, he had not been sleeping well at night. On the way they had met Seyad Jalal who was also going to Ismailia to meet the Beloved. Toward evening I called on Mrs. Stannard. She read me a letter, just received from Miss Hiscock of New York, who has been living in Ramleh for two or three years. She spoke of her happiness on hearing of the arrival

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of the Master. Mirza Abul Fazl has already called on him and she and other friends intend to avail themselves of the first opportunity to do the same.

The Master has sent one of the Bahais, Sayad Yahya, to Haifa to accompany his daughter, Rouha Khanum, back to Alexandria. ...A house will be rented in Ramleh, and in a few days we will be on our way to join the Spiritual Caravan.

2. The Presence of Abdul Baha Holds the People Together

When the Master leaves a place all the different elements which have been holding together are seemingly scattered; the collected individualities regain their entities each person follows his own inclination; one feels that something is lacking, for the touchstone of life has gone, the great social leveler has disappeared. The "I" and the "MY" stalk abroad. Futile conversation and bickering, sneak around the corner and if encouraged, step boldly in to the courtyard and to the private chamber. We must ever gaze toward the sun of Universal Fellowship, otherwise we will dissipate our forces.

This morning I was reading the diary of the Master's voyage on the steamer Cedric from Alexandria to New York. Omitting the usual details and descriptions of the trip, I have chosen a few selections from his talks with different travelers which have a general bearing upon his expected arrival in America.

3. Brahma, Krishna and Buddha Taught the Oneness of God

It is the third day of the trip. An American, after hearing the Master's teachings on reincarnation, goes

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to his cabin and carries to him an idol worshiped in China and Japan. The Master holds it in his hand and remarks: —

What vast difference exists between the souls of mankind! One retrogrades to such a low level as to worship statues and stone idols: forms which are devoid of spirit and reason, while God hath conferred upon him reason and adorned his shoulders with the mantle of spiritual attributes! Another soars to such a high summit of perfection and perspicacity as to become the Sign of God and the Instructor of humanity. Brahma, Krishna and Buddha never advocated polytheism. They were eminent teachers of monotheism as were all the other prophets of God; but succeeding generations misconstrued their words and in order to further their own selfish interests fabricated these false doctrines.

4. The Law of Change is Universal

On the sixth day he spoke to a group of passengers as follows: —
“All created phenomena are subject to the law of change and transmutation. Youth is followed by old age; a tender plant grows into an aged tree; dynasties are born, wax strong, reach to the zenith of glory and then totter to the ground. Likewise everyone of the world religions has been a cause of progress and advancement in its own time, but now they have become as very old trees, and do not yield any more luscious fruits. Some people persist in the unscientific belief that these very old trees will again become young and push forth leaves, blossoms and fruits. This is impossible. This age needs a young sapling with universal growing capacity. Are you informed of such a plant?

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5. In the Bahai Cause No One Holds Religious Offices, Titles and Ceremonies

On the eighth day, he speaks to the Persians: —
“The Blessed Perfection has torn up the root of the tree of superstition and religious offices. In the past the ambitious leaders of religion have been the reasons of the ignorance and the retrogression of nations. In this Cause there is no religious title, no ceremony of ordination. One is not respected simply because one wears a peculiar dress or has been given a religious title or has inherited one from Patriarchs of the Church. No! These are not marks of distinction.

6. Who Are the Sanctified Souls?

“On the other hand, there are holy souls, the signs of whose divine sanctity and spirituality become apparent in the hearts of others. People are unconsciously attracted to them through their pure morality, their justice and loving kindness. Everyone is drawn to them on account of

their praiseworthy attributes and pleasing qualities, and all faces are illumined by the light of their virtue and integrity. In this Movement there is no title to be given to anyone, and no position to be inherited. 'The Hands of the Cause' are the hands of Truth. Therefore, whosoever is the promoter and the servant of the Word of God, is the hand of Truth. By 'the Hands of God' certain definite spiritual meanings are conveyed. It is not only a verbal expression. The more a man is humble in the Cause of God, the more he is confirmed; and the more he is evanescent, the more he is favored."

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PORT SAID, EGYPT, JULY 20, 1913.

1. Who is Abdul Baha? 2. A Catholic procession in the streets of Port Said. 3. First journey of the Persians to America. Why Abdul Baha went to America. 4. Material and spiritual food. 5. Steam, a marvelous energy. 6. Abdul Baha's welcome in New York. 7. Interview with the newspapermen on the steamer deck.

1. *Who is Abdul Baha?*

The heart of Abdul Baha is the fountain of life out of which flows the Water of Truth. Are you thirsty? His Universal Teaching is divine Food descending from the exalted heaven of the Will of God. Are you hungry? His utterances are the roses and anemones of the garden of Abha. Do you love flowers? His words are the brilliant stars of the firmament of spiritual Glory. Are not the stars beautiful? His presence inspires confidence, manhood, loyalty and uprightness. Should you not characterize yourselves with these attributes? His Ideals are fresh breezes heralding the approaching dawn of the springtime of human regeneration. Are you stirred into gladsome life? His message is the sweet melody of the Kingdom of Abha. Do you listen to the soul-enrapturing strains? His pathway is *the* pathway, leading the traveler to the ultimate reality. Are you ready to walk in it?

2. *A Catholic Procession in the Streets of Port Said*

To-day the French inhabitants had a gorgeous religious procession which started from their church. All the streets through which it passed were adorned with flags, bunting and Japanese lanterns. The priests were dressed in their pompous surplices of red, gold and silver. There were long lines of young girls dressed as angels, also a

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company of choir boys. The procession was brought to an end by a large statue of the Virgin Mary, holding the child, Jesus, in her arms. Of course thousands of Arabs left their work to gaze at this very spectacular sight of what they called “idol worship,” and not understanding the sacredness of these symbols, they poked fun and laughed in their sleeves. How sad is the ignorance of humanity!

I will continue to translate a few more sayings of the Beloved when on the steamer Cedric.

3. First Journey of the Persians to America

Ninth day: — “Formerly it was most difficult to cross the Atlantic and up to this time few travelers with our aims and intentions have gone from Persia to America. There are some who have visited the United States, but it has been either for personal affairs or for the transaction of business. One can therefore say, that this is the first disinterested journey of a group of Persians to America. Our great hope is in the divine Confirmations through which all doors will be opened to us. To-day the nations of the world can be conquered by divine Power, and this divine Power revolves around the servants of the Blessed Perfection. All personal interests must disappear beside this wondrous Aim.”

Eleventh day: — “I go to America on account of the invitations of the American Peace Societies and the urgent appeals of my friends, because the objects of this Cause are universal Peace, the oneness of the world of humanity and perfect equality between all mankind. As this century is the century of light and the cycle of the revelation of Mysteries, undoubtedly these glorious aims will be fully established, and the influence of this great Cause will encircle the East and the West.”

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4. Material and Spiritual Food

Twelfth day: — At the table the Master speaks about simple diet: how much better it is for one’s constitution to eat one or two courses. One of the American Bahais asks Him if he will not prescribe a simple recipe of dieting for the believers upon His arrival in America. He laughs heartily and says: —

“We do not interfere with their material food, but we will give them a simple recipe of spiritual food. This is our work.”

5. Steam a Marvelous Energy

Sixteenth day: — “We will be only one more day on the steamer. In reality steam is a marvelous energy. Were it not for this power, how could we cross the Atlantic Ocean? What a wonderful means of transportation God has prepared for us and how the Blessed Perfection has confirmed us! Otherwise what relation between America and Persia!”

6. Abdul Baha's Welcome in New York

Seventeenth day: — Great skyscrapers are visible in the distance. The Goddess of Liberty holds aloft her lamp. The Master walks up on the deck watching with great interest the shifting scenes; hundreds of Bahais are impatiently waiting on the pier. He talks with the Persians:

— “When we embarked on the steamer in Alexandria no one dreamed that we should reach America in such safety, and cross the Atlantic with such ease.”

Now the steamer docks in its berth; the Bahais on the pier wave their handkerchiefs and hats; The Desire of their hearts is not seen from the dock; he is in his cabin

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surrounded by a number of newspapermen. Patiently Abdul Baha gives interviews to each, answering every question and satisfying all. Here I will translate one of the many beautiful interviews. It is the shortest.

7. Interview with the Newspapermen on the Steamer Deck

“What are your aims?” the reporter asks.

“Our aims,” he answers, “are Universal Peace and the Oneness of the world of humanity. Last year I visited London and Paris. This year I have come to America to meet the lovers of Peace, perchance we may find a basis for co-operation. It is my hope that the American Peace Societies may consolidate their forces, and thus, shoulder to shoulder, may render an effective service to humankind.”

“How will Universal Peace be established?”

“By educating the public with the sentiments of Peace. To-day the full realization of Universal Peace is a panacea for every social disease.”

“What are these diseases?”

“One of the diseases is the poverty of the middle classes through the unbearable burden of war taxation. This craze for militarism has reached its height and shall soon recede. The income of the farmer and of others is taken by the power of a military government and foolishly

expended upon useless implements of destruction. The prospect becomes gloomier every year because the war budget of every nation is being increased without any regard to the feverish signs of social unrest and industrial upheaval. The people are seething with ideas of insurrection and agitation. Their burden has become too heavy and their patience is exhausted. They groan under this load, and grope in the darkness, seeking the light of Peace. Their pitiful cries ascend to the throne of the

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Almighty. Lo, lo! He has listened to them; He has answered their prayers. The dawn of Peace has appeared, the lights of brotherhood are breaking through the foul clouds of human prejudices. Lovers of Peace! Rejoice! rejoice! O ye who are heavy laden, be happy, be happy! Weep no more, for your burden will be taken away from you.

“This military and naval expenditure is a great disease. Look at the result of the war between Italy and Turkey! How dreadful! There exists a reign of Terror. Fathers weep for their sons; sons weep for their fathers. How many peaceful villages are laid waste! How the wealth of the nations is exhausted! The remedy for this disease is through Universal Peace. This will insure public security! To-day that which is the cause of dispersion is war. If the nations enter into a faithful agreement to at once lay armaments aside, they shall secure for themselves and their posterity eternal welfare; they shall become freed from every difficulty and from international confusion. This end must be attained through the development of minds and hearts and by inculcation of peaceful ideals in all the institutions of modern civilization.”

PORT SAID, EGYPT, JULY 21, 1913.

1. There is no diary of Baha-Ullah's and Abdul Baha's words during the long years of incarceration. 2. Teaching the Cause is the most important of all services. 3. It is the day of action and happiness.

1. There Is No Diary of Baha-Ullah's and Abdul Baha's Words during the Long Years of Incarceration.

Aside from the impression that the Beloved will stay in Ramleh and not go to Haifa, there is no news. We

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are anxiously waiting to receive the word for our departure. Not only do I miss the glory of His presence, but so much of his wonderful words of light and guidance are lost because there is no one to report them. The art of diary writing is comparatively unknown in the East. The believers have not been accustomed to it. For example, throughout the life of Baha-Ullah and during that of Abdul Baha until the present no one dreamed of reporting their sayings. I have not yet seen a book or pamphlet, biographic in tone and diary-like in construction. The recent Persian pilgrims, learning this from the West, would whenever they were summoned to the presence of the Beloved, beg either Mirza Mahmoud or myself to go with them and report the Master's words. We were really stenographers, and our services were much in demand. Had the Master lived in America for the last forty years, there would besides his Tablets have been volumes of memoirs and diaries written by those who were fortunate enough to be near him.

While we are waiting patiently to receive his command, we are not idle. The calmness and sweetness of the Peace which passeth all understanding wafts over our minds and hearts, and in this temporary separation we have experienced that deeper spiritual union which will more and more be realized as time goes on.

2. Teaching the Cause Is the Most Important of All Services

Just as the Master has sacrificed everything in his life in order to spread the Fragrances of the Paradise of Abha, just as the Spirit of Baha-Ullah is his guardian and protector, so likewise must we forget all other thoughts and occupy ourselves with those matters which pertain to the exaltation of the word of God among mankind,

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and be confident that the Blessed Perfection, under all circumstances, will sustain and reinforce us. At the present time the promulgation of the Teachings is of paramount importance because the Power of the Supreme Concourse is behind it.

In a Tablet revealed by the Beloved many years ago, to the Persian friends, He says: —

“O ye believers of God! Supplicate and entreat at the Threshold of the Almighty that He may confirm you in the diffusion of the Fragrances of Holiness which are wafting from the direction of the Garden of God. Blow ye over all creation like the Breezes of the early morn and impart ye a freshness and verdancy through the Power of Truth upon the flowers, the sweet hyacinths and the rose of the garden of existence. This is the quintessence of the meeting and the superlative

degree of success and prosperity, for it causes the attainment of man unto the kingdom of Abha, attracts him to the Sacred Court of His Highness the Almighty and suffers him to reach the Sublime Presence of the Powerful, the Omnipotent Lord.”

The translation of another dynamic Tablet to the Persian believers, revealed likewise many years ago, may be of interest: —

3. It Is the Day of Action and Happiness

“O ye merciful friends of Abdul Baha! Although it is night, yet it is the morn of the dawn of the divine Kingdom. Lights are shining and faces are radiant. The Ancient Bestowal of the Beauty of Abha is the Companion of every pure heart and the Effulgence of the Manifestation of the Mount of Sinai is the associate

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of every firm and steadfast one. The soul-entrancing Melody of the Blessed Perfection is heard from the Invisible World by every upright and righteous person, and His Glad-tidings and gospels of joy bestow undeniable Favor. The Fame of His greatness hath filled all regions and the songs of the birds of the meadow of His Reality confer spirit upon all the inhabitants of the globe.

“Consequently, we must send forth a joy-cry and through the Power of God infuse a mighty thrill of spiritual emotion through the pillars of this mortal world. Eternal Life must be revealed in this mundane existence; heavenly Grace must become apparent and the Everlasting Bounty of the Paradise of Abha must adorn this earth. How long this silence! How long this speechlessness! How long this lukewarmness! The flaming torch of the burning Fire of God is set aglow on the apex of the world and the lighted candle of guidance is a witness in the gatherings. If we are not enkindled with the heat of this divine flame, with what heart-burning fire will we then be lighted! If we are not intoxicated with this Wine of God, what kind of wine, then, will exhilarate us! If in the Assemblage of Transfiguration we do not forget ourselves, becoming joyous and enraptured, then in what gathering will we make tumult and acclamation. O ye divine friends! The Call is the Call of the Beauty of Abha, streaming down from the Invisible Kingdom! The Melody is the Melody of the Supreme Concourse, be ye happy, be ye joyous, be ye exultant, be ye glad!

“Upon ye be greetings and praises.

(Signed) “ABDUL BAHA ABBAS.”

PORT SAID, EGYPT, JULY 22, 1913.

1. The spiritual lesson drawn from the material progress of Port Said and the Suez Canal.

1. The Spiritual Lesson Drawn from the Material Progress of Port Said and the Suez Canal

The material progress of Port Said is a great lesson for all the Bahais. Forty years ago there were only a handful of dingy hovels with half-naked Arabs. There was no trade, there were no houses, and no communication existed with the outside world. Almost all the area on which the present up-to-date city with its 60,000 busy inhabitants is built, is land reclaimed from the sea. When the Suez Canal joined the two mighty oceans together, Port Said became an international port, and from that date the magical progress of the city continued uninterruptedly. Just as God inspired the heart and mind of DeLesseps with this most wonderful thought of joining the two seas, in like manner, Our Beloved, as a spiritual Engineer, is appointed by Baha-Ullah to unite the East and the West. The concerted efforts of thousands of laborers made possible the realization of the Suez Canal, and thus the greatest engineering feat up to that time was accomplished. Similarly the united zeal and endeavor of all the Bahais are needed to join together the mighty seas of humanity. This is not child's play. This is a stupendous undertaking. Could the laborers complete the Canal if they sat around and criticised one another? Let us be faithful in our enterprise, and work to the end; let no harsh words discourage us, let us leave behind fruitless discussions, and engage in that whereby the Word of God may be promoted and the Fragrances of the Cause diffused. Thus we may bring happiness to the heart of Abdul Baha. Let us look forward, and not

backward; heavenward and not earthward. Baha-Ullah will assist us. The Canal will be completed and there will be witnessed the Confluence of the seas. Then the two mighty oceans of the human families — East and West — which are being stirred at the present time by the contrary winds of conflicting prejudices, shall be joined together. There will be millions of laborers in the future; but we must hold the breach honorably until they arrive! God does not need our services, but we are in need of His continued Graces. He is the most Potent! He can wait. A thousand years in His sight, is as one day. If, through our negligence and inadvertence, we retard His work, we are

the losers. He will raise other generations to fulfill His command. He will inspire other hearts to proclaim His words. He will illumine other minds to grasp His ultimate plan. He will reinforce other armies to achieve His triumph. He will instruct other nations to magnify His name. We must not let this matchless opportunity escape us! The tool is his who can handle it.

About six o'clock we left our apartment in search of news. The headquarters of news is Ahmad Yazdi's store, so thither our feet directed us. There to our surprise and delight we found Haji Sayad Javad and Rouhi Effendi, just arrived from Haifa at the bidding of the Master. The former is an old Bahai of the time of Baha-Ullah and has an interesting history as a back-ground; the latter is the grandson of the Master. He is about 13 years old, the son of Mirza Mohsen.

PORT SAID, EGYPT, JULY 23, 1913.

1. Possible departure for Ramleh makes us happy. 2 Arrival of Mrs. Getsinger in Port Said. 3. Translation

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of an Interview between Abdul Baha and the reporter of the "*San Francisco Examiner*."

1. Possible Departure for Ramleh Makes Us Happy

I feel that the Beloved will call us to him before the end of this month. I have heard that two houses are rented, one for himself and his family; the other for the secretaries, etc. The houses are near each other. This has indeed lifted our spirits, and has made us decidedly cheerful; now we sing as we work. Mirza Ali Akbar whistles Russian songs; Mirza Mahmoud chants Persian poems, and my choice, strange to say, falls to American music. We do not refer to this great change — but as we look at each other, the joy in our eyes speaks volumes. After all, environment plays a large part in shaping our thoughts and aspirations. However, the Master is teaching us to live above environment, and not to let our minds be colored by the changing film of events.

This morning Haji Sayad Javad and Rouhi Effendi came to call, and we welcomed them with Bahai cordiality. Haji Javad gave me a short account of his trips to Acca to see Baha-Ullah during the early days of His imprisonment. Javad is an old gentleman, he is tall, with a short white beard, and has a fund of reminiscences of the days of the Blessed Perfection.

2. Arrival of Mrs. Getsinger

After five o'clock we sauntered out toward Ahmad Yazdi's store, and it was with genuine satisfaction that we met Mrs. Getsinger, who had landed two hours before. She was well and happy, and overflowing with the joyful anticipation of meeting the Master. Strange enough a telegram was received from the Master within

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an hour, giving her permission to leave the next morning for Ramleh.

3. Translation of an Interview between Abdul Baha and the Reporter of the "San Francisco Examiner"

I would now like to translate from my Persian notes a most interesting interview between a correspondent of the *Examiner* and the Master in San Francisco. The date is October 3rd, 1912. The hour is about eight P.M. This fine interview appeared the next day in a most crude form, almost unrecognizable: —

Correspondent: "Are you pleased with the United States?"

Abdul Baha: "The Continent of America is most progressive. The means of instruction are prepared; the educational institutions are thoroughly equipped and the pupils are being systematically trained and educated. Its wealth is on an upward tendency. Its government is democratic. Its advancement unceasing. Its nation hospitable. Its people loyal, energetic and noble. Its inhabitants free and lovers of liberty. Its men civilized and its women cultured, refined and idealistic. On the other hand, all these advantages are on the objective plane and I observe that the majority of the people are submerged in a sea of materialism and agnosticism. Its material civilization is well nigh perfect, but it is in need of the civilization of heaven — divine civilization."

Correspondent: "What do you mean by divine civilization?"

Abdul Baha: "Divine Civilization is the light. Material civilization is the lamp. Material civilization is the body; in itself it is not sufficient, and humanity, from every point of view, stands in need of divine civilization. Natural civilization produces material welfare and prosperity;

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divine civilization develops man's ideal virtues. Natural civilization serves the physical world; Divine Civilization serves the world of morality. Divine Civilization is a symposium of the perfections of the

world of humanity. Divine Civilization is the improvement of the ethical life of a nation. Divine Civilization is the discovery of the Reality of phenomena. Divine Civilization is spiritual philosophy. Divine Civilization is Knowledge of God with rational and intellectual evidences. Divine Civilization is Eternal Life. Divine Civilization is the immortality of the soul. Divine Civilization is the breath of the Holy Spirit. Divine Civilization is heavenly wisdom. Divine Civilization is the Reality of the Teachings of all the ancient prophets. Divine Civilization is Universal Peace and the Oneness of the world of humanity. The Holy Manifestations of God have been the founders of Divine Civilization, the first teachers of mankind and the spreaders of the fragrances of holiness and sanctity amongst the children of men.”

Correspondent: “Are you satisfied with the American people?”

Abdul Baha: “The Americans are a kind, and affectionate people. All nations are welcomed in their midst. They give to every one the right of living and allow each to seek happiness in his own way. Here no one feels a foreigner. I am most pleased with them.”

Correspondent: “I have heard that you advocate the complete equality of men and women. This radical teaching coming from an Oriental thinker, is of great interest and supreme significance. Just at this juncture the Californian women are clamoring for the right to vote for all the National and State officials, and your opinion on this important question would be greatly appreciated by the people.”

Abdul Baha: “The question of equality between men

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and women has made greater advancement in America than anywhere else, and day by day it is assuming more importance and coming nearer to its full realization. However, so long as complete equality does not exist between men and women, the world of humanity will not make extraordinary progress. The woman is an essential column, while the man is also an essential column. If we aim to have a lasting building, the foundations of both columns must be laid very deep. Women are the first teachers of the children. They instruct them and inculcate morality in their minds and hearts. Later these children attend schools and universities for higher education and specialization. Now if the teacher or instructor is deficient, how can the scholar be properly trained? Therefore, it is proven that the culture and development of men will be intensified and will attain perfect fruition when women have equal opportunities with them. Consequently, the women must enjoy all the learning they are able to assimilate, so that they may reach to the level of men. The same privileges and opportunities must be conferred upon both; so that, just as they share life and its responsibilities, they may also share the same virtues of the world of humanity. Undoubtedly partnership in education and culture

presupposes equality in rights. The world of humanity has two wings, one the male, the other the female. Both wings have to become strong so that mankind may soar to the empyrean of its destined perfection; for if one wing is left weak, the upward flight must from necessity be slow. God has created both human. They enjoy in common all the faculties. No one is endowed with special privileges. How can we make a distinction which is unknown in the sight of God? We must follow the policy of God. Moreover, there are male and female in the vegetable kingdom. They are on equal footing. Inherently they enjoy suffrage and

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there is no distinction between them. Likewise in the animal kingdom, the right of suffrage and equality is enjoyed without any feeling of superiority or privilege. Therefore it is admitted that there is no distinction of gender in the vegetable and animal kingdoms, although they are deprived of reasonableness and have not the distinguishing faculties. But we, who are confirmed with the bestowal of reason, and who enjoy all the characteristics which distinguish man from the animal, how can we act in this manner, and build these false barriers? Many women have appeared who have won for themselves fame and name by the versatility of their thoughts. Amongst the Bahai women a number have shown remarkable talent for literature, science and art, and have rendered distinct services in all the departments of life.

“In history many capable women have displayed special genius for government and political administration, like Semiramis; Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra, and Queen Victoria of England. In the religious world the Israelites wandered for forty years in the wilderness and could not conquer the Holy Land. Finally a woman achieved this signal victory. In the dispensation of Christ, the apostles became confused; even Peter denied Him thrice, but Mary of Magdala became the cause of their firmness and steadfastness. In the religion of Baha-Ullah, Kurrat-Ul-Ayne, and many other Persian women, demonstrated their knowledge and wisdom to such an extent that even the men were astonished and listened with deference to their advice and counsel.

Correspondent: “What is your object in coming to America?”

Abdul Baha: “I have come to America to promote the ideal of Universal Peace and the solidarity of the human race. I have not come for pleasure, or as a tourist.”

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Correspondent: “What do you think about woman’s fashions?”

Abdul Baha: “We do not look upon the dresses of women, whether they are of the latest mode. We are not the judge of fashion. We

consider rather the wearer of the dress. If she is chaste, if she is pure, if she is cultured, if she is characterized with heavenly morality and if she is favored at the Threshold of God, she is honored and respected by us, no matter what manner of dress she wears. We have nothing to do with the ever-changing world of mode and picture hats.”

Correspondent: “What is the greatest thing you have seen in America?”

Abdul Baha: “The greatest thing I have seen in America is its Freedom. In reality this is a free nation and a democratic government.”

Correspondent: “What is your opinion about Turkey and the Balkan war?”

Abdul Baha: “We have nothing to do with war. We are advocates of Peace. Speak to us about the conditions of Peace. Go to the diplomatists and militarists and ask their opinions about this war. But as regards Peace: In the world of humanity there is no more important affair, no weightier cause. It is conducive to the well-being of the world of creation; the means of the prosperity of nations, the reason of eternal friendship between peoples, the cause of solidarity between the East and the West, the promoter of real freedom and the most eminent Favor of His Highness the Almighty. We must all strive to upraise the Flag of International Peace, the Oneness of the world of humanity, and the spiritual brotherhood of mankind.”

The correspondent tried to ask a few more questions, but Abdul Baha interrupted him by this final statement,

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while putting his hand on his shoulder and kissing his face: —

“Consider how much I love thee and to what extent I respect Mr. Hearst that, notwithstanding the fatigue coming over me as the result of a very busy day, I have answered all thy questions.”

Thus the young man left the presence of Abdul Baha with a sense of awe and respect that one feels only when one is saturated with the holy atmosphere which is created wherever he is — the Center of Spirituality and heavenliness.

PORT SAID, EGYPT, JULY 24, 1913.

1. Our departure for Ramleh. 2. Thinking over meeting Abdul Baha. 3. Scenes along the railroad. 4. Abdul Baha calls on us. 5. Real love attracts divine Confirmations. 6. Teach the Cause through deeds.

1. Our Departure for Ramleh

The Port Said believers have gone to the station to say good-by to Haji Sayad Javad, Rouhi Effendi and Mrs. Getsinger who are leaving to-day for Ramleh to be honored with the blessing of the Beloved's presence. I am with them too. The train leaves at eight A.M. They are very happy. The train pulls out of the station, and we return home in the heat of the sun to spend another day in quiet work and uninterrupted solitude. I sit at my table, Mirza Mahmoud at his and Mirza Ali Akbar in his room is copying the addresses of Abdul Baha, when the door opens and Aga Aziz enters. He looks at me and smiles. Like a flash of lightning his thought is transferred to me. I get up from my seat:

"Have you any news for us from the Master?" I ask.

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"Yes," he quietly answers. "Ahmad Yazdi has just now received a telegram giving you permission to leave for Ramleh."

We are very happy. We must leave by the one o'clock train. In half an hour all our baggage is prepared. What spiritual ecstasy! What divine beatitude! We go to Ahmad Yazdi's store to thank him personally for this good news. Returning home we finish our work and at a quarter after twelve start for the station. There, to our surprise, we find Ahmad Yazdi who has come to say good-by to us.

2. Thinking over Meeting Abdul Baha

Finally everything is ready; the first and second bell rings, and the train starts. In our hearts the birds of joy sing; behind us the pleasant memories of more than a month, all about the sandy, quiet desert — the garden of Allah; ahead of us union — with whom? — With the Beloved of our hearts. As I sat in our compartment contemplating the love of the Master, my eyes were filled with tears of joy and I realized more than ever — and no doubt thousands have had this same experience — that Abdul Baha is our Beloved, our Hope, our Desire, the sum-total of all our longings. If one has Abdul Baha for his Beloved, his happiness is not dimmed; his peace is not broken; his faith can move mountains and all his aspirations are fulfilled! O Joy of Joy! O Heavenly Light! O Love Divine! Art Thou not the most beautiful, the most satisfying, the most ennobling, the most rapturous! Would I not gladly dedicate my whole life to treasure Thee in the secret chamber of my heart? Thou art the Poet of transmutation. Thou art the Philosopher's stone. Thou art the remedy for all sorrows! O Love! O God! O Unchanging Lord! sustain us, feed

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us with thy ambrosial food; suffer us to drink from thy diamond cup of pure affection. We feel throughout our whole body the spiritual thrills of thy compassion and mercy.

3. Scenes Along the Railroad

By this time we reach Ismailia, the small clean town, blessed by the presence of our Beloved. After a few minutes, the train starts again. The country is fresh and green from the unfailing blessing of the Nile; the palm trees are laden with bunches of green dates, the cotton belt is extensive and the reports are that this year's crop is excellent. As the train passes on we see hundreds of men and women working in the fields, camels are grazing, and there are many cows and sheep. Rice also is cultivated in this part of the country. At 4.30 P.M. we reach Benha where we have to change trains, and after thirty minutes we are again on our way. It is 7.30 when we enter the station of Sidi Gaber, and here Haji Khorassani and Mirza Moneer are present to welcome and guide us to our new quarters. On the way our train had crossed the noble Nile. It is spanned by a most excellent iron bridge. Toward sunset, the men and women farmers — Fellaheen — showing their religious spirit, leave their work and perform their ablutions and prayers wherever they happen to be. It is a most divine picture to see these simple people praying to their Maker under the open sky. Another lovely scene which is truly Biblical, is the procession of women with jars on their heads, leaving their curious mud-built villages to fill them at the spring.

4. Abdul Baha Calls on Us

Ramleh is a modern Egyptian town with all the conveniences of western civilization. It is a summer resort

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for the most important European officials in the service of the Egyptian Government, and also for the native Pashas. There are lovely parks, all kinds of hotels and splendid houses. We have a nice furnished apartment about two hundred yards from the residence of the Beloved. At eight o'clock he came to welcome us and our joy at again looking upon his benign face, knew no bounds.

He had just returned from calling upon Mirza Abul Fazl. He inquired about our health, and after a few more questions, left us, but the happiness of those minutes will remain in our hearts. During the last days while the Beloved was living in the Victoria Hotel, many English officials, native Pashas, and Arab Sheiks have called upon him, and on many occasions more than twenty of these important men would

gather in the salon to listen to his talks. None of these are preserved. There is a weekly meeting at the house of Haji Khorassani and the Master attended it. At present Toubā Khanum, the Master's daughter, with her son Rouhi and Mrs. Getsinger, are staying in the house of the Beloved

I will end this letter by the translation of two quotations from Tablets —

5. Real Love Attracts Divine Confirmations

“If thou desirest to be confirmed in the service of the Kingdom of God, live in accord with the Teachings of Baha-Ullah, and that is: real love for the world of humanity, and the utmost of kindness for the believers of God. This real love, like unto magnetic power, attracts divine Confirmations.”

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6. Teach the Cause Through Deeds

“If a soul calls the people to the Kingdom of God according to the Principles of Baha-Ullah, there will be many listeners. First, one may teach by deeds, then speak the word. First, one must become thirsty, then the salubrious water may be offered. No matter how delicious the water is, one who is not thirsty will not enjoy it. Therefore, make ye an effort, so that the people may become thirsty; then enable them to quaff from this divine Chalice.”

RAMLEH, EGYPT, JULY 25, 1913.

1. A call on Mirza Abul Fazl. 2. Alexandria a progressive city. 3. Abdul Baha talks with his Persian followers. 4. Abul Fazl a great Bahai teacher.

1. A Call on Mirza Abul Fazl

This morning the Beloved visited our apartment and sat on the Veranda. He is trying to find a house in Ramleh for Mirza Abul Fazl, so that he may be near us. After a few moments he went out with Haji Mohamad to look for one. We learned later that a house has been found almost adjacent so that we shall have the privilege of seeing Mirza Abul Fazl quite often.

In the afternoon Haji Khorassani came and expressed a wish to call on Mirza Abul Fazl. Mirza Ali Akbar and myself begged him to take

us, too. It is about one hour's ride to reach the place, and then one must walk several blocks. We knocked at the door. After a minute it was opened and Mirza Abul Fazl welcomed us. He looked much older than when I used to serve him in America. He still has the same desire to be left alone.

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He loves to wait on his guests personally. After greeting us, he inquired about many of the believers in America. I was glad to convey to him their messages of love and respect and to tell him how he is remembered and honored by all the friends. He recalled his pleasant summers spent in Green Acre, and wished that place a great future. He asked about the health of Miss Farmer. He inquired about the publication of his recent book, the "Brilliant Proof" and requested that a copy be forwarded to the Rev. Easton. He deplored his inability to travel caused by his physical weakness.

"If I were strong enough I would never stay in one place more than a month. I would travel constantly. I have advised the Bahai teachers, that this is the best way to spread this universal message. They must fly from one bush to another, and sing the songs of the Kingdom — the Kingdom of Abha."

Then he served us with tea prepared by his own hands and Mirza Ali Akbar related some of the incidents during the trip of the Beloved in America.

2. Alexandria Is a Progressive City

We were on our way home when we met Aga Mohamad Bagher. The Master has appointed him to attend to the occasional needs of Mirza Abul Fazl. He lives near him. He told us that Abdul Baha sent him to accompany Mirza Abul Fazl to Ramleh.

Alexandria to all intents and purposes is like a progressive American city. Its tall buildings, its large department stores, its clean avenues, its double-decked electric cars, its delightful parks, its electrically lighted boulevards and streets, its fine promenades around the seaport, are all signs of a wonderful prosperous spirit. As I passed along the streets it seemed as though I was walking on an

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avenue in New York, and I wondered at the magical transformations which had taken place since this city was burned to the ground during the Arabi revolution thirty-one years ago. The inhabitants of all nations, Greeks, Italians, French, Jews, English, Arabs, Persians, live here and associate with one another in perfect harmony.

3. *Abdul Baha Talks with the Persian Followers*

When we reached home it was nine o'clock and the Master was sitting on the veranda with a number of believers. I learned to my regret that I had missed a large gathering of friends.

"What did he speak of?" I asked. The answer was given; about America, his addresses in churches and temples, the unity of mankind and the beauty and holiness of the spiritual life.

4. *Abul Fazl a Great Bahai Teacher*

Mirza Abul Fazl was there and the Master asked him to inspect the house which he is going to rent for him. When he returned he said that he was very satisfied with the place and in a few days we will have him with us. I shall ever be indebted to Mirza Abul Fazl who bestowed so much kindness upon me during my first years in America. He is to-day the greatest teacher in the Bahai world, and through his writings he is beloved by friends and respected by foes. May he live many years longer! How the Master loves him, considers his comfort and tries to prepare all means of happiness for him.

In talking with Mirza Abul Fazl Abdul Baha said when he will come to Ramleh he would be his physician, and take good care of him. Abul Fazl is coming and

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like a wise mentor he will guide and instruct us as long as we are in Ramleh.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, JULY 26, 1913.

1. The fragrances of God and their marvelous results. 2. Now is the time of the Union of all nations and religions. 3. In the Bahai revelation there is no limitation. 4. Become ye as kind fathers to the children of humanity. 5. Abdul Baha ready for the last call. 6. Letters and news from America. 7. Eloquent speeches must be delivered in public gatherings. 8. Persian American Education Society. 9. Many Tablets dictated for believers. 10. Pray with an attracted heart.

Before chronicling the daily events I would like to share with you the wonderful contents of a very great Tablet revealed for the believers of God in Azarbayejan.

1. The Fragrances of God and Their Marvelous Results

“O YE SPIRITUAL FRIENDS OF ABDUL BAHA!

“The faithful envoy has arrived and in the spiritual world has conveyed the message to the believers of God. This blessed happy messenger is no other than the Fragrance of attraction and the soul-refreshing breeze of the Love of God. These stir hearts into cheerfulness and make the spirits the treasures of joy and gladness. The effulgence of Divine Unity has cast such splendor over the hearts and spirits and created such tremendous effect as to establish a bond of spiritual communication between each and all, making them throb as one heart and beat as one pulse. Therefore one observes that spiritual reflections and merciful impressions are printed in the utmost beauty and art, upon the Tablets of the hearts and that their delicate forms are transparent and graceful. I pray God that, day by day, this spiritual communication

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may become reinforced and cause more and more the appearance of this Divine Unity in the world of humanity; so that all mankind like unto disciplined soldiers, may abide under the shade of the Word of God and under the Flag of the Covenant, striving with all their hearts and souls, that universal conciliation, cordial love and spiritual communication may be firmly established among the hearts of the inhabitants of the world; and that all the children of men through the radiant, new Bestowal, may consort and associate with each other in one loving meeting; that strife and war may vanish from the face of the earth; that the love of the Beauty of the Most Glorious may encompass every atom of Creation; that enmity be changed into amity; differences transformed into good-fellowship; the foundation of animosity destroyed; the basis of hatred demolished; the illumination of Union cause the disappearance of the darkness of limitation and the transcendent light of the Merciful suffer the hearts of humanity to become the mines of the refulgent Love of God.

2. Now Is the Time of the Union of All Nations and Religions

“Oh ye friends of God!

“Now is the time when you must affiliate with all nations with joy and the utmost kindness — thus may you become the manifestors of the Mercy of His Highness the One. Become ye the spirit of the world and the quintessence of life in the temple of mankind. In this wonderful century in which the Ancient Beauty — the Most Great Name — has

dawned from the horizon of the world with infinite Bestowals, the Word of God hath created such dominion and potency over the realities of mankind that the effect and influence of human conditions

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and environments are neutralized. With a penetrative power He hath gathered all into the Court of Union and addresses them as follows: —

“ ‘Now is the time when the believers of God must unfurl the Banner of Unity, singing the songs of friendship in the Assemblages of the world and inviting all to the universality and all-inclusiveness of the Grace of God — so that the canopy of Holiness may be pitched on the apex of creation and the nations brought under the shade of the Word of Unity. This bounty shall become unveiled in the Center of the world when the believers of God will live in accord with the Teaching of the Merciful One and occupy their time in the diffusion of the sweet Fragrances of Universal Love.’

3. In the Bahai Revelation There is No Limitation

“In every dispensation the Command of friendship and the law of Love have been revealed, but it has been circumscribed within the circle of believing friends and not with those outside of it. Praise be to God that in this wonderful cycle the laws of God are not confined by any limitations; neither must they be exercised toward a special community to the exclusion of another. He hath commanded the friends to show love, friendship, amity and kindness to all the people of the world.

4. Become Ye As Kind Fathers to the Children of Humanity

“Now the believers of God must live in accord with these divine Teachings. They must become kind fathers to the children of humanity; affectionate brothers to the youths of mankind and soul-sacrificing children toward those who are laden with age. The aim is this: You

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must be in the utmost state of joy and fragrance and show love and kindness to all, even to your enemies. Meet persecution and adversity with trust. Whenever animosity appears, deal with it with forbearance: make your breasts targets for the arrows and spears of opposition. Brave the ridicule, the blame and the rebuke with perfect love: so that all nations may observe the Power of the Most Great Name, and all people acknowledge the Potency of the Blessed Perfection — showing how He hath destroyed the foundations of strangeness, hath guided the

inhabitants of the world to unity and love, hath illuminated the realm of man and transformed this terrestrial globe into a delectable Paradise. These people are like unto children, negligent and mindless. One must train them with the utmost love and carry them with infinite tenderness in the arms of Grace so that they may taste the love of the Merciful One, become illumined like unto candles and dissipate the darkness of this world. Thus they may behold clearly and manifestly the glorious crown and brilliant diadem with which the Most Great Name — The Blessed Perfection — may my life be a sacrifice to Him — hath adorned the heads of His Believers; what graces He hath poured upon the hearts of His friends; what love He hath brought into the world of humanity and what friendship He hath caused to appear among the children of men?

“O Lord! O Lord! Confirm Thy righteous servants in the practice of love and friendship to all mankind and assist them in the diffusion of the Light of Guidance which is descending from Thy Supreme Concourse upon all the inhabitants of the world. Verily Thou art Powerful, Mighty, Omnipotent, Generous! And, verily, Thou art the Merciful, the Clement, the Compassionate and the Bestower!

(Signed) “ABDUL BAHA ABBAS”

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5. Abdul Baha Ready for the Last Call

This morning the Beloved called me to his presence. He spoke of the weather and of the state of his health saying that he had not been feeling well, in Ramleh, but that for the present he would not move to any other place, no matter what might happen. He said, he has finished his work. He has nothing else to do. He is now ready for the last call! How he longs to quaff from that cup! How sweet will be its taste! How delightful will be that hour!

He was surrounded by letters and papers. He handed me a package just received from America to be translated and made ready for his answers. He told me to come back in the afternoon. Before leaving he wished me to go into the reception room and visit Mrs. Getsinger, which I did with great pleasure. We had an interesting conversation about the Movement in the United States and I read to her the above Tablet and together we hoped that the believers of the Merciful would be inspired to carry out its contents.

6. Letters and News from America

At four o'clock I returned. As I passed along the street in front of the house, I looked up and lo — I saw the Master sitting on the balcony dressed in his beautiful white robe. He saw me and bade me come up.

When I entered the room he welcomed me with genuine hilarity. He felt better this afternoon, and asked me to read him the letters. He told me to sit down near the open window, so that I might get the cool breeze, while he walked back and forth. Did you ever think of the great attention which he pays to all his servants? We began to work. Because Mr. Joseph H. Hannen of Washington,

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D.C., was an active worker in the field and a special friend of mine, I often read his reports first — so this time I asked: —

“May I read Mr. Hannen’s report?”

The Master laughed heartily and said, that if Mr. Hannen was my dear friend, he was at least his son.

He was amused when I read how a clergyman was brought into the Cause by hearing a lecture against it.

7. Eloquent Speeches Must Be Delivered at Public Gatherings

As regards speaking at meetings he emphasized the fact that he has written many times on this subject. He sent a Tablet only a few days ago, which was meant for all the believers. He wished me to send a copy of it to Mr. Hannen and to write him that at the meetings and gatherings eloquent addresses and inspiring speeches must be delivered, explaining the principles of the Blessed Perfection, and setting the hearts aglow with the Fire of the Love of God.

8. Persian American Educational Society

He also was pleased to hear that \$250.00 had been sent to Dr. Moody in Teheran, Persia, and expressed the hope that the activities of the Persian American Educational Society may increase yearly, and may be enabled to wipe out its debt. He often speaks about this Society, its large, disinterested platform and the fame which it has acquired in such a short space of time.

9. Many Tablets Dictated for Believers

He revealed a Tablet for Mrs. Hannen about the Bahai Sunday school and to many other believers in different

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parts of the world. While he was dictating these Tablets he was carrying on a long conversation with an Arab Sheik. When he had finished he came out, followed by all of us. He took a long walk and

about eight o'clock returned to our apartment and stayed for nearly an hour, speaking at times and then lapsing into silence.

10. *Pray with an Attracted Heart*

Here I end with the following quotation from a recent Tablet: —
“Thou has written asking what thou shouldst do and what prayer thou shouldst offer in order to become informed of the Mysteries of God. Pray thou with an attracted heart and supplicate with a spirit stirred by the Glad-tidings of God. Then the doors of the Kingdom of Mysteries shall be opened before thy face and thou shalt comprehend the realities of all things.”

RAMLEH, EGYPT, JULY 27, 1913.

1. The Effect of Association with Abdul Baha. 2. Abdul Baha dictates Tablets for the Persians. 3. Tickets for charity. 4. Importance of cleanliness in all things. 5. Description of a charity bazaar in Alexandria.

1. *The Effect of Association with Abdul Baha ,*

We are bathed in the sea of Abdul Baha's love; are flying in the atmosphere of his beauty; drinking the wine of his Grandeur; eating the food of his humility; listening to the thrilling music of his divine voice; resting under the ever-spreading tree of his teachings, and watching the light and shade of his countenance. He inspires our hearts with wondrous thoughts of social service and

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mutual helpfulness. He reveals to our souls the secrets of forgiveness and loving kindness. He teaches us patience and long suffering. If hearts are not stony, these lessons will, in the long run, bear fruit; and I believe they will affect even the most adamant. For behind every heart of stone, there is a warm one of flesh and blood and under many a tattered coat, may live a noble prince. His presence teaches us how insignificant are our endeavors, how narrow our thoughts, how futile our works in comparison with his grand accomplishments, his sweeping, universal conception of mankind, his increasing activities in all directions, and his attention to all details. If we could walk in his footsteps, emulate him in all our lives, serve our fellowmen as He serves them, spread the Glad-tidings of the Kingdom as he spreads them, then we shall have won his good pleasure.

2. Abdul Baha Dictates Tablets for the Persians

This morning Abdul Baha called Mirza Ali Akbar to his Presence. He felt radiant and most happy. Mirza Ali Akbar, finding him in some light-giving mood, relates a few funny stories which make him laugh more. Afterwards he sends for Mirza Moneer, and dictates to him many Tablets for the Oriental believers, some of which I translate herein because they contain paragraphs concerning his trip to America. From now on there will be a flood of Tablets flowing from his tongue. For more than three years the Eastern believers have been deprived of the traces of his pen. Now it is time to compensate them.

Toward noon he passed by the door of our house, followed by an Arab. We thought that he was coming in and so we prepared to receive him, but he passed on,

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making the sign of salutation. He was evidently going to fulfill an engagement.

3. Tickets for Charity Bazaar

Later he returned with a letter in his hand and distributed among us several tickets for a charity entertainment, which was to be held in the San Stefano Hotel. A Pasha, who is a patron of the hotel had sent these tickets to him. The fête was for a worthy cause — the erection of a school, called Orwat-Ul-Woska.

4. Importance of Cleanliness in All Things

After the distribution of these tickets he spoke very emphatically about cleanliness, especially in cooking. He wished our Persian Bahai cook to wear a spotless white apron, to wash his hands often with soap, to keep his kitchen as clean as a pearl and to be as tidy and neat in his cooking as the best French chef.

Concluding his remarks he smilingly stated that if he did not see these changes in the cook, he would use the big stick, because some educators believe that one whipping will do more good than a hundred words of advice.

He recalled with much satisfaction a cook who had kept a restaurant in Beirut many years ago, and who was the embodiment of cleanliness. This cook did not touch the meat with his hands, but cut it with a special instrument and cooked it with great taste and delicacy. Abdul Baha stayed in Beirut for a long time and he went often to his

kitchen to watch him at his work. As long as the Master lived in that city he remained his customer.

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5. Description of a Charity Bazaar in Alexandria

When he left we hurried along to the fête in the San Stefano Casino. It was a palatial hotel, most splendidly built. Hundreds of carriages and automobiles were waiting in rows. As we entered we saw a large crowd of people, nearly five thousand, dispersed all over the grounds. Several bands of music were playing at different places. Many other amusements attracted the attention of the people. The wonderful sea with its ebb and flow was shimmering under the sunshine. The crowd was orderly and jovial. Except for the Tarboushes on the heads of the young men, and the thin white veils which covered the lower halves of the faces of women, letting their black eyes and eyelids shine forth, I could not see much difference between this and any American charity affair. By seven o'clock it was almost impossible to move, so dense was the throng. At night there were many moving pictures, and an excellent display of fireworks which evoked general applause. Later, the Master called at the house of Haji Khorassani, and finding there a number of Arabs, he gave them a talk which was taken down by one of those present. After this meeting he returned to the house, and entertained us with stories which evoked much laughter. He was well and happy to-day.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, JULY 28, 1913.

1. First one must teach himself, then others. 2. Heralding the Kingdom of God in the cities of Europe and America. 3. While encircled by the whirlwind of calumnies, blossom ye like unto a rose. 4. Abdul Baha sacrificing his life in the path of Baha. 5. Abdul Baha tells of his early life. 6. Abdul Baha tells the Arabs about his Western trip.

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The following are a few quotations from Tablets revealed yesterday for the Persian believers: —

1. First One Must Teach Himself, Then Others

“After my return from America and Europe, owing to the difficulties of the long voyage and to the innumerable inconveniences of the journey, a physical reaction set in and I became indisposed. Now, through the Favor and Bounty of the Blessed Perfection, I am feeling better; therefore, I am engaged in writing this letter, so that thou mayst realize that the friends of God are never forgotten under any circumstances.... Now is the time when the believers of God may imitate the conduct and manner of Abdul Baha. Day and night they must engage in teaching the Cause of God but they must be in the same spiritual state which Abdul Baha manifested while traveling in America. When the teacher delivers an address, his words must first of all have a supreme and powerful effect over himself so that everyone may be in turn affected. His utterances must be like unto flames of fire, burning away the veils of dogmas, passion and desire. Moreover he must be in the utmost state of humility and evanescence — so that others may become mindful. He must have attained to the station of renunciation and annihilation. Then and not until then, will he teach the people with the Melody of the Supreme Concourse.”

2. Heralding the Kingdom of God in the Cities of Europe and America

“Praise be to God that, through the Bestowal and Grace of the Beauty of Abha, (from the Continent of Europe) (I have returned to the Continent of Africa.)

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I have tarried in Egypt for a few days because I was weakened by the fatigue of traveling through the cities of Europe; by the variable climates of the American mountains and prairies and by the length and hardships of the voyage. While in Europe one day we were in London and another in Edinburgh; now in Paris and anon in Stuttgart; once in Budapest and again in Vienna. We were almost every hour in another place, delivering lengthy speeches and addresses, and notwithstanding the indisposition of the body, day and night I cried and raised my voice in large meetings and important churches.... As there were many obstacles, the door of correspondence was closed; but the faces of the illumined friends were manifest at every hour in the Court of Consciousness, and at all times they were present in my memory. As I have now found a little leisure, I address you this letter so that I may occupy myself with the servitude of the believers of God, and become the means of the happiness of the hearts. This is the utmost desire of Abdul Baha.”

3. While Encircled by the Whirlwind of Calumnies, Blossom Ye Like a Rose

“During this long trip great capacity was created in every clime for listening to the Word of God; even in the vast countries of the Orient the fame of the Cause of God is spreading more and more. Therefore, the friends of God must take as example my behavior and demeanor. They must not rest one moment. They must not seek quietude for one second. At all times they must emanate joy and gladness. They must be occupied in teaching the Cause of God. No event must sadden their hearts. No catastrophe must break their spirit. With divine happiness they must withstand every impending disaster.

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During the time of peace, security, comfort and the absence of grief, even the monkey will be a jovial fellow. He will be happy, joyful, grateful, patient and overflowing with gladness. But the sincere servant of Baha-Ullah, who is firm in the Covenant and steadfast in the Testament, while surrounded by the most great sea of tests; threatened by surging, rocking waves of persecution, encircled by whirlwinds of calumnies and backbitings — will blossom like unto a rose and break into joyous songs and sweet melodies like unto the nightingale.”

4. Abdul Baha Sacrificing His Life in the Path of Baha

“Your letter was received; but Abdul Baha, owing to the infirmity of the body; the difficulty of voyaging over seas and lands, the lack of rest, the striving and exerting day and night; the delivering of long addresses in different cities; and of answering the varied, and intricate questions of the people; — has not been able to answer it. His life, his identity, his heart and his body are gladly sacrificed in the Path of Baha! This is the Bestowal of the Almighty! This is the Inestimable Favor of God! This is the Favor of the Blessed Perfection! These are the Graces of His Highness the One!”

5. Abdul Baha Tells of His Early Life

It was about six o'clock in the morning when the door of the house was opened and the Beloved came in. I had just finished dressing and was about to take my place at my table to translate a few Tablets. The rest were asleep, but they jumped out of bed and were dressed in a few minutes. He was surprised that they were yet asleep and told us he had already read many letters, written several Tablets and attended to various other things before

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leaving the house. Up to the time he was 32 years old he never slept in bed, preferring always a piece of mat and using for a pillow one or two books. He went to sleep without changing his clothes, fearing that it would take him some time to dress in the morning. But now he cannot do these things. When he lived in Acca he generally kept ten secretaries busy; often dictating important letters to three of them at the same time.

6. Abdul Baha Tells the Arabs about His Western Trip

Then he started to correct one of his addresses delivered in San Francisco, and made some remarks about the speeches before the open Forum and the Japanese Independent Church. Just as he came suddenly, he left suddenly, and there were many pledges that henceforward everybody will be up before six A.M.

He again came in the afternoon, stayed a long time, and told us stories about three men who were great cowards, but who became courageous and intrepid after accepting the Bahai revelation. How graphic, how simple, how matchless he is in his description of such events. Then he called on an important native Pasha and after nine o'clock, returned to our house bringing an Arab with him. After offering him coffee, he described the meetings in the Bowery Mission in New York, and spoke of the Salvation Army in London and of other incidents of the wonderful Western trip. When he left the room, we felt the sweet fragrance of the presence of God.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, JULY 29, 1913.

1. Glad-tidings of the Kingdom of Abha from Minneapolis.
2. Modern hospital in Alexandria.
3. Abdul Baha takes the French Bahai doctor for a drive.

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1. Glad Tidings of the Kingdom of Abha from Minneapolis

This morning the Beloved sent for me and within a few minutes I was standing in his holy presence. He dictated several cablegrams, and spoke a few minutes on various topics. Then I went to Alexandria to despatch the cables and attend to other errands. As he handed me one of the corrected addresses of California, he said these talks must be translated into Arabic. Let it be done at once.

A package of newspapers was received from Minneapolis in which the Glad-tidings of the Kingdom of Abha were printed. These Glad-tidings had been sent to the Master for correction while we were in Paris. I would like to quote them because the Master was pleased with my Persian translations of them.

“Glad-tidings of the Kingdom of Abha!

“We announce to you Glad-tidings of great Joy! Similar words were spoken almost two thousand years ago. Reflect and be not of the heedless. This is the Great Day of God. This is the Day of Universal Peace, of Universal Brotherhood, of a Universal language and of the Union of All Religions. This is the Day wherein the Prophecies of the Holy Books of every tongue have been, or are being, fulfilled. This is the Cycle of Baha-Ullah!

“We announce to you His Holiness, the Bab, the Precursor of ‘He whom God shall manifest.’

“We announce to you Baha-Ullah, ‘He whom God shall manifest.’ The one who has broken the Seals of both the Creational and Collective books.

“We announce to you Abdul Baha, the Center of the Covenant, the Interpreter of the Holy Books of all peoples and of the Bahai Teachings, and the door through

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which mankind can enter the Kingdom of God in this Day and Dispensation.”

For dinner the Beloved ate a special dish prepared by one of the Pashas and left at his house. In turn he sent part of it to us. It was one of those rare delicacies of Arabia, a kind of meat cake with vegetables and pine-nuts.

2. Modern Hospital in Alexandria

I forgot to write that yesterday we called on Sayad Jalal, the son of a celebrated Bahai poet and teacher, living in Teheran. He is in the German hospital. A few days ago he was operated on but now he feels much better. The hospital is a model of elegance and cleanliness. All the floors and walls are built of marble. Really I am amazed at every turn, at the practical signs of progress in Egypt. It is nothing short of miraculous! Walking through the avenues and the European business districts of Alexandria one thinks that one is living in Europe or America.

3. Abdul Baha Takes the French Bahai Doctor for a Drive

In the afternoon I called on the Beloved and in his presence found DeBons, a French Bahai dentist practicing in Cairo — now on his way to Switzerland to meet his wife. Abdul Baha is going to take him for a drive through Nozha Park, which is the National Park of Alexandria. I have heard much praise of it, but have not yet been there. They say it rivals any park in Europe or America. For nearly two hours Abdul Baha entertained the doctor driving through the park and speaking to him about his spiritual experiences in America. When he returned,

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he was as fresh as when I saw him in the morning. For the last three or four days his health has been improving and for this great blessing we proffer thanksgiving and praise to the Lord. He walks among us as a divine witness to all men. Every day spent in the neighborhood of his light is equal to an age, the significance and beauty of which cannot be grasped by the mentality of man.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, JULY 30, 1913

1. The Cause of Baha-Ullah is the mainspring of Love and Peace.
2. Abdul Baha tells about his health and work.
3. Oriental Bahais anxious to receive the news.
4. Mirza Abul Fazl and his position in the Bahai Cause.
5. Mohammadan Mullahs and their hair-splitting metaphysical discussions.

1. The Cause of Baha-Ullah Is the Mainspring of Love and Peace

The Cause of Baha-Ullah is the Cause of life. Life is the mainspring of material and spiritual activities. One of the active principles is Love, the other is Peace. The life of a Bahai is not rounded and developed without the full manifestation of these two active principles. They must become the dominant influence of his whole existence. He must “love” the world and be at “peace” with humanity; so that these two harmonious notes may blend together and assist him to ascend to the highest summit of true greatness and innate spiritual perception. The prophets of God have come to inculcate in the life of every individual these two principles; especially Baha-Ullah. “He hath held aloft the banner of love and peace. Whosoever is imbued with the realities of these two principles, has life. Love and Peace are the causes

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which hold together all the different elements of the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms. Were it not for the presence of these two divine forces constantly exercising their benign influence, the whole scheme of creation would have been smashed to pieces long ago. The power of gravitation or attraction is no other than one of the signs of these heavenly energies. Whenever the secret power of these two spiritual verities is fully revealed in the world of humanity, impelling mankind to grow greater and greater in its capacity, then the glorious zenith of divine civilization will become visible. It is our duty to cause these two principles more and more to be revealed, among ourselves, toward one another, and among the people of the world. What a lofty privilege! What a divine Bestowal! What a wonderful responsibility! What a radiant glory! What ecstatic joy! What pure happiness!"

2. Abdul Baha Tells about His Health and Work

This morning Abdul Baha sent for me. Joyfully I hastened to his holy house to receive the rays of his love and benediction. He dictated cablegrams to various parts of the world and spoke about the amount of work to be accomplished. He stated that no one can imagine how many different issues must be met, and how many conflicting interests harmonized! He was now advanced in age. The physical reaction of his long journey has had a terrible effect upon his weakened constitution, and he cannot work as vigorously as he used to in his youth. When he reads a letter his eyes grow weary; when he dictates a few Tablets, his mind gets tired, when he walks a few thousand feet he becomes exhausted.

How heart-breaking and joy-imparting is his condition in these days. The barometer of his health never

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stands on one mark for two days. Like the ebb and flow of the sea, is the condition of his health. We watch him with great solicitude, but are unable to do anything to alleviate his pain or to increase his health. One day he told us that the doctor enjoins upon him the dictum, Do not work, Do not speak, Do not write, but God commands him to work, speak and write. Now whose commands should he obey?

3. Oriental Bahais Anxious to Receive the News

A few minutes later I was out in the open, sad at heart because I had seen Abdul Baha so heavy-laden with the burden of the world and there is not a single soul to lighten it. While Sayad Assadollah was here he carried on a large and profitable correspondence with all parts of the Orient, thus informing the friends of the passing events. They did not

receive any Tablets, but his correspondence kept them in touch with the Center and was, of course, a great consolation. But now he is gone to be a soldier in the field and up to this date no one has been appointed to fill his place; thus the believers in the Orient are concerned and anxious. Mirza Mahmoud, upon his arrival on Port Said, discontinued writing weekly letters and is now, day and night, busy compiling his notes. I also am occupied with my own duties. Mirza Moneer takes the dictation of Tablets for the Oriental Bahais which are being revealed almost every day.

4. Mirza Abul Fazl and His Position in the Bahai Cause

When I returned, the Master was in the house, Mirza Abul Fazl also being present. He recited in detail a resumé of his addresses in the Jewish synagogues of America. The respect and utter humility of Mirza Abul

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Fazl in the presence of the Beloved is most touching. He hardly raises his voice when he addresses him. Those who have seen and heard Mirza Abul Fazl, know the extent of his knowledge, the wide range of his learning, and the brilliancy of his services to the Cause of God. Men like him are rarest jewels and therefore they are loved and honored by the Master. He has suffered imprisonment for two years for the sake of his faith and has undergone much persecution.

5. Mohammedan Mullahs and Their Hair-splitting Metaphysical Discussions

In the afternoon the Master came in again and immediately two Mohammedan Mullahs called on him. These Arabs love hair-splitting religious controversies; and therefore one of them tried to start the ball rolling. The Master, with a wonderfully divine attitude, silenced him and gently rebuked him for the utter uselessness of theological discussions which are not productive of any result. They were advised to investigate the Truth free from any prejudice. Then he spoke about his lecture in Oxford University, his meeting with Mr. Alexander G. Bell, the inventor of the telephone, in Washington, and ended by telling them that his field of activity was in Europe and America. He had come here to rest for a few months.

The Mullahs were utterly defeated, begged humbly for his forgiveness of their apparent negligence, and expressed their conviction that they were highly profited by the meeting and hoped that they would never forget the lesson they had learned today.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, JULY 31st, 1913.

1. The progress of the Bahai Cause in the Orient. 2. Abdul Baha tells about Rasheed Pasha and his system of extortion. 3. The episode of Rasheed Pasha and Madame Jackson about Abdul Baha's freedom. 4. The infinite patience of Abdul Baha in answering the trivial questions put to him.

1. The Progress of the Bahai Cause in the Orient

The progress of the Bahai Cause is evident. The signs of awakening are apparent. The beauty of the spiritual life is manifest. The traces of the Sun of Reality are spreading. The mysteries of the Words of God are revealed. The clouds of superstitions are dispelled. The horizon of divine religion is clear. The rose-garden of hearts is adorned. The nightingales of significances are warbling. The flowers of faith are perfuming the nostrils. The Breezes of the Holy Spirit are vivifying the dead. The fountains of eternal life are flowing. The vineyard of the Lord is verdant. The servants are faithful, The gardeners are honest and sincere.

From all parts of the Orient the news of the forward march of the Bahai Cause is being received. Men and women are advancing toward the Kingdom of El Abha! On their lips are new hymns of praises! In their hearts tumultuous [*sic*] voices of glorification. In their ears are the sweet, ravishing melodies of the birds of paradise. The teachers of the Cause are inspired with a new zeal. Their hearts are fired with the unprecedented example of Abdul Baha. Difficulties! There are none. From every corner of the Orient the still small voice grows into volume and force, becoming irresistible in its might, removing every obstacle from its path, and attacking the rank and file of the forces of darkness, putting them into complete rout.

Through the gloomy night of ignorance and fanaticism, the light-bearers of Reality, with torches in their hands are running through the length and breadth of the East, illumining hearts with the effulgence of the Kingdom. Lo! do you hear the songs of the Eastern teachers which are being co-ordinated into one mighty voice: —

Let us follow the example of Abdul Baha! He has paved for us the highroad of teaching! Let us follow him! Let us emulate him! We shall seek no rest, wish for no comfort! We are his soldiers and he is our

commander! We must increase the power of our activity! We must travel! We must forget everything else save the promotion of the Cause!

Thus a new spirit is aroused all over the East, impelling the teachers to go forward, to rush onward, to follow Abdul Baha!

2. Abdul Baha Tells about Rasheed Pasha and His System of Extortion

The Beloved called this morning. He was in a happy mood. Mirza Abul Fazl was there; so the main part of the talk was directed to him. First Abdul Baha spoke of the two Mullahs who visited him yesterday, saying that these Arab sheiks do not understand what fair discussion means. They love a good fighty argument better than their lives. They do not mean to investigate a given subject, examine its minor and major points and obtain the conclusion. They love to go on, pro and con, ad infinitum.

Then he spoke about Rasheed Pasha, a former Governor of Syria who had called upon him many times in Paris. He said, in part, that this man, according to popular tradition, must have been bad even before Adam and Eve. He extorted money with the flimsiest excuses

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from the peaceful citizens of Syria. For example, he would send for a wealthy merchant or manufacturer to come to Beirut on urgent business. Then on his arrival he would tell him, "I have received bad reports concerning your character and dealings. You must stay here till I send a committee to investigate these reports and then I will set you free." The man, finding himself helpless in the face of such accusations, stayed one, two, three, four weeks. Meanwhile, there was no one at the head of his business, and alarming reports come to him. Finally he felt constrained to give a few hundred pounds to the governor so that he might get away. Rasheed Pasha was also a favorite spy of the Sultan of Turkey. He would forward the most dreadful reports about the law-abiding citizens, thus filling his pockets with bribery and extortion.

3. The Episode of Rasheed Pasha and Madame Jackson about Abdul Baha's Freedom

It so happened that at one time the secretary of the Turkish Embassy in Paris met Madame Jackson at a reception. Madame Jackson told him about Abdul Baha's incarceration in the town of Acca, and of the cruelty and injustice of the Turkish authorities. This secretary, being a relative of Rasheed Pasha, answered Madame

Jackson, saying, that there must needs be at least 3000 pounds sterling to bring about Abdul Baha's freedom. Madame Jackson agreed to pay this sum if he succeeded in achieving his liberty. Immediately he reported to Rasheed Pasha that there lived a woman in Paris who was willing to pay a large sum if Abdul Baha could be set free. The governor, who loved money better than his life, cabled back to Paris, "Very well, it will be done." Meanwhile Abdul Baha heard about the episode in this

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way: One day, the Motosarraff of Acca, who was the husband of the sister of Ahmad Ezzat Pasha, came running to him, saying, "God be praised! All the means are prepared!" "How?" Abdul Baha asked. "What has happened?" "Oh! do you not know?" he said. "Soon you will be free. You will go out of this prison. You will travel wherever you wish." Then he told the rest of the story. As soon as he left Abdul Baha's abode, the latter sent a cable to Madame Jackson. "Beware! Beware! lest you pay one cent for my freedom. In prison I am feeling happy!" When the governor heard about Abdul Baha's instructions to Madame Jackson, he was, of course, furious. He had thought it would be so easy to get this sum of money. So he changed his tactics, and Abdul Baha one day received a letter from his secretary saying that the governor was very anxious to see him enjoying the air of freedom. Abdul Baha did not answer. After a week, he received another letter from the same secretary announcing that the governor had instructed him to draw up a petition to his Imperial Majesty, begging for Abdul Baha's liberty. Again Abdul Baha did not answer. Then he wrote that the petition was ready to be mailed. No answer. Again: the governor is going to sign the papers and mail them tomorrow. No answer. Then Abdul Baha received his last letter, saying that the governor had read the petition and had written over the envelope, 'Not to be sent.' No answer. When the governor realized that he had failed in everything, he sent his own son to Acca to see Abdul Baha personally, thinking that perchance he might succeed. The son was, of course, lavishly entertained by Motosarraff. Abdul Baha was invited to meet him. After dinner the son brought up the subject from various points of view. Abdul Baha took the attitude that he knew nothing about the matter. After dinner he followed

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Abdul Baha to his house and spoke a great deal, but to no effect. "I am sorry to see you in prison," he would say. "Here I am happy," Abdul Baha answered. When in the morning he was leaving, disappointed, he made another effort by saying, "I hope, my Effendi, that I shall see you

next time in Haifa.” Abdul Baha waved the matter aside. When the governor heard the unsuccessful report of his son, he was crestfallen and angry. At that time he was so powerful that all the inhabitants of Syria trembled through fear of him. His reports to the Sultan were laws. One word from him would bring down the ire of his Majesty on anybody’s head, no matter how important and influential they were.

When Abdul Baha realized that they were again at their old tactics, trying to make him say the word “yes” to their extortionate demands, he one day called Motosarraff to his house and told him defiantly: “Do not make any more intrigues; you shall fail in all your secret machinations. There is a destined period for my imprisonment. Before the coming of that time, even the kings of the earth cannot take me out of this prison, but when the appointed moment arrives, all the emperors of the world cannot hold me a prisoner in Acca. I shall then go out. Rest thou assured of this.”

When the Motosarraff heard this emphatic statement, he wrote a letter to the governor, advising him not to make any further move “because Abbas Effendi knows the Talisman of Imam Ali. He has learned from the position of the heavenly Constellations the time of his freedom and no one can hasten it. It is better for us to give up this idea.”

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4. The Infinite Patience of Abdul Baha in Answering the Trivial Questions Put to Him.

At noon Mirza Moneer brought me a letter to translate into Persian. When this was finished I called at the Master’s house to deliver it. I knocked at the door three or four times before Khosro answered. As I waited outside I heard the voice of the Master, dictating Tablets to Mirza Moneer. I was then announced and ushered into the room. The Master welcomed me. He was sitting near the balcony; in front of him was a chair piled high with letters from the East and West. His dress and turban were of snowy white matching his beautiful locks and beard. Across the street there was a tall green acacia tree which attracted his attention. Now and then his eyes closed and again opened revealing infinite pity and love hidden in his eyes. Mirza Moneer was sitting writing down the heavenly words which flowed like a fountain from the tongue of the Beloved. As I watched him, I was struck by the divine beauty of his countenance, soft, tender and most adorable.

The many difficult problems of the Bahai world are solved by him. Now he writes to Persia on how to hold an election, then to far-off America on how to rent a hall. One Bahai desires to know whether she should cook food for her child; another person asks how to proceed to buy a piece of land. There are some misunderstandings in this assembly

to be removed; the feelings of some person are ruffled, and must be smoothed down. One man's mother or father is dead, he requests a Tablet of visitation, another desires to have a wife. To one a child is born, she begs for a Bahai name; another has taught several souls, he asks for Bahai rings for them. This man has had business reverses, he must be encouraged, another has fallen from a ladder, he implores for a speedy

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recovery. One has quarreled with his wife, and he wants advice on how to be reconciled; another supplicates for blessings upon his marriage. The Master goes over these one by one with infinite patience and with his words of advice, creates order out of chaos. The sorrows of the world troop along in review before him, and as they pass, lo, the transformation happens! The sorrowful becomes joyful, the ill-tempered good-natured, the lazy active, the sleepy one awakened. With magical words he transmutes iron into gold and darkness into light. At last he rises from his seat and for a while walks to and fro, still dictating Tablets to the philosopher and to the simple; soaring toward the empyrian [*sic*] of spirituality, giving us a vision of sanctity, and of the roses of Paradise, and for a while we roam, guided by him, in those delectable gardens of Abha, intoxicated with the fragrance of God; and then we find ourselves in the streets, walking home upborn on the wings of light.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 1, 1913.

1. What can we do to spread the Bahai Cause? 2. The difficulties of the western journey have left their impressions on Abdul Baha.
3. Now the importance of the station of the believers is unknown.
4. The service of the believers of God. 5. A Bahai meeting in Alexandria. 6. Bahai detachment and independence. 7. Arrival of members of Abdul Baha's family.

1. What Can We Do to Spread the Bahai Cause?

What can we do to become more fitting instruments, and purer channels, devoted whole-heartedly to the furtherance of the Bahai Cause? Is it through the organization of various committees? The discussion of various

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plans? The reading of Tablets and Words? The delivery of public addresses? The expounding of the Holy Utterances? The holding of Friday or Sunday meetings? The announcement of the Message? The publication and circulation of literature? It may be through any, or all of these, in fact each one of the above methods is important in its own place. But from a larger outlook, it is through the attraction of the heart, the purity of conscience, the spirituality of ideals, the concentration of selfishness, the leaping forth of the fire of the Love of God and the entire renunciation of self.

For the last few days many Tablets have been revealed for the Persian believers, and therefore it is very fitting to translate a few extracts: —

2. The Difficulties of the Western Journey Have Left Their Impressions on Abdul Baha

“The long journey over sea and land, the innumerable difficulties in the morn and at eve, the lack of rest and sleep, the delivery of detailed addresses in public congregations, the meetings with visitors from sunrise to midnight in America, the answering of countless questions and the withstanding of the hardships of the trip, have made their impression on this earthly constitution, and the result is a great weakness... It is now a few days since I arrived in Ramleh, and feeling somewhat better, I am engaged in writing to you.

“Convey infinite longing and love on behalf of Abdul Baha to all the believers of God. Day and night I am remembering the friends, kneeling before the Threshold and begging for them the confirmations of the Kingdom of Abha. I hope that from now on the broken chain of correspondence will be taken up and that through the protection

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and preservation of the Blessed Beauty the pen will be set in motion.”

3. Now the Importance of the Stations of the Believers Is Unknown

“The Glances of Divine Providence are always vouchsafed, the infinite Bestowals are continually descending. There are clear evidences that in the service of the Cause of God you are confirmed. Know ye the value of this most great Favor and render ye thanksgiving unto the Threshold of God by day and by night; because you have adorned your heads with such Glorious Crowns and have illumined such a light-giving candle in the assemblage of the world! Now the greatness of this station is hidden and invisible, but ere long it will become evident and manifest.”

4. Service of the Believers of God

“Thank God that thou are assisted in serving the believers of God. Thou art the enkindled brasier [*sic*] of the Fire of Love and a lamp of the utmost purity through which the Light of God’s attraction shines forth. Appreciate the value of this Divine Favor. Be self sacrificing, and give exhilaration and rejoicing to the friends of God and engage in adoration and thanksgiving to the Most Glorious Lord with infinite gladness and happiness.”

Today the Beloved came to see us in the morning. He sat on the veranda and asked Mirza Moneer to bring the Tablets which he dictated yesterday to be corrected by him. For half an hour he read them over and made a few corrections here and there. Then he dictated a Tablet

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to Maharajah of Couch Bahar of India. He also dispatched eight cables to the various cities of Persia giving the believers the good news of his health. Then went out to call on Mirza Abdul Fazl [*sic*].

5. A Bahai Meeting in Alexandria

For the first time since my arrival in Ramleh I went to a Bahai meeting in the house of Khorassani. There were many Persian and Arabian Bahais present. After our entrance, according to the Eastern custom, rose-water was given us with which to anoint our faces. Then tea was served and conversation started. I told them something about our American trip in which they were greatly interested. We spoke of certain people who rise to a great station in the Cause, then suddenly fall and are forgotten. One of the old believers illustrated this subject as follows: —

“If a person scales only a few steps of the ladder and falls, he can arise, shake off the dust, heal his bruises and scale the ladder again. But if he falls from the highest step, it will be most difficult for him to arise.”

Then an old man began to chant a prayer of Baha-Ullah when some one brought in the news that the Master was arriving. Immediately the man stopped his chanting, all voices were hushed, and everybody was on his feet, awaiting the coming of Abdul Baha. As he entered all heads bowed down and he walked toward the upper part of the room and seated himself on the divan. He spoke in Arabic, for the sake of the Arabian Bahais. The subject was the Pyramids and their antiquity. When he left the room he called me to go with him and I was very happy. He spoke to me with much gentleness and kindness. He is at all times thinking of the welfare and comfort of his servants.

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6. Bahai Detachment and Independence

While he walked along the street he was commenting on the fact that he desired every Bahai to be severed and detached. If he passes between two mountains of gold, he must not look to either side. Those souls who have entered under the shade of the Blessed Perfection must display such independence as to astonish the people of the world. If men come to them with money and supplicate them to accept it, they should reject it.

7. Arrival of Members of Abdul Baha's Family

On the way Mirza Ali Akbar brought the news that the Greatest Holy Leaf, Abdul Baha's sister, his daughter, Shoghi Effendi, and five or six others had arrived from Haifa. The Beloved came to see us, sat for one hour, drank a cup of coffee, and then left us to return to his house to see the newcomers.

In the evening Shoghi Effendi brought me a few letters from America sent by Ahmad Yazdi, and the new book by Mr. Horace Holley "The Modern Social Religion," which is just out.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 2, 1913.

1. The Greatest Holy Leaf, the daughter of Baha-Ullah. 2. Abdul Baha talks with two pilgrims. 3. This is the day of teaching. 4. Mr. Atwood, an Englishman. 5. Filial Piety. 6. The future of Persia. 7. What Abdul Baha saw and did on his Western tour.

1. "The Greatest Holy Leaf" — the Daughter of Baha-Ullah

To-day the Beloved did not come to see us in the morning because he was entertaining "the Greatest Holy Leaf"

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and the rest of the friends who had come with her. In the Bahai Cause she is a unique woman. She has devoted all her life to the service of humanity. She is a glorious star set upon the crown of womanhood, and a light-giving personality. Everybody takes her advice because she is a loving mother and sister to every Bahai. Her noble life is a glorious epic of self-sacrifice, generosity, and kindness. She radiates joy and

ecstasy [*sic*] and is the worthiest representative of her kind. All those who have come within the radius of her calm, spiritual influence and have spoken even a few words with her, bear testimony to the fact that she is a heavenly soul — wonderfully spiritual, highly cultivated and attuned with the ethereal music of the celestial spheres. Well may all womankind be proud of her sweet life, spent in the path of God, consecrated to the Love of God and dedicated to the service of the Almighty!

Two pilgrims have just arrived from Persia. One is from Yazd, the other from Khorassan, a relative of Bab-El-Bab, Mullah Hossein Bushruiyeh — the first believer in the Bab.

2. Abdul Baha Talks with Two Pilgrims

I was going to take a walk when I saw the Master, dressed in his pure white garment, slowly coming toward me. I stood aside in a reverent attitude until he arrived, then I followed him. He felt very tired because he had read and written a great deal during the day.

He wished that he could get away, and be alone for several weeks and do nothing but rest, but he wondered whether he would be happy! He entered the house and our dear pilgrims wanted to kneel before him and kiss his hands, but he prevented them from doing so. He inquired from each how the Cause was progressing in

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their respective cities. The one from Yazd answered that the Cause was spreading very rapidly in that part of the world, the teachers were very zealous and active, the meetings very radiant and that every day from ten to fifteen people were instructed in various gatherings. The Master praised their zeal and courage and expressed the hope that they would increase their enthusiasm and their power of teaching.

3. This Is the Day of Teaching

In talking with these pilgrims the Master emphasized that this is the day of teaching. This is the day of service. This is the day of the illumination of the world of humanity. Nothing else will give permanent result. This is their work.

Then he left us, but our hearts were full with his love, a love which never grows dim, but is light upon light.

4. Mr. Atwood, an Englishman

I went out, walking toward the Hotel Plaisance where Miss Hiscock and Mr. Atwood live. I had a most interesting talk with the

latter. He is very cultured and learned and the Master thinks highly of him. He writes articles for Magazines, is well-informed on many subjects and has lived in Ramleh with his wife and two children for nearly four years. From now on I hope to see him as often as I can for I have great admiration for him. He is a man of intelligence and sound mind.

I will end my letter today with the translations of a few extracts from the Tablets.

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5. *Filial Piety*

“TO A FATHER WHOSE SON IS A TEACHER IN THE CAUSE.

“Every son who does not become a cause of glory for his parents is a manifest loss. How many children turn out to be fruitless and unfaithful! Therefore render thanksgiving unto the Lord that thou hast such a kind and skillful son. He is a servant of the Cause and very efficient. He is favored at the Threshold of the Most Glorious King. His heart and soul are vivified through the Breaths of the Merciful. His eyes are turned toward the horizon of His Highness, the Unconstrained. His tongue is fluent with the divine proofs and evidences, and his nostrils perfumed with the sweet Fragrances of the Clement One.”

6. *The Future of Persia*

“The region of Nur is the birthplace of the Speaker on the Mount. Consider to what grandeur, importance and splendor it shall attain throughout future ages and cycles. It shall become the abode of the Paradise of the Kingdom; the forest for the lions of the Forgiving Lord, the Holy Ground for the people of all nations and the abode of the angels of the Most High, for the Fire of Sinai flamed forth from this region and the Most Great Luminary dawned from this horizon. But a thousand times alas, that the inhabitants of that country are still heedless and unaware. Ere long they shall become awakened and mindful, and they will glorify and magnify the Lord for these privileges.”

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7. *What Abdul Baha Saw and Did on His Western Tour*

“O YE ILLUMINED FRIENDS OF ABDUL BAHA:

“It is well-nigh three years since, like unto the wind I have been crossing vast deserts and like unto the nestless and shelterless bird, I have day and night been singing over mountains and shores. Now, in the middle of the ocean, I watched the crest of the furious tempest and while traveling I beheld the vastness and the immensity of the wilderness. One moment of rest I enjoyed not; one second of peace I sought not. Throughout many cities of the Occident I delivered the Glad-tidings of the appearance of the Sun of the Orient, in many churches I raised the cry of Ya Baha El Abba, and before innumerable audiences, with resonant voice gave the Gospel of the Kingdom....

“Praise be to God that the rays of the Sun of Reality are shining upon the East and the West, changing dark nights into luminous days. From every direction the cry of ‘Ya Baha El Abha’ is being heard and from every side the voice of ‘Oh my Lord the Supreme!’ has reached to the zenith of heaven....

“In short, after great difficulties, from the West I have returned to the East. I shall tarry in Egypt for a while so that I may gain physical strength and energy; perchance, God willing, I may render a service to the Threshold of God, and at the Court of the Beauty of Abha, may be confirmed in Thrldom. If the believers of God loosen the tongue of teaching, in a short time, undoubtedly this world will become another world, the rays of the Most Great Luminary shall shine and its darkness be transformed into the illumination of the East and the West.”

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RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 3RD, 1913.

1. Spiritual sustenance distributed in the morning. 2. Spiritual receptivity. 3. Abdul Baha sang a new song in every garden. 4. The Mohammedan month of fasting. 5. What is the real object of fasting? 6. Abdul Baha writes to a Indian Prince.

1. Spiritual Sustenance Distributed in the Morning

His Holiness the Bab has said that every day before sunrise the spiritual sustenance of mankind is provided and distributed. Similarly, how appropriate it is to adorn the beginning of every letter with the name of the Lord of mankind and with quotations from the Tablets revealed from the tongue of the Beloved! He thus writes to a Persian believer:

2. Spiritual Receptivity

“The Cloud of Providence hath poured down the rain of guidance upon the East and the West; the rays of the Sun of Reality has shone forth upon all the inhabitants of the world, but out of the brackish ground nothing will grow except thorns and thistles and the effulgences of the Orb of Truth do not penetrate through the black stone. Therefore, thank God that thy pure heart was the clear mirror reflecting the radiant rays of divine guidance, and that thy mind was fertile soil, because, through the downpour of the rain of Grace there have appeared the flowers, anemones of wisdom. Thank God for this Eminent Bounty, for verily thou art of those who have attained.”

3. Abdul Baha Sang a New Song in Every Garden

“Thy letter was received. Thou hast lamented and complained because it is some time since thou hast received

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any letter from Abdul Baha. For forty years Abdul Baha was kept in prison, but his infinite longing was to spread with a resonant voice the word of God throughout all countries and to unloosen his tongue in the exposition of Truth and in teaching the Cause. No sooner was he freed from prison, than he hastened to every clime and country. On every mountain he raised a cry of ‘He is God’ and in every city he spoke with public-spirited men. In every garden he sang a new melody, and like unto the bird of the morning raised the note of Ya Baha El Abha. In every meeting he elucidated the teachings of this divine Cause and while traveling through the Western countries he summoned all to the Kingdom of God. Under such circumstances, there was no time to write, and therefore correspondence was neglected.”

4. The Mohammedan Month of Fasting

This is the first day of the month of Ramadan — the month of Mohammedan fasting. The Beloved made this announcement this morning as he entered the house. He sat down on the veranda and spoke on the subject of fasting. The Mohammedans are very strict about it. One must eat, drink and smoke nothing from sunrise until sunset. As the eastern calendar is lunar, the month of fasting falls in different seasons; as a result of this arrangement it is in August this year — a month extremely hot with days exceptionally long. The laborers and farmers suffer very much from thirst during the day, but they do not break the laws of their religion. If by mere chance a Mohammedan is seen eating in the street, he is punished by the Sheik.

In the evening all good Mohammedans go to the Mosque to pray, and strictly obey all the ceremonials connected with this holy month.

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Every person — whether he understands it or not — should read the Koran, at least once, from cover to cover. This act is most meritorious.

The Master told Mirza Ali Akbar to go to Alexandria and bring our two new pilgrims back to live with us. They had taken rooms in a native hotel somewhere down town. By three o'clock they were here full of joy and delight because they were going to be near the Beloved and see him every day.

5. What is the Real Object of the Fast?

In the afternoon the Master came and as there were present several Arabian believers, he talked in Arabic on physical and spiritual fasting. Real fasting is to abstain from carnal desires and the prompting of ego. Fasting means to purify the heart from every stain of egotism, replacing material tendencies with spiritual susceptibilities, refining the moral fibre, intensifying the Fire of the Love of God, cleansing the self from the dross of haughtiness, teaching humility and dispelling the darkness of ignorance.

After the Beloved left, the audience scattered, and went out for a brief stroll. In a few minutes I found myself in the Hotel Plaisance talking with Mr. Atwood, Miss Hiscock and a very charming Turkish lady. She spoke French and English quite well besides three or four other languages.

I will conclude today by quoting the translation of another Tablet.

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6. Abdul Baha Writes to an Indian Prince

“THROUGH REV. PROMOTHO LOLL SEN

“TO HIS HIGHNESS PRINCE MAHARAJ COUCH BAHÁ,

“(Upon him be greeting and praise)

“He is God!

“O HAPPY STARRED AND NOBLE PRINCE:

“The gift you have forwarded was very acceptable because it was from your Highness; this exile one over mountain and plain, this wanderer over land and sea took that cup as a symbol, signifying: ‘I am

thirst for the Water of Reality and longing for intoxication with the Wine of Knowledge.’

“Therefore I upraised the hand of supplication toward the Kingdom of the Incomparable One, praying: — O Thou Almighty, Deign to fill this Divine Cup with the Wine of Thy Love and let this golden goblet overflow with the nectar of Thy Grace; so that friends and strangers may become exhilarated with the wine of ‘Am I not your lord?’ and shareless ones become the adorers of the Ideal Wine.

“In short I offered the utmost prayer and supplication at the Threshold of the Possessor of Glory that your kind father the leader of the Worthies, the Glorious Ameer, may be submerged in the Ocean of Divine Grace, become intoxicated with the Wine of Celestial Bestowal and Favor, obtain the Peace of the spirit in the Rose-garden of the Merciful in the midst of the Paradise of Knowledge, and attain to the station of the Transfiguration in the Delectable Heaven of God.

“May the Almighty confer the happiness of both worlds upon thee, O happy starred Prince, grant eternal joy and felicity never-ending, suffer thee to become the

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the manifestation of confirmation and to inspire thee under all circumstances with a new spirit!

“This is the prayer of this wanderer in behalf of that leader of freedman.

“Upon this be greeting and praise!

(Signed) “ABDUL BAHA ABBAS.”

RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 4TH, 1913

1. The blessings of the universal mind. 2. Abdul Baha and the family morning prayers. 3. Abdul Baha and Shoghi Effendi. 4. The Persians delighted with the pictures in the American Magazines. 5. Universal homage paid to Abdul Baha. 6. Life during the month of the Mohammedan fast. 7. How eager are the Bahais of Persia for martyrdom. 8. Abdul Baha confounds the Mullahs in the Mosque. 9. Story of Mulla Sadek, the fanatical Sheik. 10. Abdul Baha’s love-pat

1. The Blessings of the Universal Mind

Praise be to God that the world has heard the message of Reality, listened to the clarion call of Wisdom, quaffed the Water of Eternal

Life, hastened toward the arena of Knowledge, embraced the Beloved of Truth, has been quickened by the breaths of the Holy Spirit, stirred by the Glad-Tidings of the Lord of Hosts and rejoiced by the wonderful words of God! May the hearts become as fountains from which the limpid water of divine spirit ever flow! May the minds become as rose-gardens wherein the flowers of idealism grow and develop! May the spirits become as mines out of which nuggets of love and jewels of friendship are produced! This is the world's heavenly heritage. The inner world, like a beautiful meadow, is carpeted with hyacinths of affections, violets of harmony, anemones of immortal ideals, and lilies of spiritual susceptibilities. No one should hide

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these tender flowers under a glass. Let the light shine. Sing like unto a nightingale. Gird up the loins of endeavor. Soar heavenward. Step into the area of activity. Diffuse the radiance of the celestial light. Leap forward. Raise the ringing watchword of Peace and Brotherhood. Do not tarry. Travel on and on in the mystic realms of Guidance. Your helper is God. Your inspirer is the Holy Spirit. Your co-workers are the angels of the Supreme Concourse. You have received the Truth, and the Truth hath made you free. What greater blessing is there than this? This is Eternal Glory and everlasting Life.

In order to teach the Cause of Peace, every person must become a clear channel for the expression of the Love of God, the focalization of the Knowledge of God and the manifestation of the attributes of God. We are all His servants, and before His throne we stand with the utmost humility. We must increase our effort, strive in the pathway of righteousness, illumine the world of humanity with the rays of brotherhood and inter-racial feeling and upraise the standard of the solidarity of mankind. This is the world's work! This is the task set for man! With the assistance of God and the co-operation of all public-spirited leaders we will not fail.

2. Abdul Baha and the Family Prayer in the Morning

Hardly were we out of our beds when Khosro rang the bell. Haji Sayad Javad and myself were summoned by the Beloved. When we arrived at the door of his apartment, Khosro made a sign to wait. The door was shut and we could see nothing. In a moment I heard the sweet voice of a woman. Oh! She was chanting a prayer and I was all attending. I knew what it was. Like a flash it dawned upon me. It was the family morning

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prayer offered at the Threshold of Baha-Ullah and presided over by the Center of His Covenant. As I waited there I pictured in my mind a spiritual society, when every home would be a temple of God like unto the home of the Beloved. From these hearths every morning chants of thanksgiving and praise would be sent up to heaven from the lips of those whose hearts were stirred by the spiritual Fragrance, whose spirits were treasures of the mysteries of God and whose consciences reflect the longing and aspirations of the angels!

The chant continued soaring higher and higher, carrying me away to a glorious world! I thought I was listening to the delectable voices of the Seraphim and Cherubim. Then it ended in a hush of silence, leaving behind the delicate hues and perfumes of the world of God and filling the void with a rare atmosphere of spirituality!

3. Abdul Baha and Shoghi Effendi

Now the door opened and we were bidden to the Master's writing room. As we sat there we heard Shoghi Effendi chanting with pathos and sweetness. As he ended the prayer suddenly I heard the voice of the Master. I was on my feet. What marvelous depth of feeling! It causes the stones to dance with joy! He was teaching Shoghi Effendi how to chant and how to control his voice under various expressions.

What a heavenly Feast I have had this morning! Manna from on high! What a great privilege to have even a mental glimpse of this Holy Shrine of the Lord of Mankind where every morning, prayers are proffered for the general welfare of all the human race; such prayers as will effect the very foundations of the social consciousness of every man and woman in this world.

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Then the Master entered our room and said that, inasmuch as it was the month of Ramadan, he couldn't serve us tea. He had prepared many envelopes containing Tablets to be mailed and he asked Haji Sayad Javad to take them to Port Said and there to be registered.

4. The Persians Delighted with the Pictures in American Magazines

While I was in Abdul Baha's presence, the mail man brought several letters from America and four big packages of the Magazines, "Travel," kindly sent by Mr. Roy C. Wilhelm. These magazines delighted many. Already several copies are with Shoghi Effendi, some of them are with Mr. Atwood. Everybody is interested in the pictures. I would appreciate it if the friends could send every month some of the current magazines and papers. They would delight the hearts of many friends, especially the illustrated ones.

5. Universal Homage Paid to Abdul Baha

In the afternoon I called on the Master. He was sitting on the balcony. He asked me about the news from America. I read him the letters just received from Miss Thompson, Mrs. Ralston, Miss H. Magee, Mrs. Fraser, and others.

After half an hour's talk about the Cause in America he left the house and I accompanied him. He is shown marked respect by everyone as he walks in the streets. The policeman standing at the corner salutes him, the man sitting on the ground gets up as though compelled to do so by a superior force. He walked toward our house and surprised everyone by his sudden appearance. For nearly an hour he sat on the veranda watching

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the slow stream of life passing by. Now and then he spoke in monosyllables and then he took his customary walk.

6. Life during the Month of Mohammedan Fast

During the days of Ramadan life is very interesting just before and after sunset. Before sunset, because everybody is exhausted with hunger and thirst; then restaurants are filled by the people awaiting anxiously the setting of the sun, and the streets present a hustling, motley crowd; after sunset, because once they have satisfied their appetites they go out to the cafes, amusement places, and theaters.

7. How Eager are the Bahais of Persia for Martyrdom

Mirza Abul Fazl came in the evening, and told us a few incidents out of the rich treasury of his life. When he was imprisoned in Teheran with 18 others, there was an old man among them by the name of Mirza Mohamad Reza. He was well known for three rare qualities; firmness, fearlessness and truthfulness. He defied the prison authorities by his courage; awed the enemies by his firmness and set at naught the intrigues of the foes through his truthfulness.

"Whenever," Mirza Abul Fazl said, "Hajeb-ed-Doulet, one of the Ministers of the Court, came to the prison to investigate the condition of some one, Mirza Mohamad Reza would approach him and speak to him with great earnestness. Finally Hajeb-ed-Doulet would turn to him with a despairing look saying, 'Sir! This is impossible! I cannot do it. Why did you not ask the Prince Nayeb-us-Saltaneh about this? He can do it. He has the authority.' At last one day we asked him, 'What is this

which you talk about with Hajeb-ed-Doulet, whenever he comes to the prison, and why does he refuse you so emphatically?’ He said, ‘I ask and plead with him to sentence me to death. I tell him: I am an old man, I am of no good to the world. I want to bathe my body in blood for the sake of Baha-Ullah. Please, please, I beg you to do something for me. Is this too much of a favor that I ask of you? Are you not kind enough to fulfill this last wish of an old man? But he does not listen to me and answers me loudly in the manner you have all heard.’ ”

8. Abdul Baha Confounds the Mullahs in the Mosque

Mirza Abu Fazl was giving us a graphic description of another prison scene, and he had just reached its climax when the door opened and the Master entered. Apparently he felt well and in a happy mood. He told us that last Friday he had gone to the Mosque of Sidi Jabar. There were many Mullahs present. One of them was chanting the verses of the Koran, while another was addressing the people. Abdul Baha could hear neither, so he addressed the one who was speaking, “What art thou doing? Hast thou not heard the saying of Mohammed, that when El Koran is read everyone must listen?” The man turned red and was ashamed and all the other Mullahs looked at each other wondering.

9. Story of Mullah Sadek, the Fanatical Sheik

Then he related another story: During the early years of his arrival in Acca, he was one night invited to a feast, where, for the edification of the guests, El Koran was being chanted by a very good singer. The Mohammedans having forgotten their reverence for Holy things, and

overlooking the injunction of Mohammed, smoked and talked on such occasions, and when Abdul Baha arrived, there was a hubbub of confusion, people chatting, smoking and drinking coffee and tea; while in a corner of the room two singers chanting the Koran with great feeling. Abdul Baha looked about and saw beside him a very fanatical sheik, Mullah Sadek. Abdul Baha asked him whether this was fitting and if, according to the text of the Koran these people should not listen quietly. He answered: “Yes.” “Then enjoin the law of God upon them,” Abdul Baha told him. Mullah Sadek arose from his seat: “Be silent,” he hurled at them with tremendous fury, and struck at their water-pipes, glasses and cups, breaking them all in his religious zeal. He then harangued them for their lack of religious spirit, their forgetfulness of

the Laws of God, and their awful disobedience. The people were astonished and thought that he had become a lunatic; but from that time one, at all the feasts, nothing was served and everybody listened reverently while the Koran was chanted.

Although Mullah Sadek considered the Bahais infidels, yet he used to come every night to Abdul Baha's house; staying for supper and talking until midnight. He was so fanatical that if any person deviated one hair's breadth from the prescribed formulas of the religion, he would consider him an atheist.

10. *Abdul Baha's Love-pat*

The Beloved continued talking and relating several amusing stories, which made us laugh. When he had finished he told us that his intention had been to entertain us. Then he arose to leave and as he passed me he looked at me with twinkling eyes — and raising his hand brought it down on my left cheek. It was a hard blow and everybody

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enjoyed it, especially myself. It has been some time since I had received a "love-pat" and I was thinking that I was somewhat neglected. A "love-pat" from the Master is worth all the kindnesses of all the people of the world.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 5TH, 1913

1. Abdul Baha does not rest. 2. The significance of spiritual meetings. 3. The world is a farm and the people are farmers. 4. Spiritual Guidance. 5. Be seekers of Truth. 6. Divine Confirmation. 7. Selfish people are tied with iron bands. 8. How Abdul Baha built a bath for Baha-Ullah. 9. Spiritual humility and the story of the King and the Arab. 10. Abdul Baha's generosity.

1. *Abdul Baha Does Not Rest*

Let me share with you another translation of the words of the Beloved revealed to the Persians: —

"It has been some time since Abdul Baha has been deprived of correspondence, because he has been engaged in the delivery of public addresses. He has been speaking constantly. He has been crying out at every morn and shunning rest at every eve. On many a night and day he has been giving the Glad-Tidings of the appearance of the Kingdom of

Mystery in the temples of both friends and strangers. This delay in correspondence comes from the lack of time and opportunity; otherwise you are always before his sight. It is hoped from the Favor of the Self-Subsistent Lord that your hearts may be flooded with a new effulgence — that is, that you may obtain a new joy and ecstasy [*sic*] and leap high like an inextinguishable flame — so that the light of your love may illumine all regions.”

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2. The Significance of Spiritual Meetings

“The meetings that thou art holding in thy house are the means of strengthening the hearts of the spiritual ones, of guiding the seekers and of awakening the sleep ones. These meetings are illumined with the splendor of divine Providence, and like unto the rose-gardens of Wisdom they are adorned with the flower of significances and Ideals. I hope that they will make progress.”

3. The World is a Farm and the People are Farmers

“O thou who art attracted by the Fragrances of God! Every person is a farmer. One sows the seeds of Industry; another scatters the acorns of commerce, and a third farms politics. All various agricultural pursuits culminate in harvest, yet these do not enjoy the blessings of the eternal springtime, neither do they yield inexhaustible benefits. But as the friends of God are scattering seeds in the farms of reality, they will gain an increasing blessing and will collect throughout centuries and cycles thousands of harvests. Now praise be to God that thou art sowing seeds in the ground of Truth and art the farmer of His Highness the Peerless One.”

4. Spiritual Guidance

“Thank God that a light of guidance has shone in the court of thy heart and soul! Thirsty wert thou, thou didst attain to the fountain of eternal life. Sick wert thou, thou didst receive the Most Great Antidote of the Glorious Lord.”

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5. Be Seekers of Truth

“Your letter was received. I supplicated and entreated at the Threshold of the Kingdom of Abha to Confer upon you anew Grace and Bounty; so that those souls may ever walk in the straight Path,

move in the Ancient Highway of the Lord and be seekers of Truth and speakers of Truth. This is the utmost hope of Abdul Baha.”

6. Divine Confirmations

“O thou servant at the Threshold of the Blessed Perfection! Offer thou glorification unto the Lord because the radiant morn of the most great Guidance has appeared upon the dawning-places of the heart and spirit; the musk-diffusing fragrance of the garden of reality has reached the nostrils; the divine Confirmations have rent the veils asunder; the slight and the insight have beheld the most glorious signs; the dove of the Love of God has returned to the meadow of the Covenant and the moth of attraction has circled around this divine Lamp.”

7. Selfish People Are Tied with Iron Bands

Our home was illumined very early this morning by the presence of the Beloved. He walked in with confident strides. His face was beaming with joy and health. And the sun of his countenance irradiated happiness, so we in turn were made glad for our peaceful life depends upon his good health.

As he sat upon a chair he told us that he had slept soundly the last two nights, and to-day felt very well. I could see the effect on his animated face. It had not any of the former weariness. Then he spoke about fasting and of how it is necessary for the rich to think

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of the poor during the month of Ramadan. Those souls who prefer themselves to others are tied with selfish iron bands, while those who prefer others to themselves are the benefactors of the human race. Such was the conduct and the life of Baha-Ullah.

8. How Abdul Baha Built a Bath for Baha-Ullah

The name of Baha-Ullah brought to his mind the following incident: —

In the military barracks of Acca, there was a small primitive bath which the Blessed Perfection used occasionally. After their departure from this place Abdul Baha rented a little house in the town. This house consisted of two stories, two rooms being on the lower floor and four on the upper, all of very modest proportions. Now the family was numerous, and Abdul Baha wondered how all those souls could be accommodated in this small house. Finally thirteen of them agreed to occupy one room, and here they lived and slept and worked together. They kept this house for well-nigh twenty years. It so happened that,

although it was small, it yet contained a primitive bath, and the Blessed Perfection could use it as often as he wished. At the end of twenty years, Abdul Baha rented a much larger house, but it had no bath. He went to Baha-Ullah and asked permission to build one. The more he begged, the more definitely was he refused. Abdul Baha stated, that a bath could be built for only fifty pounds, but Baha-Ullah did not give his consent.

After a month had passed he went to an Arab friend . and borrowed from him 250 pounds at two per cent. This money he took to a merchant who was in former times a grain-dealer, but who was now out of work. He told him something to this effect:

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“We will enter into a partnership; the capital will be from me, the labor from you. With this fund you will deal in grain for four months. After paying off all the expenses of rent, etc., and receiving your monthly salary, we will divide the profit; one-third for you and two-thirds for me.”

This agreement was made and the merchant started the business. After four months they cleared their accounts. The debt was paid back with its two per cent interest; the merchant received his one-third profit; all the other expenses were defrayed, and 30 pounds left in the balance for Abdul Baha. With that sum he built a bath in the house of Baha-Ullah. This house is kept intact to the present day.

9. Spiritual Humility and the Story of the King and the Arab

Then the conversation turned upon another subject — how outward circumstances, such as wealth, honor, titles and even spiritual gifts made some people proud.

Concerning this the Master told a story:

It is said that at one time a king went traveling incognito. He put on a humble suit of clothes and started on his adventures. After a few days journey, during which he had lost his way in the scorching desert, he finally reached the tent of an Arab. The Arab, finding the man exhausted from heat and hunger, dragged him to the shade. When the king was revived, he asked the Arab what he had to eat and drink. “I have a goat-skin of wine and a little goat,” the Arab answered. Very well, bring the wine and let the goat be cooked.” The wine was brought. When the king had drunk one cup, he looked at the Arab and said: “Do you know who I am?” “No.”

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“I am a soldier in the king’s army.” The Arab was glad to entertain a brave man.

He drank another cup. “Do you know who I am?” “Who are you?” “I am a Minister of the King’s Council Chamber.” “I am delighted to receive such a distinguished statesman.” A third cup was taken. “Do you know who I am?” “Well?” “I am the King himself.” The Arab could stand it no longer. He arose from his place and took away the goat-skin of wine. “Why do you do this?” the guest asked, astonished. “Because I believe that if you drink another cup, you will declare yourself to be the prophet of God, and a fifth one may raise you to the station of God himself; so it is better for you to cool down a little.”

10. *Abdul Baha’s Generosity*

At five o’clock Abdul Baha returned with Mirza Ali Akbar, and went out to call on Mirza Abul Fazl. He came back after two hours and complained of fatigue, because he had been speaking with several Arabs who had made an appointment to see him. He said, that from morning until this very moment beggars of all nationalities and religions had knocked at his door, and that even now one was waiting outside and he gave me some money for him.

His munificence extends to all people. Freely he gives without distinction for race or color. Our duty in life is to follow his glorious example, in taking care of the poor in time of need, and in practicing charity and kindness. I do not see or hear what he does and says during the day, but I know that every minute is spent in the service of others.

How to make the world better, how to improve the conditions of mankind, how to raise the standard of moral

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consciousness and how to make the hearts more glad is his hourly preoccupation. Before leaving he told us that the duty of each believer is to be the servant of the other and to attend to his brother’s wants. He considered himself the servant of all the friends of God.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 6, 1913.

1. God’s favors measureless. 2. Spiritual relationship. 3. A walk through the streets and the radiance of the star of hope.

1. *God’s Favors Measureless*

This morning I was musing upon the events of the past two years, the extraordinary occurrences concerning the Cause, the historic tour of Abdul Baha through the United States and Europe and the contrast of our present quiet stay in Ramleh. "What does the future hold for us?" I asked subconsciously. Baha-Ullah has caused the descent of divine blessings; he has spread before us a heavenly Table bearing many kinds of spiritual food, he has left amongst us his son, Abdul Baha — to interpret his words and to spread his Universal Message and he has summoned into existence glorious souls all over the world to promulgate His principles. We must let the lamp of hope burn, we must free ourselves from regrets or pessimism. If we fall, we must immediately rise and push forward. The same God who has assisted others will come to our help.

2. Spiritual Relationship

Abdul Baha visited us this afternoon and we gathered about him like moths around a candle. Little by little

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the friends arrived. Then an American Bahai came with an Arabian believer — a tall young man. The Master spoke with them on the spiritual union of hearts, irrespective of color and nationality.

This spiritual union is one of the wonders of the age, that an oriental and occidental can meet on common ground. Although there exists between them no racial, no patriotic, no political relationship, yet they are able to enjoy a friendship as though they belong to the same race. This is a spiritual bond. Often two brothers reared in the same household are antagonistic, but on this divine plane others who have no material connections can in reality be more sympathetic than if they were blood relations. Happy are you that you have drunk from this spiritual fountain and have attained to the reality of existence.

Then he spoke about his western trip, mentioning the names of the various cities of America, and of how his time was spent in those places. Although often he had not felt well, he had been happy because he could teach the Cause and spread the Glad-Tidings.

3. A Walk through the Streets and the Radiance of the Star of Hope

At sunset he ordered tea and in the calm atmosphere of a lovely eastern evening, we felt his power more than ever. He is the King of our hearts and spirits and our love for him is increasing daily. He left very quietly, followed by the Arab believer. I felt a new ray of hope dawning upon the horizon of my soul. After dinner I wished to be alone so that I might contemplate the divine sweetness of the Beloved.

Walking through the streets I looked up and millions of stars were shining in their accustomed glory. The night was beautiful. The Eastern

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sky was radiant. The stars were the shining lamps of God. At last I sat down on a broken wall and I looked about me. Thinking upon the past, I became confident for the future. God in his bounty has guided the ship of my destiny so far, and He will continue to do the same. I returned with a light step. On my way back I met three other believers. They are sincere in their striving and longing to be of more useful service. How confident they were! How simple! how spiritual! how glorious their faith! They inspired me with a greater faith. In the darkness there arose a light, full of radiance and beauty. I entered the house very happy. My heart was singing. The future was in the hands of God.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 7, 1913.

1. The beauty and charm of the palaces of Ramleh.
2. The Egyptian pashas are proud of Abdul Baha and his philosophy of religion.
3. A call from Abdu Baha and his encouragement

1. The Beauty and Charm of Ramleh

From my room I see the great clock of the New Victoria Hotel, wherein the Beloved stayed from time to time. The manager with much pride shows to the guests the various rooms occupied by the Master. He knows something about the Cause, and recognizes the great honor and blessing bestowed upon him and his hotel. When the Master was here the last time, he gave two large feasts just before his departure for America. There are a few other hotels and houses in which the Beloved has lived periodically. The homes of the Pashas are really wonderful specimens of the best Renaissance architecture. They very much resemble the houses and

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villas I have seen at Nice. Wonderful palaces, furnished with a taste truly magnificent, and are enclosed within gardens, the beauty and charm of which rival the fairy-lands of the artists and the poets. These “villas” are surrounded by walls from two to four yards high. The principal avenues are macadamized and clean and the narrow streets are also very much like the garden paths of Nice. As one walks through

them the perfume of the flowers is inhaled, the branches of the trees overhanging the walls give a cool, inviting shade and the climbing vines add to the charming verdancy. A man passing through the streets and observing the houses, sees all the windows tightly shut. The stranger may think that they are not inhabited, but on inquiring about this custom of closing the windows, he is politely informed that as the owner is Mohammedan, the blinds are drawn, so that no foreign eyes may gaze upon the dark beauties of the women.

2. The Egyptian [sic] Pashas are Proud of Abdul Baha and His Philosophy of Religion

Several of the houses of these Pashas are honored by the presence of the Master, for they admire him and appreciate his teachings of tolerance and broad-mindedness. It is very strange that although these men do not believe in the Cause, yet they boast before strangers about the existence of Abdul Baha.

A very prominent Pasha, who was an admirer of Abdul Baha, received from time to time some English periodicals with accounts of the Bahai movements, among them was the Christian Commonwealth which contained an article explaining the Cause.

After showing the article to visiting Englishman, the Pasha said: —

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“We have produced in the Orient a man such as Abbas Effendi, who alone visited Europe and America, and who through the sheer force of his personality and the wonderful soundness and brilliancy of his philosophy, captivated the pulpits and platforms, revolutionized the current of western thoughts, opened before your faces vistas of glorious ideals, and drew to his audiences thousands of men and women who were deeply attracted to his humane and divine wisdom, while the Press of the West from one end to another had but one tongue by which to praise his many virtues and to elucidate his system of religion and philosophy. Yes, we are proud of him. We honor him because he comes from the heart of the Orient. He represents us, he utters our ideals and longings. You have never sent us a man who could travel in the Orient and deliver lectures as Abbas Effendi has done in the West.”

Thus these people are spreading the principles in a most effective manner, because they are men of great influence, although not “believers” in the Bahai Movement.

3. A Call from Abdul Baha and His Encouragement

This morning the Master did not come to our house but passed by, asking for Mirza Ali Akbar. During the day he came in two or three

times, but for only a few minutes. His health has improved much. He seems very busy, for he is out often, paying visits to this or that person.

In the morning I was told many interesting stories of how certain people had become Bahais and the manner in which some of the believers taught. These stories are really worth recording, for they illustrate the peculiar disposition of a people who may be instructed by a line

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of poetry quoted at the right time, but refuse to listen to all kinds of logical arguments.

In the evening the Beloved came with a number of friends, tea was prepared according to his directions and served by himself. He stayed for half an hour, speaking now and then about the Cause and encouraging the Pilgrims to teach when they are back again among their associates and relatives.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 8, 1913.

1. A practical lesson in cleanliness. 2. The story of the Dervish and his resignation. 3. Abdul Baha amid the roses. 4. Abdul Baha raises the Call of the Kingdom.

1. A Practical Lesson in Cleanliness

Today I played the part of house-cleaner and cook. I spent most of my time in the kitchen cleaning the dishes, washing the utensils, scrubbing the floor and dusting the ceiling and the cupboard. It was an object lesson to our cook, who does not know the simple ways of cleanliness. When I left the kitchen all the Persians came in and admired the spotlessness of everything. The cook was most willing to learn, but there had been no one who would take a day off to demonstrate a method of tidiness to him.

“My parents did not teach me any of these things; in fact they did not know them,” was the way he explained this lack of knowledge.

Most of the simple, loving folks here have plenty of religion. They are honest, truthful, hospitable, but they lack the knowledge of hygiene and sanitation. Their children are allowed to remain dirty; in many cases they do not dress them well for fear of bringing them to

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notice and of possibly attracting the “Evil Eye.” Woe unto anyone if he praises or admires the beauty of the child of a Mohammedan! What these people need is a practical knowledge and the inculcation of sanitary laws. Once they learn these, they will forget their superstitions; the outlook of their cramped lives will be expanded, the light of intelligence will shine, and the beauty of holiness appear. The most important thing for them is the supreme knowledge of cleanliness which is next to godliness. The Bahai Revelation is inculcating this lesson, and they are learning as fast as opportunity is offered to them. Baha-Ullah has said that cleanliness is the perfume of paradise!

2. The Story of the Dervish and his Resignation

While I was busy with my house-cleaning, the Master was dictating Tablets for the Oriental believers. In the morning he came to see the pilgrims, but most of them were not yet up. However, within a few minutes they were in his presence. He asked the cook what he was going to prepare for us. The cook did not know and Abdul Baha demanded from one after the other what they liked, and finally the decision was made. Then the Master told us the story of a Dervish, as follows: When Baha-Ullah with his family were leaving Bagdad, a Dervish begged Abdul Baha’s permission to join the party. He was told that the trip would be most difficult, but the Dervish was willing to accept all manner of hardships so he traveled with the party as far as Constantinople. Then when they left for Adrianople, he stayed behind but joined them later, for having become accustomed to associate with the Bahais, he could not live without them. In Adrianople, he rented a room in an adjoining Mosque with another friend, and for some time they lived together

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peacefully. One day the Dervish came to Baha-Ullah, saying: “My friend attacked me this morning and gave me a sound beating, but I said nothing. I was in a state of utmost resignation. Then after half an hour he returned, kissed my hands and said: ‘Verily, you have attained the stage of great merit, you are now a saint.’ ” Baha-Ullah, listening with interest to this story, said laughingly: “If he beats you another time and you demonstrate such resignation, he may believe that you have attached the station of Prophethood.”

3. Abdul Baha Amid the Roses

In the afternoon we met Abdul Baha in a garden walking among the lovely roses. He was talking on the mission of the Manifestations of God.

Before sunset we went to a Bahai meeting in the house of Khorassani. They expected Abdul Baha but he did not come, because he was very tired on account of the activities of the day. In the evening a number of Arabs called on him in his own house. One of them had composed an eloquent poem in his honor, and read it aloud. They stayed until twelve o'clock and went away impressed with his knowledge and wisdom.

4. Abdul Baha Raises the Call of the Kingdom

In a Tablet revealed to the Persian believers he says:

“O YE FRIENDS OF ABDUL BAHA: — It is now three years that, like unto a nestless and shelterless bird, I have been wandering through mountains and plains and flying over the wilderness and Sahara. I rested not one moment, neither did I tarry long anywhere. Constantly was I moving and travelling. The cry of the Kingdom

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of Abha was raised and the most great Glad-tidings penetrated throughout those vast and remote regions. The Flag of the Cause of God was unfurled over every hill and waved over every country. As I was occupied day and night, spreading the world-consuming call of the Cause, I failed to correspond with the friends of the heart and the soul, but as soon as I returned to the Orient, notwithstanding my indisposition, I immediately started to correspond. For the utmost desire of my heart and spirit is to remember the believers and to mention the names of the friends, especially those who have been at all times, the objects of tests and who are submerged in the sea of trials; notwithstanding this, with infinite firmness and steadfastness, you withstood the attack of the waves, underwent bravely violent storms, and guided the Ark to the shore of salvation. Therefore I am greatly pleased and most satisfied with the believers of Boshrouyah, Kheir-ol-Gara and Faran and all those of Khorassan. I hope that in the future their flame of enthusiasm, and the fire of their devotion may be enkindled more and more. Upon ye, and upon the maid-servants of the Merciful be Baha El Abha.”

RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 9, 1913.

1. The Bounties of God. 2. Tablet for the believers of Esphahan, Persia. 3. Contrast between Oriental and Occidental houses. 4. Abdul Baha gives money to the poor.

1. *The Bounties of God*

No matter where we go and what we do, the protecting hand of God overshadows us. We are tenderly and wistfully taken care of by Him who rules the world of

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Creation. In His mighty grasp He holds the scepter of Guidance and in His hand He carries the golden crown of the heavenly Glad-tidings. He illumines the hearts of the sincere ones with the light of Providence and summons all the nations to come under the Tent of His Mercy. He quickens the dead with the Breaths of the Holy Spirit and inspires hearts with divine Knowledge. He adorns the heavens with countless scintillating stars and commands the winds to blow from every direction. He causes the water to gush out of the adamant rock and irrigates the soil with the rain of Reality. He reveals unto man the mysteries of His Kingdom and spreads abroad the vision of Paradise! Glory be unto Him for this Manifest Bestowal. Thanks be unto Him for this Evident Grace! Praise be unto Him for this spiritual outpouring!

His true servants adore Him under all conditions and circumstances. They obey His will and follow His commandments. They lose the self and attain to the station of renunciation. The love of humanity flows through the stream of their lives. They become the spiritual springtimes which are followed by no autumns. They become the guardians of the rights of men. They are the angels of the Supreme Concourse, the fruitful trees of the Orchard of the Almighty and the singing nightingales of the meadow of Truth. It is the hope of every lover of humanity to become the center of these merciful qualities, to attract these praiseworthy attributes, to surround himself with these wonderful virtues and to reflect the rays of the sun of righteousness!

2. *A Tablet for the Believers of Esphahan, Persia*

A Tablet was revealed yesterday for the believers of Esphahan. Esphahan is my native home and I have a

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secret predilection for that place. The Tablet is through a Sayad Assadullah, a native of that city who, is a fine young man amongst the present pilgrims. After having a most memorable visit of many days with the Blessed Master, he leaves tomorrow via Constantinople for his home. Here is the translation of the Tablets: —

“O YE FRIENDS OF ABDUL BAHA! His Honor Sayad Assadullah arrived in Alexandria and a meeting was obtained. When he received permission for his departure he mentioned your names and asked for a Tablet. But Abdul Baha, like unto a bird who has been constantly flying for many days and nights is exhausted. He has not rested for one moment, and is in the utmost fatigue and weariness, to such an extent that he has not the endurance for writing even one word. Notwithstanding this, through the tremendous power of the Love of God and the rising of the waves of affection for the believers of God, I am thus engaged; so you may realize how this heart is attracted toward those blessed souls, and is the captive of the memory of the friends.

“In short, it has been some time since, like unto a Breeze wafting, I have been travelling in the regions of the West, but under all conditions and circumstances, I have remembered the friends of the East. At every moment, the spirit enjoyed a new exhilaration, and often I regretted the fact that I was far from the opportunity of association with those faithful believers. I did not choose any plane as my shelter. One night I was crossing a mountain, and spending the day on the plains and in the flowerbeds. At one time I was traveling in the midst of the great ocean and at another, landing on the shore of a continent. Day and night I raised my voice and cried out in the name of His Highness the Almighty! Now at last I have reached Alexandria and have looked

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in the faces of the Oriental believers. Praise be to God that I beheld such pilgrims who are in the utmost of supplication and adoration of God. I have also remembered you. It is hoped that the Sun of Reality may so shine upon the East that the West may become illumined with one of its effulgent rays and that the friends of Persia may be the means of the union of the hearts of the people of other countries and arise for the guidance of the inhabitants of the earth. Praise be to God that the confirmation of the Blessed Perfection descend incessantly like vernal showers and that merciful reinforcements are constantly bringing assistance. Therefore, O ye believers of God, avail yourselves of this opportunity, be ye engaged in the enlightenment of souls and think ye of the unlimited illumination of your hearts. Enlighten the East. Perfume the West and let nostrils inhale the Fragrances.

“Upon ye be Baha El Abha.

(Signed) “ABDUL BAHA ABBAS.”

3. Contrast between the Oriental and Occidental Houses

This morning the Beloved paid us an early visit. He called each one by name and our hearts glowed with unchangeable love. He said to the pilgrims that it was the wonderful Love of God that gave him the

impetus to write so many Tablets to the friends of Persia. Otherwise physically it would have been impossible. Then he said that he could not sleep last night, because he had been submerged in a sea of thought and reflection. He pointed out the contrast between the Oriental and Occidental houses by saying, that all the Oriental houses were enclosed within beautiful courts and gardens. If a person cannot sleep during the night, he can go out in the

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court, walk around quietly, commune with the stars, and pass the night in the open. But one cannot leave the Occidental houses except to go into the streets.

4. Abdul Baha Gives Money to the Poor

In the afternoon he returned and asked for Mirza Moneer. While he was standing in front of the house, an Arab stopped and begged for money to feed his children, because he was a stranger in the city. I wondered whether he was telling the truth, but the Master gave him one Majidi, which is quite a sum in this part of the world. Then he went into the garden nearby. For more than one hour he sat silently, his eyes half-closed; only now and then opening them to look at the flowers, and thus he remained in the garden until sunset.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 10, 1913.

1. How Abdul Baha dictates Tablets to his friends in all parts of the world.
2. Abdul Baha speaks on Theosophy.

1. How Abdul Baha Dictates Tablets to His Friends in All Parts of the World

This morning I was called into the presence of the Beloved. He was very happy. He asked for the letters which have come from America and Europe. I returned home and brought a full-sized package. As soon as he started to dictate, and the words of wisdom like unto a sparkling stream flowed from his blessed mouth, he was a transfigured person. He sat immovable on the sofa, his eyes most of the time shut, but his heart a waving ocean of revelation. Now he revealed a Tablet to a believer in Constantinople, and again to a friend in

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Rangoon, India; Stuttgart and Switzerland, London and Paris, New York and Honolulu, Washington and Boston were represented. How wonderful and significant appears to me this golden net-work of spiritual correspondence, reaching to the different parts of the earth! This correspondence is not based upon any commercial or material scheme. It is the eternal plan of God, to diffuse the fragrance of the spiritual rose and scatter the rays of the Divine Sun! Every day an ideal Congress of religions and nations is held in the rather small room of the Beloved and he presides over the proceedings with a dignity and wisdom that is nothing short of miraculous. Some of the friends who became the recipients of the Tablets are as follows: Miss Beatrice Irwin, Miss Rhoda Nicols, Mrs. Isabel Fraser, Mr. Ch. Remey, Miss A. Boylin, Miss O. Schwartz, Abbas Butt Ally, Mr. Ekstein, Madame d'Ange d'Astre, J. Miller, Dr. Skinner, J. Wieland, Miss Alma Knoblock [*sic*], etc., etc. Toward the end, the Master was so moved that he got up from his seat and began to walk to and fro while continuing dictation. I tried to keep up with the rapidity of his uttered words. When I mentioned the name of one of the believers, his whole countenance changed, and he was very happy, saying that he loved him, because he was very sincere in the Cause. In the Tablet, addressed to this particular Bahai, he said:

“May His Holiness Baha-Ullah be thy Confirmer and Helper! May the Effulgence of the Sun of Reality be the light of thy path! May the sea of Divine Confirmation cast its waves over thee! May the cloud of Celestial Grace pour upon thee! May the Breeze of Providence be the cause of the fragrance of thy nostrils! May the treasury of the Kingdom be thy wealth! This is the prayer of Abdul Baha in thy behalf.”

What a heavenly prayer! Then he revealed a Tablet,

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on the sinfulness of back-biting, evil-finding and gossip, which must be spread all over the Bahai world. Soaring again toward the spiritual realms of eloquence and pausing for a moment, he said, if these Tablets do not move and stir the hearts out of their sleep and do not spur them into activity, they are harder than stones; because in this condition of weakness, he was writing to them with such love and tenderness.

It was about 11:30 that I left his presence. In the afternoon he went to the rose-garden, and while sitting on the soft grass dictated many more Tablets to the Persian believers.

2. Abdul Baha Speaks on Theosophy

In the evening he came to our house. He sat on the veranda. Many believers were gathered around him. He spoke on the doctrines of the Theosophists, of his interview with Mrs. A. Besant in London and with

other prominent Theosophists in the West, about the story of the boy who is being educated in Oxford to become the manifestation of God, and a most instructive exposition of the principles of reincarnation which was greatly beneficial to all. Mirza Abul Fazl said afterward:

“I have read many books on this subject, but have never seen anywhere, such clear and lucid explanations.”

RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 11, 1913.

1. The spreading of the Bahai Cause similar to the spreading of early Christianity. 2. Abdul Baha's Tablets are the never-fading roses of the Kingdom of Abha. 3. The most great sin is back-biting.

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1. The Spread of the Bahai Cause Similar to Spreading of Early Christianity

Three of our pilgrims — one from Esphahan, another from Yazd and a third from Eshkabad, departed for their respective countries, carrying away the Glad-tidings of the Kingdom of Abba.[sic] As they travel along, from country to country, before reaching their native lands, they will cheer many hearts, console many despondent spirits, teach many souls, and diffuse far and wide the fragrances of the Roses of Love and Affection. How exactly parallel is the promotion of this Movement to that of early Christianity! Whole-hearted, spiritual, zealous men and women, without the expectation of any salary, are spreading the Cause throughout all the countries of the world! Their only reward is the good-pleasure of the Lord of Mankind. They are affected neither by the praise nor the blame of the people! They work for the sake of God. They are always in good humor, ever teaching their fellowmen the ways of charity and freedom, amity and concord. Abdul Baha sent for the pilgrims early this morning, so that he might speak to them words of blessing and comfort. He praised the steadfastness of the Persian believers before the executioner's sword and under the severest trials; how they danced with joy when they were surrounded by persecution, and how they faced martyrdom with benign faith and smiling countenances!

2. Abdul Baha's Tablets Are the Never-fading Roses of the Kingdom of Baha

Early in the morning I went down to the sea, and as I passed the house of the Beloved, I saw him walking in his room and talking to the Pilgrims who were about

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to leave. At four o'clock he sent for Mirza Moneer. In the rose-garden nearby many Tablets were dictated for the Eastern and Western Bahais. These Tablets carry with themselves, not only the ideal fragrances of the paradise of Abha, but the perfume of the flowers before his loving vision. They have a special charm and significance to me and as I translate or read them, the beautiful rose-garden with its luxuriant verdancy and fragrant flowers passes before my sight, and I look upon each one of these Tablets as a spiritual rose, never-fading, imperishable, sent as a divine gift to the friends of God. These roses of the Kingdom of Abha are being scattered all over the earth, to perfume the nostrils of mankind, not only in these days, but throughout the coming generations. Just think of Abdul Baha, visualize him in your mind! He is walking among the flower-beds, pausing here to pick a rose, there a violet, inhaling them with the sweetness of his spirit and dictating words of knowledge and wisdom!

3. The Most Great Sin Is Back-biting

Herein I translate the important Tablet on back-biting. It is written to Doctor M. G. Skinner of Washington, D.C.

“He is God.

“O THOU MY DOCTOR!

“Thy letter was received. Thou hast written regarding thy aims. How blessed are these aims! especially for the suppression of back-biting (gossip, fault-finding, etc). I hope that you may become confirmed therein; because the worst human quality and the most great sin is back-biting; most especially when it emanates from the

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tongues of the believers of God. If some means might be devised so that the doors of back-biting could be shut eternally and each one of the believers unsealed his tongue only for praise of the other, then the Teachings of His Holiness Baha-Ullah would be spread, hearts illuminated, spirits glorified and the human world attain to Everlasting Felicity.

“I hope that the believers of God will shun back-biting completely, (gossip-making and fault-finding) and each one praising the other cordially, and believing that back-biting is the cause of divine wrath; that if a person back-bites to the extent of one word he may become dishonored amongst all people: because the most hateful characteristic of man is fault-finding. One must expose the praiseworthy qualities of the souls and not their evil attributes. The friends must overlook each other’s shortcomings and speak only of their virtues — not of their faults.

“It is related that his Holiness Christ — may my life be a sacrifice to Him — one day accompanied by His Apostles, passed by the corpse of a dead animal. One of them remarked: ‘How putrid has become this animal!’ The other exclaimed: ‘How it is deformed!’ A third cried out: ‘What an odor! How cadaverous looking!’ But His Holiness Christ said: — ‘Look at its teeth! How white they are!’ Consider that He did not look at all for the defects of that animal, nay rather, He searched well until He found its beautiful white teeth. He observed the whiteness of the teeth only and entirely over-looked the deformity of its body, the dissolution of its organs and its evil odor!

“This should be the attribute of the children of the Kingdom!

“This should be the conduct and the manner of the real Bahais!

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“I hope that all the believers will attain to this lofty station.

“Upon thee and upon them be Baha El Abha.

(Signed) “ABDUL BAHA ABBAS.”

Toward evening the Beloved called at the apartment of Mirza Abul Fazl and finding there a few young Arab students, spoke to them on general subjects. For the present Mirza Abul Fazl is writing a book which when finished may be considered the chief work of his busy and eventful life.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 12, 1913.

1. The Bahais must start a forward movement of teaching. 2. Mrs. Getsinger and her forthcoming trip to India. 3. Abdul Baha praises the German Bahais in a Tablet.

1. The Bahais Must Start a Forward Movement of Teaching

This is the time when the believers must give attention to the spreading of the Teachings among those people who have not yet heard

of this Cause. There should be a general forward movement in all the Bahai Assemblies. The supreme question of spreading the Lights of the Kingdom of Abha must gain the upper hand. Abdul Baha desires to see the results of the work of the friends.

We must recruit new soldiers for the Army of Abha. The friends should avail themselves of this great opportunity. They should loosen the tongues of eloquence and invite all men to the heavenly Banquet. They should speak with fire and let the spirit of God inspire their hearts. Abdul Baha is crying: Teach, Speak, Spread the Message! Can we remain indifferent, speechless, and

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voiceless? No! a thousand times No! Why has God given us tongues? To speak out his Grace, to proclaim His Manifestation, to raise our voices in public meetings and gathering-places, to widen the circle of human thought and to teach His Principles.

Because Abdul Baha travelled throughout America and Europe, the zeal and enthusiasm of the Persian teachers have been increased a hundred times. We have seen him with our own eyes, heard his teachings with our own ears. The slogan of every Bahai must be: "Let us teach the people brotherhood and tolerance!"

2. Mrs. Getsinger and Her Forthcoming Trip to India

This morning the Beloved sent for me. He was feeling well. Mrs. Getsinger was called into the room and the plan of her journey to India discussed. Since her arrival she has been living with Abdul Baha's family which is presided over by the Greatest Holy Leaf! Then the Beloved dictated a few Tablets and cablegrams. In the afternoon he passed by the house, followed by Shoghi Effendi, and asked for Mirza Moneer. Many Tablets were revealed in the garden. No one is allowed to go there during these hours unless permitted by him. One of the Tablets is to Mr. Ekstein of Stuttgart. He is a fine Bahai and translated the words of the Master on many occasions during our trip to that city. The Tablet is as follows:

3. Abdul Baha Praises the German Bahais in Tablet

"O THOU ILLUMINED MAN!

"The days that I spent with thee in Stuttgart I shall never forget, for at all times we associated with the

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Assistance of the Breaths of the Holy Spirit. The power of Confirmation of His Holiness Baha-Ullah waved over those meetings, the lights of the kingdom shone forth from the horizon of Abha, the invincible aids descended successively, the hearts were in the utmost joyousness, the spirits were exhilarated with the Divine Glad-tidings, and each one of the believers like unto a candle. On this account those days will never be forgotten.

“Now it is my hope that after my departure; the Fire of the Love of God may flame forth with greater intensity, and that thou mayest sing a heavenly melody in every gathering.... I am most grateful and satisfied with the believers of Stuttgart. Truly I say that they are blessed souls. I will never forget them for one moment. The thought of them makes me very happy. ...”

**RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 13TH,
1913.**

1. The story of the man who made it appear that he was a Bahai in 1830 while the movement began in 1844. 2. The story of fifteen robbers in Bagdad. 3. Abdul Baha talks about helping the poor and the needy. 4. The story of Mohammed, the Mullah and the questioner. 5. The arrival of a new pilgrim. 6. With Abdul Baha in the rose garden.

1. The Story of the Man Who Made It Appear That He Was a Bahai in 1830, While the Movement Began in 1844

This morning the Master came in to inquire about the health of his servants. We responded joyfully to his humorous questions about fasting, eating, etc. After walking a few minutes he sat down and corrected the Tablets which had been dictated during the last two days. Then, in connection with his remarks about those

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persons who profess to be Bahais because they expect some material reward, he related the following story: —

“When the Bahais were living in Bagdad there was a very prominent man who used often to come to see Baha-Ullah. He sat in His Presence with the greatest respect and listened attentively to his utterances. One day he tried to express his faith and belief in the Cause with all apparent sincerity and devotion. ‘Yes, my Lord!’ he concluded his talk, ‘I thoroughly believe in this Cause. In the year 1830, one of the great teachers of this Movement passed by our city. I met him and he

talked with me for several days and his words convinced me of the validity of this revelation. From that time on I have been a believer.' ” Then Abdul Baha laughed, saying, that this man did not know that the movement was inaugurated only in 1844 and so, in order to convince Baha-Ullah of the genuineness of his belief, he had set the time of his acceptance 14 years before the declaration of the Báb!

2. The Story of the Fifteen Robbers of Bagdad

At another time there were fifteen robbers in Bagdad. They raided many houses during the nights. The government and police were unable to find their whereabouts. One night they robbed the stores of several Persian merchants and according to the law of capitulation, the Persian Consul did his best to catch them. This Consul was, however, very greedy and avaricious, and he thought more of his personal profit than of finding the robbers and of giving back to the merchants their stolen goods. One morning Abdul Baha arose early and came out of the house. He saw in the court fifteen uncouth men waiting for him. Their spokesman told him that they were the band of robbers and that in order to escape the

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wrath of the Consul and his rapacity, they had come to take refuge under the shelter of Baha-Ullah and become Bahais. Abdul Baha inquired about their whereabouts, gave them a little advice, and sent them away. Then knowing that if the goods were taken by the Consul, they would never be returned to their owners, he sent one of the believers to the chief of the band, requiring him to return everything, which he did without any protest. The merchants in turn, received quietly all their stolen goods without the mediumship of the Consul. But when the Consul heard of Abdul Baha's part in this affair, he was very wroth, because the matter had been taken out of his jurisdiction. He had expected to fatten his pockets, and not succeeding in this he forever afterward tried to injure the Bahais on every occasion.

Among these robbers there was one by the name of Heydar. As a punishment for his former raids, the government had cut off both his hands. He was, notwithstanding this handicap, the cleverest of them all. One morning, a Bahai came to Abdul Baha, saying that last night his money which was sewed in a special pocket of his vest had been stolen. He did not know how, and he wondered who had done the deed. Abdul Baha told him to go and bring his vest, and when it was before him, he observed that the pocket was not ripped with a knife, but chewed to pieces with teeth. He did not say anything, but sent for Heydar. When Heydar arrived, Abdul Baha told him: “Thou hast stolen the money of this poor man. Give it back to him.” He tried to deny it, but Abdul Baha

said: "Look at this vest! Thou hast chewed the pocket with thy teeth; it is not torn with a knife as any other man would have done were he in possession of his hands." No, he would not confess that he had stolen it. Then Abdul Baha ordered the bastinado to be brought in. After receiving a few lashes

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on the soles of his feet, he brought out of his pocket the small bundle of money and gave it to its owner. Then he was released.

3. Abdul Baha Talks about Helping the Poor and Needy

Before Abdul Baha's departure for America, the poor of all nationalities came to him, Persians and Turks, Arabs and Syrians, Greeks and Europeans, belonging to all religions and faiths. He gladly helped everyone without any distinction for race or color; but this year he could not give to the same extent, because the expenses of his travels in America and Europe had totalled a great sum. Even now he was under a heavy debt. However, although these difficulties existed, he would not send one man away without satisfying him and relieving his immediate needs. The worst condition in life is, when one is in urgent want of the means of livelihood. It is indeed very sad when a person begs for assistance to be unable to lighten his burden, or to contribute anything toward his relief.

4. The Story of the Mohammedan Mullah and the Questioner

Then, changing the mode of his expression, he said:

One day a layman went to a Mullah and asked several questions. The Mullah did not answer him. The man then said: "Have you not read in the Koran 'You must not turn away a questioner?'" The Mullah in turn rejoined: — "Hast thou not also read the injunction in the same holy book, 'Give thou not thy possessions to the fools.' Now, my possessions are the ideals of knowledge and of Truth. I must protect them from intruders."

Then he interpreted a dream of Mirza Ali Akbar and

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left our precincts to attend to the many works of charity which call for his personal attention.

5. Arrival of a New Pilgrim

A new pilgrim arrived to-day from Beirut. He is an old Bahai and has a most interesting history. He has a limited education, but out of the clearness of his heart and the beauty of his faith, he interprets the verses of the Koran and can carry on most instructive discussions on spiritual subjects. The Master has expressed a wish that he should interpret in his presence, one Koranic verse every day.

6. *With Abdul Baha in the Rose-garden*

When I returned from Alexandria in the afternoon I was told that the Master had asked for me. I went immediately to the garden. Seeing me standing near the door, he permitted me to enter and to take a seat. He was walking in the avenue fronting a most charming rose-garden, and dictating Tablets to Mirza Moneer. Shoghi Effendi was there also. For nearly three hours, the limpid stream of revelation flowed to irrigate the parched ground of hearts in distant climes! Just as the sun was sinking behind the western horizon, he revealed a most touching, prayer. His voice was like the music of the spheres, now chanting in a clear rich voice, now in a low, sweet undertone. The effect made us forgetful of everything. The dusk of the evening, the murmur of the breeze through the roses and trees, the unbroken calmness of the atmosphere, the spiritual beauty of the presence of the Master, and then as we looked up, the twinkling stars all combined to weave around our hearts a garland of spiritual enchantment! We were in reality

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worshipping the glorious King of Kings in the holiest moment of our lives! The prayer was a supplication to the throne of the Almighty for the purification of souls and the spiritualization of hearts, — in order that men might sing the praises of their Lord, and cause the ringing cries of “Ya Baha El Abha” to ascend from their meeting places to the Supreme Concourse.

As we left the garden, I carried with me that wonderful prayer of the Beloved! On the wings of Light it had ascended to the throne of the Almighty and had been accepted by the Ruler of Mankind.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 14TH 1913.

1. Bahai schools in Kashan and Teheran and their examinations. 2. The Orient-Occident Unity. 3. Talk of Abdul Baha to the writer. 4. Abdul Baha praises Mrs. Goodall and Mrs. Getsinger. 5. Difference between Abdul Baha and others. 6. Abdul Baha and three roses.

1. Bahai Schools in Kashan and Teheran and Their Examinations

Yesterday afternoon the Master read to us a letter received from Kashan, giving the details of the examinations of the children of the Bahai school in that city. He said that there were more than 700 persons present on Commencement Day and that all the pupils examined came out with flying colors. The school has become a credit to the Bahai community and every one speaks about it. Another letter from Teheran was given us by the Master to read. It contained a graphic description of the examinations at the school of Tarbiat. Thirty students together with the President of the school and the teachers presented themselves before the Board of Examiners,

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appointed by the government in the College of Darel-Fonoun. Twenty-one out of the thirty pupils received their diplomas. This shows the earnestness of these students of Tarbiat and their thorough education. After this examination which lasted several days, the Faculty of the school gave a public reception, to which more than 2000 persons were invited. The school of Tarbiat is well known throughout Persia as a Bahai institution. It ranks high for its educational standard, and its Branch for the girls is headed by Miss Lillian Kappes. Notwithstanding many stumbling blocks in its path, it has been slowly, but surely forging ahead. Its progress and steady advancement is very dear and near to the heart of Abdul Baha. He hopes that it may become a wonderful influence for culture and refinement throughout Persia; and those friends in America who are assisting it are helping the Cause in an unqualified manner. Not only the American friends have realized the importance of this fact, but also the Indian Bahais in their far-off country.

2. The Orient-Occident Unity

In a Tablet revealed two or three days ago to the believers of Rangoon Abdul Baha says:

“Whatever contribution you may send to the school of Tarbiat is in the estimation of Abdul Baha, most acceptable. In this we observe the aim of God working for the advancement of public education in Persia. The Western friends have rendered a worthy service to the Tarbiat School through the instrumentality of the Orient-Occident Unity in Washington. It is hoped that this channel of philanthropy will be continually widened, its various interests solidified, its annual scholarships kept up and increased in number, and its wholesome, disinterested influence expanded. Inasmuch as it is a universal

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undertaking, and every universal undertaking is divine in origin, its activities will continue. God has confirmed this work in many ways and will confirm those who are serving it.”

3. Talk of Abdul Baha to the Writer

This morning the Beloved sent Basheer for me. When I stood in his presence, He spoke with great tenderness. In his face there was the serenity of the Kingdom, the newness of the spring and the freshness of roses. Through his tongue the angels of love and affection uttered words of truth and beauty. I could almost hear the aeolian harps playing infinite chords of sound and color. My spirit was transported into the seventh heaven of ecstasy!

He told me that he had allowed me to stay near him, so that he might educate me according to his own standards. As soon as he observed that I had attained to that standard, he would send me away. Daily I must prepare myself for the services of the Cause. I must live in such a manner that wherever I go, I may attract from the Kingdom of Abha the divine Confirmations of the Blessed Perfection. Like unto the nightingale I must sing; like unto the bird I must soar; like unto the tree I must bear fruit; like unto the breeze I must waft over mountains and deserts, and similar unto the artist I must paint. Sanctified and holy I must occupy my time with the diffusion of the Lights of the Kingdom, and strive in the enkindlement of hearts and the regeneration of souls. I must be the servant of the Blessed Beauty and create a great reverberation in the spheres of thought and ideals. I must protect my eyes in order to behold His beauty, and my ears, so as to hear His music. Abdul Baha’s wish for me is that I may be trained in accordance

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with the nature of his great teachings, and try to walk in the footsteps of his mission. Then when He sends me away, he may ever receive, glad news from me, so that he may declare that his son is the spreader of the Cause of His Holiness Baha-Ullah, the conqueror of the cities of the hearts, the torch-bearer in the highway of guidance, and a radiant star in the heaven of the Supreme Concourse. There is much work to be done. Gird up the loins of endeavor. Be on the alert. Be wakeful and pray. In a short while he shall send me away. The time is coming soon. Now daily he is watching me, just as the gardener watches the growth of the plant with solicitude and care. Like unto the magnet I must draw the Confirmations of the Kingdom of Abha unto myself and be connected with the most Great Sea. I must not rest one moment. I must seek no

comfort; yea, yea I must walk in his footsteps. He declared by the Blessed Beauty that there was no other ideal in his mind except the ideal of servitude at the Threshold of Baha-Ullah. I must live eternally in this condition. All other conditions are non-existent when compared with this supreme state — the guidance of God. I must spread this ideal among the people. Baha-Ullah alone is my faithful helper and supporter. The time for my service has come. I must be confident and rest assured that the Blessed Perfection is with me.

These utterances of Abdul Baha flashed through my mind and heart like so many rays of light. I was dazzled. From the height of authority and inspiration he was speaking. I was moved to tears and my whole body was shaken to the core; then the Beloved, seeing my condition, changed his tone and spoke of other things. He dictated several Tablets for the believers of Persia. Then I left his presence. I walked as a man in a dream.

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4. Abdul Baha Praises Mrs. Goodall and Mrs. Getsinger

In the afternoon he passed by the house. He called me to go with him. In reply to a cablegram to Mrs. Goodall, he had received an answer which had made him very happy. He said that she was his beloved, heavenly daughter, that she was the daughter of Baha-Ullah, ever serving the Cause with a rare faithfulness and magnanimity. He also spoke very lovingly about Mrs. Getsinger.

He said that if Mrs. Getsinger conducts herself according to his instructions she shall move India and teach many souls. Her words are endowed with Spiritual efficacy. Severed from all else save God she must go to India, relying upon Baha-Ullah for Confirmation.

I gave the Master a list of the names of the Bahai Assemblies of America and Europe requesting him to reveal a Tablet for each assembly.

At the gate of the garden, two poor Persians were standing. He told me to bring them in, and finding that he did not have money, he borrowed two English pounds from a believer, and gave one to each.

5. Difference between Abdul Baha and Others

In reference to a certain individual, he said, that the difference between himself and many men is that he wishes the welfare of the people for their own sakes, and without any ulterior motive. He desires that every one of the friends may shine like unto the sun. Others may love you, but it may be for some purpose. They may love you because they expect some day or some time, to receive a reward from you; but

Abdul Baha expects no reward. There are some people who are submerged in mud, yet they believe that they are world-illuminating

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suns. He wishes to free them from this water and clay, clear their wings from these impediments, but they cry out: “No, No, we are suns and stars; we are not in need of thy education,” Notwithstanding this, he must open the way for their freedom.

6. *Abdul Baha and Three Roses*

Then he walked toward the end of the garden, and spoke with the gardener. The latter picked three roses, one white, one pink and one red, and offered them to the Master, a beautiful symbol to those who know the meaning and significance of each color. With these roses in his hand, he faced the setting sun, — the horizon was suffused with purple and crimson. For a long time he looked toward the West, as though expecting to see the sun rise from that direction. He was in deep thought. Without a word he left the garden and we followed him.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 15, 1913.

1. How are you to-day? 2. Talk on religion and atheism by an illiterate Bahai. 3. Abdul Baha sends his secretaries to Nouzha Park. 4. Attending a Bahai meeting with new pilgrims. 5. Abdul Baha and the Khedive of Egypt. 6. A sweet Tablet to the darling little Mona.

1. *How Are You To-day?*

How are you to-day? Are you happy? Are you glad because you are living in this unparalleled [*sic*] cycle of the Lord? Are you facing the world and its puzzling problems this morning with courage and enthusiasm? Are you going to make another heart happy beside your own? Will you open wide the window of your soul? Is the

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meadow of your life verdant? Will you continue to be hopeful and optimistic? Will you dedicate yourself anew to the service of your fellow men? Are you feeling the whirl and stir of the new dawn? What will you do next to benefit mankind? What kind of thoughts and ideals will you hold in the secret chambers of your minds? Will they be

exalted and lofty? Will they be humanitarian and disinterested? Let us on this day make a new resolution. Let us stand up and with a radiant faith proclaim the Cause of God.

2. Talk on Religion and Atheism by an Illiterate Bahai

This morning our new Pilgrim — Haji Mohammed from Beirut — carried on a long discussion with me.

“Religion and atheism; faith and agnosticism are like two streams which have been flowing from unknown sources since the genesis of mankind. The former is sweet and the latter is bitter. When the stream of religion becomes active, the stream of atheism is dried up; therefore the fresh stream of faith must ever be strong and aromatic, in order to consume the bitter stream of unfaith which is tasteless. In this day Baha-Ullah from the inaccessible heights of the mountains of revelation has sent down upon the valley of humanity fresh and sweeping torrents of Faith to swell the volume of the stream of religion, and to irrigate the network of the brooks of materialism. Each Bahai is a new torrent and must roar with the power of reality. This stream of truth is greater than an ocean. It clears the path from all thorns and thistles and leaves behind it culture and civilization.”

To hear from the tongue of a simple man such a dissertation was an extraordinary thing.

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3. Abdul Baha Sends His Secretaries to Nouzha Park

At 3 o'clock Basheer told Mirza Mahmoud and me that according to the wish of Abdul Baha, Shoghi Effendi would take us, this afternoon, to the famous Park of Alexandria. I welcomed this invitation, because I had been looking forward to the day when I could see this public garden. We took the electric car for Alexandria, then another one through the city. The park has a fine gate, and as one enters, one finds shady, inviting avenues on every side. There are many animals, and a part of our time was spent in watching them. The flower-beds are laid out very artistically, there is a lake and many small reservoirs of water in which gold fish disport themselves with great abandon. Tall palm trees, at the top of which many clusters of green dates are hanging, lend a charming effect. It was about sunset when we left the Park, having thoroughly enjoyed the scenic beauty and large green vistas. We walked back half the way, and then took the car.

4. Attending a Bahai Meeting with New Pilgrims

When we returned, the Master was talking to the friends. He told us to go with the rest of the believers to the weekly meeting in Haji Khorassani's house. There we saw three other pilgrims from Cairo, Mirza Abul Gasem, El Yahou and Mirza Javad. Later on three other Arab believers arrived to meet the Master, and so the gathering was enlivened by the presence of these newcomers. Tea was served, prayers were chanted, and different ones spoke.

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5. Abdul Baha and the Khedive of Egypt.

During our absence in the afternoon, Osman Pasha, one of the Ministers of the Khedive, called on the Master conveying the loving greetings of the Ruler of Egypt and his longing to meet him. The date was then fixed for the afternoon of August 17th. His Highness the Khedive is now staying in Alexandria. His summer resort is near Ramleh. He lives in one of his palaces fronting the sea called Raas-ottin. The Khedive is friendly to the Bahai Movement and has special regard for the Master. It may be that history will record that he is one of the few Oriental Rulers who has received Abdul Baha with due honor.

6. A sweet Tablet to the darling little Mona.

While we were walking through the Garden of Nouzha, the Beloved was dictating beautiful Tablets to Mirza Moneer in another garden in Ramleh. One of these Tablets is to the little daughter of Mrs. Theodora de Bons whose husband is a dentist in Cairo. Now all three are on a vacation in Switzerland. Her name is Mona; so in this delightful manner the Master begins the Tablet:

“O THOU MY DARLING LITTLE MONA! Thy tiny eloquent letter was received and thy sweet dear thoughts became known to me. Rest thou assured that I shall behold thy charming, lovely face, and from thy dainty mouth shall hear a wonderful melody and song in glorification, thanksgiving and praise of the Almighty!

“Upon thee be Baha El Abha.

(Signed) “ABDUL BAHA ABBAS.”

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RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 16, 1923

1. Abdul Baha writes to a Hindu Bahai. 2. El Yahou arrives from Cairo. 3. Abdul Baha dictates Tablets in the Garden. 4. Walks and Bahai reminiscences. 5. To two German and Austrian Bahais traveling in Persia Abdul Baha gives Persian names. 6. The believers must summon the people to the Kingdom. 7. Acquire complete concentration.

1. Abdul Baha writes to a Hindu Bahai

May I be permitted to start the day's record with a Tablet revealed to an Indian Bahai in Rangoon, who has translated into the Hindustani language the holy books of Ighan, Seven Valleys and Hidden Words? His name is Abbas Ally Butt Cashmirce. Mr. Jos. Hannen, of Washington, D.C., had forwarded a copy of a letter written by him to the Master and the following is an answer to it: —

“He is God!

“O THOU ABBAS OF ABDUL BAHAI!

O THOU NAMESAKE OF ABDUL BAHAI!

“The letter that thou didst write to Mr. Joseph Hannen was forwarded by that beloved person to me. Couldst thou realize what an ecstatic condition was obtained through the reading of thy letter, unquestionably thou wouldst become enkindled like unto a candle. Like unto the moth thou wouldst burn thy wings and even as the nightingale thou wouldst break forth into songs of thanksgiving and glorification.

“I love thee, and my heart and soul obtain the utmost joy and fragrance when I remember thee. I hope that thou wilt become assisted in rendering mighty services....

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“It is my desire that thou wilt become confirmed and aided in the diffusion of the Fragrance of God and in the spreading of the Tablets and Holy words.

“Convey to all the friends the wonderful, Abha greetings.

“Upon Thee be Baha El Abha!

(Signed) “ABDUL BAHAI ABBAS.”

2. El Yahou Arrives from Cairo

One of the pilgrims — El Yahou, an old man — had brought with him from Cairo a bouquet of fragrant white flowers and six white fezes for the Master. He stayed with us last night and kept our party in a good humor until very late. In the morning he wanted the flowers and fezes to be taken to the Master, which I did with great pleasure. I

knocked at the door, and the Beloved opened it. He took the bundle out of my hand and told me that he would send for him in a few minutes.

3. Abdul Baha Dictates Tablets in the Garden

In the afternoon after four o'clock the beloved could be seen in the garden of roses, preparing spiritual bouquets to be forwarded to the Believers of the East and the West. May they scatter their aroma to all parts of the globe! May they refine the atmosphere of materialism and unbelief! May they dispel the clouds of superstition and doubts! May they adorn the chambers and halls of the spirits and souls!

4. Walks and Bahai Reminiscences.

Every night after dinner Mirza Ali Akbar and I take a long walk as far as Sidi Jaber. Arriving there, we sit

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in front of a Turkish Café facing the broad avenue. Around this café there are many palm trees. We watch the long streams of carriages and automobiles driving by from Ramleh to Alexandria, many of them carrying shrouded Turkish and Arab ladies of the social world going to theatres and places of amusement. Then we drink coffee, lemonade or sherbet, all of the sum of five cents. After half an hour's rest we walk back, talking now and then about America and the friends. These lovely walks in the moonlit Egyptian night are most attractive.

5. Abdul Baha Gives Persian Names to two German and Austrian Bahais Traveling in Persia

A letter from Mashad stated that two European believers have arrived in that city, A German and an Austrian. The Master in answer wrote: —

“Thou hast given the utmost praise to the two believers, German and Austrian. Go to Stuttgart and see with thine own eyes what is there! Those two blessed souls who are living in your midst are the samples of these other friends. Such persons have entered beneath the Tent of Providence in Germany, each one of whom sings like unto an ethereal Angel. Their hearts are attracted by the Love of God and their spirits rejoiced by the Glad-tidings of God! Exercise the utmost kindness and love toward these two holy souls who are with you. Give the name of Hossein to the German and Hassan to the Austrian. In these names there is a wisdom. You will become informed with their purport later.”

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6. *The Believers Must Summon the People to the Kingdom*

In another Tablet he says: —

“All the believers of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful must summon the people to the Kingdom and be the cause of the guidance of the inhabitants of the world. They must live and conduct themselves in such a manner that in sanctity, prayerfulness and devotion they may become distinguished from the rest of mankind.”

7. *Acquire Complete Concentration*

To the two French Bahais who bade us farewell in Marseilles, Abdul Baha writes: —

“Praise be to God that you have not forgotten the time of our meeting and that your hearts and souls are attracted to Baha-Ullah. I hope that you will obtain complete concentration of thought; so that you may have no idea and conception save Baha-Ullah. Then you shall make extraordinary progress and the Confirmation of the Kingdom of God shall descend upon you. You shall develop a seeing eye and a heart overflowing with the Love of God. Your breaths shall have influence upon others and your tongues will become the interpreters of the holy Books. Therefore, strive as much as you can to attain to this station.”

RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 17, 1913

1. Abdul Baha and the Khedive of Egypt meet. 2. A traveling companion for Mrs. Getsinger in her approaching visit to India. 3. Story of the French Ambassador

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and Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs about Christ's resurrection. 4. The Principle upon which Abdul Baha's Western trip was based. 5. America cannot be compared to Europe.

1. *Abdul Baha and the Khedive of Egypt*

This was an important date in the Bahai calendar because Abdul Baha and the ruler of Egypt met each other for the second or third time. Beyond this bare announcement I have no other information. The

Master may give us, later, an account of the meeting, and thus in our imagination we may construct a picture or he may not divulge any of the details. None of the believers were with him. For the present it is enough to know that on this day, between three and six p.m., the sovereign of Egypt had the honor and privilege of talking with Abdul Baha.

2. A Traveling Companion for Mrs. Getsinger in Her Approaching Visit to India

I was given the utmost joy of standing in the presence of Abdul Baha this morning. The more you receive his benediction, the greater becomes your hunger.

Mrs. Getsinger was called in and the question of a traveling companion was discussed. Different names were mentioned, but no one measured up to the requirements of the Beloved. Then the name of Mrs. Isabel Fraser was presented. "Yes, yes." He exclaimed delightedly. "She is just the right person." He loves her very much, and he always desires to assist her in serving the Cause. Why did we not think of her sooner? She will be able to render a great service in India. She has no other thought except the Love of Baha-Ullah. Then he dictated a cablegram to be sent to her without delay, the contents of which are as follows:

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"If possible leave immediately for Port Said. Wish send thee India for service. Cable Yazdi. Abbas."

3. Story of the French Ambassador and the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs about Christ's resurrection

Between 6 and 7 the Beloved came to our house and stayed for more than an hour. He spoke of the enmity of the ignorant people in every age and cycle for the manifestation of God. This enmity comes through the accumulation of dogmas and traditions and from blindly following the religious leaders.

Some people, he told us, are like unto the spiders. The more you tear to pieces their cobwebs of imaginations and imitations, the greater will become their zeal to spin again. Once the French Ambassador at the Sublime Porte satirically asked Foad Pasha, the minister of Foreign Affairs: "How did Mohammed ascend to heaven according to your trustworthy tradition?" Foad Pasha, realizing the scoffing tone of the Ambassador cheerfully volunteered the answer by saying: "With the same ladder that your Lord Christ ascended to heaven after his

resurrection.” His Excellency could not say anything. This able answer seemed to silence him, and put him “hors de combat.”

Then Abdul Baha related several stories of the time of Baha-Ullah when he was in Bagdad. These stories entirely lose their beauty and charm if translated into English, because they are in accord only with the Oriental conception, and parts of them are masterful plays on words and their various shades of meanings, which can be enjoyed solely by the Persians. The Master knowing so well their nature, from time to time, supplies the demand and thus makes them more attracted to the Cause

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by his peerless witticisms. He had just come from his interview with the Khedive, and as he was in such a delightful humor, I believe the meeting must have been very satisfactory.

I conclude the day with the translation of Tablets to the Persian believers:

4. The Principle upon Which Abdul Baha’s Western Trip Was Based

Consider how Abdul Baha forgot every material thought and mention and turned his face toward the countries and empires, cities and villages, mountains and deserts of the West. Day and night he was engaged in teaching the Cause and conveying the message. The principle upon which his trip was based was this:

“O God, make all my ideals and thoughts One Ideal and One Thought, and suffer me to attain to an eternal, unchangeable condition in Thy service!”

He sought no rest, neither did he breathe one breath of Comfort. Notwithstanding the weakness of his constitution, the infirmity of his body and the nervous fever, every night, he was in a city and every day in a community. Although at times he was hardly able to speak, yet he delivered lengthy addresses. Working in this manner shall bear fruits.

5. America Cannot Be Compared to Europe

In another Tablet he says:

“Praise be to God that this second journey is happily completed, and that from the West I have returned to the East. But this second voyage cannot be compared with the first European trip, because America cannot be

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compared with Europe. That country is another world; its inhabitants are another people; their capacities and receptivities of another type; therefore Abdul Baha found a vast arena, and an unlimited expanse and opportunity. In all the conventions and conferences he raised the clamor of ‘Ya Baha El Abha,’ and caused the clarion of ‘O My Lord the Clement’ to reach the Supreme Apex. From the infinite Bestowals of the Blessed Perfection I am anticipating the appearance of the results of this trip. I hope that this conduct of Abdul Baha will become an example for the believers; so that all of them may convey the message accordingly; be wanderers over deserts and mountains; seeking no ease or composure and taking their lives and spirits on the palms of their hands, and sacrificing them to the Blessed Perfection.”

RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 18, 1913

1. Abdul Baha and his attitude toward humanity. 2. Abdul Baha and Abul Hoda, a favorite of the Sultan.

1. Abdul Baha and His Attitude toward Humanity

The most significant Personality living in this age and generation is the Personality of Abdul Baha. Few souls in the history of mankind have been so successful in combining the harmonizing influence of the East and the West. Day and night he wields the scepter of spiritual powers. His gentle, loving Presence is felt in the remote corners of the earth. His unerring judgment reads the secret longings of the hearts. His Knowledge spiritualizes the lives of men. His love ennoble every being. His sublime consciousness embraces each race and nation of the earth. His universal conceptions enkindle the fire

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of brotherhood; his divine mind grasps the plan of creation and its ultimate fruition. In his dealings with the people he is merciful. In his treatment of the poor he is generous. In his association with men he is helpful. In his intercourse with society he is democratic. In his contact with his enemies he is forgiving. In his attitude toward mankind he is a father. He loves all; He showers his mercy upon all; He exercises kindness toward all. Abdul Baha is the mystery of love but an open mystery. God in his wisdom is daily revealing the secret of this Love; so that we may learn more and more of its ineffable sweetness and thoughtful tenderness. His life is a living book of love in all its heights and depths; its ink has been the blood of the martyrs, its chapters the tragic lives of glorious souls; it is written with a pen made of precious

stones on the pages of universal history. Who can measure the glorious possibilities of a life so complete as the life of Abdul Baha! He stands in the center of immensity. He voices the mysteries of eternity; he upholds the heavens of justice; he paves the path of the kingdom of God; he ushers in the dawn of the new era; he breathes a new spirit into dead bodies; he begems the firmament of the Cause with the radiant stars of praiseworthy virtues; he breaks the seals of the heavenly books; he fires hearts with the Flame of the Love of God; he sings the songs of the coming age; he calls all the inhabitants of the globe to spiritual solidarity and he spreads far and wide the Fragrance of the rose-garden of Abha!

2. Abdul Baha and Abul Hoda, a Favorite of the Sultan

This morning Abdul Baha came to see us and stayed a long time. He spoke about a great Sheik who lived in Constantinople and was a favorite of Abdul Hamid. His name was Abdul Hoda [*sic*]. He tried his utmost to intrigue

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against the Master but failed to accomplish his purpose. After the declaration of the Constitution in Turkey the enemies of the Sheik confiscated his property and reduced him to wretched poverty. This sudden change in fortune so deranged his mind that he died a year later. This man had thought that Sultan Abdul Hamid desired to send for the Master to come to Constantinople to fill a high position in the government, so he worked hard to poison the mind of the Sultan against the Beloved. The Master sent him a message to the effect, that he could rest assured that Abdul Baha would not come to Constantinople, even if he were sent for. He was a humble servant of God. What connection between him and royalty? He loved God and could worship Him better in the solitude of his prison than amid royal splendor; nay rather, the latter would separate him from the Threshold of the Almighty.

In the afternoon while passing by the door of the House he called for Mirza Moneer to go to the garden and take down the dictation of holy Tablets. In the evening a number of the newly arrived pilgrims received permission to see him.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 19, 1913

1. The coming of Isabel Fraser to Egypt. 2. Abdul Baha attends to his mail. 3. Thou must be firm and unshakable in thy purpose. 4. Abdul Baha and his talk with Miss Hiscock.

1. The Coming of Isabel Fraser to Egypt

“Coming immediately, Fraser.” The words danced before my eyes as the Beloved handed me the cable. In my heart there was gladness, on my face a smile of contentment.

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I looked up into the Countenance of the Master, and saw that my elation was but a reflection of his own satisfaction. Such a Bahai is priceless. Well done good and faithful maid servant, you have made the heart of the Beloved very happy! You have won the ball of victory from the field of Spiritual Glory! In the presence of the Master you have received a new baptism of fire and spirit. He will put in your hand the torch of guidance; on your lips the words of light; in your heart the symbol of life and he shall send you off with a new power, a new dedication, a new vision. May the Hand of God protect you throughout your voyage and bring you safely into the land of Egypt wherein the ideal Joseph lives! We are all gladness because you are coming and look forward to the day when we will again talk of holy and divine things as we were wont to do in London and Edinburgh, Bristol and Paris. You will be a welcome guest in the holy household. You shall have much to write for the Bahai world.

2. Abdul Baha Attends to His Mail

I stayed only a few moments in the presence of the Master this morning. He had sent for me to give me the above news. I took to him a big package of Tablets with their translations for the friends in America, and Europe. He himself attends to the final despatching of the rather voluminous mail to all parts of the world. For the last few days his health has been very good and his food, although simple, is regularly served. He takes long walks either at early morning or in the late afternoon, and at such times he is always alone. Outwardly he is walking, but in reality he is thinking and communing with our Maker.

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3. Thou Must Be firm and Unshakable in Thy Purpose

In the afternoon I had again the good fortune of being summoned into Abdul Baha’s room. A cable has been received from Doctor

Getsinger saying that he was willing to obey the call and to come. Mrs. Getsinger was sent for and in the course of conversation the Beloved told her that she must be firm and unshakable in her purpose and never, never let any outward circumstances worry her. He was sending her to India to bring about certain definite results. She must enter that country with a never-failing spirituality; a radiant faith, an eternal enthusiasm, an inextinguishable fire, and a solid conviction — in order that she might achieve those services which were required of her. Let not her heart be troubled. If she goes away with this unchanging condition of invariability of the inner state, she shall see the doors of confirmation open before her face, her life will be a crown of heavenly roses and she shall find herself in the highest station of triumph. She should strive day and night to attain to this exalted state! Let her look at Abdul Baha! She does not know a thousandth part of the difficulties and seemingly insurmountable obstacles which daily arise before his eyes. He does not heed them. He is walking in his chosen highway. He knows his destination. Hundreds of storms and tempests may rage furiously about his head, hundreds of Titans may sink to the bottom of the sea, mad waves may rise to the roofs of the heavens: all these will not change his purpose, will not disturb him in the least. He will not look either to the left or to the right. He is looking ahead. Far, far away, piercing the impenetrable darkness of the night, past the howling winds, and the raging storms, he sees the glorious light beckoning to him. The balmy weather is coming, and the voyager shall land safely. Kurrat-ul-ayne

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had attained to this supreme state when they brought to her the terrible news of the martyrdom of the Bahais. She did not waver; she also had chosen her path; she knew her goal. And when they imparted to her the news of her impending death, no one could see any trace of sorrow in her face; rather she was happier. Although she had never cared for dress, she wore on her supreme day her best white silk robe and most precious jewels and perfumed herself with the fragrant attar of rose. She hailed the chamber of death as a happy bride entering the nuptial bower of the bridegroom.

Then turning his face to Mrs. Getsinger, he ended his talk by saying that she must attain to this lofty summit of unchanging Purpose. Like Kurrat-ul-ayne nothing must shake her firm faith.

4. Abdul Baha and His Talk with Miss Hiscock

Miss Hiscock, who was with the Holy Family, was called in. The Master told her that he was well pleased with her. Her aim was to serve the Cause and the day was coming when he should command her to teach. She said:

“I have no other hope save this Cause and the love of Abdul Baha.”

The Beloved answered that he knew, he knew.

Afterward he told me that Miss Hiscock’s heart was very pure. She was very sincere.

Late in the afternoon he called on Mirza Abul Fazl and stayed with him for nearly one hour. He passed by our house but did not stay for tea. His spiritual figure saluting us remained with me all night as a heavenly picture of a divine being descended from on high.

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RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 20, 1913

1. Customs in different countries are not tokens of the inferiority of the people. 2. Divine Guidance. 3. Lack of trustworthiness. 4. Persecutions in the path of God. 5. Teaching the Cause. 6. Faithfulness at the Holy Threshold. 7. Arrival of a new Pilgrim. 8. Abdul Baha’s photograph in Constantinople. 9. Abdul Baha on his meeting and conversation with a Persian General in Paris.

1. Strange Customs in Different Countries are not Tokens of the Inferiority of the People

Instead of giving you extracts from the daily talks of Abdul Baha, often I am obliged to substitute them with extracts from Tablets, for only when I am called into his presence, or when he comes to see us am I able to give an account of what is passing. The rules of social intercourse are so different from those in America that we see Abdul Baha much more seldom than when we were traveling with him. We know well that no nation can ever claim to be perfect, but that each one according to its capacity and environment, has, and is contributing, something to the upbuilding of a universal civilization.

2. On Divine Guidance from a Tablet of Abdul Baha

“O ye blessed souls! In the world of existence no bounty remains eternal and permanent and no gift continues to be immutable save the Bestowal of ‘Divine Guidance’! This is the everlasting Grace! Praise be to God that you have attained thereunto. Should you live thousands of years and unloose thousands of tongues in thanksgiving for this Grace, you would be unable to render adequate praise; for praise is limited but this Grace is unlimited. How many souls have longed to live in this

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Day, yet their hope was unrealized and how many thousands of people have undergone severe discipline, yet were deprived of the Day of the Promised One.

“Consider what a Bounty God has conferred upon you! Without undergoing any hardships you have reached the goal and without traversing vast Saharas you have drunk from the ocean of sweet waters. Without any suffering you have tasted of the fountain of guidance! This is the most great Bestowal if man can appreciate its value: otherwise in the estimation of the ignorant, Guidance and error are practically the same. A person who is not thirsty is unaware of the delicacy of sweet waters, likewise the salty ground does not absorb the outpourings of the vernal showers and the withered tree is unresponsive to the call of the rain from the cloud of spring.

“Therefore thank ye God that you have received a goodly portion and have become the confidants of the Mysteries of the Kingdom.”

3. Lack of Trustworthiness

In a Tablet he says:

“Untrustworthiness is a poisonous arrow which mortally wounds the heart, the soul and the spirit of Abdul Baha.”

4. Persecutions in the Path of God

“Praise be to God that you are soaring in the Divine rose-garden, have found your way to the Kingdom of Mysteries and have become the recipients of the favors of His Highness the Incomparable One! On the other

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hand you have endured the ridicule of the ill-wishers; you have suffered sorely and have tasted the poison of the tyrannical serpents, but as this was in the path of the Glorious Lord, the venom became honey and the pain health. Look at the outcome of such events. These ordeals result in Divine Gifts. This blame and derision will be followed by praise, glorification and adoration. Ere long it will become evident and manifest.”

5. Teaching the Cause

In a Tablet on Teaching the Cause of God, he says:

“Be thou in a state of utmost joy and fragrance and render thanks unto the Forgiving Lord, that praise be to God, thou art victorious and triumphant and art speaking for the Glorification of His Highness the King of mankind and that in conveying the message thou art striving and putting forth praiseworthy efforts. Know thou of a certainty that the authoritative Firman is to-day revealed from the Kingdom of Abha for those who teach the Cause. I hope that thou mayst become assisted in this and be a means for the guidance of innumerable people! This is the Divine Bestowal! This is the Eternal Honor! This is the Everlasting Life!”

6. Faithfulness at the Holy Threshold

He writes:

“I supplicate and entreat at the Threshold of the Blessed Perfection and beg for the Divine Friends infinite Bestowal and Grace: — so that they may become confirmed in loyalty at the sanctified Threshold. May they ever remember His Bounties and Favors, sacrifice their

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lives in His path and freely resign their possessions in the Highway of the Merciful One.”

7. Arrival of a New Pilgrim

To-day we welcomed another pilgrim from Tabriz. His name is Haji Abbas. He is a Turkish poet and does not speak Persian very well. He is an old Bahai and has served the Cause for many years. He will stay for nine days. Generally all the pilgrims have permission to stay nine days after which they return to their native land.

We have heard from Haifa that Mrs. Stannard has arrived there from Port Said. In order to regain her health she may spend the rest of the summer. The Master was very anxious to know where and how she is, and the other day he sent her a loving message of inquiry through Miss Hiscock.

8. Abdul Baha's Photograph in Constantinople

Our new pilgrim told us that while he was walking through the streets of Constantinople he saw a photograph of the Master surrounded by a group of Western Bahais, which was exhibited for sale in the window of a photographer. In the picture the believers held aloft the “Greatest Name” in their hands. Many people were buying copies. This is very significant, considering that in the same city lived the despot

who imprisoned Abdul Baha in the fortress of Acca for more than forty years.

9. Abdul Baha Talks on His Meeting and Conversation with a Persian General in Paris

In the afternoon Abdul Baha walked in the garden and two of the friends who had just arrived from Cairo went there to see him. As I was returning from the Post

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Office I passed by and observed him talking with much animation. Immediately afterward I was called into his presence.

After supper while I was sitting in my room, writing, the door opened and Abdul Baha came in. I had neither my Tarboush nor coat on and I jumped up from my seat confusedly. He walked toward the veranda and asked:

“Is there any one here?”

It was a typical Oriental night, very quiet and enchanting. In a little while the friends gathered around him. He asked questions about the believers of Cairo, and Mirza Abul Gasim of Shiraz answered them. In the course of his talk Abdul Baha said that in this day the greatness of the Bahai Cause is acknowledged by all people, even by outsiders. A few months ago in Paris one of the Sardars of Persia came to call on him. He told Abdul Baha the following story: When he was in London he was invited by one of the English Peers to a reception. There he met many members of the English Nobility with their wives and daughters. He was introduced to all and when they heard that he was a Persian, many came forward expressing the utmost delight in meeting a person who belonged to a race which had given Abdul Baha to the world. They asked him “Do you know Abdul Baha? Have you met him?” He noticed that the wife of his host instead of wearing precious stones on her fingers like the other women, wore a solitary simple ring. He was a little surprised. He approached her, saying: “What is this stone?” She answered: “This is agate. Do you not know it?” He rejoined: “Yes, but why do you wear it?” “Upon this stone,” she answered proudly, “is impressed the name of Baha-Ullah.” The Persian General was ignorant of the teachings of this Cause, and could not understand the significance of “Revelation.” He could not comprehend,

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how a man communicates with God. These subjects were beyond his mental capacity; neither should any one try to teach him these things, because he had made up his mind not to understand them. However, he

knew, because he had witnessed it with his own eyes, that this Cause has become the means of the honor and glory of Persia throughout the civilized world. To this he would bear testimony to the end of his life!

The teachings of the Blessed Perfection are so humanitarian, Abdul Baha continued, that even the enemy testifies that they are the spirit of this age. For example, Baha-Ullah says: "O ye people of the world! Ye are the fruits of one tree and the leaves of one branch! Consort with the followers of all religions with joy and fragrance." Throughout many cities of America and Europe, in churches and meetings, he declared with a loud voice and there was not a single soul to contradict them. Then he gave a detailed account of the meetings in Washington, New York and San Francisco and ended his talk by saying, that this Blessed Cause has such great power that it shall, ere long, vanquish all opposition. We must live and act in such manner as not to lower the station of the Cause, but rather try by day and by night to raise its banner higher. The Blessed Perfection has given us wares which are eagerly sought on the market place of the world.

After a few moments of silence he departed, but left us happy.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 21, 1913

1. The qualities of the members of the Spiritual Assembly

1. The Qualities of the Members of the Spiritual Assembly

This morning Shoghi Effendi came and told me that the Master was ready to receive me. Within a moment

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I was standing in his presence. He inquired about my health and asked how I was getting along with my fast. Yet eleven days remain to the month of Ramadan, after which the Mohammedan world will hold a natural [national?] Fête. Then he called in Lua Getsinger and inquired concerning the Cause in America. A cablegram has been received from Chicago about the re-election of the House of Spirituality. He said that there was no need for re-election at present. He told us that in the election of the members of the House of Spirituality no political tactics should enter. They must be free from self, nor anxious to further their own personal ambitions. The existence of the Spiritual Assembly is for no other purpose than to discuss those means which can further the promotion of the Cause; otherwise its non-existence is better than its existence. The members must not be opinionated, but must devote their attention to the services of the people. The promotion of the principles

of the Cause must be the uppermost idea in their minds. Nothing else will yield fruit. No secret canvassing will add to the luster of any person. The people must be free and untrammelled to choose whomsoever they want. As soon as political plans are introduced in the Cause, the spirit is killed. The apostles of Christ never devised any political schemes whereby to win the majority vote. They went out into the world and taught the gospel of light to all mankind. The result is that whenever we mention the names of John, or Peter or Matthew, a wonderful spirituality is obtained, hearts are inspired and souls rejoiced. These disciples were not politicians, they were the harbingers of the Glad-tidings of the Kingdom. They did not know anything about elections, votes, initiative and referendum. They were filled with Christ. They knew Him only. Similarly this Cause is pure spirituality. It deals with the moral aspect of humankind. The hearts of the believers

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must be fountains of the Love of Baha-Ullah. Freeing themselves from all withering restrictions, they should occupy their time with the promulgation of the word. They must love each other and banish all phantasms of suspicion and doubt.

Then he left the room and for a few moments I had time to speak with Mrs. Getsinger. She is most happy in her spiritual nest, and is learning to chant many prayers of Baha-Ullah in the original.

In the afternoon for nearly two hours Abdul Baha dictated Tablets to Mirza Moneer in the garden, and when he passed by our house, he carried in his hand a bouquet of yellow roses.

In the evening some Arab friends called on him and he entertained them until midnight. When they left he was very tired, but well. How glad we are when he is in good health.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 22, 1913

1. Story of the woodcutter and his wife. 2. Story of the sinner and the Mullah. 3. Story of Baktashi and his strange death amid the laughter of his friends. 4. Abdul Baha goes to the Mosque and gives money to the poor.

1. Story of the Woodcutter and His Wife

Abdul Baha told us three stories about Baktashis who belong to a religious sect in Turkey. I am inclined to report them as the Master has in each case been a direct factor in them.

When the Bahais were staying in Adrianople there was a Baktashi who lived close by them. Professionally he was a wood-chopper, socially he was a wit. Once he became severely ill and was on the eve of departure from

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this world. Becoming acquainted with this fact, Abdul Baha called on him. He was lying on a low, uncomfortable cot, and his old wife was sitting beside it with the marks of solicitude and care on her wrinkled face. Suddenly she started to speak, addressing her husband: "Thou art going to get well very soon. This sickness shall pass away and thou wilt be strong. Oh, my beloved! I am praying to Allah for thy speedy recovery. May Allah hear my prayers!" The sick man, as though pulling himself out of a heavy drowsiness, half-opened his eyes and said: — "What can I do even if I get well? I am tired of the world and want to leave it, my dear. Oh! I am so weary, so weary." And he closed his eyes. The wife, with much agitation declared: "Oh no, no! May Allah never bring that black day! My darling! Thou wilt gain back thy health. Together we will go into the garden and there eat all kinds of fruits. Hand in hand we will walk through the woods and listen to the songs of the birds. Yes, yes, I will nurse thee back to health, oh thou, the apple of my eye!" The sick man, without opening his eyes, and seemingly with much struggle, answered her back: — "Oh my wife, be silent! Nothing shall happen if I get well, only this: I have to chop ten or twenty or thirty more loads of wood. That's all. Have I not cut enough already? Oh, let me die!" In this world we are all more or less wood-choppers. If we are attacked by illness and survive it, we have to work a little longer, chop a few more loads of wood, and the world will go on as before.

2. Story of the Sinner and the Mullah

There was another Baktashi who, in his younger days, was an officer in the Turkish government. This man became very sick, and the members of his family had summoned

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a Mullah to his bed. Then Abdul Baha called on him and they asked the Mullah to pray that God might forgive his past sins before his death. After the performance of many ceremonials, the Mullah, in his most solemn voice, told the patient to repeat the formula: — "Oh, God! I have sinned much. Confer upon me thy forgiveness." The sick man did not answer. The Mullah repeated the formula over and over, but to no effect. Finally the patient, getting tired with this repetition, turned his

eyes to the Mullah and said with earnestness: — “Man! For many years I have sinned against God and his servants. I have ransacked houses, orphaned children, burned hearts and committed all kinds of iniquities. Is the government of God so childlike as to forgive all my past sins by the repetition of a mere formula? Is God’s system of dispensing justice so loose? Be gone, thou ignorant Mullah! Thou art telling me all these things to get ten Piasters as thy fee. Come, come, my friends, give him some money and let him depart quickly from my presence. He is a Satan and a tempter!” Then the Mullah left the room in haste, and when Abdul Baha was alone with him, the man fell on his knees, and from the depths of his heart, cried out: “Oh Lord! Oh Lord! I am a real sinner and thou art the just God! I beg Thy Mercy! I have committed many sins. I have not done that which Thou hast commanded me and have practised those things which Thou hast made unlawful. With humility and contrition I am standing in Thy Presence. Do with me whatsoever Thou wilt!” Abdul Baha was much affected by this outpouring of sincerity and departed, praying that his supplication might become acceptable at the Threshold of the Almighty.

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3. Story of Baktashi and His Strange Death amid the Laughter of His Friends

Facing the house of Abdul Baha in Adrianople there was a café. Here every day sat a retired officer of the Turkish Army belonging to the Baktashi’s sect. The Baktashi’s are always on good terms with the Bahais. They are a peaceful people. This retired soldier received a pension of 5 Piasters (25¢) a day from the government. Every morning he would come and take a chair in front of the café and order a cup of coffee. Then the people would gather around him and listen with delight and laughter to his stories until noon. At that hour he would call the waiter and give him five cents to buy him two loaves of bread, two rolls of roast-meat and a dish of salad. Then he would ask for a clean table and use his neat handkerchief as a tablecloth. Every day he invited one of the habitués of the café to lunch with him. “Come here, my friend!” he would say placing a chair on the other side of the table, and leaving before it a loaf of bread, with one of the roast-meats. “Come and be my guest to-day!” Then he would commence to eat. Every mouthful that was taken was followed by the short sentence “Oh God! I thank Thee! How delicious is this lunch!” — till it was finished. Then again he would start his conversation. Always tempered with sharp wit and the joy of living. From time to time he would come to the Mosque of Sultan Suleiman where the Governor and the officers would gather about him to pass a pleasant hour. He would keep them roaring with laughter over his stories. One day, when Abdul Baha was also present,

the Baktashi entered with a mat under his arm. Laughingly he saluted every one and said: — “To-day I am going to start on a long journey; therefore, I beg you to forgive all my past shortcomings!” “Art thou going to

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Bagdad?” one asked. “Further! Much further!” “Surely to China?” “Very much further.” Then no doubt to Australia?” “Still further.” All this time everybody laughed because they thought that he had a joke up his sleeve. “Please, please,” he pleaded, “I beg you to forgive me. Say that you do!” In order to humor him, they said: “All right, we forgive thee!” Then he said: — “I am now happy. I will also forgive you, my good friends!” Then he walked toward the court of the Mosque; spread on the ground half of his mat, laid himself down and covered his body with the other half. The spectators, thinking that they had reached the climax of the joke, laughed uproariously. Five minutes passed — no movement; ten, fifteen minutes, half an hour, no sign of life. The time grew heavy and strained. They looked at each other, with wonder in their eyes. Then laughing and shrugging their shoulders, they left their places and gathered around the mat. One of them, on tip-toe, cautiously lifted one corner. Wonder of wonders! The Baktashi had breathed his last. Then these men carried him on their shoulders laughing and singing, took him to the undertaker laughing, washed his body laughing and buried him with roars and thunders of laughter. It was a most phenomenal event! This Baktashi used to call on Abdul Baha. He had heard about Baha-Ullah and knew something concerning the Cause. The believers asked him several times to call on the Blessed Perfection, but he always refused, saying: “How can I, the essence of sin, stand in the Presence of the Essence of Holiness! I am not worthy of this privilege. Whenever I find that I have deserved such an honor, I will go; but not now, not now!” Thus this good man lived and died in happiness.

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4. Abdul Baha Goes to the Mosque and Gives Money to the Poor

It was about noon when the Master passed by our house and called for Mirza Ali Akbar to follow him. When Mirza Ali Akbar returned he told us that as there was a great festival at the Mosque of Sidi Jaber, the Master had been invited to be present. The Mosque was most beautifully decorated with flags and draperies. The Khedive was there. After the ceremonies, Abdul Baha came out and all the poor men, women and children gathered around him with their tattered garments

and dusty appearances. He placed money in their hands, patting each on the shoulder and cheering everyone with his loving glances.

About four o'clock he went to the garden, but this time all alone.

To-day I received letters from our American friends. I read them with much pleasure, and their contents will be presented to the Master at the first opportunity! May this link of spiritual correspondence bring the East and the West closer together!

RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 23, 1913

1. The Bahais must embody their teachings in their lives. 2. The story of the man who did not know the window in his own room. 3. No power on earth can withstand the Cause of God.

1. The Bahais Must Embody Their Teachings in Their Lives

The Bahai Movement has come into the world principally as a Cause of Love, Spirituality, Unification, Reformation,

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Reconciliation, Universal Peace, Idealism, International Language, Unity of Religions, General Education, Brotherhood and Celestial attributes which will contribute toward the Union of the Orient and the Occident. The inevitable conclusion is that those who call themselves Bahais must embody these principles in their lives; so that mankind may discern with their own eyes the concrete, spiritual results of the Bahai teachings and arise to spread them more universally. We all desire to see our ideals realized in a human being. If we admire courage, we would like to see this quality in a hero. If we love Love, we consider it a high privilege to behold this attribute manifested in a person. In brief, we are hungering for results.

2. The Story of the Man Who Did Not Know the Window in His Own Room

The other day Mirza Moneer told us a story which will illustrate this point. There was a young man in Beirut who worked as a waiter in a restaurant. For some time he had lived in a small room on the top of a house. He worked all day and returned to his room at night. One day he met an old friend of his on the street, who had just arrived from his native town. "Where are you going to live" he inquired.

"I am at this very moment looking for a hotel."

"Oh, no! Don't go to a hotel. Come and be my guest."

After some insistence the invitation was accepted.

“Here is the key to my room. Take it. The address is at such and such a place. Go there now and rest. I will come after work, about nine o’clock.”

The man took the key and found the place. As soon as he unlocked the door, a stuffy odor struck him.

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He waited outside for a few minutes, and then with much difficulty, entered. He found the room dark and dirty and all the furniture covered with several layers of dust. As he was accustomed to cleanliness, he began to sweep the floor and to dust the objects. In carrying the furniture and boxes from one corner to the other, he uncovered the rusty shutters of a window, apparently untouched for a long time. He opened it with much effort and a flood of light poured into the room. Then, he sat down and waited for his friend till night came, then he went out and bought a candle. He lighted it and began to read a book. Nine o’clock, and his friend did not arrive; ten o’clock and there was no sign of him; at eleven o’clock he got up from his seat and went out to see what had become of him. He saw a man walking to and fro on the veranda.

“Who art thou?” he asked in the darkness.

“I am...and it seems that I have lost my room.”

Realizing that this was his friend he told him that this was his own house. The friend walked in and looked about with evident astonishment:

“I have lived in this room for a long time,” he said, “and never knew that it had a window. I have never lighted a candle. I enter the room by night and feel my way to the bed. I take off my clothes and sleep. Before sunrise, I dress and go out. Thus I have never been here in the daytime. Now, when I came to-night, I looked at the room and saw an open window; so I thought that it surely was not mine, and for more than two hours I have been pacing outside wondering what I should do.”

Now God and His generosity has given us many things, but we have to find them; he has revealed many precepts but we have to live by them. If we close the shutters of our hearts, the light will not come in, the spiritual atmosphere will not become purified, dormant

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powers will not be awakened, divine susceptibilities will not be obtained; intellectual faculties will not become active; heavenly illumination will not be realized; celestial Love will not be revealed;

results will not be produced, and moral civilization will not raise its standard.

3. No Power on Earth can Withstand the Cause of God

Abdul Baha passed by our house before noon and called for Mirza Ali Akbar. He sent him to Alexandria to attend to an errand and to personally call on an important personage. Then he spent the afternoon in the garden dictating Tablets for the Oriental Bahais. About sunset he came to us. Many believers were here, and he spoke now in Arabic and again in Persian.

He told us that the stories of the prophets recorded in the Koran were not mere historical writings. They were warnings to future generations after Mohammed; so that they might know how former people treated the Messengers of God. Although they opposed the Cause, yet they were defeated in their purpose. Who can stand before the Will of the Almighty? Let me give you an example. His Holiness Christ, after his crucifixion, had only eleven disciples. One of these had betrayed him; another denied him thrice, and the rest had deserted him. On the crucial night of his life, he was left all alone, friendless and helpless; yet in future years the combined forces of the Roman and Greek emperors and philosophers could not stamp out His Power. Like a mighty torrent everything was swept before it. Now after the departure of Baha-Ullah, at least, five hundred thousand men and women believed in Him; thousands having already testified with their blood, and the rest, ready at any moment to give up their lives. If we reflect

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for one moment and compare the immediate results of the two Movements, we will logically conclude that no power on earth can stand in the path of the progress of the Bahai Cause which is the Cause of humanity.

Then he spoke of some of the incidents which had occurred during the stirring days of Acca, when, the Investigating Committee at the instigation of his enemies had arrived to send him to Feyzan. The events of those years, 1906-7 if collected and written, would form one of the most dramatic chapters in the Master's epic life. They illustrate more than anything else his divine courage, endurance, patience and spiritual control over great difficulties.

1. How Tablets to the American friends are spread all over Persia. 2. An eloquent Tablet to Mr. William Hoar of New York. 3. The minute questions asked of Abdul Baha. 4. Abdul Baha jokes and beats his secretary. 5. Abdul Baha says if people wish to sneeze they ask him about it. 6. A talk by Abdul Baha on creation. 7. Explanation of free will. 8. Abdul Baha talks to Sheiks and young Egyptians of his trip to the West.

1. How Tablets to the American Friends Are Spread All Over Persia.

The other day I observed one of the pilgrims from a faraway town in Persia holding a book in his hand. He was reading it with great attention. Approaching him I looked at the top of the page. To my surprise I read the name of Mr. William Hoar of New York. It was a copy of a Tablet revealed for him by the Master on the eve of his departure from Acca many years ago.

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“Do you know whose Tablet you are reading?” I asked.

“Of course I do. It belongs to one of our American brothers,” he said with pride.

“How did you come to get a copy of it?” I asked.

“Oh! It is spread all over Persia,” he rejoined. “By the way,” he said. As though remembering something, “tell me about this Mr. Hoar. When I go away I would like to tell the story to my friends, because we used to read this Tablet at every meeting.”

“Very well. Then ask the others to gather together in the room and I will talk to you about him.” Having told them all I knew about Mr. Hoar, and of what a splendid and upright Bahai he was, I got a copy of the Tablet, and I will share its contents with you; the original is in eloquent Arabic.

2. An eloquent Tablet to Mr. William Hoar of New York

“TO MR. WILLIAM HOAR,

“(Upon him be Baha-Ullah)

“He is God!

“O THOU VISITOR TO THE BLESSED TABERNACLE!

“Verily the Messenger of Confirmation and the Commander of Assistance invited thee and brought thee safely to this radiant Holy Land. Verily thou hast crossed the seas and passed through the cities until thou didst reach to this Center of Lights, this Origin of divine

Traces and this Dawning-place of the inspiration of thy Lord, the Mighty, the Master of Destiny! Verily, Verily, I say unto thee, this is a Bestowal through whose mention

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the Unitarians are rejoiced and for whose attainment the sincere ones are longing. This is a food for the spirit, a sustenance from heaven, a Grace through which the hearts are resuscitated and a favor by which the souls are re-vitalized. Render thou thanksgiving unto the Lord for His Generosity and Liberality. Appreciate thou its value and guard its preciousness.

“I declare by the True One, that if a faithful believer in God, while turning his face toward His Kingdom, the Supreme, arrives at this White Land — the Luminous Spot — and perfumes his nostrils through the Fragrance of Holiness, which is being diffused to all parts of the world, — the most dynamic Power shall aid him, the Glorious Giver shall reinforce him with His Love and Good-pleasure and confirm him in the accomplishment of a matter which shall have no parallel in the realm of existence and no similarity in the World of Visibility.

“But as to thee, gird up the loins of endeavor and return to that distant continent which is thy home and give the Glad-tidings of the Kingdom of God to the people, — the Kingdom whose doors are opened before the faces of all that who live upon the earth and in the heavens; a kingdom for the attainment of which the chosen ones amongst the dwellers of the cities of the Almighty have longed, but have not attained. Verily the capability for the receiving of this uninterrupted Down-pouring, is a grace from the Graces of God and a most glorious gift; and verily the Generosity of Thy Lord is not limited.

“Declare thou unto the people: Verily at this time the Sun is shining, the orbs are gleaming, the stars are sparkling, the lamps are ignited, the fire of the Love of God is flaming high, the heavens are expanding, the seas are becoming tempestuous, the breezes are wafting, the rain is pouring down; the earth is adorned, the Tabernacle

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of the Lord is lifted up, the rose gardens are embellished, the orchards are in luxuriant growth, the birds are singing, the flowers are blossoming, while Fragrance scatters and the zephyrs blow!

“How long, how long will ye remain asleep in your tombs, and rest upon the beds of negligence! Will ye not awaken from your slumbers, cleanse your ears, respond to the call of your Lord, the Omniscient and become the objects of the Favor of your God, the Clement; reading the verses of His Mercy and worshiping the Adored Countenance in this Manifest Day? Hasten ye! Hasten ye! O ye sincere ones! Hasten ye!

Hasten ye! O ye attracted ones! Hasten ye! Hasten ye! O ye expectant ones! Hasten ye! Hasten ye! O ye longing ones! Ere long ye shall behold the Banners of Guidance waving from the summit of the highest mountains; the Knowledge of God encircling this terrestrial globe and the signs of the Bounties of your Lord manifesting in all directions as the appearance of the sun in midday. On that day the faithful ones shall break into songs of gladness, the people of Unity shall rejoice and the hearts which are filled with the Love of the Living, the Self-Subsistent will become dilated, the heedless ones will be in loss, the violators of the Covenant will regret and the rebellious ones be in degradation.

“O ye servants of God! Avail yourselves of the opportunity which is offered to you through these Favors, and do not ye forget that which was promised you in all the holy writings. This day is the day of attraction! This day is the day of enkindlement! This day is the day of soaring toward the ethereal atmosphere of the Merciful! This day is the day of the Call! This day is the day of Grace! This day is the day of the Most eminent Bestowal! This day is the day of the discovery of the most valuable treasure! Oh ye servants of God!

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Deprive not yourselves of the Ocean of Favor, and shut not your eyes to the vision of the signs of your Lord, the Omnipotent. Approach ye toward the Kingdom of Abha, the Supreme Heaven, the Loftiest station with radiant faces, with hearts overflowing with the mention of God and breasts dilated by the verses of God: — so that you may attain to that which was longed for by the righteous ones — the station coveted by the saints and prayed for by the holy souls. Verily this is that which causes astonishment to the people of intelligence.

“Convey my greetings and praise to all the believers of God in that vast and spacious continent and say unto them from the tongues of Abdul Baha: — ‘O ye believers of God! It is incumbent upon you to work mightily (in the Cause), and to strive nobly to declare the Bounties of God; be ye engaged in the commemoration of the Name of God; be ye severed from all else save God; take a firm hold of the rope of virtue, shun obedience to the dictates of self and passion; practice kindness toward all the people of the world; serve the Cause of Universal Peace and show ye love to all the nations of the earth.’

“Upon ye be greetings and praise!

(Signed) “ABDUL BAHA ABBAS.”

3. The Minute Questions Asked of Abdul Baha

I did not see the Master this morning. Having received large packages of letters from the various countries of the East, He was busy

reading them. Like simple children they come to Him for advice to solve their problems.

4. *Abdul Baha Jokes and Beats His Secretary*

At four o'clock I found myself at the door of the Master's house. He was coming down with firm strides.

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The carriage was waiting. He had promised to take Mr. Atwood for a drive, and this was the day of fulfillment. In my hand I had a package of letters to be read to Him. Looking at the rather thick package, He laughed and taking it out of my hand, showed it to the upper windows (apparently some of the members of the Holy Family were looking down) saying:

"Look what an amount of work Mirza Ahmad has brought for Me. Does he not deserve a sound beating?" and with the umbrella's handle he gently struck me twice on my back. Then he entered the carriage, after him Shoghi Effendi and next myself. Before reaching the Hotel Plaisance to call for Mr. Atwood, he talked with much humor, laughing all the time.

5. *Abdul Baha Says That If People Wish to Sneeze They Ask Him about It*

On the way He told us that matters had reached such a point that if the friends wanted to cough or sneeze they wrote to him to do it for them. He has repeatedly written that any realizable plan which has for its aim the spread of the Cause is acceptable. Each one wishes Abdul Baha to free him from his perplexities and to lighten his work; but no one yet has asked to come and be of service to Him; and help to lighten His load.

6. *A Talk by Abdul Baha on Creation*

Finally we reached the hotel, picked up Mr. Atwood and started again. Mr. Atwood has written two articles on the Bahai Cause. The first has appeared in the *Christian Commonwealth*, the second will be published in another English paper. On the way he asked two questions, one on creation and its apparent incongruities and anomalies;

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the other on free will and determination. Abdul Baha answered as follows: If we look upon creation from a remote outlook, we see

symmetry and harmony; the apparent differences and anomalies blending into one harmonious whole; but if we study the world of genesis from a partial standpoint, these freaks of nature come to our notice at every turn. All parts, kinds and species of the creational life are interrelated. There is an invisible chain binding all into one mass of homogeneity. Those anomalies of creation which we call freaks are not freaks at all; but are made by a definite wisdom. As soon as we learn the purpose of their creation, they are no longer freaks, but parts of a whole. For example, we know the wisdom of the existence of the eyes, the ears, the teeth, the hands and the feet, but we may wonder why a single hair is grown on the top of somebody's nose. This also has a purpose were we to become cognizant of it. The law of composition and decomposition, amalgamation and dissolution, construction and destruction, protection and danger are two basic principles of creation. An organism — whether living or inanimate — must be decomposed at a stated time; so that through its scattered atoms, elements of other organisms may be composed and created. Creation therefore is based upon the activities of these two fundamental laws. On the other hand, there is the law of the eater and of the eaten. The higher forms of life feed upon the lower species of genesis. The grass takes its nourishment from the soil, and every day grows taller and taller like unto this (extending His hand toward the tall grass waving in the field). The animal in turn (showing a cow grazing in the field) eats the grass and is sustained by it. After a while man appears, kills the cow and eats it. Thus we observe that the various kingdoms of Life feed upon each other; but they have no conscious knowledge

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of the other's existence. Hence the inferior degree is entirely out of touch with the superior degree, but the upper can look down upon the lower and help it. Therefore, while we are living in this world, we are not informed of the existence of the Spiritual world, but the dwellers of the spiritual world know about us and can assist and help us.

7. Explanation of Free Will

As regards free will. There are two distinct kinds of affairs, the first dominated by man, the second which is beyond his control; the first voluntary, the second involuntary. I am a free man so far as walking is concerned, but I am not free to soar in the air, unless I build an aeroplane.

8. Abdul Baha talks to Sheiks and Young Egyptians of His Trip to the West

While the carriage was rolling on past fields of cotton, palm groves, and primitive hamlets, the Master continued speaking on the above two subjects. We returned about 7 o'clock. Mr. Atwood enjoyed the ride and thanked him for it. At 8:30 Abdul Baha came to our house. There were some Arab Sheiks waiting. After indulging in some poetry and philosophic jargons to which the Master listened patiently, one of them ended by the announcement that his wife and children were sick and he had no money. The Master gave him five Majidis (5 dollars) and he left the house happy. Afterwards six young Egyptian nobles arrived. For more than two hours Abdul Baha spoke to them about the virtues of the English and American people, of their scientific achievement, and of his travels throughout those distant

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countries, so full of wonders. Then he gave a resumé of his lecture in the Jewish Synagogues of America. He was very lively in his descriptions and laughed throughout this interesting talk. The young Egyptians were all attention.

To-day the Master was very happy and well. And his words created joy and spread sunshine. When he laughed the waves of his mirth rippled over the sea of our lives, creating wider and wider circles of the joy of living.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 25, 1913

1. International Bahai correspondence conducive to unity. 2. The weather in Ramleh. 3. Receipts of Bahai reports from America. 4. The story of Foad Pasha, the Grand Vizier of Turkey. 5. Gaem-maqam, the Persian statesman. 6. The story of the sick soldier and the watchman.

1. International Bahai Correspondence Conducive to Unity

Most important of all is the establishment of a line of correspondence between the East and the West. Not that it may go on for a year or two only, but that it may continue without interruption. The success of every affair depends upon one's firmness in following it up. Of no less importance is correspondence between the various Bahai Assemblies; for each assembly thus becomes informed of the status of the other, and gives its moral support. It would be well to designate certain active centers in America — Chicago, Washington, New York, San Francisco, Boston, etc., — to correspond regularly with European

and Oriental Assemblies and in turn disseminate the news they receive to smaller centers; that

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the future Bahai conventions may give one or more sessions to the consideration of this important subject; that the secretaries may report on what they have done during the year and how many letters they have written and received.

As a confirmation to the foregoing statement, I translate the following Tablet, and am sure, that after reading it, the Bahais will do their utmost to carry out its contents: —

“The correspondence of the believers of God with all parts of America and from America to all directions is very acceptable and seasonable. It will be the means of drawing hearts together. Display the utmost effort in this matter. The friends of God must be like bouquets of roses, disseminating their sweet fragrances one to another. They should assist each other: — so that, through the powers of the Kingdom, cooperation and reciprocity may be obtained. Correspondence and communication are the two greatest means for solidarity.

“It is said that correspondence is equal to half-meeting.

“Forward a copy of this Tablet to all parts; — so that the friends of God in every city may correspond in a representative way, with other cities; especially with America. This will be the cause of enkindlement and the means of attraction. The souls will become exhilarated, the spirits gladdened, the hearts stirred into cheerfulness, and the breasts dilated.”

2. The Weather in Ramleh

The days and nights of Ramleh are without rain. In the shade it is always cool. The sky is as blue as the bluest turquoise. At night the heavens are illumined with radiant stars. During the winter there is no snow, and the weather is balmy.

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3. Receipts of Bahai Reports from America

To-day, at about half past three, Abdul Baha, passing by the house, called out my name, and in a second, I was following after Him. He told me to bring the letters with me. I was glad for this. Reaching the gate of the garden, I knocked at the door, and the gardener opened it. The Master entered, took off his black coat and yellow “aba,” and placed them on the branch of a fig tree. He was now all in white. For a

few minutes he walked along the avenues and I could see his wonderful stature through the branches stirred by the wafting of the breeze.

He told me that when the weather was good his constitution responded to it and that he felt like a different person.

Then he started to dictate Tablets.

The third monthly report of Mr. Joseph H. Hannen, from Washington, D.C., was read. As He listened, His face brightened, and recalling different names mentioned in the letter, he exclaimed, "Bravo, Mrs. Belmont," "Bravo, So and So." He directed me to send copies of this report to Cairo and Teheran; — so that they might spread it to other Bahai Centers, and to keep the original for him. In the evening he told the believers that a good report had been received from Washington which made him very happy. They should read it.

4. The Story of Foad Pasha, the Grand Vizier of Turkey

After two hours of dictation he left the garden to see a house which he desired to rent for the coming pilgrims from India and Persia. On the way we met the son of the former Consul of Damascus, Hashem Khan, with the Secretary of the Consulate of Alexandria. They had

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come to pay their respects to Abdul Baha. After seeing the house, the Master took his guests to the apartment of Mirza Abul Fazl, and there, on the veranda, he conversed with them. As the son of the Consul — a pleasant, polite young man — had just arrived from Constantinople, the conversation naturally turned in the direction of the late war and its dreadful consequences.

Abdul Baha said that the thoughts of the statesmen of the East are atrophied, and their hearts devoid of desire for the progress of the nation. Their ideas are petty, not sublime; selfish, not disinterested; local, not general. They think more of the advancement of their own interests, than of those of the country. They are not far-seeing patriots, but inexperienced tyros. They sell the resources of their country, if they think that by so doing they can fill their own pockets. Except in two instances, the Mohammedan countries of the East have not produced any real statesmen for the last 200 years. When He was in Constantinople He heard on every side the praise of Foad Pasha, the then Grand Vizier. At that time Abdul Baha was about seventeen or eighteen years old. One day He was in the house of Kamal Pasha, the former Ambassador of Turkey to Persia. The latter spoke Persian fluently, and as Abdul Baha had known him when he was an official in Teheran, he called on him during his short stay in Constantinople, and Abdul Baha returned the visit. While they were engaged in conversation Foad Pasha was announced. Abdul Baha thought to

himself: "Now I shall have the opportunity of meeting this celebrated statesman, and of hearing words of political wisdom from his lips." As soon as Foad Pasha entered, his first word was addressed to Kamal Pasha. "I could not sleep last night." A statesman who can not sleep all night must of necessity be thinking out the vast plan of some administrative reform, or public or

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civic welfare. "I did not enjoy one wink of slumber till this morning: the result being the composition of two blank verses," he said. "Do you want me to read them to you?" Abdul Baha was astonished at this state of affairs, that the Grand Minister of an Empire does not sleep all night for the writing of two blank verses. The lines were some poetical exaggeration about the beauty and tresses of his beloved. When he left the room Abdul Baha asked Kamal Pasha: "Why did you praise so volubly those vapid verses?" He said: — "Why, we can't do otherwise."

5. Gaem-maqam — the Persian Statesman

Then Abdul Baha told us another story about this man. He had ordered the killing of several hundred persons, exiled two or three thousand innocent men, and paid a large indemnity of eight millions to one of the European powers, to satisfy their demands based upon certain occurrences which had transpired in Syria. But in Persia, during the Ministry of the Great Gaem-maqam, the Legation of one of the Foreign Nations was burned down and seventy-two people were killed by the populace, yet that far-sighted and astute Persian Minister so dexterously satisfied that Foreign Power without paying an indemnity or killing or banishing anyone, that this one act alone became the greatest political feat of that Persian statesman, Gaem-maqam.

6. The Story of the Sick Soldier and the Watchman

While Abdul Baha was in Adrianople, Khorsheed Pasha, the Vali, one day asked him about the future of the Turkish Empire.

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"Do you want me to give you my frank opinion?" Abdul Baha said.

"Yes, of course," he answered.

Then, let me illustrate your position by a story. During the war against a foreign nation, one of the soldiers was stricken with a severe sickness. The military doctor, observing his case, recommended him to

the watchman, saying: "This man must not sleep to-night. It is the crisis of his illness, but to-morrow morning he will feel much better. Nurse him very carefully and watch over him." The doctor left, and about sunset the watchman came around to look after the sick man. After an hour or two he saw that he was getting worse, and was moaning and lamenting loudly. In order to alleviate his pain, the watchman gave him an opium pill, as a result of which he slept soundly all night. In the morning, the doctor called and saw that the condition of the patient was worse than the day before. Not being able to understand this relapse, he sent for the watchman. "What did you do for him last night?" "Oh, he was in such a frantic condition that I gave him a pill of opium, after which he slept soundly." "Did you not think that I, who am a doctor, knew this remedy just as well as you, but I did not give it to him because I knew that it would make him worse?" "What do I care? I wanted to sleep and this patient disturbed me. I gave him an opium pill, and it served its purpose. To-night there will be another watchman. If the patient is getting worse, it does not trouble me in the least."

Now, Abdul Baha told the Governor, it is your watch-time. You are not doing anything to improve the condition of the sick country. You are putting it to sleep by giving it narcotics, and when you leave your position, what do you care whether the patient will live or die? You have had your night's sleep. Instead of watching

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the patient solicitously, and pulling him through, you prefer your own rest and comfort.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 26, 1913

1. The Bahais must raise a new voice. 2. The article .of Arthur Brisbane on "Science" translated and published in Arabic daily and discussed by students. 3. This world is dark, it must be changed into a universe of light. 4. Attraction is not realized save through teaching the Cause of God. 5. Confer upon every one spiritual joy. 6. A poetic tablet like a bouquet of fragrant flowers.

1. The Bahais Must Raise a New Voice

Last night Haji Mohammad, the brother of Ahmad Yazdi, arrived from Port Said, and brought us our mail. I had a few letters from America, the contents of which gave much pleasure to Abdul Baha. The breeze of good news must ever waft from the direction of the West to gladden the heart of the Center of the Covenant. May the believers of

God, during the coming years plant new seeds in the gardens of hearts, educate new souls in the divine school, adorn with new stars the heaven of Reality, upraise new banners in the army of the Kingdom, cultivate new flowers in the Paradise of Abha, issue a new voice through the pillars of the earth, herald the new message with a new enthusiasm, break through the rank and file of indifference with a new impetuosity, invite new guests to sit around the heavenly table, ask new thirsty ones to drink from the spring of life, create a new motion in the spiritual spheres, throw a new stir in the world of ideals, and pave new highways leading to the Supreme Concourse.

In the morning I went to Alexandria, and having dispatched some letters and attended to duties entrusted to

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me by the Master, returned. All day our house was an interesting center for the coming and going of the believers and pilgrims. Haji Abbas received permission to return to his home via Constantinople and Russia.

2. The Article .of Arthur Brisbane on “Science” Translated and Published in Arabic Daily and Discussed by Students

In the afternoon I called at the apartment of Mirza Abul Fazl. There were several young Arab Bahais present, and to my pleasant surprise, the subject of discussion was an article by Arthur Brisbane, feature writer of Mr. Hearst’s papers in the United States. The article dealt with the wonders of science and the discoveries of this age. It was translated into Arabic by an Egyptian daily and published in the current issue. Mirza Abul Fazl could not agree with certain statements made by Arthur Brisbane. After much discussion pro and con, he directed Hossein Rouhy to write an answer and to forward it to the editor of the paper. As I sat there, I thought how small the world was! What would Arthur Brisbane say or think did he know that his article, written thousands of miles away, in a new world, surrounded by a complex civilization, was being discussed and criticized by a number of Arabian students, supervised by a Persian philosopher, in a summer resort of ancient Egypt. Truly the world is becoming one!

I may conclude with extracts from some Tablets which I have gathered out of the manuscript book of one of the pilgrims. They reflect the Bahai qualities and spirit.

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3. This World Is Dark, It Must Be Changed into a Universe of Light

“O ye friends of God and assistants of Abdul Baha!

“What can I write, and what can I say? That which is in the heart can be neither translated into words nor written on paper, and that which can be moulded into phrases cannot express the susceptibilities of the heart and conscience; therefore, I address you, O ye real friends: — Turn the mirrors of your hearts toward mine. Unquestionably the mysteries of this heart shall become reflected upon yours, and the emotions of this longing one will become evident and manifest in all regions.

“The world is black; the Divine Bestowal is Radiant. This blackness must be changed into light, and this narrow, dark sphere be transformed into a vast, illimitable universe of illumination. The body of the world is a dead corpse, it must be resuscitated; it is withered, it must be made fresh and blooming; it is extinct, it must be enkindled; it is the arena for the expression of animosity, it must be made the dawning-place of love and good fellowship; it is the origin of the emanation of contention, we must make it the axis around which revolves unity; it is the exposition for the baser qualities which lead to eternal disgrace, we must make it the rising-point for the refulgent rays of the Everlasting Glory. The stranger must be instructed in the lesson of neighborliness; the heedless ones be made aware; the enemies must be loved and the hateful ones be shown kindness. We must become flaming torches and burning Fires of God. We must move the world, and illuminate the dark globe. All this depends upon the effort of the friends and the sacrifice of the beloved ones.”

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4. Attraction is Not Realized Save through Teaching the Cause of God

“O thou servant of the Almighty! Beg of God that in this world which is groaning with pains and troubles, thou mayst aspire to a breath of rest and that in this sorrow-begirdled globe, thou mayst obtain happiness. This Bestowal will not become unveiled and this Grace will not adorn the Assemblage of the heart except through severance from all else save God and by complete concentration upon the kingdom of Abha. This severance and attention will not be obtained save by attraction to the Fragrances of God, and by enkindlement with the Fire of the Love of God. This attraction and enkindlement will not be realized except through teaching the Cause of God and by firmness and steadfastness in the Covenant and Testament of God. Upon thee be Abha, and upon every one who is severed, attentive, attracted and enkindled; conveying the message while he is firm and steadfast....”

5. Confer upon Every One Spiritual Joy

“O thou who art exhilarated with the Cup of the True One:

“Thou hast the desire to render a great service at the Threshold of the Almighty. Happy art thou that thou art confirmed with this bounteous aim. To-day, ecstasy [*sic*] and yearning at the Threshold of God, enkindlement with the Fire of the Love of God, attraction with the Fragrance of God and the Song and melody of the Supreme Concourse, are true service. Be thou an ignited torch and cast upon all people the reflection of its rays. Enkindle the Fire of Love and burn away all veils. Confer upon every one spiritual joy and gladness and

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manifest a merciful nature and disposition. Deliver men from prison and lead them to the Court of Guidance.”

6. *A poetic tablet like a bouquet of fragrant flowers.*

“O ye who are intoxicated with the Wine of God!

“The Breeze of the Merciful is wafting from the rose-garden of Eternity, the luminous Morn hath dawned from the horizon of significances; the clarion Call reaches to the ears from the Kingdom of Abha; the melody of the wisdom of the nightingale of the meadow of sanctity is raised; the Paradise of unity and the orchard of Abstraction are opened and luxuriant; the roses of idealism, and the flowers of the merciful verities are laughing and blooming; the hyacinths and anemones are fresh and full of fragrance; the trees of the divine Garden are fruitful, their roots firm in the ground; the rivers of life are flowing; the fountain of unending Grace is gushing forth, leaping playfully on and on; the liberty-loving Cypress has raised its branches toward the sky; the longing dove is cooing; the real Leila with a rosy-checked Countenance is manifest; the Manjun of Consciousness with burning heart is evident.”

RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 27, 1913

1. This is the seed-sowing time. 2. This is the day in which to lay the foundation of the house. 3. All efforts must be centralized about the spreading of the Cause. 4. Hope for the Union of the East and the West.

1. *This Is the Seed-sowing Time*

Teaching the word of God — spreading the Glad-tidings of the Kingdom — conveying the Message of Unity and raising the Flag of International Peace hold

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the foremost ground in the Bahai Cause. When we receive certain heavenly privileges and spiritual distinctions, we must share them with the rest of our fellow men. The very fact that we have received connotes the idea of giving. By teaching our own knowledge will be increased. When the water is not constantly flowing, it will stagnate, no matter how crystalline and pure. If you have a handful of seeds, you must sow them during the season, so that you may gather a goodly crop at the harvest. Now this is the seed-sowing time of the Kingdom of Brotherhood. This and this alone will yield fruit. We must, like wise farmers, get up early in the morning, and go about our business with no other thought in our minds except sowing the seeds. We must sow all the seeds that God has given us, and if we have scattered our stock, he stands ready to replenish it from his invisible storehouse. Once the seeds are sown; the sun of Providence will shine forth, the Breeze of Mercy will waft, the rain of clemency will pour down, causing the growing of the field, waving with a soft, beautiful verdancy and soon attaining to the stage of fruition — the sheaves laden with golden corns. Then is the time of rejoicing for the farmer, because the result of his labor and industry is spread before his eyes.

2. This Is the Day in Which to Lay the Foundations of the House

Before everything else we must lay the foundation. Then go out and gather mortar, stones, bricks, lime, hauling machinery and laborers to build the house. What benefit will accrue to us if we buy the furniture or utensils before the house is ready? How can we build the roof before the structural framework is put together? A wise builder lays a good basis for his house, collects

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all the necessary material, and then goes on, step by step, in its construction. Abdul Baha has shown through his life and deeds how this is the most important work of the Cause. The autumn and winter seasons will come in due time. Our supreme duty now is to arise unanimously for the awakening of souls! Should we follow the example of the Divine Farmer, we will reap a great crop in the harvest season, we will see the reflections of our contented faces in the mirror of the Kingdom, and will observe our names inscribed upon the scroll of time with the pen of light. The friends all over the world are longing

to serve the Cause. Praise be to God that their aims are humanitarian, their ideas are lofty, their love for the Truth manifest, their eagerness to diffuse the lights of the Sun of Reality and their spiritual susceptibilities warm and aglowing. They are servants of the world of humanity, and heralds of the Kingdom of Light. May they become confirmed to teach the Cause with a new fervor and inspiration!

In a Tablet written by Abdul Baha several years ago he says:

3. All Efforts Must Be Centralized About the Spreading of the Cause

“The believers with the utmost steadfastness and firmness must engage in the teaching of the Cause. They must become united and agreed. They are all the drops of one river, waves of one sea, breezes of one garden, streams flowing from one fountain, birds soaring toward one apex, hyacinths adorning one Park, intoxicated with one wine and their hearts ravished with one melody. ... It is hoped that the friends may become sanctified and holy above all earthly conditions and in concord and harmony, in unity of identity, unity of quality, unity

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of opinion and unity of thought, set an example for all the believers of other countries and become the spiritual leaders in this arena. Now all aims must verge toward one spring, and all efforts be centralized in one object, and that is: the diffusion of the Fragrances of the Merciful, and the promulgation of the Word of the Almighty. The time of systematization and crystallization shall come. It has not yet arrived. The aim of all the friends must be this: — the diffusion of the Fragrances of Holiness. When a man’s efforts are concentrated on this one object, he will undoubtedly reflect the confirmation of the Manifest Light. Except for the guidance of souls, no other cause is equally confirmed. If any person entertains other thoughts than this, he will unquestionably regret them.

“During the season of seed-sowing you cannot gather a crop and at the time of irrigation, harvesting is unthinkable. The soul who, during the summer season, engages in planting trees, will not reap any reward, for this is the season of fruit-gathering, and not that of tree-planting. In short the purpose is this: During the season of the Divine Spring we must occupy all our time in seed-sowing and irrigation, and not in harvesting and crop-collecting.”

This morning Abdul Baha called on Mirza Abul Fazl, and spoke with him for half an hour on the importance of teaching the Cause in this day, and of the subserviency of all other ideas to the idea of

promoting the word of God. In the evening He entertained a Russian Prince and a number of Arab Sheiks at His home.

4. Hope for the Reunion of the East and the West

Letters and cablegrams are pouring in from all parts of the world. The Master is daily growing stronger, and

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is attending to all the innumerable duties which are laid on His shoulders.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 28, 1913

1. The life of the East and the West, and of how the Bahai movement unites them.
2. Abdul Baha writes on the future condition of women.

1. The Life of the East and the West, and of How the Bahai Movement Unites Them

The spiritual life of the East is calm and uplifting. It has a celestial outlook. It purifies one's aims. It ennobles the character. It changes the satan into the angel. There is a subtle influence in this life which works like magic over the hearts of men. It steadies the nerves, confers an equipoise, intensifies spiritual feelings and bestows mental calmness and serenity. The realization of the power of faith and prayer dawns upon the mind; the divine Presence is felt as never before and the holy light breaks upon the dark chambers of the heart. Those who have lived in the East and have experienced this feeling cannot describe it in words. It is a fire the flame of which sets aglow many hearts, and which inspires the imagination with pictures of heavenly attributes.

While the life of the East on the one hand is sweetly contemplative, the life of the West is energetically active; the former is a calm river, the latter a rushing cyclone. One interprets life subjectively, the other elucidates it objectively. The Bahai Movement establishes a balance between the two poles. The materialism of the occident is imbued with spirit and the unproductive mysticism of the Orient is discountenanced when work is constituted as worship. Thus the Bahai Cause is in a position to

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help both hemispheres with its new spiritual philosophy. Abdul Baha is daily working for the consummation of this object.

2. Abdul Baha writes on the future condition of women

This morning we got glimpses of Abdul Baha as he passed by our house two or three times. He was busy all day. In the evening, the correspondent of the *Agdam*, published in Cairo, called on him and had a long interview. These days, the Master is devoting much of his time to writing Tablets for the Persian believers. He is fulfilling his promise, that after his return from America and Europe, he would answer all their petitions. I produce herein the translation of one of these Tablets on the "Feminist Question," — one that is very opportune. It is as follows:

"O thou my beloved daughter! Thy eloquent and fluent letter was perused in a garden, under the cool shade of a tree, while the gentle breeze was wafting. The means of physical enjoyment was spread before the eyes and thy letter became the cause of spiritual enjoyment. Truly, I say, it was not a letter, but a rose-garden adorned with hyacinths and flowers. It contained the sweet Fragrances of Paradise and the Zephyr of Divine Love blew from its roseate words.

"As I have not ample time at my disposal, I will give herein a brief answer. It is as follows: — In the revelation of Baha-Ullah, men and women stand shoulder to shoulder, in no instance will the women be left behind. Their rights with men are in equal degree. They will enter into all the administrative branches of the body politic. They will attain to such a high plane that they will be honored in the very highest station of the world

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of humanity and will take part in all affairs. Rest ye assured of this! Do not look upon present conditions; in the not distant future the world of women will become all-refulgent and all-glorious. For His Holiness Baha-Ullah hath willed it so. At the time of elections the right to vote is the inalienable prerogative of women, and their admittance to all the departments of life an irrefutable and incontestable right. No soul can retard or prevent it. But there are certain matters, participation in which is not worthy of woman. For example, at the time when the community is taking up vigorous defensive measures against the attack of foes, the women are exempt from military engagements. It may so happen that at a given time, warlike and savage tribes may furiously attack the body politic with the intention of carrying on a wholesale slaughter of its members; under such circumstances defense is necessary; and

it is the duty of the men and not of the women to organize and execute such defensive measures, because the women's hearts are tender and cannot endure the sight of horror and carnage, even if it is for the sake of defense. For such, and similar undertakings, the women are exempt.

"As regards the Constitution of the House of Justice, Baha-Ullah, in the Book of Aqdas, addressed the men, saying: — "O ye men of the House of Justice!" but (when the members are being elected) the right which belongs to women, as far as their voting and their voice is concerned, is indisputable. When women attain to the ultimate degree of progress, then, according to the exigencies of time and place, and of their capacity, they shall obtain extraordinary privileges. Be ye confident on this account: His Holiness Baha-Ullah has greatly strengthened the Cause of women and their rights and privileges are the special principles of Abdul Baha. Rest ye assured! Ere long the day will come when the men, addressing

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the women will say: — Blessed are ye! Blessed are ye! Verily ye are worthy of every gift, and deserve to adorn your heads with the Crown of Everlasting Glory; because in sciences and arts, in virtues and perfections, ye have become equal to men and as regards the tenderness of heart and the abundance of mercy and sympathy, ye are superior."

I received several letters from England, France and America, each containing cheering news of the steady growth of the beloved Cause.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 29, 1913

1. The college life and its expected results. 2. A talk by an old Bahai on the sins of backbiting. 3. Permission given to Persian Bahai students to come to Ramleh. 4. Abdul Baha praises Mrs. Besant, President of the Theosophical Society.

1. The College Life and Its Expected Results

One of the Persian poets says:

"All the means are prepared for thee, and yet thou art sitting idle."

The outcome of school and college years must be a useful life for the community. If a child is possessed of happy surroundings, if fortune

has smiled upon him, he must avail himself of these opportunities and daily prepare himself — so that when he leaves college, he may enter upon the stage of life, ready to act his part with confidence.

In a spiritual way we are all the children of the Heavenly Father. He has prepared for us the means of advancement. He has placed within our reach the instruments

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whereby we may obtain an ideal education and fit ourselves for the service of humanity. He has given us lessons in many ways. He has encouraged us with words of wisdom, and has pointed out the glorious goal. Yet some of us play truant, do not learn our lessons, and at the time of examination fail. Do you not think the Father will feel sad and keenly disappointed when He finds that His years of solicitude have brought no results? Let us, therefore, be the studious children of Truth; avail ourselves of all the opportunities prepared for us — so that throughout our lives we may give happiness to others and fulfill the expectation of the Great Teacher.

2. A Talk by an Old Bahai on the Sins of Backbiting

“El-ya-hou” is an old Bahai. In years gone by he has visited Baha-Ullah many times, and as he had been a Jew before becoming a Bahai, he is well conversant with the prophecies of the Old Testament. He has a sweet nature and loves Abdul Baha more than words can express. In the course of conversation he told us that the Cause of the Blessed Perfection is the reality of Love and the means of unity and concord amongst the children of men; so that all of them may become the waves of one sea, the radiant stars studded in one illimitable sphere, the brilliant pearls of the shell of unity and the sparkling gems of the mine of singleness; thus may they serve each other from their hearts; praise and commend each other; unloose their tongues in manifesting the good qualities of each, and thank the Lord for His Graces and Gifts. They must look toward the horizon of everlasting Glory and as they attribute themselves to Baha-Ullah, they must see no evil, and never speak of the faults of others. They must shut their ears to all gossip and

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backbiting. They must be spiritual beings, with spiritual qualities. A number of souls are walking in this straight path, and, praise be to God, are assisted and confirmed in all countries; but others have not yet reached this exalted, and supreme station, and are not fully established in this Divine Principle. This is a cause of great grief to the heart of Abdul Baha. There is no greater obstacle to the Cause of God than

faultfinding and no greater handicap for the word of God. The friends of God must become the essences of union and accord, enter under the unicolored tent of the Almighty, the expression of one great Ideal, walk in one road, forget conflicting opinions, and leave behind them their divergent views. Then Abdul Baha will be pleased with them, because He sees that they have dedicated all their thoughts and energies to the promotion of Love and affection, throwing into the corner of oblivion their differences and growing in the image and likeness of the Creator.

Thus “El-ya-hou” spoke from the depth of his heart.

3. Permission Given to Persian Bahai Students to Come to Ramleh.

To-day we did not see Abdul Baha, but he sent me several cablegrams to be forwarded to various parts of the world. One of these was to Haifa giving permission to half of the Bahai students to come to Ramleh. There are about thirty young Persian Bahais who are students in the American College in Beirut. As this is vacation time they are spending their summer on Mount Carmel. In a few days, half of them will arrive, the other half will come later. To-night we had a meeting at the House of Khourassani. Mirza Mahmoud spoke on the trip of Abdul Baha to Edinburgh. There were many Bahais of different nationalities.

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4. Abdul Baha Praises Mrs. Besant, President of the Theosophical Society

An interesting Tablet was sent to Mr. Graham Pole, the Editor of the *Scotland Theosophy* in Edinburgh, in which Abdul Baha refers to Mrs. Besant, the President of the Theosophical Society. As he has spoken before many of their societies in various cities, both in the United States and Europe, it will not be out of place to quote it herein, so that the friends may become informed of its contents:

“O THOU MY BELOVED FRIEND!

“Thy letter was received from India. From its contents it became evident that thou art occupied, and art spending thy days in the company of that respected lady, Mrs. Besant. I hope thou mayest be ever happy, serene, confirmed and assisted; so that thou mayest become able to render a signal service to the respected lady, Mrs. Besant. The ideal of Mrs. Besant, I say truly is very lofty. She is working and laboring most valiantly, and her utmost hope is to render a service to the world of humanity, and to be the means of the establishment of good-fellowship and love between all the communities of the earth. At all times I am praying in her behalf, so that the Confirmations of the Kingdom may surround her, that she may sow the seed of service in

pure, productive soil; and that she may gather many, many harvests; then the heavenly benediction will be obtained the outpourings of the Holy Spirit realized, and her services, troubles and hardships crowned with eternal results. I desire this station for her.

“Consider how many important women have come into this world! How many queens have lived upon this earth! How many distinguished ladies have become the

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Presidents of Societies! But neither have their names nor any great account of their deeds been left behind! Yet Mary Magdalene, who was only a peasant woman, — because she became inspired to serve the Kingdom of Christ and to scatter his seeds in productive ground — what a great crop she gathered! And through the blessing of that harvest, they are even now building churches in her name! in all the Churches the people glorify and praise her and now, after 1900 years, Abdul Baha is speaking of her lofty station! He testifies to the fact, that, in the Kingdom of Christ, she served more than all the apostles. She even became the cause of the firmness and steadfastness of the Apostles, for, accordingly to the Text of the Gospels, their faith wavered after the crucifixion, but Mary Magdalene inspired them with resolution, and certainty. Consider what a service she rendered to the Kingdom of Christ! That is why, like unto a star, she is shining from the horizon of Eternity.

“Convey my most respectful greeting to the revered Lady, Mrs. Besant.

“Upon thee be greeting and praise.

(Signed) “ABDUL BAHÁ ABBAS.”

While in America and Europe Abdul Baha often stated that the Bahais must associate with the Theosophists because they were nearer to this Cause than many other groups.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 30, 1913

1. Spread of the Bahai Cause in the interior of Turkey. 2. Let the American friends wait. 3. Story of how a Bahai feast was given in Bagdad. 4. Abdul Baha writes on nineteen day feasts. 5. The Mohammedan month of fasting comes to an end.

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1. Spread of Bahai Cause in the Interior of Turkey

Abdul Baha received a letter from the interior of Turkey, the city of Antab where the Bahai Cause is being spread. He read to us a portion of it which describes a lecture given by an Armenian before an audience of five hundred people. The lecturer dwelt upon the trip of the Master of Europe and America, and gave a synopsis of the Teachings. What interested the audience more than anything else was the principle of the Conformity of Science and Religion, philosophy and faith. Science and religion, he told them, have always been in accord, but the despicable, accursed, satans (Ulemas) have always sown seed of discord between them. The Master laughed heartily when he read the above conclusion.

2. Let the American Friends Wait

Then he gave each of us letters just received in our names and while we were sitting in his presence, he wrote several Tablets with his own hand. At last he told us that he was trying to make amends for the past and was devoting all his time to the Oriental friends. Before leaving for America, he wrote that the Bahais must excuse him from any letter-writing, but that after his return he would correspond with them as of old, and now he was fulfilling his promise.

When we left I ventured to say that many petitions from America and Europe were accumulating and solicited his attention. He answered me in a humorous fashion; wait, wait a little longer. Let him now attend to the Persian believers, and the turn of my American friends would soon come.

When we left his house, we were all intoxicated with his divine Love. During our interview the Master spoke

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a great deal with Mirza Jalal, because one of the Princes of Persia taught by him had written a letter.

3. Story of How a Bahai Feast Was Given in Bagdad

Mirza Jamal, our cook, told us a story about a feast in Bagdad.

“The Bahais in Bagdad,” he said, “were not rich, but were firm and filled with fervor. They kept the nineteen day feast. One morning they sent word to one of the friends that the Feast would be held in his house. He touched his pockets and there was no money. What should he do? He had a watch which he had bought for ten majidis. He took it out of his pocket and sent it to the bazaar to be sold at auction. Accidentally one of the Bahais passed by and recognized the watch. He stopped, and saw that it was going to be sold for two majidis. He raised

the price half a dollar and bought it. Quietly he carried it home. When night came, he went to the meeting, and after the refreshments were served, he approached the host and, taking the watch out of his pocket offered it to him as a present. The host was very much surprised, but delighted. All the friends were pleased when they heard the story.”

4. Abdul Baha Writes on the Nineteen day Feast

I may now conclude by quoting from a Tablet, which Abdul Baha writes to Mr. Jos. Hannen:

“O thou who art firm in the Covenant!

“Thy third report was received and its contents imparted the utmost exhilaration. The 19-day Feast was the Lord’s Supper, and its results are eternalized. Although physically Abdul Baha was far away, he was present in that meeting with heart and soul. Truly I

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say, it was a glorious feast, perfect in every way. Do not ye look upon the present, nay rather, look into the future. The Lord’s Supper during the lifetime of that divine Light, had no importance in the estimation of the public; but consider how the rays of that sun of Reality illumined that meeting afterward. ...O thou my kind, Mr. Hannen! I am most pleased with thy service, and I hope that these services of thine shall make thee a standard in the Divine Kingdom. Announce the utmost kindness to Mrs. Hannen. If Mrs. Hannen can undertake to spread broadcast the diary letters which are forwarded to you from the East concerning the travel and sojourn of Abdul Baha, it is very acceptable. ...”

5. The Mohammedan Month of Fasting Comes to an End

In two days the month of Ramadan will come to a close and all restrictions will be taken away. There will be general feasting and five holidays. To the Mohammedans, this is one of the most important occasions for joy-making and for calling on each other. Already the air is full of expectation for the coming feast!

RAMLEH, EGYPT, AUGUST 31, 1913

1. The story of the blind man and the serpent.

1. The Story of the Blind Man and the Serpent

“When I was a Seesan,” said Mirza Jalal Sina, “the friends of God brought to me a very old man with a patriarchal beard, and wished me to speak to him about the Cause. They had often told him of the teachings, but

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with no evident result. He was simple, yet fanatical, tender-hearted, yet full of religious superstitions. At heart a child, in body a Hercules. He had the strength of a lion, yet his firm belief in dogmas, inspired him with apprehension as to his future. With rough and uncouth gestures he entered the room and squatting on the floor cried out: — ‘Tell me now, what have you to say? I have no patience to sit through a long sermon!’ Immediately I got, as in a flash of lightning, how I must handle this overgrown child of nature. I told him — ‘My friend! I have really nothing to tell you but with your permission I shall relate a story. Will you give me your ears?’ ‘Forsooth I shall. I do love to hear a good story with a moral to it,’ he said, his face already brightening with interest. ‘All right, then listen with attention: — Once upon a time there was a man of good position and fortune. As a public servant he ranked high in the estimation of the members of society. He had a palatial residence, and his servants were innumerable. His stable, stocked with Arabian and Persian horses was the pride of the neighborhood. Many famous men sat at his table and ate of his bounteous food. He dispensed hospitality like a prince, and received people of all ranks with royal courtesy and lavish splendor. As time rolled on the heaven of his fortune became beclouded, and like the thunders of the sky, successive reverses overtook him, breaking the mountain of his wealth into a thousand pieces. Soon he found himself in complete poverty. By this time all his old friends had left him, and in the hour of destitution, no one would condescend to so much as recognize him. From height of opulence, he was thrown headlong into the depth of despair and indigence. As though these humiliations were not enough, the Fates visited him again and made him totally blind. Now indeed, the cup of sorrow was full to overflowing, and

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all doors were closed forever before his face. He was considered an outcast, and no one would associate with him. Finally through this chain of circumstances, he was forced to become a beggar in the public square. One cold morning in the winter, he left his dirty hovel and went to his accustomed place. While he was walking, his feet stumbled against something. He knelt down and searched for it. He felt a long sinewy thing in his hand and thought it was a silk whip of some special value. He took hold of it and he walked along unconcerned. A passer-

by, frightened by the sight of the object being carried by the blind beggar, cried out: — ‘Man! Man! Dost thou not see what thou art holding in thy hands? It is a serpent, it will bite thee. It will kill thee. Throw it away quickly.’ ‘No, indeed. No indeed!’ the blind man retorted angrily. ‘This is a silk whip which costs at least five majidis. Feel it with thy fingers, how soft it is. No! I shall not listen to thee. Thou art a covetous, greedy beggar and wantest me to throw it away so that thou mayest take it up and sell it.’ ‘Really, my friend! This is a poisonous serpent, but the cold weather has benumbed it, and soon the rays of the sun will bring it to life.’ ‘No! No! Don’t talk to me like that. I will not throw it away. If thou art very anxious to have it, I will sell it to thee for four instead of five majidis.’ By and by a large crowd gathered, each one calling upon him to throw away the seemingly dead serpent, but he, having lost all confidence in humanity, persisted in believing it was a whip. In order to show his utter contempt of public opinion, he folded the serpent and placed it near to his skin, standing erect in the already rising sun, in the horrified sight of the spectators. ‘What art thou doing? Art thou thine own enemy? The serpent will sting thee with its venomous fangs. Cast it away while there is yet time.’ No! the more they insisted,

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the closer he hugged it to his breast. The serpent warming up under the downpour of the rays of the star of the day, started to move slowly up and down the body of the beggar, stinging him several times. He shrieked and cried with pain, then fell to the ground in terrible agony. The deadly poison working up rapidly through his body caused his death.

“Now, my old friend, thou art in the position of that blind beggar, because thou art hugging to thy heart the old, superannuated symbols of a decayed and dying religion which will not benefit thee in the least. That serpent, however, caused the death of only the body; this serpent causes the death of the spirit. During the past years all these friends of thine have testified that the old form of religion will not be conducive to thy salvation, but like the old beggar, blindly, thou art in thine obstinacy persisting in that this is a silk whip — my religion is good enough for me — and not a serpent. The serpent of superstition, ignorance and dogma is next to thy skin, and these men cry out to thee to cast it away; so that thy spiritual life may be saved, but no, thou wilt have none of their advice. I portrayed his inner condition so vividly that he commenced to shake and weep. From that time on he became a dweller in the kingdom of Abha, and a most progressive member of the community.”

Abdul Baha went to Alexandria this morning and in order to have some papers signed by the judge, he presented himself in the Court.

During the evening he came to our house for half an hour, and the talk was on the coming national Fête of Ramadan.

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RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 1, 1913

1. The watermelons of Acca. 2. Abdul Baha and the story of the policeman of Ramleh. 3. Abdul Baha talks on the power of imagination. 4. Oriental Bahais portray natural spirituality.

1. The Watermelons of Acca

We have received fine watermelons from Acca. Abdul Gasem sent ten big ones for the Master and he forwarded six of them to our house. If we cannot go to Acca now, at least the watermelons of Acca come to us. While we were enjoying them, I said that I wished that I could send one of them to America to show the friends how big and juicy are the watermelons of Acca. Mirza Mahmoud laughingly said: "Though wouldst have sent it if thou didst know how!"

2. Abdul Bah, and the Story of the Policeman of Ramleh

Arising early this morning Khosro entertained us with some sidelights on the current events. He sleeps in this house and goes to the Master's home a little after sunrise to begin his work. This morning he delayed his departure, and explained the reason as follows:

"All the policemen in this quarter have received generous gifts of money and presents from the Master. There is one who stands in Khosro's way every morning and tells him a long story, so that he may repeat it to the Master, who may give him some money. 'I have three children. My salary is not sufficient and since the Pasha, His Excellency (Abdul Baha) has come here, a new hope has dawned from the horizon of my heart. One of my children goes to school, and for him I have

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bought a pair of new shoes for the coming feast. The other two who are only a few years old, left stealthily their small beds last night and came to me without any noise. They woke me gently and said: "Papa, papa, we are the Furies. If thou dost not buy two other pairs of shoes for us,

we may strangle thee right now.” I laughed and hugged them to my breast and sent them back to their beds with a promise that if they are good, behave well and obey their mother, then probably the new “Pasha” may give them the shoes. Now, please, Khosro Effendi, tell this to “Pasha.” Other policemen whose duties are patrolling in other quarters come to Khosro and ask him: “How long is the new ‘Pasha’ going to live here?” He says: “Probably one month!” “Good, good! because after two weeks this quarter will be assigned to us and then the ‘Pasha’ may be as generous toward us as he has been to others.”

3. Abdul Baha Talks on the Power of Imagination

Haji Niaz arrived this afternoon from Cairo and brought us the good wishes of the believers. He is the same happy old man with a nature of sunshine and good will toward all. About 6 o’clock Abdul Baha passed by and called on Mirza Abul Fazl. After a few moments Shoghi Effendi returned and brought me the good news that I was summoned by the Master. I stood before him on the veranda. He was speaking to Mirza Abul Fazl on “imagination,” quoting the epigram of an Oriental Philosopher: “Imagination is the greatest ruler in the human world.” No matter how scientific a man may be, yet at times, “imagination” gains an ascendancy over his mind. For example, while a man is alive he is able to strike, to beat, to kill, yet you sleep with him in the same room. When he is dead, science teaches us that his body

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returns to the mineral kingdom. He can neither strike, nor kill. The body lies there like a piece of stone, inanimate. But you would not sleep with it in the same room. what is the reason of this? It is the power of imagination. It grips you with its imperial energy and overwhelms you with invisible force. All the convincing proofs of science will not induce you to live in the same room with a corpse.

Then he related a dramatic story to further illustrate the subject, but as soon as he finished it, he turned to me and said: “Don’t write this.” He could see in my face how deeply interested I was! Ere long, he fell into a deep heavenly silence, and the beautiful atmosphere was permeated with a languorous quietness and peace. The brilliant hosts of the sky were arrayed in shining armor of white light, fighting bravely against the deep-coming darkness. With the ears of the spirit we could hear them chanting and praising, because the face of the earth was illumined by the Face of the Lord.

4. Oriental Bahais Portray “Natural” Spirituality

Returning home, I found a number of the friends engaged in conversation. How happy, how carefree, how detached these people seem to me! They are beings created and fashioned in other worlds. Their happiness, their joy, their detachment are all so natural, so unconscious, so outflowing from the springs of their hearts. There is no affectation, no sanctimony, no religiosity. They do not try to be spiritual. It is not through the exercise of the will. How well Abdul Baha echoes the secrets of their inmost hearts when he writes in a recent Tablet: —

“The days of human existence are like vanishing shadows. With the utmost rapidity they are brought to a close. From amongst mankind those who live a

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heedless life are at the end, afflicted with manifest loss. For the days of their lives will come to a sudden close, leaving no leaves, no blossoms and no fruit. They shall remain in the lowest degree, and no mention of them will be left behind. From kings to servants all walk in this path and live in this circle, except those souls who are freed from all ties. They are not greedy after comfort, nor are they seeking fleeting pleasures. They are not longing for honor, neither are they chasing phantasmal pictures of glory and wealth. They are the devotees (or veterans) of the Blessed Perfection and are in the utmost state of renunciation and evanescence. They are wanderers over mountains and deserts. They call the people to the kingdom of God, and are the cause of the guidance of souls. Like unto candles they are ignited with all the virtues of the world of humanity. This is Everlasting Glory! This is Eternal Life! This is the greatest attainment of the human world! This is the divine sublimity of the Creation of God!”

Daily the cord of correspondence between the East and the West is becoming stronger, and the interchange of ideas more common. Each one of us must do our humble part, no matter where we are; so that the millennium for the coming of which we pray, may soon be established between all peoples and nations and tongues.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 2, 1913

1. Moving picture theaters in Egypt. 2. The feast of Ramadan and its spirit of joy. 3. Talk on education and the story of the selfish mother. 4. Story of the theologian and the sea captain. 5. Story of a meta-physician and the correction of his book by a teacher. 6. Study of science and true religion must be combined.

1. *Moving Picture Theaters in Egypt*

This is the second greatest feast in the Mohammedan world, — the feast celebrating the passing of the month of Ramadan. In a way it fills the place of the New Year in America. It is called the Feast of “Beyram” and is a national holiday. All the government departments, offices and stores are closed for from one to five days. The older people pay visits to each other, and the younger generation dressed in bright colors, receive gifts and presents and eat much candy to their great delight. Although a thin air of sadness broods over many hearts owing to the Balkan wars, yet the general impression is that of happiness, gaiety and fun. Life to a simple-hearted Arab is like a moving picture gallery, and he loves to see the scenes of creation unfolding before his eyes without leaving his seat; to this we may attribute the springing up of many nickelodeons and cheap show-places all over Egypt who advertise their pictures in a lurid and sensational manner. These show-places attract a large clientele of heterogeneous elements. On a day such as this, the managers, mostly Italians, Greeks and Levantines, reap a golden harvest.

2. *The Feast of Ramadan and Its Spirit of Joy*

On the other hand, the religious spirit of the people finds expression in the gorgeous decorations of the mosques and in long hours of prayers and preaching.

Last night Mirza Ali Akbar brought three kinds of candies for the callers to-day, so this morning they were put on different plates ready to be served. The Samovar was boiling and the tea brewing. I was dressed and walking on the veranda, when I saw Abdul Baha coming toward our house. I was glad to look into his face on

this Fête day, and my heart sang the songs of joy. What else really do we want except his good pleasure? Is there anything more worth while? Do we not live and move and have our being in him? Is he not the supreme object of our lives? The sum of his unalloyed peace shines upon all and everybody is contented.

How thoughtful and beautiful of the Master to call on Mirza Abul Fazl before anybody else! Is it not just like him?

By the time he returned to us a number of believers and outsiders had gathered on the veranda. He greeted them with affability, and afterwards he wished them a happy and blessed “Beyram.” Then tea

and candy were served in turn. He beamed on the friends with heavenly joy and cabled to the Bahai world the glad news: "My health is perfect."

3. Talk on Education and the Story of a Selfish Mother

The subject of his talk was "Education" and the duty of mothers toward their children, — a most appropriate message to go out to the world of motherhood.

He stated that fathers and especially mothers must always think how best they should educate their children, not how to fondle and embrace them too much and thus spoil them. By every means at their disposal, they must knead onto their growing bodies, souls, minds and spirits the basic principles of sincerity, love, trustfulness, obedience, true democracy and kindness toward all races; thus, hereafter the world-civilization may flow in one mighty current and the children of future generations may secure the foundation of human solidarity and good-will. From tenderest childhood, the children must be taught by their mothers the love of God, and

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the love of humanity; not the love of the humanity of Asia nor the humanity of Europe, nor the humanity of America, but the "humanity of humanity". There are some mothers who have a strange, inexplicable love for their children. One may call it the inversion of love, or as we call it in Persia, "Bearish love". This kind of love does more injury to the child than good. When Abdul Baha was in Akka, during the life of the Blessed Perfection, he entrusted the son of one of the believers to a German carpenter. After a month the mother went to Baha-Ullah and lamented and bemoaned that she wanted her son, because he was unhappy with the carpenter, who cursed his religion. Baha-Ullah told her to consult with Aga (Abdul Baha) and abide by his decision. She went to Abdul Baha and after telling her side of the story, he said to her: 'The Germans do not curse any one. They are not accustomed to it.' She went away and after a month called again with another complaint, saying that this carpenter had forced her son to carry a load of wheat on his back. Again Abdul Baha told her that if the carpenter had done this, it was for her son's discipline. Outwardly Abdul Baha satisfied her, but she was murmuring inwardly. A few months rolled by and she returned with another set of complaints, frankly confessing that she did not want her son to be away from her, for he was the apple of her eye. Realizing how selfish her love was, Abdul Baha told her at last that he would not take her son away, but that he must stay with the carpenter for eight years, until his apprenticeship was over. She yielded to the inevitable. After eight years

of study the son left his master, and his mother was very proud of him, because his work was in demand on all sides. In short, mothers must not think of themselves, but of the progress of their children, because upon the children of to-day — de-

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pend the molding of the civilization of to-morrow.

All day telegrams poured in from the leaders and important men of Turkey, Egypt, Arabia, etc., congratulating Abdul Baha on this Fête and wishing him a happy “Beyram”!

4. Story of the Theologian and the Sea Captain

There was a caller on Abdul Baha, a theological student of the College of Azhar, and the discussion turned upon the utter futility of Mohammedan theology and metaphysics, and of how some young men wasted their lives on the study of this one branch for twenty or thirty years. Once there was a theologian who took a sea trip. While he was pacing the deck and watching the calm sea, the captain passed by and inquired about his health. Our friend was so full of his theology that he asked the captain: “Dost thou know theology?” he answered “No.” “Then,” the student declared with much pompous dignity, “half thy life is lost.” The captain did not answer him but continued his walk. Next day the sea became very stormy, and the ship was in danger of being wrecked. The captain called on the theologian and found him prostrated with sickness. “Dost thou know how to swim?” he asked. “No.” “Then *all* thy life is lost,” the captain thundered at him. And you should have heard the Master laugh. Then he quoted several of their metaphysical, hair-splitting axioms over each one of which the theologians wrangle and dispute days and nights.

5. Story of a Metaphysician and the Correction of His Book by a Teacher

Another time, a theological poet, after several years of hardship and privation, finished a book and took it to

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a learned man to be read and corrected. He read the book and found that the contents were very much like the cobwebs of a spider, or the phantasmal imaginings of a sickly brain. Therefore he marked the first and the last pages, thus conveying the fact that the book was not worth correcting.

In the afternoon the Master sent all of us to the garden of Nozha. We had a pleasant time and on our return we heard that he had been entertaining many Arabs, first at our house and then at that of Mirza Abul Fazl.

6. Study of Science and True Religion Must Be Combined

At noon Abdul Baha told us that he did not mean that religious study must be neglected, but that practical sciences should be learned, so that the lives of the students might become useful. In the future, the theological seminaries must discard all their dogmas which are contradictory to science and reason, and lay a basic foundation, not to be destroyed by the fretting tooth of time. We hope that they will accomplish this task.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 3, 1913

1. Persian Bahai students of the American college arrive. 2. Persian students in Paris and London. 3. Abdul Baha tells the students how to study. 4. The students read Abdul Baha's talks in America. 5. Abdul Baha calls on the Persian Consul.

1. Persian Bahai Students of the American College Arrive

Last night eleven young Bahais arrived from Haifa. They are students in the American College at Beirut,

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and have been passing their summer vacation on Mount Carmel, waiting impatiently for permission to visit the Master. These are not all of them. When the present party leaves for Haifa, another one composed of an equal or larger number, will come. They are all young boys from 8 to 18 years, studying in various branches of science, and equipping themselves to become useful members of the body politic. Morally pure, intellectually keen, spiritually susceptible, mentally alive, they combine with these qualities rare power of reserve, simplicity, naturalness and dignity of character, seldom to be witnessed on other youths of the same age. Every one knows by memory many communes and supplications, and this morning after drinking tea, they sat around and chanted Tablets. The American spirit of freedom and activity is in their constitutions. They will become fine and progressive citizens of Persia, when they return to that country. Although their names may sound unfamiliar to our American friends across the ocean, yet they

may be of interest. They are as follows: — Mirza Azzizollah Khan, Mirza Ali Mohammed Khan, Mirza Abdul Hossein Khan, Mirza Mahmoud Khan, Mirza Abdul Hassan Khan, all of Shiraz; Mirza Aflatoun of Hamadan, Mirza Ali Aga of Rasht, Mirza Mahmoud Khan of Espahan, Ghodsee Effendi of Haifa and Aga Sayad Gasem of Sabzevar.

Abdul Baha sent for me and after a few minutes talk, told me to go and bring the students. I conducted them to the house and they were ushered into the reception room. Hardly a minute had passed when the Master appeared. They all rose to their feet and although he told them not to do it, yet one after another knelt before and kissed the hem of his garment, his hands or his feet. This is the highest sign of respect, nay rather adoration, and flows from the depth of their hearts.

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It is spontaneous and natural, full of sweetness and attachment. It is neither dictated by custom nor ceremony.

2. Persian Students in Paris and London

He told them that they were very welcome! He had been longing to see them, but up to this time the way was not open. Was their vacation spent pleasantly in Haifa on Mount Carmel? The College of Beirut was very good. They could not realize how some of the Persian students spent their time in profitless pursuits in London and Paris. Not only did the Europeans look down upon them, as members of an inferior race and half-civilized, but they (the students) confirm them in this opinion by indulging in the questionable pleasures and vices of the European lower society. They hardly do any study. The major part of their time is spent in the gratification of the appetites, such as sensuality, attending dance halls and theatres, wine drinking, association with undesirable members of the community in which they live, and leading an insipid and voluptuous life, ruinous to themselves and the Persian nation alike.... Praise be to God that the faces of these Bahai students were radiant; the rays of the love of God were shining from their countenances. He was most pleased to have met them. It is very strange that when a face is not illumined with the light of the Love of God, it is dark, and when you look into it, the traces of the divine Glad-tidings are not manifest, but when the light of God shines upon it, it becomes bright and enlightened, as it is said: — “In the faces you shall see the verdancy of Paradise and in their countenances there is the sign of worship.”

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3. Abdul Baha Tells the Students How to Study

Afterward the Master left the house to call on Osman Pasha, and in his company, a visit was paid to the Khedive who celebrated the feast yesterday in Cairo, and to-day in Alexandria. Before noon, the Master came to our house to meet the students. He told them that it was his hope that they would make extraordinary progress along spiritual lines as well as in science and art; so that each one might become a brilliant lamp in the world of modern civilization, and upon their return to Persia that country might profit from their acquired knowledge and experience.

4. The Students Read Abdul Baha's Talks in America

In the hands of the students there were copies of Abdul Baha's address given before the Forum Club of San Francisco. He asked one of them what he was holding in his hand? The student presented it to him and he read the last portion concerning the philosophers and the cows, and how the modern materialists should go to the cow to learn the principles of materialism. After speaking on some other subjects, he left us. The students are all eager to take down every word which he says to them and they are writing to their parents and friends the incidents of their trip and of their experiences.

Before he left he told Mirza Ali Akbar to accompany all the students to the Persian Consulate at 4 P.M. as we are quite numerous, both dinner and supper are served in turn; first the students sit around the table, and afterwards the rest of us.

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5. Abdul Baha Calls on the Persian Consul

At 4 o'clock, we found ourselves in the large reception room of the Persian Consulate General in Alexandria. For the first half hour we were entertained by the Consul, then the Master came and spoke with him in Turkish. The Consul is a genial old man, and loves the Master very deeply.

When we returned home, the Master had arrived ahead of us, and was talking with a number of prominent callers. At night we had an unusual gathering, full of interest, many of the Bahais related the story of how they first embraced the Cause of God.

1. The story of the royal bird of Gedam. 2. Purity and chastity are the foundations of spiritual life. 3. The brother of the Khedive calls on Abdul Baha. 4. American ice cream for the students. 5. Their love for the Bahai Cause.

1. The Story of the Royal Bird of Gedam

The Eastern mind is a treasure-house of mystic stories, each one fraught with significant lessons. One of these beautiful stories was related to me the other day by Mirza Jalal Sina, and fore-shadows the coming of the Manifestation of God into this world. I report it here without its interpretation, knowing that my readers will supply it by their own imagination: —

Far, far away in a jungle, inaccessible to man, beyond the Indian Ocean, there lived a bird of royal birth, majesty and beauty. Her name was Gedam. Her song was endowed by the Creator of mankind with incom-

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parable beauty, richness, sweetness, and charm. The strains of her natural melodies belonged to other than this material world, which is full of the cawing of crows, the crackling of geese and the twittering of sparrows. Whenever Gedam began to sing, she raised her melody to such a lofty height as to silence all the other birds, who were ashamed of their own weak, discordant noises. Thus were they discomfited and filled with envy and regret, and wondered what they could do to bring about the end of Gedam. Finally they arranged a large meeting in which they might deliberate as to how they should heap vengeance upon her unsuspecting head and cause her death.

After much consultation, they agreed upon the plan of destroying the eggs of Gedam whenever and wherever she laid them; so that her descendants might not increase. In order to carry out this plan with vigilance, they appointed a committee to execute the decree. They agreed amongst themselves that they would continue to break the eggs of Gedam till the time came when she would grow old and die, thus protecting themselves from the power of such a rival. For a number of years Gedam patiently endured the persecution of these little birds who were exulting over the success of their plan in thus systematically destroying her eggs and not letting her progeny increase. Gedam never said anything nor manifested any trace of concern. Then at a time when the birds were away from their nests, she laid one egg in each and flew away, perching on the loftiest branch and singing her own entrancing melody. The other birds, not knowing exactly what had happened, sat as usual on their eggs, and after a while the little ones stepped out of their narrow world into open space. Tenderly and with much solicitude

and devotion were they taken care of, and from the mother birds' beaks the

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little ones were fed. Soon their dear growing wings were covered with soft feathers like unto velvet, and the parents were delighted to see their darling offspring developing into the size of birdhood. Gadem from the loftiest branch was watching, how day after day, her children were nurtured by these different birds with wistful tenderness and sympathy as though they were their own. Then, when she observed that they had reached the flying stage, she perched on the highest green branch, filling the empty void with her wonderful music, which vibrated, and rocked through the atmosphere. The little birds who were her real children, heard the clear, resonant melody and finding its exact similarity to their own, and realizing from the depth of their hearts, their true kinship with the invisible singer, suddenly fluttered their wings, and up they soared to join their Mother. Out of every nest a number of birds such as doves, partridges, sparrows, crows, nightingales, blue-birds, etc. who had become accustomed to the harmonious companionship of the children of Gedam, joined them in their flight. Although they were of various forms, colors and species, voices and kinds, — they soared together with love and sweet fellowship, toward the azure height and there composed a divine company, circling and circling around their beloved mother, as the songs of thanksgiving and gratitude with soft appealing notes flowed like a clear stream from their hearts.

2. Purity and Chastity the Foundations of Spiritual Life

While the students and other pilgrims were drinking tea, the Master entered the house. He walked through the rooms and inquired about the health of each. Then he went to the veranda and sat down. The first thing that he said, showed his interest in the welfare of the

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students. He asked Mirza Ali Akbar to take them to Nozha Park. Then, introducing them to an Arab Bahai, he remarked, that these students were doing well with their studies and that in reality they were the cause of his happiness.

He also gave a most interesting talk on what the students should study while in Europe and what they should shun. After giving a minute account of the social customs of the Western people, he told us that chastity and purity are two divine standards of the spiritual and moral law. The greater the aims of a man the nobler his deeds; man

must ever be thoughtful of others and polite and courteous toward his fellow beings. This will win for him the good-pleasure of the Lord and the satisfaction of the general public. One's sitting and rising, conduct and manner, speech and conversation, social intercourse and communication must be based upon a firm foundation and be conducive to the Glory of the world of humanity.

3. The Brother of the Khedive Calls on Abdul Baha

In the afternoon Prince Mohamad Ali, the brother of the Khedive, called on Abdul Baha. The Prince arrived in his automobile at the door of our house, and hearing that the Master lived close by in another one, said that he would walk to it. Mirza Moneer was about to go on ahead to notify Abdul Baha, when he appeared in his long, loose, cream-colored coat from the other side of the street. Thus, in the middle of the road, the Master and the Prince met, each offering to the other courtesies designated for the most distinguished men. Every one looking at this strange scene wondered, while trying to imagine what had brought a royal Prince of Egypt to the Threshold of Abbas Effendi. The Master was walking

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ahead, the prince a few feet behind, and while they were talking in the most animated manner, they disappeared from our view.

4. American Ice Cream for Students — Their Visit to the National Park

Late in the afternoon Abdul Baha came to visit the pilgrims and after a few minutes went to see Mirza Abul Fazl from which place he returned to rest.

Before the students left for Nozha Garden, Khosro brought a jar of American ice cream, prepared for them by Mrs. Getsinger. It was very good, and everybody enjoyed it.

5. The Student's Love for the Bahai Cause

All day there were different groups here and there, each speaking about the Cause and putting forth arguments to prove the Dawn of the Sun of Reality. It seems to me that these young men are very devoted to the Movement, and free, and ready to receive and assimilate all kinds of useful information. I have no doubt that from amongst them a number of most capable teachers will arise.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 5, 1913

1. Who is Abdul Baha and what is he doing? 2. The Persian students and prayers. 3. The story of a man who was hired to build a wall around the garden. 4. In the Cause of Brotherhood there are no titles. 5. Abdul Baha inquires from the Persian students about their teachers. 6. People are not awake to the danger of war. 7. Abdul Baha dictates Tablets for the American Bahais. 8. Program for a national or religious feast. 9. Driving around with Abdul Baha.

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1. Who Is Abdul Baha and What Is He Doing?

Abdul Baha is eloquent in his silence and speaks with the tongue of the angels in the congregation of the elect. His heavenly songs, stream down from unknown heights. Like unto the bird of Paradise, he raises his voice and humanity hears it. His heart is a variegated rose-garden whose fragrant narcissuses of knowledge, gentle violets of wisdom, sweet anemones of love and graceful hyacinths of sympathy spread their perfume. The heaven of his mind is begemmed with orbs of reality, dispelling the darkness of doubt. The grandeur of his spirit, the sublimity of his ideals and the epic events of his life are the noblest examples set before the eyes of men. To the wanderer he is a refuge; to the thirsty he is a cooling spring, to the poor he is a treasury of wealth; to the dependent he is a source of inspiration; to the orphan he is a kind father; to the sick he is a physician; to the weak, he is a power-house of energy; to the hungry he is a divine table.

2. The Persian Students and Prayers

Every morning presents to my view a happy scene of worship, because all the students pray before sunrise. They attract to themselves a moral force, infusing into their lives that quality of Faith which changes hate into love, strangeness into friendship, and enmity into amity. Through prayer their minds are polished and their hearts purified with the fire of the Love of God. They attain to the station of confidence, realize the divinity of holiness, are drawn unto God, and become clear mirrors in which the ideal images of the Kingdom are reflected. They put forth green leaves of hope and blossoms of radiant acquiescence. With prayer, they learn their les-

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sons; with prayer they take their examinations; with prayer they make intellectual progress and with prayer on their lips they rise in the early morning and go to sleep at night.

To-day I was speaking about the servants of the Cause and Mirza Jalal Sina told me the following story.

3. The Story of a Man Who Was Hired to Build a Wall Around a Garden

A man hired a mason to build a wall around his garden. The next morning the mason came to start his work. The foundations were already laid by other laborers, and an assistant was hired to pass him the bricks. At the moment when the first one was handed to him a friend of his passed by and was hailed to come near, and they engaged in a lively conversation. The mason forgot all about the building of the wall, and the time slipped by until noon. He had yet the first brick in his hand when the hour of twelve struck. At that time the owner of the garden arrived on the scene, and seeing the work not even started, dismissed him and brought another mason to do it in his place.

4. In the Cause of Brotherhood There Are No Titles

There are some souls who are similarly situated. When a work is entrusted to them by the Great Builder, they take it as a personal thing. They do as much of it as they think advisable according to their limited understanding or do not do it all. In such a case the Great Builder without telling them anything about it, takes the work out of their hands and entrusts it to those who will dispatch it with the utmost rapidity. Personalities do not court in this Cause; work, enduring work, patient im-

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personal work is called for. There are no titles in this Movement. Let all the workers banish such dreams from their minds. In God's estimation the laborers are all equal. We are all His servants. Abdul Baha has taken the title of the "Servant of God" and the servant of humanity. Every sincere soul, according to his ability, must strive day and night to walk in this path. The divine path is the path of servitude, humility, evanescence, — severance from aught else save God, and service.

5. Abdul Baha Inquires from the Persian Students about Their Teachers

At 8 o'clock Abdul Baha came and all the students were ready to receive him. He inquired about their health and if they were comfortable in their present quarters.

He asked them to tell him whether the teachers took pains to instruct the students, or if like some professors, they went through the lessons as machines without showing any feeling or interest in the progress of the pupils?

6. People Are Not Awake to the Danger of War

Holding in his hand several copies of his American addresses which had been published in the newspapers, he informed us that the people of Egypt were not interested in them and that any reference to them would bring only the answer, "very excellent," "very good." However, they were interested in the most unimportant news of the day. They are not thinking of those principles which will build up the future civilization of mankind; yet they acknowledge the fact that the world of humanity is in great danger, and is going through a most crucial period. Although war may cease temporarily, yet there is an invisible war constantly carried on which is a tremendous

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economic loss. These unseen drains are breaking the financial backs of the nations. They do not know by what means or instruments the comity of nations, or the peace of the world can be achieved.

7. Abdul Baha Dictates Tablets for the American Bahais

Then he told me to have the letters ready, and in a few moments I was following him toward the garden. He was glad to be away from the people, and for three hours he dictated Tablets for the friends beyond the seas. Some of those who were honored with Tablets were the following: Miss Jean Masson, Mrs. Gertrude Diffet, the Editor of the "Master Mind" in Los Angeles, Mrs. Harriet Cline, Mrs. Mary C. Bell, Miss General Jack, Mrs. Thornberg Cropper, Mrs. Anna Killius, Mr. Horace Holley, Mr. Fred Mortenson, Madame H. Maron, Mrs. Stansell, Miss Juliet Thompson, Consul General Topakeyan, Miss Edna MacKinny and Miss Maria Wilson.

Yesterday the Master's daughter left for Cairo with Basheer, for short stay. To-day Shoghi Effendi joined his mother with Haji Niaz. In the afternoon four Bahais arrived from Cairo.

8. Program for a National or Religious Feast

About 4 o'clock, Abdul Baha came again and gave us an interesting talk on how a religious, or national Fête should be celebrated.

The program for such fête days must be prepared as to yield a permanent result. As these are days of freedom from work, the leaders of the communities must discuss such problems as may be beneficial to the individuals and the outcome of which will be eternal;. They must

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be occupied with prayers and thanksgiving, and be grateful for the Favors and Bounties of God.

9. *Driving Around with Abdul Baha*

Then he called me to follow him. Outside a carriage was waiting. He beckoned me to sit beside him and told Khosro to sit next to the driver. We stopped at the Hotel Plaisance and took Mr. Atwood with us. The carriage drove for more than one hour on the shore of the Nile. We passed many large palm groves and the Arab hovels of Fellaheens. These Arabs live in real squalor. Pigs, hens, donkeys, goats sleep with them in the same mud room. Arriving at the Nozha, we drove through its shady avenues and our eyes were brightened by the wonderful flowers. The Master left the carriage and we passed into the place where the band was playing and where more than two hundred Englishmen were picnicing [*sic*] with their families. He walked through the Park and finally sat down on the side of a well. He was steeped in a world of thought. Then he went away from us and sat on the green grass. For nearly 15 minutes he remained there undisturbed. The sun was sinking behind the western sky when our carriage was driven homeward. The Master putting his arm around the shoulders of Mr. Atwood told him that he went driving to-day especially for him as he loved him very much. He was most pleased with him, because he had resigned his will to the Will of God.

Mr. Atwood thanked him for his kindness and said:

“Master, I think often of you and of your great work. I can never forget the time when you called at a mission school in Alexandria. The principal in greeting you, said: ‘You are the father of the poor and I am their

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servant!’ You answered: ‘I am the servant of the poor, but you are their father!’ ”

RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 6, 1913

1. The American Bahais must make great efforts in teaching the Cause of Peace. 2. Prof. Armenius [*sic*] Vambery's letter to Abdul Baha. 3. The Persian students meet Mrs. Getsinger. 4. Abdul Baha speaks to them on the Power of unity.

1. The American Bahais Must Make Great Efforts in Teaching the Cause of Universal Peace

When I stood in the Master's presence this morning, he asked me whether I had any news. Then in a talk he emphasized the fact that the American Bahais must, with one accord, and one voice unite in raising the pillars of Universal Peace in their regions. God will reinforce them with the Powers of the Kingdom if they arise wholeheartedly in the service of this Cause. They have every means at their disposal, and no lack of extraordinary desire to do the will of God. By example and by deeds they have seen the workings of the Glorious Lord. Now that Abdul Baha is in the Orient, he loves to hear that the seeds of Truth which he has sown in the West are beginning to sprout, that the ideals of Peace which he has diffused are taking root in the hearts. They must gird up the loins of endeavor, enter the arena of activity and let the reports of their fresh triumphs gladden the heart of Abdul Baha.

2. Prof. Armenius [*sic*] Vambery's Letter to Abdul Baha

Before I left his presence, he handed me a letter written to him by Prof. Vambery of Budapest, who met him dur-

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ing his sojourn in that city. On his arrival in Port Said, Abdul Baha revealed for him a Tablet and sent him a Persian rug as a present. I will translate the letter as a matter of historical interest. The Professor's letter is in Persian:

"I forward this humble petition to the sanctified and Holy Presence of Abdul Baha Abbas, who is famous throughout the world, the Center of Knowledge, and beloved by all mankind!

"O thou kind, noble friend, thou art conferring guidance upon humanity — may my life be a ransom to thee!

"The loving epistle which you have condescended to write to this servant and the rug which you have forwarded, came to hand safely. The meeting with your Excellency and being in your Presence, which is full of benediction, recurs to the memory of this servant and I am

longing for the time when I shall meet you again. In reality, although I have traveled throughout many countries and cities of Islam, yet I have never met a lofty character and exalted personage to compare with your Excellency, and I bear witness that it is not possible to find one. On this account I am hoping that the Ideals and accomplishments of your Excellency may be crowned with success, and yield results under all circumstances; because, behind these Ideals and deeds, I easily observe the future welfare and prosperity of the world of humanity.

“This servant, in order to gain first hand information and experience, entered the ranks of various religions; that is, outwardly I became a Jew, a Christian, a Mohammedan and a Fire-worshipper. I discovered that the devotees of these different religions do nothing else but hate and anathematize each other; that all these religions

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have become the instruments of tyranny and oppression in the hands of rulers and governors, and that they are causes for the destruction of the world and of humanity. Considering these evil results, every person is forced by necessity to be enlisted on the side of your Excellency and embrace rejoicingly, the prospect of the Universal Religion which is being ushered in through your effort.

“I have seen the father of your Excellency from afar and have realized the self-sacrifice and noble courage of His Son, and my admiration has been increasing. For the principles and aims of your Excellency, I express the utmost respect and devotion and if God, the most High, confers a long life upon me, I will be able to serve you under all conditions. I pray and supplicate for this from the depth of my heart.

(Signed) “YOUR SERVANT, VAMBERY.”

3. The Persian Students Meet Mrs. Getsinger

In the reception room of the house of the Beloved the students met Mrs. Getsinger. She spoke to them most beautifully and they listened with rapt attention. None of them had yet seen or heard an American Bahai. She related for their benefit, the story of the Beloved’s lecture in Columbia University of New York, and in Stanford University of California and when she told about Mortenson, and how he traveled from Minneapolis to Green Acre — and under the trains — and of how he was received first by Mr. and Mrs. Kinney and later by Abdul Baha, all eyes were dim with tears. Then she spoke about spiritual knowledge, prayer, and the conformity of science and faith, and at the end chanted a prayer of Baha-Ullah.

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4. Abdul Baha Speaks on the Power of Unity

Then Abdul Baha came in and said that God had brought us together in Ramleh. No other power could ever have accomplished this. We were meeting with the utmost joy and fragrance. Spiritual attraction had united us. The Divine outpourings and the Bestowals of the Blessed Perfection had called us to this heavenly banquet. Just as in this material world we were brought together at this meeting, similarly may we associate with one another in the kingdom of Abha.

In the afternoon the Beloved dictated several important Tablets, and later entertained the French Consul of Haifa who had come to meet him.

Many hours to-day were spent in writing and in listening to the delightful stories related by Mirza Jalal Sina.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 7, 1913

1. The story of the mythical republic and of a curious way of electing a president.
2. Abdul Baha spends a busy day.

1. The Story of the Mythical Republic and a Curious Way of Electing a President

Let me relate to you the story of a poor man and how he became the Ruler of one of the ancient Republics. Back of it you will detect the spiritual history of God and His relation with mankind.

Years and years ago the inhabitants of the country of... who enjoyed a sort of Republic, had a most curious way of annually electing their President. The people gathered once a year in the largest public square of the capital. Then they would bring out the golden cage of

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the bird, "Homai," and place it at the head of the procession of dignitaries, amidst universal rejoicing, while the music of the national band played. After many ceremonies, and the delivery of eloquent addresses, they would open the gate of the cage and release the bird Homai before the eyes of the citizens. The bird, gaining its freedom, would rise higher and higher toward the blue ether, and then descend on the head of an individual in the crowd, whom the people would hail as the next Ruler.

It was on such an important election day that a stranger entered the city. He observed decorations of flags and bunting, and the streets filled

with seething humanity. Every avenue, like a tributary to the sea, emptied its rushing people into the great public square. All the seats, tier upon tier, were filled. After much pushing and pulling, the stranger found his way to the square, where a wonderful spectacle met his view. He was thunderstruck at the lavish splendor of this sight. While he was looking at it, he felt some one tapping on his shoulder. He was hot and pressed on all sides. "What do you want, man? Do you not see that I am nearly dying of suffocation?" "Wilt thou make me thy aide-de-camp if thou art elected President of the Republic?" "Pooh! Art thou gone insane man? I have just entered this city and know not a single soul. I would like to know who would elect an absolute stranger to the highest position in the Republic?" "I think thou dost not know the laws of this country, neither is there any time for their explanation. Just give me thy word now." "All right," the stranger laughed aloud. "If I ever become the President of the Republic, thou wilt be my aide-de-camp."

Hardly was this promise given, when he felt the sudden weight of something upon his head. Then he heard the deafening hurrah of the great multitude which filled the air and which rocked the very foundations of the build-

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ings. The bird "Homai" had sat upon his head, and he was already, by the sovereign will of the people, the President. The notification committee, followed by the most prominent citizens, informed him of his election, and with much solemnity conducted him to the Palace. For one week there were great festivities in the capital. Fireworks and illuminations, athletic games and banquets, brilliant processions, and public receptions, attracted the attention of all the classes of citizens. The inaugural ball, which brought to a close these successive festivities, eclipsed all other events in points of brilliancy.

To the delight and satisfaction of Congress and the Cabinet members — the new President showed extraordinary knowledge on all public questions, and an intuitional grasp of necessary reforms. These reforms had been needed for a long time, but the nation had not been fortunate enough to have a man at the helm of the government who could make them possible for practical legislature.

Soon after his inauguration, the President received a letter from an unknown man, reminding him of his promise. He sent for him immediately, and found in him the requirements of an aide-de-camp. In the course of mutual association, they became great friends and one day, the aide-de-camp said to the President in an off-hand manner: "Do you know what is going to happen to you after the expiration of your Presidential term?" "No, I have never thought about it." "Well I will tell you, because you have been very kind to me. When your term expires, the citizens will come to the Palace, drive you out of your

executive office, ask you to put on your old clothes, take you through the streets, make you ride backward on a donkey, and at the head of a sneering, ridiculing mob, parade you through the avenues and bazaars. In this ignominious manner the procession will

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leave the city. They will proceed for several miles until they reach a broad river on the other side of which is an island. Then they will place you in a boat, and a boatman will row you to the other side. There he will leave you and return. As the island is surrounded by the water, there can be no communication with the outside world."

The President was quite disturbed by this account. "Why did you not tell me of this before?" "Firstly, I did not know you; secondly, this knowledge could not prevent 'Homai' from alighting on your head; thirdly, even should you have known this, the people would not have accepted your refusal." "But, have I not given them an wise and efficient administration, and on that ground, am I not entitled to a second election?" "You must realize that the people are not electing you. It depends upon the caprice of a bird, and I am sure, that even if they let you stay in the public square on the election day, you would not have the remotest chance of being re-elected. On the other hand, no power on earth, except the will of the whole people of this Republic, can amend this provision of the constitution. It is simply impossible." "Then what must I do? Will you give me your advice?" "Well, you can do one thing. As long as you live in this Palace, you have a perfect right to expend your salary on any undertaking you deem most necessary and urgent. You are able to select a number of architects, masons, engineers and laborers, send them to the island, and give them the commission of building a commodious house, in which you may live during the remaining years of your life. I have been aide-de-camp to may former Presidents, and in every instance I have urged them to do this, but they were so occupied with the gratification of their own desires, that they did not heed my advice, and the time slipped by. Suddenly they saw that the year had

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expired, and they found themselves in manifest loss."

This President, however, was of a different disposition, and from that day on, he devoted his leisure hours to the construction of a house on the island. When the term of his service expired, he went through all the strange rites prescribed by the law with a cool head, a confident heart, and a serene mind, because he knew that on the other side, everything was prepared to receive him....

After a few days on the Island, he started to explore it, and here and there came across a number of emaciated and starved looking men who were clothed in tattered garments. He asked them, "Who are you?" They answered: "We are the former Presidents of the Republic of X. We were not as wise and as far-seeing as you have proven to be. While we filled our Presidential Offices, we thought only of our own importance, and pursued the pleasures and vanities of life, instead of thinking of enduring principles. We never troubled our minds about our future, neither did we heed the admonitions of our friend. Thus this present misery is the result of our own past heedlessness."

2. Abdul Baha Spends a Busy Day

This morning the students were summoned into the presence of Abdul Baha, and he gave them a stirring talk on the union of the East and the West, and of how the Cause of Harmony has set aglow the hearts of mankind and how its flame is getting stronger and stronger every day.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 8, 1913

1. The Arab Bahais give a feast to the Persian students. 2. How an Arab became a Bahai. 3. Importance of agriculture. 4. A prayer for the illumination of mankind. 5. The object of the coming of Baha-Ullah.

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1. The Arab Bahais Give a Feast to the Persian Students

Five of the young Arabian Bahais acted as hosts to the students, and the friends. The feast was given in the garden of Nozha. The tablecloth was spread under the shade of the trees and forty of us sat around it. The dinner was delicious, and our Arabian friends dispensed true old-fashioned Oriental hospitality. During the day, Tablets were chanted, songs were sung, short speeches delivered and the spirit of Bahai friendship deeply felt. Although there existed no outward relation between the Arab and the Persian Bahais, yet they conversed together with great sympathy as though they belonged to the same family. After dinner we were divided into small groups and walked through the Park. On our return, we found the Samovar boiling and tea prepared.

2. How an Arab Became a Bahai

One of the hosts told us how he was first attracted to the Cause: “Two years ago, a similar picnic was held here on this very spot by the Bahais. I passed by, and looking at them, saw a divine happiness upon their faces. I became curious, and began to ask questions. Soon I obtained the privilege of entering the kingdom of Baha-Ullah. Now, of all these men who are passing by, looking at us with wondering eyes, who knows but there may be some who will become Bahais, two years from now?”

3. Importance of Agriculture

When we returned we found Abdul Baha dictating Tablets in the garden. Mirza Moneer was the secretary. Several new men were permitted to go into his presence. Later he sent for the students, because

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they had not seen him in the morning. He spoke with them on the subject of agriculture and the present need for it in Persia. He asked them whether such a course was given in the Beirut College. He laid great stress upon the study of scientific agriculture and encouraged them to become the teachers of this science and the spreaders of its principles. He concluded, saying that he expected the appearance of great things from them.

4. A Prayer for the Illumination of Mankind

One of the prayers chanted by the students to-day in the Nozha garden is the following:

“He is El !Abha

“O Thou pure God! Make thou this gathering the candle of the world and suffer this assembly to become a rose garden and a verdant meadow. Let its meeting become a delectable paradise and its horizon the dawning-place of the lights of the Merciful. Perfume Thou the nostrils of the dwellers of the Mount of the Friend with its Fragrance and rejoice the heart of the pilgrims of the Holy city of the Desired One with its amber-scented breeze. Protect thou these souls under the shadow of the wing of Thy Mercy and confer Thou to these hearts, an asylum of Protection in the fortress of Thy Majesty, the One, the Most High! Shower upon us the Confirmations of Thy Abha Horizon and bestow upon us the Graces of Thy Supreme Concourse. Although we are birds without feathers and wings, yet have we built our nests and

homes in the gardens of Thy Cause. We have taken refuge at the Threshold of Thy Oneness, and we are begging of Thee Confirmation, help and aid. When we look upon ourselves, we are smaller than the atoms;

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when we behold the sea of Thy Generosity and Liberality, we see the atoms as brilliant suns, nay rather, more brilliant!

“O Thou Kind King! Cover the sins of these weak ones with the hem of the garment of Thy Mercy. Change the indifference of these heedless ones into the essence of fidelity, wisdom and understanding! Grant the souls a loftier effort and cast another tumult in the heads; so that they may sing the melody of the Supreme Realm, seek after the Everlasting Glory, long for the delicacies of the New World, soar toward the highest horizon, enter into the congregation of the Almighty and become the recipients of the Bestowals of the Kingdom of Abha! Thus the dark world will become luminous, the satanic field will be transformed into the Court of the Merciful, this mound of earth will become the celestial heaven, and this terrestrial globe the Eternal Rose-garden. Verily Thou art the Powerful, the Mighty, the Hearer and the Seer.

“ABDUL BAHÁ ABBAS.”

5. The Object of the Coming of Baha-Ullah

Abdul Baha writes in a Tablet: —

“O ye real friends! And ye who are drawn to the Beauty of God! This is the time of attraction and acclamation, and the period of rejoicing and merrymaking. This is the morn of Glad-tidings! Is it not suffused with splendors? The Candle of the world is bestowing light upon all the assemblages. Is it not luminous? The Manifest Orb is rising from the dawning-place of the Most High! Is it not Glorious? The Blessed Perfection and the Most Great Name — may my life be a ransom to His believers, arose in the city of self-sacrifice like unto

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the banner of Guidance. While he was under the chain, He was a helper to every oppressed! From the Manifest horizon, He shone forth glorified by trials! In the midst of the world, He withstood the attacks of infinite persecutions; so that these withered ones might become enkindled, and these extinguished souls might be set aglow with the Fire of the Love of God. May we close our eyes to both worlds, and be ignited and burn with the Fire of Longing! Now, O ye spiritual friends!

Is it just that we sit silent, become speechless, sorrowful and pessimistic! No by God! This is not the attribute of fairness and gratitude, but the essence of unfairness and negligence.”

RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 9, 1913

1. A bird's eye view of the general conditions of the world.
2. The spread of the Bahai Cause in Germany makes Abdul Baha happy.
3. Photographs received from America and Germany distributed amongst Persian Bahais.
4. The silence of Abdul Baha is eloquent.

1. A bird's Eye View of the General Conditions of the World

Would you like to hear the translation of a Tablet which was read this morning? It contains a wonderful spirit and a most significant exposition of the general conditions of the world at this time.

“He is God!

“O Thou who art holding fast to the Pure hem; thou who art the twig of the Blessed Tree!

“Look thou with deep insight at the world and the inhabitants thereof! It is an immense theatre upon the

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stage of which most spectacular plays are being enacted.

“Here, thou wilt see upon its plains the victorious and vanquished legions of profit and loss and there, thou wilt observe the waves of the sea of folly, rising and falling with great impetuosity. Cries are heard on every side, and the agonies of revolution, revolt and unrest reach to the ears of every progressive man.

“There is a tremendous clash and strife between capital and labor and the war between the aristocratic and the democratic adherents is carried on with relentless sword, javelin, bow and arrow. The phalanxes of the grand Army are drawn in battle array, each squadron taking its position. The world-raging armament and the heavy artillery are prepared in every part of the field. The dazzling splendor of the swords of enmity blind the eyes from the most remote distance; the lightning effect of breastplates, the brilliancy of the lances and the sparkle of the bucklers of hatred brighten the gloomy night and bewilder the eyes.

“In short the weapons for strife, battle and war are being prepared with the utmost celebration.

“Thou wilt observe that from every house, the strains and notes of music are raised, the confusing melodies of harp, lyre, cymbal and flute are heard, and the mad revelers dance while in a state of inebriation with the wines of these vanishing pleasures and joys.

“Here, thou wilt see wanton and soiled decorations, and there, flimsy shows of a gilded class of creatures. Here, embellishment and luxury is made possible through illicit wealth, and there are displayed the ravishingly beautiful appearances of this mortal and ephemeral existence. From one part of the world sighs of anguish, lamentations of poverty and agonies of misery are raised, and from another voices, acclamations and Jeremias calling for succor have reached the gates of heaven! Here,

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one sees the tears of the hopeless and listens to the appeals of the oppressed; there, the trembling murmurs of the helplessness and the harrowing wails of the shipwrecked in the sea of perfection. The heat of the conflagration of separation spreads on all sides: the flame of the fire of longing is raging with great intensity, and the tongue of an avalanche of calamities leaps forth. Here, one observes the absolutism and oppression of kings, and the utter thoughtlessness of the Cabinet ministers, and there, one sees conflicts and wars on the battlefields of thoughts and ideas by ambitious generals, statesmen and administrators of the nations and countries. They consult together, they scheme, they plot, they exchange their views, they organize fallacious enterprises, they float superfluous companies, they circulate false notes, they destroy and they lay the foundation of their political careers.

“In short when thou considerest the reality, the outcome, and the fruit of all these theatrical performances, thou wilt see with thy real eyes, that they are the results of an illusory mirage and their sweetness is as bitter poison. A few days shall roll on their axis, and all these conditions will become non-existent, evanescent and completely forgotten. But when thou shuttest thine eyes to this dark world, looking upward and heavenward, thou wilt behold light upon light, eternity onward to eternity, and from everlasting to everlasting. Then thou wilt see the realities of Mysteries.... Therefore, happy is the pure spirit who does not attach himself to the changing conditions of this transitory world; and who clings rather to the Purity, Nobility and Grandeur of the Never-ending world.

“Upon thee be Baha!

(Signed) “ABDUL BAHA ABBAS.”

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2. The Spread of the Bahai Cause in Germany Makes Abdul Baha Happy

This morning I had the great pleasure of finding myself in the Presence of Abdul Baha. A cablegram from Marseilles announced the departure of Mrs. Fraser and her approaching arrival in Port Said. Abdul Baha sent a telegram to Ahmad Yazdi to receive and direct her to Ramleh. Another cablegram from America inquired about his health. Letters from Boston and Washington, as well as from Germany contributed to his happiness. The Bahai Cause in Germany is making splendid headway, and believers, enthused by the presence and example of the Master, have arisen to spread the Movement with a determination and strength never equaled before. As he walked back and forth, while I was reading the letter from Germany, he smiled and was much elated, saying: You see, you see! He wished the believers to spread the Cause Baha-Ullah. If they do this, divine Confirmations shall encircle them from all directions.

The Cause, he said, has thrown a universal reverberation through the pillars of the earth, and the divine Power of Baha-Ullah shall encircle the globe. Rest thou assured of this.

3. Photographs Received from America and Germany Distributed among the Persian Bahais

This week I received five packages of photographs of Abdul Baha from Mr. and Mrs. Killius of Spokane, Wash., which were to be divided between Mirza Mahmoud and myself. After making the division in equal parts I have distributed a number of them among the students and pilgrims. They are all made very happy by these presents. I also received some photographs from

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Consul Schwartz of Stuttgart which are already given away to many believers. In this way, the Western friends can impart the greatest joy to the hearts of their Eastern brothers.

4. The Silence of Abdul Baha Is Eloquent

In the evening the Master came in while the students were sitting on the veranda. As he entered they all arose. Before sitting he told us that this was a good gathering, a luminous gathering. He sat for ten minutes, but he did not speak one word. Silence, calm and eloquent, pervaded the whole atmosphere, and when he left we were quite as contented and happy as if he had given us an address.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 10, 1913

1. Good news received from America and Europe. 2. A few Arabian proverbs. 3. A prayer by Abdul Baha for detachment.

1. *Good News Received from America and Europe*

I received a number of letters from the United States. Chicago, Spokane, New York, San Francisco and Washington were represented. I am sure that all the good news will make the heart of Abdul Baha very happy. I had also letters from Budapest and Stuttgart, London and Paris. In London the believers are already laying plans for the promotion of the Cause during the winter. The American friends, I have no doubt, will likewise carry away the wreath of triumph, and shall guide many souls into the green valley of Divine Faith.

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2. *A few Arabian Proverbs*

Here I would like to quote a few proverbs which the Arabs use in their conversation. The Arabs are generally very lively and dramatic. Their talk is enriched with numberless epigrams, and is endowed with a wonderful power of expression and poetic fancy. They are simple, yet winsome, graceful and most chivalrous.

“Make neither your friendship a pretence, nor your hatred a menace.”

“Don’t ask a man about his origin; you can read it in his face.”

“Patriotism is from faith.”

“The boy is his mother’s double.”

“Beware of speech, one word may bring a fatal result.”

“Avarice destroys what the avaricious gather.”

“A ruler without justice is no better than a river without water.”

“A man is often an enemy of things concerning which he is ill-informed.”

“There is no honor like the possession of a good character.”

“Disdain not a kind action, be it but to give water to one who is not thirst.”

“Knowledge without practice is like a bow without a string.”

“No pious act is more beloved by God than the telling of the truth.”

“Without Hope, no mother would nurse her child, nor would any peasant plant his land.”

“The young who revere the aged will receive reverence themselves when they are old.”

“The next best thing to belief in God, is sympathy with people.”

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“A true believer is not content while his neighbor is hungry.”

“There are men who are keys to the good, and locks to the evil.”

“Avoid vain hopes — contentment is prosperity.”

“Wisdom lifts a slave unto the dignity of princes.”

“Hearts, like bodies, become tired and should have recreation.”

“A wise enemy is less harmful than a foolish friend.”

“Man is not to be valued by the robes he wears, but by the character he shows.”

“If you censure your friends for every fault they commit, there will come a time when you will have no friend to censure.”

“The beautiful spirit of the hospitality of the Arabs is often illustrated by the apt inscription of welcome engraved above the gates of their homes; for example:”

“Welcome to him of whose approach I am all unworthy.”

“Welcome to the voice announcing joy after lonely melancholy.”

“Good tidings thine; off with the robes of sadness; for know, thou art accepted, and I myself will take upon me whatsoever grieves thee.”

3. *A Prayer by Abdul Baha for Detachment*

I will here translate a prayer from the pen of the Master.

“He is El Abha

“O Thou kind, Incomparable God!

“Familiarize these hearts with Thy Mysteries and detach them from friends and strangers. Suffer them to

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drink from the cup of the Wine of the Morn of Eternity and intoxicate them with the Goblet of Everlasting Felicity. These servants long and yearn for Thee and these lovers are enamored and attached to Thee. They are dwellers in Thy Mount and attracted with the Beauty of Thy Face. They are the gazelles of Thy flock wandering in the wilderness of separation and scattered in the valley of regret. Send Thou to them the Messenger of Providence and cause to descend upon them the angel of guidance: — so that fragrance may waft from Thine Abode to their nostrils and an effulgence from Thy Face may illumine the hearts of these servants; the impenetrable darkness be changed into light and the

thorny place transformed into a rose-garden. Verily Thou art the Powerful, the Seeing and the Hearing.”

In the evening Mirza Abul Fazl came and all the students gathered around him and he spoke to them about the early events of the Cause.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 11, 1913

1. How the Persian students lived together and their departure. 2. An important Tablet revealed by Abdul Baha for China.

1. How the Persian Students Lived Together

To-morrow our band of earnest students will depart, and everything will again be quiet for a few days before the second party arrives. The past days my room was a busy center; here a number of them were speaking, there some were writing letters. From morning till late in the evening they were constantly coming and going. Many of them were anxious to possess the Master’s talks in

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America which I gave to them and of which in turn they made copies forwarding them to their homes. They were not only polite and courteous toward us, but also toward each other. They exercised the utmost kindness and consideration and did not lack the sense of true friendship and fellow-feeling. Like members of one family they inspired confidence and emulation. They were full of hope and each a true optimist. I can hardly remember a more united, a more congenial or a more devoted band of young men. Each one has set in his heart the accomplishment of a certain object, and is intent on carrying it out. The photographs of the Master sent by Mrs. A. B. Killius of Spokane, arrived in due time, and many of them were made happy by receiving this gift. In every one of his speeches, the Master has expressed to them his satisfaction and pleasure, because they are studying with zeal and their lives have been pure and uncontaminated. They are wonderful examples of the spirit of modern Persia.

To-day Abdul Baha came to see them both in the morning and evening and each time he delivered a very eloquent and effective address, which I will share with you soon.

2. An Important Tablet Revealed by Abdul Baha for China

I will now give the translation of a very significant Tablet revealed for a learned gentleman in China. It may be taken safely that this is the first important Tablet which has been sent to the Chinese Republic. I would like to see it translated into the Japanese language and also into Chinese. Once translated into these two languages it will be well if it were printed in a small pamphlet

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with a short historical sketch of the Bahai Cause, and distributed.

“He is God!”

“O THOU WOOER OF TRUTH WHO ART ATHIRST FOR REALITY!

“Your letter was received. Its contents was evidence to the fact that from the horizon of consciousness the refulgent light has become manifest. It is hoped that after the appearance of the dawn, the brilliant sun may rise so gloriously as to cast its splendors upon all regions.

“It is a fact well-known to your honor that the world of existence is in need of an educator and instructor. The educators are of two kinds. The educators of the world of nature, and educators of the world of reality. If you leave the earth in its natural condition, it will become a jungle and a thorny place; but once it is entrusted to the hands of a skilled and kind gardener, the jungle will be changed into an orchard, and the thorny patch transformed into a rose-garden. Consequently, it has become evident that the world of nature is in need of training. Moreover, reflect carefully, for should humankind be deprived of the graces of culture and instruction, it would become a poisonous body; because the savage tribes have not acquired any of the separative distinctions which differentiate man from beast. For example: what is the difference between the African negro and the American negro? The former has not yet adorned himself with the ideals of culture while the latter has become intelligent, sagacious and civilized. During my journey throughout America, at the time when I was in Washington and elsewhere, I delivered detailed addresses in the universities, churches, conventions and meetings of the negroes, and found their audiences composed of most intelligent persons

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who could grasp the subjects under discussion as well as any other audiences of civilized and intelligent Westerners. Thus a great chasm exists between these two communities of negroes; one in the lowest depth of ignorance; another rising toward the pinnacle of civilization

and freedom. Then it is plain that education is the distinguishing mark. Undoubtedly, culture or instruction is the cause of the glory of the one, while the lack of education is the means of the degradation of the other.

“Hence it is proven that education is the concomitant necessity of the world of modern civilization.

“Furthermore: Civilization is of two kinds. The civilization of the world of nature and the Civilization of the world of reality which belongs to the realm of morality. As long as the influence of these two types of civilization does not appear fully in the body politic, complete success and prosperity will not be obtained. Consider that the tent of material civilization is pitched in the European world; yet notwithstanding this how dark it is! The thoughts of all men converge upon the law of the ‘Survival of the fittest’ and the ideals of all the inhabitants revolve around the doctrine of the ‘Struggle for existence.’ The extravagant expenditures on armaments are daily increasing at a terrible rate, and the staggering expenses of the financial budget to support the preparations of the military storehouses, have brought the nations to the brink of bankruptcy. Civilized mankind is in a state of civil insurrection and under a too heavy burden; they are struggling, with wonder and astonishment, to free themselves. All this is because the civilization of morality, spirituality and attraction with the Fragrances of God is entirely lost sight of.

“In short: Just as the Instructor and the Teacher are necessary in the material world; so in the Ideal realm, i.e.: the Kingdom of spirit and consciousness, ethics and

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morality, infinite virtues and the perfections of humankind and salvation in both worlds — there must needs be an Educator and Teacher. The founders of natural civilization are the philosophers of the earth, and the Teachers of the Ideal civilization are the Holy Divine Manifestations. Therefore if the human world is deprived of the training of the natural and ideal teacher, unquestionably it will fall headlong into the lowest stratum of the animal kingdom. Natural civilization is like unto a glass; divine civilization is like unto the light. Material civilization is similar to the body, Divine Civilization is the spirit. The lamp is in need of the light and the body is only quickened through the spirit. Read the work of Galen, the famous Greek Philosopher, which he has written on the progress of the civilization of the world of humanity. He says: ‘Religious beliefs are the greatest means of impelling upward the world of civilization and humanity. As an example to this: — We observe that a number of people contemporaneous with us are known as Christians. Inasmuch as they are firmly rooted and well-established in their beliefs, the common people of this sect are as true philosophers, are adorned with such

ethics and manners that the greatest philosophers attain to them only after many years of study, troubles, hardships and discipline. The simple folk of this community are characterized with the infinite virtues and excellences of the world of humanity.’ Hence it is established that mankind is in need of an Ideal, Universal Instructor, in order to unify under the shade of one Word the various nationalities, causing antagonistic communities to drink from one fountain; changing enmity and hatred into amity and love, and transforming strife and war into peace and salvation. In this manner His Holiness Mohammed — upon him be peace and greeting — conciliated the various contending warlike, barbaric tribes and

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nomads of Arabia, and ushered them into the shade of the Tent of agreement, upraised a lofty banner in the world of physical and spiritual sciences, and caused them to attain to the highest station of Everlasting Glory. Likewise, His Holiness Christ — upon Him be peace — gathered around one spring of Unity, the inimical, the quarrelsome and the warring nations of Greeks, Romans, Syrians, Chaldeans, Assyrians and Egyptians who exercised toward each other the utmost rancor and contempt. He established amongst them the ideal band of communication.

“The above instances irrevocably demonstrate that the world of humanity is in need of Universal Teachers and Instructors, and that these are the holy, divine Manifestations. If certain souls pretend to be of the elect and in no need of education, it is similar to a pretension put forth by private soldiers that they are skilled and efficient, and do not require the instruction of the general. It is evident that such statements are baseless. All the individuals of the army, whether privates or officers, are in need of the supervision of the commander-in-chief, who is the general instructor.

“This is enough and sufficient for those who have hearing ears and to this God bears testimony!

(Signed) “ABDUL BAHA ABBAS.”

RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 12, 1913

1. Departure of the Persian students. 2. Russian Count meets Abdul Baha and talks on reincarnation. 3. Strive that love may increase day by day. 4. Tablet of Abdul Baha to the author of “Modern Social Religion.” 5. Pure intention is the magnet of heavenly assistance. 6. “Strive to quicken dead souls.”

1. Departure of the Persian Students

Separation from the friends of God is a difficult thing. Although by this time we are more or less used to it, having already traveled so much, seen so many countries and associated with so many Bahais — still we feel keenly when we meet and grow to love a number of the Bahais — then suddenly they depart and in all probability, never will we meet again. However, in this separation, there is one consolation and that is: — these friends go out into the world after attaining to the meeting of the Beloved, to teach the Cause of human brotherhood and to equip themselves to become more useful instruments. Thus in a spiritual sense there is no separation between those Bahais who are truly devoted to the Cause of God and are striving in the path of Reality. Consequently from an external standpoint, we were all sad, when we saw the body of students leave the house for the station. The Master received them in the afternoon and delivered to them his last word of advice and exhortation.

2. Russian Count Meets Abdul Baha and Talks on the Two Aspects of Reincarnation

The Master had sent for me to go to the hotel and translate. A prominent Russian Count who understands English and French was calling on him. In a moment I was there, and soon Abdul Baha plunged into a deep and most interesting discussion about the two aspects of reincarnation, the particular and universal, the return of generic and specific ideas, and a presentation of the logical proofs concerning the existence of a Divine, Supreme Power, animating and energizing all creation. The Count seemed greatly interested, and was going to ask more questions, when the Secretary of the brother of the

Khedive was announced. Thus he postponed his questions for a later meeting and departed with satisfaction and pleasure.

I will quote here a few extracts from Abdu'l Baha's Tablets:

3. Strive That Love May Increase Day by Day

“Strive ye as much as you can; — so that love and amity may increase day by day amongst the believers of God; all of you can help each other and be ever ready to sacrifice your lives for one another. This is the quality of the people of Baha.”

4. Tablet of Abdul Baha to the Author of “Modern Social Religion.”

The following is a Tablet to Mr. Horace Holley, the author of the Bahai work called “Modern Social Religion.”

“He is God!

“O THOU SON OF THE KINGDOM!

“A copy of the book written by thee and forwarded to this spot was received. The friends are engaged in reading it. They praise and commend your book most highly and appreciatively. God willing, it will be translated and I likewise will read it. Thank God that thou art confirmed and assisted; thy aim is to render service to the Kingdom of Abha and thy object the promotion of the Teachings of Baha-Ullah. Although the glory and greatness of this service is not known at the present, it will in future ages, assume most great importance and attract the attention of scholars. Therefore strive more

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and more as far as thou canst in this service, so that it may become the Cause of thy everlasting glory; in the Kingdom of Abha thou mayst be enkindled like unto a candle and in the horizon of majesty thou mayst shine like unto a star. Upon thee be Baha-Ullah.

(Signed) “ABDUL BAHA ABBAS.”

5. Pure Intention Is the Magnet of Heavenly Assistance

In another Tablet He says to Mrs. Killius:

“O thou who art attracted by the Love of God! Thy letter was like a mirror in which were reflected the pictures of Divine Confirmations. Thou has a heart which is turned toward the Kingdom of Abha, a spirit rejoiced by the Glad-tidings of God and eyes illumined by beholding the Lights of God. Your aim is to render service to the world of Reality. Pure intention is the magnet of heavenly assistance and the only means whereby to attract a great power.”

To another person whose house had been burned down he reveals:

6. “Strive to Quicken Dead Souls”

“If thy earthly house is destroyed, be thou not sad! May the Palace of the Kingdom be upbuilt! O thou bird of reality! If thy terrestrial nest is ruined, be thou not unhappy, a heavenly nest is destined for thee. His Holiness Christ, the Holy Manifestations and the apostles possessed no

nest whatsoever in this mortal world, but in the Universe of God a glorious Palace. It is hoped that through the Divine Bestowals, on a lofty station, in the Universe of God, a radiant palace may become prepared for thee. Consider that the palaces of former kings from the day of Adam to the present age are ravaged by

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the relentless hand of time, while the towering Palace of the believers of God are built throughout Eternity and are never subject to destruction. Reflect carefully and thou shalt observe that all the buildings are uptorn, but the foundation of the apostles of Christ is becoming firmer and loftier every day. It is my hope that thou shalt likewise lay the basis of such a lofty palace. The foundation of this Palace is the Call of the Kingdom of God; its galleries are the Teachings of Baha-Ullah; its decorations the virtues of the world of humanity and its radiant lamps the lights of the Divine Kingdom. Therefore strive as much as thou canst to quicken dead souls, to guide erring ones, to cause to drink those who are thirsty and to invite those who are hungry to sit around the heavenly Table and partake of the Divine Food.”

RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 12, 1913

1. From Ramleh the mysterious power of God is silently quickening the world. 2. Story of the German Consul in Haifa and how he became the victim of Bravo. 3. Abdul Baha dictates Tablets for Russia.

1. From Ramleh a Mysterious Power Is Silently Quickenning the World

Ramleh is honored with the presence of Abdul Baha. From this quiet summer resort of Egypt the mysterious power of God is felt in the uttermost corners of the world. Men, women and children belonging to all nationalities and religions are turning their attention to this spot. Here lives and moves the God-man amongst the people, as lived and moved Jesus over 1900 years ago along the shore of Galilee. His munificence and generosity embrace the world of humanity. His love is all-inclusive and

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the fountain of his sympathy flows without any interruption. With their burdens, sorrows and sufferings, the children of men come to him. With willingness and pleasure he shoulders their burdens; he cheers the despondent heart; he inspires the downcast; he strengthens the weak; he helps the poor and sows the seeds of wisdom in the garden of their minds. With fortitude he stands before the world and proclaims the coming of the kingdom of God. Those who are endowed with divine perception can easily realize that the spirit of God is moving over the world, the doors of the kingdom are open, and the Graces and Bounties of the Lord of Hosts are manifest. Thus awakened they arise to glorify their Lord and to summon mankind to the Banquet of Eternal Life and Everlasting Felicity.

2. Story of the German Consul in Haifa and How He Became the Victim of Bravo

This morning Abdul Baha accompanied by Shoghi Effendi came to our house and sat for about half an hour. Throughout his talk he laughed, giving us much happiness. He told us the story of a German Consul in Haifa, illustrating how certain people come to a sad end because they enjoy and believe the flattery of sycophants.

In Haifa there was at one time a German Consul who became Abdul Baha's friend. He used to call on him often, and Abdul Baha returned his visits. At one time, he disappeared for a whole month. Suddenly, one day he entered Abdul Baha's room. He had a stick in his hand and was lame. "Oh, sir, how is it that you have not inquired about my health during the past month?" — "Why, friend, what has happened to thee?" "Yes," he pitifully answered, "I am the victim of 'Bravo.' Let me tell you how it happened. The German Colony had

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prepared a ball, to which I was bidden. The governor, the judges and the officials of Haifa were likewise invited. When the dancing was over, they had a jumping contest. One by one they started to jump, but in a clumsy manner. I saw that none of them had learned the secret of jumping a long distance, but I had learned it in boyhood, going to gymnasium in Germany. When the last one failed to reach the mark, I volunteered as a candidate. All eyes were on me now. My first attempt was so successful that it elicited the hearty 'Bravo' of the governor. In my heart I was pleased and thought I would try again, and go beyond the first limit. I went back and back, then jumped forward, and when I landed on the other side, a tumultuous applause was raised from the governor and the officials. 'Bravo, bravo,' rang in my ears. By this time, I was puffed up with pride and became blind to my own limitations. 'Now I will show them,' I said to myself, 'what real

jumping is,' and with this determination I started the third time. I wanted to go further, much further than the first and second time, and so, when I came down upon the earth with a great crash, I felt a most excruciating pain in my right foot. My leg was broken. I became unconscious, and when I opened my eyes, I found myself in bed. For the last thirty days I have suffered much. Thus you see now, how I became the victim of the 'Bravos' of the governor." There are many people in this world who will go to the limit of doing anything, even in attacking the purity and the motives of their friends just to gain a temporary applause and Bravo without thinking of the ruinous effect of such a thing upon themselves in the future, and the loss of public confidence.

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3. Abdul Baha Dictates Tablets for Russia

The Master had received many letters from the East and America. He wondered to which direction He should turn His attention.

Seeing a package of letters in my hand, he laughingly asked: Is this the work I had prepared for him? How many hours did I want? It seemed to him that there was no end to my requests.

In the afternoon he dictated Tablets in the Garden to Shoghi Effendi for a long list of believers in Baku, Russia. Tea was served while he revealed the heavenly words. He also entertained the Arabic professor of the American College in Beirut. He spoke with him about the unification of religions and the principles of the Bahai movement. The professor went away with a new light in his heart.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 14, 1913

1. The law of Universal love and the Bahais. 2. Tablets for German Bahais.

1. The Law of Universal Love and the Bahais

In the garden of the heart plant only the flowers of Love. The fragrance of the hyacinths of Love, the influence of the divine Love, the efficacy of the spiritual Love must constitute the foundation of the life of every Bahai. You shall know the tree by its fruit. You shall recognize a real soul by the quality of Love he manifests. With Love in our hearts we are enabled to benefit humanity. Love being the magnet, its possessor is enabled to attract the hearts to the Kingdom of peace. True love

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never changes, and has no similitude or shadow of turning. Love is the basis of human sympathy, and sympathy prompts us to be kind and compassionate to all those who are in sad circumstances. With Love the enemy is changed into a friend, the cheerless is comforted, the weary traveler is lodged, the hungry fed, the naked clothed, the destitute made rich, the weak reinforced, the hopeless made hopeful, and the barren life made to blossom like unto a rose. Love is the great panacea for the healing of all social, political and economic evils. Love is the Holy Fire enkindled in the hearts by the hand of God. The only Love that is all-enduring is the Love of mankind. Let the power of this Love take possession of our beings. Let the sea of this Love flow toward the countries of our hearts. Let the rays of this Love illumine the dark recesses of our minds. Let the sun of this Love flood the regions of our souls. Those who have experienced this Love will never become despondent; with shining faces and smiling lips they shall march through the storm of difficulty, scale the impassable mountains of trials and reach the goal with added zeal, increased energy, supreme faith and unfaltering courage. This Love exalts one's Ideals, purifies one's motives and glorifies one's thought.

The Bahais are the servants at the Court of this Love; they adore and pay tribute to this king. Love, only Love, makes them invulnerable. With this weapon they gain victories over the cities of the hearts. With this torch they dispel the gloom. With this medicine they heal the sick and with this water they allay the thirsty ones. Out of this book they have learned the Mysteries of God; from this spring they have quaffed the wine of Knowledge, toward this exalted height they are soaring, and in this illimitable ocean they are submerged. They are the followers of the Lord of Truth, whose words, actions and

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ideals are spelled in letters of Love — Love for the world of humanity. Their watchword is Love. Their calling is Love and their avocation is Love. They eat Love, they drink Love, they are clothed in Love and have their existence through Love. They have known the source of Love, and Love has made them free. They love God and they love mankind. With this omnipotent power they have arisen to serve the world. In all their transactions and dealings Love is their Instructor. They love to live a life of simplicity, prayerfulness, helpfulness and service. For them there is no more sorrow or hate. Life is an Elysian garden of joy and happiness where men may live together lovingly. Love is peace, peace is contentment, contentment is light.

2. Tablets for German Bahais

This morning I was called into the presence of Abdul Baha. He has taught us what Love is, and how we should gain more capacity to become the custodians of Love. He called Khosro to bring him a small cup of coffee, and when it was served, with a twinkle in his eye, he said:

“Who says that Mirza Ahmad does not drink a cup of coffee? Khosro, bring him one!”

Then he dictated several wonderful Tablets for the German believers. He was especially pleased with the letter of Miss A. Knoblock [*sic*], and with her splendid work in several German cities. He ordered the translation of her letter to be sent to all parts of the Orient. He started to dictate a Tablet for her: “O thou herald of the Kingdom of Abha” — then He turned to me saying:

“Truly she is a Herald of the Cause of God. She has won this title by her noble work in guiding the souls.”

Then He continued. At this time Mirza Ali Akbar was announced and later on Haji Niaz.

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RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 15, 1913

1. A busy day for Abdul Baha. 2. The story of the king and the thorn-picker.

1. *A Busy Day for Abdul Baha*

We did not see the Master to-day. In the morning he was busy reading his letters; in the afternoon he dictated Tablets for the believers of Persia; in the evening he gave an interview to two correspondents of Arabic Dailies in Cairo. We were standing near the door of the Victoria Hotel, expecting him to come out when the interview was ended. About 10:30 P.M. we saw him descending the stairs. He was feeling well, but a little tired.

2. *The Story of the King and the Thorn-picker*

If you would like to hear the story of the king and the thorn-picker as related to me by Mirza Jalál Sina, I will be glad to share it with you:

Once upon a time the king of the country of the North went hunting. While he was chasing a deer, he forgot all about his retinue and royal tent, and charged his steed through glen and dale; the deer

ever evading him by leading him on. Suddenly the king realized that he was far away from his servants, the midday sun poured its hot rays down upon his head. He looked around, and to his amazement found himself in a vast desert full of thorns and briars. Then in the far distance he spied, with his eyeglass, an old man gathering thorns. The old man startled, looked up. "Who art thou?" the king asked. "I am a thorn-picker and maintain my large family by selling thorns in the city." "How many times a week dost thou come here?" "Oh, I come every day. If I

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miss one day, my people will go hungry." "But surely thou art not equal to this hard work." "What else can I do?" "Come, my brother," the king said, as he extended his hand to him. "If thou dost listen to me and obey all my orders, I will make thee the richest man in the world. I will teach thee the secret of the Philosopher's Stone which transmutes the baser metals into gold." "Very well, I will follow and obey thee under all circumstances." "But thou must realize that the road is full of temptations. Thou must look neither to thy right nor to thy left, listen to me and renouncing all things, ever follow me." "Yea, yea, I will do anything thou dost command me." "Very well, then, come; I am willing to give thee a trial." The thorn-picker, throwing away his stiletto with which he used to cut the thorns. Started to follow the king.

For one hour they walked till they reached a desert which was shining under the rays of the sun. The old man asked the king: "Why is this soil so brilliant?" "The ground of the desert is of silver." "Oh, oh, can I not fill my pockets with it?" he asked, all excitement. "Did I not tell thee that thou wilt encounter temptations in the path?" The old man, being thus rebuked for his apparent forgetfulness, became silent and said nothing, but in his heart he coveted such free, abundant wealth. In order to keep his mind away from his secret thoughts, the king tried to entertain him with varied conversation until they had passed by this plain, and entered another which was a dazzling yellow color. "What is this?" the thorn-picker asked, while blinking his eyes. "The soil of this plain is of gold." "Gold, gold, my goodness! There is so much gold scattered here, and I am so utterly, so miserably poor; and my family always half-starved." Half bent, inclined by an uncontrollable desire, he was going to grab a nugget, when the king took

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him by the hand: "Come, come, my brother, I shall make thee so rich that thou wilt not deign to look at a mountain of gold." "Well, I don't know how! Here I see so much gold, a pocketful of which will make me rich beyond my fondest dreams." "Don't listen to the suggestions of

thy heart. This desert of gold is not to be compared to the treasures which lie before thee.” “I will wait and see.”

At last they crossed the desert, but the old man was moody, his eyes wandering to the right and to the left, looking at the immense amount of gold dust scattered over the plain. Finally they entered another desert. Here their eyes were almost blinded by the dazzling brilliancy everywhere. “What is this plain made of? Please tell me at once,” the old man asked excitedly. “I have never seen anything like it in all my life.” “Oh,” the king answered calmly. “Nothing especially valuable. This is the diamond plain.” “Diamond!” His eyes were ready to fall from their sockets. “I have heard that it is the most precious gem in the world. Surely you will permit me to fill at least one of my pockets with these priceless stones. Just think how one of them will make me quite independent!” “No, brother, thou must not act like a child. On this pilgrimage thou canst not carry anything with thee. Like a bird thou must be free. Thou must not soil thy wings with water and clay, otherwise thou wilt not be able to soar and reach the height.” With much persuasion, the old man was at last prevented from loading himself with diamonds, and by and by they were out of this plain too. Now it was nearly sunset, when lo, on the Western horizon they saw a wonderful body of water shimmering under the last rays of the sun. The king pointed it out to the old man with an exultant cry: — “Look, dost thou see the ocean lying before us? This is the sea of the ‘Philosopher’s Stone’, one drop of which

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will transmute all the baser metals into the purest gold.” The old man was, however, extremely tired by this time, and as he was thinking in an absent-minded way how to answer the king, he saw another thorn-picker, who was a friend of his, appearing on the scene. “What dost thou do here?” he asked. “To-day,” he said, “several members of our guild went on a strike, so a load of thorns is fetching a high price in the city. Come along with me. We two, all our lives, have been non-union members, and for the next two or three days, before the strike is settled, we can make a nice profit by supplying the citizens with the necessary fuel.” The old thorn-picker got very much excited over this unexpected news, and forgetting the king, the ocean of the Philosopher’s Stone and the inexhaustible fortune awaiting him, turned back. The king, pitying their ignorance, cried out after them, promising that he would make both rich beyond their dreams. The younger man hesitated for a moment, but the old man would not listen. “He has fooled me all day, and now he is going to make another fool out of you. Let us run quickly before he persuades us again to obey and follow him.”

For two days they gathered several loads of thorns, hoping that they would sell them at their own price and become independent and

rich. But when they entered the city, they learned to their utter dismay that the price was even lower than its current standard, because there was no strike at all amongst the thorn-pickers, and the information given to the younger man was based on hearsay. Then the old man remembered the king, the plains of silver, gold and diamonds, and the ocean of the Philosopher's Stone. Wildly he ran out of the city, searched and searched all the neighboring plains, but he could find no trace of the king. Everything had disappeared like magic. "Why did I listen to another man? Why did I not obey

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the king? Why did I deprive myself of such a heavenly treasury?" Thus he was rebuking himself as he continued his search, ever hoping to find the king.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 16, 1913

1. Arrival of pilgrims and other incidents. 2. Unity to be established first amongst the Bahais, then they can teach it to the world. 3. Give hearing to the deaf, sight to the blind and speech to the dumb.

1. Arrival of Pilgrims and Other Incidents

This morning I could see the Master only for a few minutes and presented to him a number of letters just translated. We did not see him any more before sunset. At that hour he passed by our house going to Mirza Abul Fazl's apartment, where the Arab believers gather weekly to hear him speak. A number of Persians were also there. He sent for Mirza Mahmoud and told him that there were some pilgrims who would arrive at 7:30 P.M. from Port Said, and that we should go to the station to welcome them. We walked to Sidi Jaber and when the train rolled into the station, we were glad to receive two young Persians, one from Russia, another from Beirut, and Mrs. Stannard from Haifa. She has spent a pleasant summer on Mount Carmel and is going to stay in Ramleh, as long as the Master continues to live here. We conducted her to the Victoria Hotel. Miss Hiscock also has left her Hotel and is now at this one. I hear that Mrs. Getsinger will go to Acca and Haifa to visit the holy Tombs of Baha-Ullah and the Bab before starting on her journey to India.

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2. Translation of a Tablet, Giving the Keynote of the Bahai Movement

“O YE FRIENDS OF ABDUL BAHA! In this Divine Dispensation and lordly Cycle the fundamental principle and the supreme object is the establishment of the oneness of the world of humanity; so that through this oneness and agreement all wars and contentions will be wiped away from amongst mankind and the Beloved of Union appear in the Assemblage of the world.

“The promulgators of this Union must be the believers of God, — so that through the merciful power they may dispel from the horizon of the world the darkness of strangeness and the Adored One of Unity may unveil her sweet and heart-captivating Countenance. If the least ill-feeling exists amongst the friends themselves, how, then, can this great matter be realized? Therefore, everyone of the believers must strive valiantly with heart and soul; so that not the smallest speck of dust may sit upon the mirror of fundamental Unity; Love should increase day unto day, and the qualities of good-fellowship, intimacy, friendship and mutual kindness be clothed with resplendent realities amongst the believers.

“O God, O God, I lay my forehead and place my face upon the dust of humility and submission — looking up toward the kingdom of Mystery and beg of Thee with a contrite, supplicating, entreating, humble, submissive, broken and pain-encircling heart, from the Threshold of Thy Holiness — in the world of Lights — to rend asunder the veils of Pluralities, and with manifest signs reveal the Beauty of Fundamental Unity in the hearts.

“O Lord! Make thy believers the waves of the sea of Thy Oneness, the Breezes of the rose-garden of Thy

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singleness, the stars of the heaven of amity and good-fellowship and the pearls of the ocean of Love and Guidance; — so that they may drink from one fountain, breathe in one air, be illumined by one light, turn entirely their faces toward the world of renunciation and the Center of inspiration.

“Verily Thou art the Mighty, the Beloved, the Glorious and the Most High!

(Signed) “ABDUL BAHA ABBAS.”

3. Give Hearing to the Deaf, Sight to the Blind and Speech to the Dumb

“O thou sign of Guidance! Thank God that thou hast advanced from the region of darkness toward the center of Lights and after

crossing the desert of mirage, hast reached the sweet, cool and salubrious springs. The rays of Guidance thou has beheld in the horizon of Unity, and in the Valley of safety, thou didst hear the soul-refreshing Call of God from the Blessed Tree. The honey of the Love of God thou didst taste, and hast become intoxicated with the Wine of the Knowledge of God.

“Now is the time when thou mayst become the associate of the known and unknown and at every moment raise the cry of Ya-Baha-El Abha. Unloose thy tongue in the most great Guidance; give hearing to the deaf, sight to the blind and speech to the dumb. Bestow exhilaration and rejoicing upon the lukewarm, and happiness and joy upon the despondent. Confer intelligence upon the heedless, awake the sleepy ones, cause to drink those who are thirsty, guide the erring ones, make confident those who are deprived, and reinforce the weak. Verily Thy Lord will assist thee and help thee; will inspire thee with the breaths of the Holy Spirit and cause thee to

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utter His proofs and arguments with great penetration and conviction.”

RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 17, 1913

1. The spiritual palace of International Brotherhood is being built by the peacemakers. 2. “Christian Commonwealth” and Bahai articles. 3. Tablet to the Editor of the “Christian Commonwealth.” 4. The sojourn in Ramleh has been fruitful.

1. The Spiritual Palace of International Brotherhood Is Being Built by the Peacemakers

All the palaces that are built are subject to destruction, save only the Palace of Love which is protected. So far as Love is the Ruler of hearts, there is no difficulty, but when it is replaced by indifference, the fire is extinguished. In order to remove the possibility of estrangement, we must look to the higher principles of the spiritual life. For life indeed is sterile, unless it produces the fruits of love, a Love which breaks through all the walls of national and racial prejudices, and enters upon the plane of universal brotherhood. The spiritual Palace, the foundation of which is the Love of God is never laid waste.

The Palace of the Bahai Cause is firm; because its architect is Baha-Ullah, its builder is Abdul Baha, its masons are the companions of God, its laborers are the friends of God, its foundation the Word of God; its cement the Law of God, its water the blood of the martyrs, its

materials the principles of absolute Reality, its rooms the religions of God, its light the sun of righteousness, its decorations the virtues of the world of hu-

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manity, its imperishable flowers the glorious attributes of Divinity and its dwellers the people of Truth.

Men and women from East and West, North and South are daily working on the construction of this Palace. With noble self-sacrifice, with unparalleled enthusiasm, with confident self-reliance, they are continually adding new partitions to this heavenly Palace. They do not rest for one moment. For them spiritual treasures are destined and inestimable bounties are provided. Are they not joint-partners in the building of the Palace of International Peace and arbitration, the edifice of the equality of human rights and the structure of the economic adjustment of all the inescapable problems of this modern era? We are assured by the Divine Architect that the volcanic events of the times and the corroding effect of the coming ages, shall not leave their impression upon the spiritual Palace.

2. “*Christian Commonwealth*” and *Bahai Articles*

To-day Abdul Baha had a slight fever; notwithstanding this he wrote many Tablets for the believers of Acca with his own hand. He received the newly arrived believer, Mirza Sayad Hossein, a fine young man, a graduate from the college of Beirut, and the son of the sister of the Master. Of course, he lives in His house. The rest of the students are expected to arrive to-morrow. In the afternoon the Master passed by and went to the garden. He stayed there for more than an hour, telling several stories to Haji Niaz who was in his presence. On his return we caught just a glimpse of him.

The *Christian Commonwealth* is publishing weekly articles and these are regularly translated into Persian and circulated in the Orient for the benefit of our Eastern friends, especially the August number which contained

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an article on the Prison experiences of Abdul Baha. The Master has often expressed the wish that the friends should serve the Cause by subscribing to this paper. The other day a Tablet was revealed for the editor which I transcribe here; so that it may encourage the Bahais to increase their inscriptions. They can do so through Mr. Joseph H. Hannen; because he is its Bahai correspondent. One of the latest copies will contain the Master’s article on Universal Peace.

3. Tablet to the Editor of the “Christian Commonwealth”

“He is God!

“O THOU KIND, BELOVED FRIEND!

“The copies of your peerless paper which are in reality the proofs of your high ideals, the exaltation of your aims and the principles of the prosperity of the world paper of yours which is like unto a clear, transparent of humanity [*sic*] — were received. Truly I say, this unique mirror, reveal the images of Reality. It is the reflection of Truths which mirror forth through the pages of this paper. All the Bahais are grateful and thankful to you on account of your praiseworthy intentions. The significance of these articles is not realized at the present time, but in the future they will gain such importance that every copy containing an article on the Cause of Baha-Ullah will be framed, preserved and hung in the most honored place, and their contents quoted by people of culture. Therefore, rest thou assured that thou art sowing pure seeds in pure ground. Ere long they will grow and develop and many harvests will be gathered.

“Upon thee be greeting and praise,

(Signed) “ABDUL BAHHA ABBAS.”

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4. The Sojourn in Ramleh Has Been Fruitful

So far as I can judge at the present, our stay in Ramleh is coming to a close, though the next place to be honored by the presence of the Beloved is not definitely known. I hear talk about going to Haifa. However, he will be here at least one month more. Our summer was altogether very delightful. Abdul Baha was a source of great joy and strength to the hearts of many believers who made the pilgrimage from all corners of the Orient to see him and to receive his spiritual instructions.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 18, 1913

1. Abdul Baha writes to the believers in Russia. 2. In the Bahai Cause there are no salaried teachers. 3. Wit is the salt of conversation. 4. The second party of Bahai students arrive. 5. Mrs. Fraser arrives from America. 6. Mrs. Fraser is welcomed at the station by Shoghi Effendi.

1. *Abdul Baha Writes to the Believers in Russia*

This morning the Master dressed in his beautiful soft cream-colored robe, entered our house. Mirza Ali Akbar handed him a few letters from Russia. He read them without delay and asked Mirza Moneer to bring paper, ink and pen. He dictated answers to each, and through them you can see how he adapts himself to the individual needs and the spiritual capacity of every person, and out of his abundant treasury, showers upon them the wealth of the Kingdom of Abha. Although these believers live in the remote Empires of Russia, Persia, Turkey, or Arabia, yet he knows them and they know him. How they

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hunger for and preserve every Tablet which he reveals for them!

2. *In the Bahai Cause There Are No Salaried Teachers*

One of the believers asked him what should he do, what course of action should he take up? He told him to go and teach the Cause, spread the coming of the Kingdom and herald the dawn of the Sun of Reality. To convey the message is a confirmed matter. Whosoever arises in this service will always be aided by the angels of the Supreme Concurrence. It is true that the friends will do everything in their power to help a person who devotes all his time to the service of the Cause, but let there be no doubt on this subject, that in this movement there are no *regular salaried teachers*. A paid teacher will not be able to accomplish as much work as if he were independent. In this Cause Abdul Baha desires to have teachers who sacrifice all their belongings, possessions, hearts, lives and spirits in the work of God. This would be very effective. The Cause must be promulgated with devotion and personal sacrifice, and not through financial operations.

3. *Wit Is the Salt of Conversation*

Then he told us that, although he did not feel well, he had written many letters to the believers of Acca with his own hand, because they were old and tried friends.

He mentioned their names, one by one, a long list, I assure you. Speaking about the Tablet written to Abul Gasem, the gardener, he said that Abul Gasem had sent some pomegranates to him from the garden, so that he might write back that the skin of the pomegranates were as rosy and pink as the cheeks of Jameleeh (the garden-

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er's wife), but that the former is through the creation of God, while the latter through the power of devotion. He laughed a great deal, finally saying that it is necessary to joke now and then, for joking is the salt of conversation.

4. The Second Party of Bahai Students Arrive

About ten o'clock the second party of Bahai students arrived from Haifa. They are fine fellows, full of the spirit of the Cause, and devoted to their studies. Their names are as follows: Habibollah Khodabaksh, Badi Bashrouayeh, Mir Jalal, Mir Kamal, Abul Hassan Khan, Golam Hossein Khan, Hassan Khan, Abdul Ali and Tarazollah. The first two are very brilliant young men, and owing to their superior wisdom and intelligence exercise a most salutary influence over the student body. They are, in a way, leaders without the name of leadership. Badi Effendi is a versatile poet as well as Habibollah. The former sings beautifully, and on account of this advantage, both of them have taught all the students Bahai songs and poems. As soon as they entered the house, the atmosphere was changed, and we heard snatches of songs, now in solo and again in chorus. After a while the Master sent for them and they had a short interview with him. He fired their hearts with words of encouragement, and hoped that they would combine together literary knowledge with practical science. From now on they will stand daily in the presence of the Master and listen to his advice.

5. Mrs. Fraser Arrives from America

In the afternoon Abdul Baha passed by, followed by Shoghi Effendi. He called for me and I walked behind

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him to the rose-garden. A telegram sent to Port Said from the Master to Ahmad Yazdi: "Send Mrs. Fraser to Ramleh," brought back the answer that she had left at one o'clock. He told me to go with Shoghi Effendi to the station and bring her home. We were expecting her for the last few days. I was delighted to hear the news.

6. Mrs. Fraser is Welcomed at the Station by Shoghi Effendi

It was a hot day, but the rose-garden is always cool, the fresh breeze wafting. The Master asked Shoghi Effendi to bring him a bottle of Evian water. Meanwhile an Arab, who is a laborer, came in and saluted him. The Arab told a long story, illustrating it with poems,

about the source of the Nile, that it is in Paradise and flows from under a throne — a pretty legend. Then a few men came in to see the Master. He spoke to them in detail on trustworthiness, and told them three stories about his own life. For three hours we sat in his presence listening with attention to every word he said. When he left the rose-garden, Shoghi Effendi and I went to Sidi Jaber station to welcome our dear sister, Mrs. Fraser. We greeted her on behalf of the Master. After ten minutes, she stood before him. She is going to live with the Holy Family, and I have no doubt that the Bahai world will receive a rich and valuable treasure when her Diary is given out.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 19, 1913

1. The American Bahais will be going to India. 2. The importance of the art of translation. 3. The past glory of Persia and her future opportunity. 4. The Bahai

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students meet Mrs. Getsinger and Mrs. Fraser in the home of Abdul Baha. 5. Bahai meeting for the Americans. 6. Abdul Baha amid a profusion of thousands of roses. 7. Description of the garden of Baha-Ullah in Teheran. 8. A single rose in the garden of Constantinople.

1. The American Bahais Will Be Going to India

With the early departure of Mr. and Mrs. Getsinger and Mrs. Fraser to India, we will have three active teachers in that great field. May they work together unitedly, and hoist the banner of the Cause in that vast region! Each one of these three Bahais is gifted with a particular spiritual talent, and when they combine their forces they will be able to render a most brilliant service to the Cause. To India, — a region of sects and creeds, — this truth goes as a balm of reconciliation, a remedy for religious differences and a cooling water of knowledge for those who are thirsty. Their work will carry them through many cities and the assistance of God will be with them. A cable was received from Doctor Getsinger saying that he would be here in three or four days.

2. The Importance of the Art of Translation

This morning Abdul Baha sent for the students. They were all filled with hope and longing. When they stood in his presence, he

welcomed them and tea was served. Having received the constitution of “a central London Bahai Committee” which is in the process of organization, he gave it to Badi Effendi to translate, and then delivered a short talk on the art of translation, advising them to write at least one page every day, either from English into Persian, or from Persian into English, thus they might acquire efficiency in this line of work. He recommended for the future that when the means are pro-

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vided, a committee of translators be organized from both nationalities, who would know the two languages well, in addition to Arabic. Then the Tablets would be properly translated. Again he spoke about Persia and the part which they must play in her reconstruction.

3. The Past Glory of Persia and Her Future Opportunity

He said to the students that there was a time when Persia was like a fragrant Bouquet, perfuming all nostrils. She was the center of the glory and honor of the world of humanity. The inhabitants of Persia from a social, industrial, political and moral standpoint were superior to the rest of mankind. Now conditions are reversed, and the same high standard is not kept waving aloft. Like a great giant, she is prostrated on the ground, groaning with a pitiful voice. If the Persians could clearly see the sad and gloomy state of their own country, they would weep bitter tears of remorse, but they are all self-occupied. It is a natural and divine law that when a nation or country sinks to the lowest degree of degradation, then God, in His Bounty, comes to help her, uplifting and raising her to the highest zenith of glory. As Persia has experienced these sad events, the Lord in His Mercy has willed that that country be illumine, so that her future condition may become even more glorious than her past, and that she may advance greatly along the path of science, industry and art. Now God has purposed that they may become a means of this reformation, and strive day and night that Persia may be enlightened. They must equip themselves with practical education; — so that Persia may be benefited through them. The Confirmations of Abha will always be theirs. If a person studies all the sciences and arts, without receiving heavenly Con-

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firmations, he will not be able to accomplish very much. Now he hopes that they will become the Cause of the moral and scientific advancement of all the Persians.

4. The Bahai students Meet Mrs. Getsinger and Mrs. Fraser in the Home of Abdul Baha

Afterwards he sent for Haji Niaz, Mirza Ali Akbar, Mirza Mahmoud and me. I was carrying a package of Tablets just translated, which I gave to him. He took it out of my hands and gave me a hard blow on my right cheek. "Bravo," he said. Then for a few minutes he spoke about the events of Persia, and the attitude of the governors toward the Cause, and the believers. A package of petitions had just been received. He opened it and read a few. They all contained good news about the progress of the Cause in Persia. Then he went into his own room and sent Mrs. Getsinger and Mrs. Fraser to see us. When they entered the sight of them brought me the significance of the Bahai Cause. Here we were, four Persians and two American ladies meeting on the ground of perfect spiritual friendship! Who has brought to us this divine edifice in which we abide? Those who have lived in the West all their lives, are not quite able to realize this wonderful transformation; this alchemic change of hearts. When we left them, I was yet under the spell of the realization of it, and was more than ever thankful to Baha-Ullah for thus uniting the hearts of the East and the West by breaking away the barriers of nationalities, and causing the appearance of the light of Reality.

5. Bahai Meeting for the Americans

In the afternoon the students were taken to the garden of Nozha by Mirza Ali Akbar and Haji Niaz after

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which they attended a meeting in Khorassani's house, where Mrs. Fraser, Mrs. Stannard and Miss Hiscock were present. Mrs. Fraser had her first experience of a Persian-Arabic Bahai meeting, and for her honor the students sang Mrs. Waite's poem of "Allaho Abha" and other pieces. This gathering composed only of men, must have appeared very picturesque and strange to her. The Master attended the meeting for a few minutes. In the evening several people visited him and he spoke with them on the theological questions of the East, and of their futility. While the students were in the Park, he passed and asked for Mirza Moneer.

6. Abdul Baha Amid a Profusion of Thousands of Roses

After a few minutes Mirza Moneer returned, saying that the Master wanted us to go to the rose-garden. Mirza Jalal Sina, Mirza Mahmoud and I joined him. He was sitting under the shade on a tree, while the

breezes played about him. This is a rose-garden divided into two parts, the first section overlooking the other and joined together by steps. Daily twelve thousand roses, pink, white, red, yellow, are sent to Alexandria and Cairo florists. The fragrance of these roses is exhilarating. The gardener is a simple Arab and most devoted to the Master. He always jokes with him.

7. Description of the Garden of Baha-Ullah in Teheran

After speaking and reciting several stories of the life in Acca, Abdul Baha reverted to the rose-garden, expressing his love and admiration for roses. He said that outside of Teheran his family had a great park planted by the father of Baha-Ullah. This was a wonderful

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garden. It contained four gates, Eastern, Western, Northern and Southern. As you entered the Eastern gate, the Western gate was visible, and similarly from the Northern you could see the Southern gate. In the center of the garden, a throne was built, the four great avenues branching off toward the gates, so that you could see all four gates as you sat on that throne. On both sides of these avenues popular trees were planted to the number of ten thousand. These trees rose erect and majestic toward the sky. Under them thousands of rose bushes were growing, the fragrance of which filled the air. Often Abdul Baha used to sleep on this throne at night. The moon, clear, full, silvery, shone upon him. The galaxy of stars shedding their rays, now faintly, and again with a lustrous twinkle over the calm and mystic scene of the garden. Long before sunrise he would open his eyes and look with wonder at this infinite universe of God. Then the nightingales would break into a glorious concert of divine music; the gentle murmur of the rills flowing on all sides reached the ears, and the zephyrs wafting through the leaves made soft music, the branches hand-clapping and applauding. In the early morning the Blessed Perfection would rise and prepare tea for the family, and while the sun was dawning from the Eastern horizon, they would gather about him, drinking tea and enjoying the heavenly scene.

Then he started to walk through the rose-garden, now and then standing before a rose on a bush, contemplating its structure and petals.

8. A Single Rose in the Garden of Constantinople

Looking at a rose which was very like an American beauty, he said that it was just about this season he had arrived in Constantinople. The garden of the

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house wherein he lived contained one bush, on a branch of which a single rose bloomed forth after sunset. The believers, never having seen roses at this season were overjoyed, and until late at night were gathered around it.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 20, 1913

1. Thoughts on the Mediterranean shore. 2. Abdul Baha talks to Mrs. Fraser and Mrs. Getsinger about their trip to India. 3. Mr. Hooper Harris and Harlan Ober's journey to India.

1. Thoughts on the Mediterranean Shore

It is ten o'clock P.M. I have just returned home, after lying quietly on the shore of the Mediterranean for more than an hour. While my body was stretched on the soft sand, my eyes gazing at the infinite orbs of lights, my spirit was holding communion with the friends beyond the seas. The night was dark and still, and my ears enjoyed the music of the waves, murmuring along the shore. Here I am, I thought, and where will I be in the future? Did I ever dream last year that I would be returning to the East in the service of Abdul Baha? Truly, how our own plans seem futile when compared with the glorious plan mapped for us by the Designer of the Universe! How often in a foolish fit of pride we prefer our own pigmy scheme to that of the Almighty! The Cause is great and our destiny is very high! I praise God for thus taking me out of the noise and clamor of the West into the calm and beautiful serenity of the East! As Mirza Abul Fazl said the other day:

“You are now in the school. Daily you are learning your lessons but the time may come when Abdul Baha

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will send you away into the world to carry out his will and to serve the cause of humanity.”

2. Abdul Baha Talks to Mrs. Fraser and Mrs. Getsinger About Their Trip to India

This morning after the students had visited the Master, we were sent for, and he dwelt on the same subject on which he had spoken with them. It was on the internal condition of the Cause in Teheran and the history of one of the believers. Then he told me that I might come at

any time to see Mrs. Getsinger and Mrs. Fraser to talk with them about the details of the plan of their voyage to India and prepare for them a list of addresses. For an hour in the afternoon we discussed their approaching visit. The former gave me a copy of her diary of yesterday, and I will quote here a part of it: —

“Suddenly turning to me, Abdul Baha asked, ‘Can you think of an excuse to secretly take me to India with you? What plans have you made for India?’ ‘I have no plans,’ I answered, ‘except to obey the will of Abdul Baha!’ Then turning to both of us, he said: ‘What will you do if they dispute these teachings?’ Mrs. Getsinger answered, ‘I shall turn to Abdul Baha and call upon him for spiritual confirmation. After repeating the Greatest Name, I shall open my mouth and say what is given me to say.’ ‘What will you do if they beat you?’ ‘What will you do if they put you in prison?’ ‘I shall thank God that I have walked in His path, and have been permitted to share what Abdul Baha suffered for years.’

“Abdul Baha was silent for a moment. Then he raised his voice, giving it a dramatic emphasis: — ‘And what will you do if they kill you?’ ‘I shall realize that the first favor that I ever asked of Abdul Baha had been granted. And the minute my soul is freed from my body, I will fly

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to God from whom I hope it will never be separated through all eternity.’

“There was a silence. The Master’s eyes were closed. Then he told us: when one goes forth to teach, he should think of all these things. He must be prepared at all times, for whatever comes in the path of God. During the many years that he was in prison, each moment he lived under the sword. He felt that perhaps to-morrow, or to-night, or in an hour, or on the very hour, an order might come from the Sultan to kill all of them. He never went to bed a single night all that time, thinking to see the morrow!”

3. Mr. Hooper Harris and Harlan Ober’s Trip to India

In this connection let me bring to your attention the good and excellent Bahai work done in India, by our two American brothers, Mr. Hooper Harris of New York and Mr. Harlan Ober of Boston. Both these brothers scattered far and wide the seeds of the Bahai Cause, and their memories are always kept fresh in the hearts of those who have seen or heard them. Their services will never be forgotten. Like true, staunch pioneers, they worked nobly and faithfully, and when they returned, they laid many laurels of victory at the feet of Abdul Baha. With the lamps of guidance in their hands, these other teachers will

soon hasten toward India, and will summon all to the kingdom of Abha, and impart the Glad-tidings of peace and Brotherhood.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 21, 1913

1. The story of the king and his search for the fountain of life. 2. The simplicity of life and how the Arabs live in the desert. 3. Abdul Baha talks with Mrs. Fraser.

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1. The Story of the King and His Search for the Fountain of Life

“Please tell me a story,” I asked Sayad Jalal Sina as I sat down in front of my writing table.

“Once upon a time,” he started without hesitation, “a king of antiquity who had conquered many countries, and had raised the Flag of his authority over many climes, became restless and discontented with his lot. On the occasion of a New Year’s Day, when all the Cabinet Ministers, Dignitaries of the States, Colonial Governors and officials of remote countries had gathered in the capital to pay homage and tribute to their emperor, and while he was sitting on his diamond-studded throne, with all these men standing before him, he raised his voice addressing the concourse of officials, clothed in their dazzling robes of ceremony:

“ ‘My friends! From my earliest youth, I have obtained everything for which my heart has wished. I have had the good fortune of receiving wise instructions from excellent teachers and statesmen. Then having attained the age of maturity, I ascended the throne after the death of my father. I have ever striven to keep Peace within the vast heterogeneous elements of my empire, and have extended the boundaries of my possessions beyond the seas. The mighty arms of my generals have carried the authority of my government, and the influence of my laws to the confines of the earth. Notwithstanding these things, I am not contented. My heart longs for the attainment of an object which seems to my mortal eyes unattainable. I do not know what it is, but I feel that there is something for the possession of which I am ready to give up my whole empire. The idea has occurred to me that I may ask each of you to relate the story and the experiences of your lives, perchance through your narra-

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tion I may be able to learn the secret of this longing which is knocking at the door of my heart.'

"For several minutes the great throng of people in the audience-chamber fell into a deep silence, so deep that if a pin had been dropped, one could have heard its fall. They looked furtively at each other, and each wondered in his heart, 'What is this Something for whose possession the king is willing to forfeit his whole Empire?' At last, the prime Minister arose from his seat, and related a long story about his experiences. He sat down, and others followed in the order of succession. All the while the king shook his head, showing that the problem had not been solved. Finally an old man, who had been the wise mentor and guide of the king from his early childhood, rose from his seat and, with a penetrating and convincing voice, spoke as follows:

" 'Sire! I know the object of your Majesty's search. You are longing for the water of Life, the fountain of which is situated in the Kingdom of Darkness. I have been there. I have seen it with my own eyes, and have drunk it deeply. Now having attained to Eternal Youth, I am bound for the Kingdom of Light.' 'Oh! Oh!' the king exclaimed, rising from his throne, and shaking off his lethargy, 'that is the thing that I have wished for, all my life, but did not know what it was. From this very moment I will make preparations to start the search and will close my eyes to all rest and comfort till I have found it.' Then he ordered his generals to summon the army, and issued an edict for the Imperial Guards to prepare to start on a long journey. After a week of feverish work, everything was ready and the king appointed his successor.

"On the last day, the inhabitants of the capital arranged a mammoth open air reception, and when the king had delivered a farewell speech, amid flying colors, and to the

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singing of the national anthem, he started at the head of his great army for the Kingdom of Darkness. After many months of journey through desolate deserts and over impassable mountains, the exhausted army reached the desired destination. But the king, to his great disappointment, remembered that the old man had told him in a private meeting, that there were about 2000 fountains in the Kingdom of Darkness, and as regard to color, taste and property, they were exactly alike.

"Therefore it would be a matter of impossibility to distinguish one from the other. Thinking that all the hardships of this arduous journey would be crowned with no success, and filled with apprehension and terror at the gloomy darkness enveloping his innumerable legions, with no possibility of escape, he resigned himself to the hand of Fate, and began to think how he and his army could manage to extricate

themselves from the impenetrable gloom. At this juncture, the same old man appeared on the scene, and the king's hope immediately revived. He confided to him his great perplexity at not being able to find the real Fountain of Life, inasmuch as there were so many of them.

“ ‘This is very easy,’ the wise one said, ‘I have come here especially to relieve your mind from further anxiety on this point. Here is a dead fish. Take it along with you. When you reach a fountain, drop it in. If it is revived, you will know, without a doubt, that you have the Fountain of Life before your eyes.’ ”

“The old man disappeared in the same mysterious way. The king thus heartened by the advice of his mentor, ordered his army to decamp and to continue the journey. After several days, they reached a large fountain, and as soon as the king dropped the fish into the water, it became a living, moving creature. He prostrated himself on the ground, and thanked God for thus guiding

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him at last to the Fountain of Life. And so he camped there for a few days, and drank deeply of the water, gaining new life, new hope and new courage.

“Realizing that he had attained to the supreme object of his existence, he decided to return. Just before their departure, a great, invisible voice filled the air. ‘Whosoever takes away the stones from the bottom of the Fountain of Life, will regret it afterwards, and whosoever does not take the stones will also regret.’ The people were puzzled, and did not know what to do. Should they take, or should they not take? Finally a number of them filled their pockets, under the pretext that even if they did not take any, they would regret, so that it was just as well to take them; others argued, why should they burden themselves with any of these stones, and then regret it afterwards. So it happened that half of the army possessed themselves of the stones, and the other half returned empty-handed. When they came out of the kingdom of darkness, they observed to their great astonishment, that these stones were precious gems. Those who had taken them, regretted that they had not taken more, and those who were empty-handed, regretted that they had not taken any. Thus both sides were afflicted with remorse and regret.

“Now, instead of giving the full significance of this story, I will give you the key. The king, every man; Old man, reason; Fountain of Life, religion; Fish, the heart; Invisible voice, Intuition; Stones, good deeds; Kingdom of Darkness, material world; Kingdom of Light, spiritual world; Eternal youth, Everlasting life; Two thousand fountains, Creeds and sects.”

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2. The Simplicity of Life, and How the Arabs Live on the Desert

In the morning the Master came to our house and as a preliminary to his talk, spoke about the renewal of the rent, which, of course, meant a longer stay in Ramleh. Then as naturally he fell into a description of the complexity of the means of modern life.

How complex are the means of life in the present age, and how much more complex are we making them daily! The people's needs seem never to come to an end. The more they accumulate, the more they want. There is only one way of freedom, and that is by shutting one's eyes and heart to all these things that distract the mind. The Arab of the desert teaches us a great lesson in the simple life. Living as he does, in the vast Sahara, he lacks all means except a tent, a rug or mat, a caldron, a sword hanging to the inside pole of the tent, and a javelin tied to the outside pole. This is all his furniture. Thus if he is wealthy, he has a mare, or a horse, a few camels, and maybe, adjoining his tent, a palm grove. It never occurs to his mind, that there is anything else in this world. He is happy and he has no worry. His food consists of a bowl of milk and a few dates, and he may well wonder how the city man can digest all the different kinds of dishes with their flavors and spices. He enjoys perfect health. His thought is peaceful and serene, contrary to the city people, who are always haunted by the nightmare of making a bare livelihood.

3. Abdul Baha Talks with Mrs. Fraser

Afterwards I went to see the Master. He was surrounded by many people and was talking and writing at the same time. In the afternoon, I visited Mrs. Fraser

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and Mrs. Getsinger and for quite a while we talked together about their forthcoming trip to India. Both are full of enthusiasm and are looking forward with great pleasure to their approaching experiences. In the evening, the Master sent for me and in speaking with Mrs. Fraser, told her that he was very pleased with her, because as soon as she received his cablegram, although there were difficulties in the path, she pushed them aside and came. The Confirmations of the Kingdom of Abha shall descend upon her. She was going to India in the service of the Kingdom of God and the Angels of the Supreme Concourse shall assist her. Let her attract to herself the heavenly Bestowals.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 22, 1913

1. Abdul Baha's spiritual moods. 2. Dr. Getsinger's arrival in Alexandria. 3. Tablet from Abdul Baha to Bahais in Leipzig, Germany. 4. Another Tablet to a German Bahai asking him to teach.

1. Abdul Baha's Spiritual Moods

Last night, when Mrs. Fraser left the room, Abdul Baha continued to walk. He was fatigued. He sat down and closed his eyes, saying how glad he would be when he leaves this world; this world of darkness and sorrow, pain and suffering. He sighed. It seemed to me that he was too exhausted to speak another word, and I was going to retire. Then somehow, Mrs. Haney's letter came to my mind, so I said:

"I had a letter from Mrs. Haney the other day, in which she expressed great joy at reading the story of the Self-sacrifice of Mullah Mehdy Kandy."

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Immediately he opened his eyes, and looked like a different person, as though supplied by a tremendous force from an invisible source. As soon as the name of this martyr was mentioned he was energized, got up from his seat, and began to speak with inspiration and eloquent fervor, throwing additional sidelights upon the life of that divine martyr, and then just as unconsciously, a clear stream of words flowed from his tongue in praise of Mary Magdalene, and how she became the cause of the constancy and steadfastness of the disciples of Christ!

2. Dr. Getsinger's Arrival in Alexandria

This morning Shoghi Effendi entered my room with a wireless message, just arrived from Dr. Getsinger, advising us of his arrival Monday morning, and as this was Monday, the Master sent word for me to go to the wharf to welcome him. I was on my way without delay, and had to wait until noon. Then "Prince Heinrich" of the German Line appeared, and after a few minutes, I spied Doctor Getsinger on the deck. We had to wait two hours in the Custom House before we were freed, and then taking a carriage, and putting his trunks and valise in front, we drove to Ramleh.

At four o'clock the Master greeted him in his house, and about six we called on Mirza Abul Fazl. He was very glad to welcome Dr. Getsinger back to the Orient and inquired about many believers in Washington, Chicago and New York. Then a historical discussion

about the Bible and the exact date in which Zoroaster lived waxed hot until the Master came in. We all sat on the balcony and for a few minutes, Abdul Baha joked with Doctor Getsinger, reminding him of the days when he was traveling with him in America.

He dictated a long Tablet to the believers in Mazan-

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daran in the garden. Returning from his walk he came to our house and spoke with the students. Thus he attends to his flock with care and solicitude. Doctor Getsinger is going to have a room in the New Victoria Hotel as the guest of the Master.

3. Tablet from Abdul Baha to the Bahais in Leipzig, Germany

“He is God!

“O YE SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF THE KINGDOM!

“The heavenly daughter, Miss Knoblock [*sic*], has given the utmost praise about your Faith and Love; that Glory be to God, you heard the call of the Kingdom, that your spirits gained the capacity of flight, your hearts were illumined with the Light of Guidance, you drank the Elixir of Bestowal from the Cup of Divine Knowledge and became intoxicated with the Wine of the Kingdom. Thank God that He has chosen you from amongst all the people of the world and has granted you such an eminent Gift: — so that each one may enter into the Kingdom of God, and like unto the stars may shine and gleam. This Bestowal of the Most great Guidance is not so apparent now, but in future ages, it will illumine the East and the West.

“Consider that during the days of His Holiness Christ — Upon Him be Glory — no one gave any importance to the guidance of the Apostles. The populace pretended that a number of insignificant souls, who were catchers of fishes, had gathered around a poor man and were talking foolishly. They laughed even at the Blessed Perfection of Christ and spat upon that radiant, luminous and wonderful Countenance. But reflect that afterward,

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the guidance of those catchers of fish became famous throughout all regions, and up to this time mankind is glorifying and praising them.

“Upon ye be Baha El Abha!

(Signed) “ABDUL BAHA ABBAS.”

4. Another Tablet to a German Bahai Asking Him to Teach

“He is God!

“O THOU RESPECTED YOUTH!

“How many holy souls in past ages have longed most intensely to hear the name of the Divine Kingdom and live during the day of the promised one of all the nations of the world; but they passed away and left this world with utter regret, because they did not attain to their wish. In this radiant Century God has so confirmed thee that thou mayst step into the Universe of Life, be trained in the Cradle of God’s Protection and Preservation, suck the milk of tenderness from the breast of Providence and take a share and a portion from the Light of Guidance. Consider what a great Favor is this! What a wonderful bounty! Therefore loosen thy tongue in the glorification of this most Great Bestowal and summon the people to the Kingdom of God, so that others may receive a goodly portion from this Holy Cause.

“Upon ye be Baha El Abha!

(Signed) “ABDUL BAHA ABBAS.”

RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 23, 1913

1. Speeches to be delivered at public meetings. 2. History of the life of Arminius Vambery.

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1. Speeches to be Delivered at Public Meetings

As now and then the question of public speaking in the Bahai meetings has more or less agitated the minds of the believers, I desire to quote herein an extract from a recent Tablet which will show clearly the attitude of Abdul Baha on this rather important matter:

“Rest ye assured that the Breaths of the Holy Spirit shall inspire you with the power of speech. Consequently, loosen your tongues and speak in every meeting with undaunted courage. First, before beginning, turn your face toward Baha-Ullah, beg for the Confirmation of the Holy Spirit, and then open your tongues and speak out whatever is dictated to your hearts. Speak with the utmost serenity, conviction and dignity. I hope that day by day the circle of your meetings may be enlarged and that the investigators of Reality may listen to the proofs and arguments. With heart and soul, I am with you in every meeting. Be ye confident.”

2. History of the Life of Arminius Vambery

This morning, with Doctor Getsinger, I called on Mrs. Getsinger and Mrs. Fraser and had a long talk with both of them. Then Mrs. Stannard came and the conversation turned upon the death of Prof. Vambery in Budapest, and his most significant letter written to Abdul Baha just a few days before he died. This letter will be published in the Egyptian Gazette and copies of the same will be sent to the European Press. He was well-known all over Europe on account of his travels in the interior of Asia, and on account of his writings. Mrs. Stannard thinks that this letter is one of the most wonderful documents of the Cause on account of the importance of the man, for he wrote with thorough understanding, and sympathy. The

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European Press prints long articles about his adventures and early life, and singles him out as a unique man.

Arminius Vambery was born in Hungary at the Village of Duna-Szerdahely, in March, 1832. His father was a Jew in humble circumstances. He was apprenticed at the age of twelve, to a dressmaker, but having acquired some book learning, he presently became tutor to a publican's son. After enduring much privation, he had mastered, by the time he was sixteen, several other languages besides Latin. Four years later, he went to Constantinople, where he was engaged as tutor by Hossein Dein Pasha. In 1853, he brought out a German-Turkish Dictionary. He had now lived so long in the East, that he could pass for an Osmanli, and in 1862 he started on his long and arduous journey to Central Asia. He disguised himself as a Dervish which disguise he assumed at Teheran because of a knowledge of Persian and Turkish and of a careful practice, not only of the customs of Orientals generally, but also of the ways of the Dervishes — the mendicant friars of Islam. He made his way to Khive, where he was granted two audiences by the Khan. The Amir of Bokhara heard suspicious stories of the traveler, but having seen that Rashid Effendi, as Vambery called himself, was a good Moslem and all that he professed to be, dismissed him with handsome presents. On his return to Europe, Vambery paid a visit to England, where he met with a reception both from the geographers and the public. His first account of his "Travels and Adventures in Central Asia" was published in London in 1864, and had a large circulation. He wrote also a "History of Bokhara," based chiefly on the works of Persian and Arabic historians.

In recognition of his linguistic attainments, Vambery was appointed Professor of Oriental languages at Budapest. He frequently visited England, and seldom missed

an opportunity to give his opinions in European periodicals on any new developments of Eastern and Middle Eastern politics.

During the visit of Abdul Baha to Budapest, Vambery met him twice. His knowledge of Oriental languages, especially Persian, Arabic and Turkish, was amazing. He was a pleasant looking old man of rather short stature and wrinkled face. In the course of conversation with the Master, he said:

“For many years have I followed your teachings and ever longed to meet you. I admire more than anything else your supreme courage in that at this advanced age you have left everything and are traveling all over the west [*sic*] to spread your humane principles. You are doing a great work. It will be crowned with success, because your sincerity, unwavering faith and high ideals have stamped themselves upon the minds of the World’s thinkers.”

His last words as Abdul Baha bade him farewell in his long drawing-room and library, were these: —

“I hope to hear from you. Please when you return to the East, send me the writings and Treatises of your Father and I will do everything to spread them in Europe. The more these principles are disseminated, the nearer will be the age of peace and brotherhood.”

The story of how Vambery, physically afflicted, for he was lame, fought for existence against hunger, and persecution, and gradually mounted the ladder of fame, furnishes one of the most remarkable pages of the history of the Jewish race. At school Vambery once said:

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“Hunger, mockery and insult — I experienced them all in turn; but the greatest misery was not capable of darkening the serene sky of youthful mirth for more than a few minutes, and even my healthy color returned after a short interval of bodily collapse.”

He was well received at the English Court both in the reign of Queen Victoria and in that of King Edward. On the occasion of his seventieth birthday, in 1902, his Majesty conferred upon him the title of Commander of the Victoria Order. The present King of England, when the Prince of Wales, proved equally amiable when the distinguished Hungarian Professor stayed at Sandringham. One day, while the latter was occupied with his correspondence, he received a message from Queen Alexandra, inviting him to join her in the garden. Vambery wished to wash his hands before going, but there was no one in sight. At length the Prince appeared, and asked him what he wanted. Vambery told him, and the Prince disappeared, returning in a few minutes with a large jug in his hand, which he placed, smiling, on the

washstand. Thus was a poor Jewish beggar-student of former days, waited upon by a Royal Prince, whom, moreover, he had the temerity to name “The Royal Jug-bearer.”

In the afternoon and evening many people of various nationalities called on Abdul Baha, and the demands of several “gentlemen beggars” were satisfied. When I was walking in the evening with two others, we passed by a house, the windows of which were open; we looked in and saw the Master sitting on the Divan talking with the Pasha.

“God has created us that we may love each other” — were the words that came to our ears as we passed by.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 24, 1913

1. A Persian Bahai student delivers a lecture in English.
2. Abdul Baha wishes the Bahai students to take postgraduate courses.
3. The mission of the Bahai Cause is universal, not local.

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1. A Persian Bahai student Delivers a Lecture in English

Since the arrival of the students from Haifa, table-talks have become the fashion. These talks are delivered in English. Now and then one hears a good speech, short and to the point. It seems to me very interesting how these young men are eager to learn everything from everywhere and thus increase their fund of information, so that in the future they may become able to teach the Cause with eloquent tongues and fluent speeches. Why then, do they practice in English rather than in Persian one might ask? This in itself, of course, is another sign of that drawing together of nations and peoples, that commingling of interests and ideals. The one all-absorbing thought of these young men is to equip themselves with the mental instruments whereby they may go out to war against ignorance, selfishness and greed. I may therefore quote one or two short addresses given by these budding orators. The following is an example:

“Gentlemen! Bahai Brothers! About seven thousand years ago, according to the religious history, God the Maker of all things through His Mercy and Providence created the world and made man after his own image and likeness. Since that time up to the present day, His Manifestations have successively appeared upon the earth and thus the dark world has been quickened and vivified through the spiritual vibrations of their divine Teachings. By this education mankind has attained to a higher degree of knowledge. It has passed over the arc of

ascent, until now it has obtained the capacity for the recognition of the Manifestation of God. When His Holiness Moses appeared, thousands believed in him, and having received and lived according to his divine teachings, became leaders of other nations. God showed them

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His Love and showered upon them His blessings like unto a torrent. He freed them from the tyrannical yoke of Pharaoh [*sic*], brought them out of Egypt, and established them in the Promised Land. He sent down for them manna from heaven, He cleft asunder the sea and made a safe passage for them to pass through. He called them His children and they became worthy of every praise and embodied every virtue. Later, they forgot the heavenly laws, followed their own inclinations and worshiped idols instead of the Almighty Jehovah. As a result they stopped progressing. Their civilization waned and their moral virtues retrograded. For many ages they were scattered, humiliated and scorned. But now, praise be to God, they are stirred with a new life, resuscitated with a new spirit, and many of them are quickened by the call of the Kingdom. The Lord of Hosts hath come, the King of Kings hath appeared. The rays of the Sun of His Mercy have enlightened them and the Breeze of His Benevolence has wafted over them. Thus are they endowed with a seeing eye, a hearing ear and an understanding heart.

“One of these blessed souls is a brilliant young man of 30 years of age. His face is shining, his speech is winsome, his heart is radiant with the light of the Love of God, and his countenance is as pure and bright as the brightest diamond. His dark, ample brow, his towering forehead, his slender nose, and his graceful manners denote a sensitive nature and a true Bahai. His attitude is well-disciplined, his character, and his nature amicable. His intentions are pure, his desires holy and his aims philanthropic and he thinks ever of the welfare of the world of humanity. My humble delineation of this gentleman seems quite superfluous when we remember the repeated praises and commendations of Abdul Baha in reference to him. His word is a divine testimony, a

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heavenly witness and a celestial blessing. The name of this young man is Doctor Habbibollah [*sic*] Khodabaksh. He is sitting now at this table, and is one of the promising Bahais of this century of light and knowledge. We heartily congratulate him and offer him our best wishes, hoping that he will be assisted by God to cure the ills of humanity, both physical and spiritual; bestow eternal life upon every

dead one, and cause mankind to obtain immortality by leading it to the fountainhead of light and bounty.”

2. Abdul Baha Wishes the Bahai Students to Take Post-graduate Courses

This morning the Master received the students. His talk to them was about his lecture in Leland Stanford University, praising meanwhile, the President, Doctor Jordan, and his labors, in the field of International Peace. He encouraged the students to take post-graduate courses in that University, because he had spoken about this matter with Doctor Jordan. Already many are considering going there, and they mean to write to the President and ask for particulars.

3. The Mission of the Bahai Cause Is Universal and Not Local

Yesterday the new Persian Consul General arrived from Constantinople and the Master sent all the students to welcome him at the steamer and to-day, with Mirza Ali Akbar, he went to Alexandria to pay him a visit, in the hotel where he is staying for a few days before his departure for Jadda. In the course of conversation Abdul Baha pointed out to the Consul General the impartial attitude of the Bahais in recent developments in Persia

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and how they are the lovers of Peace and progress. The mission of the Bahai Cause is universal and not local; its principles are for all humanity; its objects are worldwide. The Bahais are the army of spiritual and intellectual advancement. Then he spoke a few words about the promotion of the Cause in America and Europe. The Consul General became very attracted, and made an engagement to come next day and call on the Master. On his way back in the street car, the Master showed love and kindness to a little child with his mother. The child was so attracted, that he came and sat next to him. Abdul Baha gave him a present and kissed him, and the mother thankfully and happily carried him away, reluctant.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 25, 1913

1. An Analysis of the Letters of UNITY by a Persian student. 2. Story of the stork, fish and prawn. 3. Letters received from and tablets written to different parts of the world.

1. An Analysis of the Letters of UNITY by a Persian Student

The other day I was speaking with one of the students as we were walking along a broad avenue. The subject was “Unity,” a word much used in the Bahai Movement. “Unity,” he said, “is the foundation of all successful undertakings. With unity of purpose, a harmonious action is produced. When various elements are brought together, and basic unity is established, an organism is the result. In the political world, Union is the watchword of all the statesmen and in the Bahai world it has a deep significance. The aim of this Cause is, as we all know, a confederation of the world’s reli-

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gious systems, a consolidation of the political interests of the nations, and a truly grand realization of the brotherhood of man. To my mind, every letter in the word ‘Unity’ stands for a great principle or quality. For example, ‘U’ stands for ‘understanding,’ we must at all times try to understand truth impartially and improve our minds; ‘N’ stands for ‘nourishment’; once we have acquired understanding, we must ‘nourish’ it with wisdom and knowledge and cleanse it with the water of intelligence; ‘I’ stands for ‘investment’; if we have a capital we should ‘invest’ it, in order to increase it. The Bahais must teach the Cause and spread the Glad-tidings of the kingdom of Abha and awaken those who are asleep. ‘T’ is for ‘thoughtfulness’; before teaching we must think, or in other words, before teaching others we must teach ourselves. ‘Y’ means ‘yield’ to the truth. If you investigate an object and realize that it is reality, yield to it. Don’t shut your eyes to the truth, once you have seen the glory of its beauty. Let us cling to the truth, as a shipwrecked sailor clings to the cliff. In short, our aim is to ‘understand’ everything in a comprehensive manner, to ‘nourish’ our understanding with the truths from every clime, to ‘invest’ our acquired knowledge in the best possible channel pleasing to our Lord; practice ‘thoughtfulness’ under all circumstances and ‘yield’ to Reality no matter from what horizon it dawns — thus may we become the cause of UNITY in the world of humanity.”

2. Story of the Stork, Fish and Prawn

At this juncture Mirza Ali Akbar joined us and asked what we were talking about. We told him.

“Let me tell you a story,” he said, “which illustrates this very point. Once upon a time there was a stork, a fish and a prawn. They became friends and planned

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to travel together. They said to each other that they would do everything in 'Unity'; but the stork wanted to start on the journey by way of the air, the fish through the watery path of the river, and the prawn by the track of a pond. The three formed a board of consultation to see which mode was the best for traveling together. They had several sessions, lasting for hours, but they could not determine upon any plan, each one insisting that his opinion was correct, and not willing to yield to the other. Finally they saw a little baby carriage not far away and decided to use it as a common vehicle for traveling. They came and hitched themselves to the carriage, confident that their differences were now brought to an end; but no sooner did they start than they began to assert their varied natures. The stork flew 'upward,' the fish went 'forward' and the prawn was pushing 'backward.' "

3. Letters Received From and Tablets Written to Different Parts of the World

[NO TEXT IN THIS SECTION OF THE BOOK]

RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 26, 1913

1. Ishkabad, Russia, an important center of the Bahai Movement.
2. Two Tablets for the Bahais of Ishkabad.

1. Ishkabad, Russia, an Important Center of the Bahais [sic] Movement

The city of Ishkabad is an important Bahai center wherein the first Mashrekul-Azkar is built. The Bahais are free to teach and pursue their religious principles without any molestation on the part of the Russian authorities. In that city the Bahais are quite numerous and are represented by all classes. During the last few days the Master has been entertaining a believer from that city by the name of Ahmad Aga and now he is going away, his life perfumed with Fragrances of the

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Love of God. Abdul Baha has revealed three Tablets for the believers in that city. He came this morning and after reading them aloud, handed them to Ahmad Aga to be taken to Ishkabad. Here are the translations of two of these Tablets:

2. Tablets to the Bahais of Ishkabad

“O YE BELIEVERS IN THE HEART AND SPIRIT OF ABDUL BAHÁ!

“It has been well-nigh three years since this Servant at the Threshold of Baha has been a wanderer over mountain and desert and a traveler upon plain and sea. One morning I was in this province and one night I spent in another. As the express train speeded over vast stretches of land and traversed long distances, — thus joining together the remotest parts, — I became associated with and the confident participator of every meeting and sang the praises of the Lord in each assembly. Day and night I was teaching and explaining and in public gatherings and important Congresses I upraised my voice. I imparted the Glad-tidings of the Sun of Reality and made an exposition of Divine Proofs and Arguments. I laid the foundation of the Teachings of God and elucidated the truth of the Merciful Effulgence.

“After enduring infinite hardships, traveling through and visiting many countries, diffusing the Fragrances of God and promoting His lordly instructions, I returned to the East. But the difficulties of this long voyage were so numerous, that toward the end, my body was attacked by a severe illness and I was at the point of breaking down. This is the reason why correspondence has been suspended for such a long time.

“Now, praise be to God, my constitution is, to a certain extent, reinforced and the illness removed, and there-

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fore day and night I am engaged in answering letters. Not for a moment do I rest or seek comfort. Continually do I remember the friends and as far as possible, I am writing to them. Truly I say, Ishkabad is the city of Love. Each one of the friends of God is occupied with service and engaged in adoration. They are the friends and the companions of Abdul Baha.

“As regards the members of school committees, in reality they are serving with heart and soul and perform their duties with rejoicing. They put forward extraordinary exertions in organizing and systematizing the school and in the instruction of the pupils while all the other believers are assisting and cooperating with them. On this account, I am greatly pleased with the friends of that region. Day and night do I supplicate God in their behalf, beg lordly confirmations for them, and ask heavenly assistance: — so that that city may become the envy of all the cities of the world.

“O God! O God! This is a city wherein the Fragrances of Thy Holiness are spread, the delightful odors of the garden of Thy Mercifulness are diffused and from which the voices of glorification

and thanksgiving, praises and commendations to the Lord of the Kingdom, are raised. For he [*sic*] has revealed Himself on Mount Sinai with a light of radiant effulgence wherefrom the regions are illumined. Glory be unto Him who hath caused the appearances of the Morn! Glory be unto Him who sendeth the winds! Glory be unto Him who resuscitates the spirits! Glory be unto Him who breathes into the bodies of the world the inspiration of Existence!

“O Lord! Accept their supplication toward Thee! their trust in Thee and their invocation between Thy Hands! Verily Thou art the Merciful! Thou art the Great! and Thou art the Ancient Lord!

(Signed) “ABDUL BAHA ABBAS.”

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The next Tablet is the following:

“He is God!

“O YE BLESSED SOULS!

“The beloved pilgrim like unto an overflowing cup has a heart full of your praises. Continually this Servant expects that all the believers unloose their tongues in the commendation of the friends; nay rather, they may adore each other and sacrifice their wealth, comfort, life and spirit for the sake of one another.

“O ye friends! This Cycle is the Cycle of Bestowal and this period is the period of Mercy. All the seasons are the seasons of spring and all the periods are the periods of the Grace of the Almighty. The Breeze of Providence is wafting, the Fragrances of the rose-garden of the realities and significances are perfuming the nostrils and the melody of the Kingdom of Mercifulness has stirred into joy and happiness the heart and the soul! What a delightful age is this! What a heart-attracting century! But a thousand times alas! that the spiritually dead are not awakened by the blowing of the trumpet of Revelation, that the blind are deprived of the sight of the world-illuminating Orb while those afflicted with colds cannot inhale the odor of sanctity. Praise be to God that ye have opened your eyes, have won the ball from the arena of self-sacrifice, prostrated yourself before the Threshold of His Highness the Merciful, become the manifestors of the Favors of the Incomparable Beloved and at all times are advancing and progressing!

“Upon ye be Baha el Abha!

(Signed) “ABDUL BAHA ABBAS.”

This morning the Master passed by our house, went into the garden and dictated many Tablets for the Eastern

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and Western believers. About eleven o'clock he returned and stayed a few minutes. The students were speaking together in English when he suddenly entered and laughed heartily over their speaking in a foreign tongue. Then he went to the Mosque, followed by Mirza Ali Akbar. Again in the afternoon he was in the garden revealing Tablets. Toward five o'clock we went to the meeting. Doctor Getsinger talked about the Master's address in the Jewish Synagogue of Washington.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 27, 1913

1. Tablet in handwriting of Baha-Ullah. 2. Prayer for spiritual strength by Baha-Ullah. 3. Someone must arise to write the life history of Baha-Ullah. 4. Pilgrims arrive from India, Persia and Russia. 5. Abdul Baha urges the students to practice public speaking on all subjects.

1. Tablet in the Handwriting of Baha-Ullah

Have you ever seen the original writings of Baha-Ullah? Tablets written with His own blessed Hand? I had the privilege of seeing such a Tablet to-day. Just think to hold and read with your own eyes a Tablet written by Baha-Ullah's own hand! For many minutes I looked at the writing. The Tablet belongs to Haji Niaz. He went to Cairo yesterday morning and returned in the evening bringing it with him.

When years ago he was in the presence of Baha-Ullah, he requested Him to reveal for him something. The Blessed Perfection took pen and paper and wrote the following prayer.

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2. Prayer for Spiritual Strength by Baha-Ullah

“He is the Knowing, the Wise!

“O God! O God! I beg of Thee by Thy Radiant, Collective Name, to change the humiliation of Thy Chosen Ones into Thy Glory; their weakness into Thy Strength; their impotence into Thy Omnipotence; their poverty into Thy Wealth and their fear into Thy Assurance.

“O Lord! Illumine their hearts by the Light of Thy Knowledge!

“O Lord! Behold Thou these thirsty ones journeying toward the River of Thy Bestowal and the Ocean of Thy Generosity. Verily Thou art the Powerful, the Mighty, the Benevolent.”

3. Someone Must Arise to Write the Life History of Baha-Ullah

What would one not give to receive such a prayer from the Hand of Baha-Ullah. Truly this was a great bestowal. These old men who have seen Baha-Ullah many times are to my eyes very wonderful. I always look upon them with a peculiar reverence and respect. If someone had the time just to write down their stories, they would make, I am sure, most interesting reading. One of the most dramatic events connected with this Movement is the ascension of Baha-Ullah. Haji Niaz was living in Acca that time and for six months after the ascension. He has witnessed everything, and having once heard his story, I will some day reduce it to writing; I am now waiting to hear of it from other eye-witnesses, and once I have all my material together, I hope to begin the story in a consecutive manner. Up to this time no adequate history of the life of Baha-Ullah has been compiled.

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All that we have are fragments, or a mere outline. How I long for a man endowed with spiritual insight, divine faith, historical imagination and intellectual perspicacity to arise, and with patience and perseverance, to travel through the East, collecting the proper material, and then writing a connected history of the life of Baha-Ullah! Such a man will confer an eternal benefit upon mankind. It is a hundred times easier to undertake a work like this at the present time, than in the coming ages! Not only are there many people living who have seen Baha-Ullah and whose stories must be preserved, but we have amongst us Abdul Baha, who has lived and traveled with His Father in all His sufferings and wanderings and exile and imprisonment.

4. Pilgrims Arrive from India, Persia and Russia

Yesterday and to-day many pilgrims have arrived; four men, two women and three children, all Zoroastrian Bahais; from the Persian Gulf, a prominent ex-governor; from Russia, an ardent believer and from Persia an enthusiastic youth. Those who desire to see a religious Congress must come and stay with Abdul Baha, and observe how these men and women of various types and faiths appear from all parts of the world to receive heavenly knowledge from his Bounteous Table, and to then return to their respective homes, inspired with the celestial Spirit. A number of us went last night to the station to welcome our Zoroastrian brothers and sisters. Their faces were aglow with the fire of the Love of God. They were great, big-hearted men, with that stamp of nobility and dignity in their faces that does not wear off. How glad were they when they heard that the American Bahais would go to India to spread the Glorious Message!

“We long to see them,” they said in a chorus, “we

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are ready to receive them and to sacrifice our lives for them. How wonderful! How wonderful! that God has given us the mighty privilege of witnessing His miraculous works. Are they not our real brothers and sisters? All the believers in India are expecting their arrival and will cooperate with them to the extent of their capacity to spread the message of light and truth.”

5. Abdul Baha Urges the Students to Practice Public Speaking on All Subjects

In the morning Abdul Baha spoke in detail with the students about public speaking, and emphasized the fact that they must practice at all times, for, as the future teachers of the Cause, it is essential to develop this God-given faculty. They must choose various topics, physical and spiritual, and then speak amongst themselves and thus employ their imaginations.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 28, 1913

1. Farewell words to the students. 2. “I desire that thou mayst be filled with Baha-Ullah.” 3. Mrs. Stannard an earnest Bahai. 4. An address delivered to the students.

1. Farewell Words to the Students

The Master received the students this morning. They are going to leave to-morrow for Beirut to be there before the opening of the College on October 5th. He reminded them of the former Glory of Persia and of her present decadence, and encouraged them to continue with their studies; so that the confirmations of God might ever be with them, and wished for them to be as radiant stars

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on the horizon of Baha. Afterward the Zoroastrian believers were ushered into His presence. They were so happy and glad because they have reached the destination of their long journey.

2. I Desire that Thou Mayst be Filled with Baha-Ullah.

In the course of His conversation with Mrs. Fraser, the Master told her that he desired that she might be filled with Baha-Ullah. She must concentrate all her ideas and thoughts around the promotion of the Word of God. Just as the cup is filled with wine, so her heart must be overflowing with the Love of the Blessed Perfection. Let her look at him. How from early morning till late in the evening he is engaged in the service of the Cause. He devotes all his time to Baha-Ullah. As she is going to India, let her one thought be Baha-Ullah. He will help her. Whenever he sends someone to serve the Cause, he prays in his behalf and God will assist him. Let her rest assured that he will be with her and she will be enabled to render great services. Let her heart be at ease and have no fear.

3. Mrs. Stannard an Earnest Bahai

In the afternoon the Master was again in the garden dictating Tablets to Mirza Moneer. Mrs. Stannard was also permitted to be present. The Master is turning His attention to the believers of the Orient, and the Secretaries are kept busy copying His innumerable Tablets. Now and then a number of Tablets are revealed for the West, but the East is getting the lion's share. Before sunset, as I was walking outside of the house, I saw the Master coming out of the rose-garden followed by a

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number of believers, Mrs. Stannard and a newspaper correspondent. With the latter, the Master walked away, and I joined Mrs. Stannard and walked toward the beach. For nearly an hour we sat on the sand, watching the sea, and speaking about the Cause, and its future progress. She is a wonderful Bahai and the Master always praises her sincerity, her broad vision and her unflinching energy in many directions.

This being the last night, the students and resident Bahais had a farewell meeting, and addresses were delivered both in Persian and English. Each one was followed by a Bahai song. We were singing and talking until late in the evening.

4. An Address Delivered to the Students

“My dear Bahai Brothers! During the last few days, through the kindness of Abdul Baha we have been brought together. We have lived under one roof, sat around one table and associated together in the spirit of love and unity. I cannot express to you adequately how much I was impressed by your earnestness and true friendship. The memory of these days as well as of the days spent with your companions who constituted the first party, will ever live in my mind. We cannot gainsay

one thing and that is, that the Fire of the Love of Baha-Ullah is burning in the heart of each one of you. God through His Grace has chosen you from amongst the people of Persia and has crowned your heads with the diadem of Faith! This is the highest privilege in the kingdom of Abha! Undoubtedly you must have been worth of the reception of this spiritual Gift. In this day only those who are pure in heart are enrolled in the invincible ranks of the army of God. By this you can easily see that each one of you is a soldier and must be a

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courageous one, ready at any instant to give up his life for the sake of the Cause. Baha-Ullah is your Commander-in-chief, and from the invisible world he is continually reinforcing you with the powers of the Holy Spirit. Your artillery is the principles of the Cause, your cannon the love of God, your rifles the divine teachings and your defenders the angels of the Supreme Concourse. In your hearts is the love of humanity, on your lips is the word of "Ya Baha-El-Abha," in your hands is the sword of light. Before you there is no defeat, behind you there are glorious victories, and upon all sides you are surrounded by the Confirmations of God. Abdul Baha has instructed you and has inspired your hearts with the mysteries of self-sacrifice. He is looking toward you with wistful tenderness, expecting that each one will become a great teacher in the Cause. From a physical standpoint you are the citizens of Persia, but from a spiritual standpoint, you are the citizens of the kingdom of Abha which means the citizens of the world. Consequently, although Persia has a claim on you, the world has a greater claim.

"You are all aware of the fact that through the Revelation of His Holiness Baha-Ullah a new spirit of brotherhood is abroad, leavening all the degrees of society and enlarging the horizon of the human intellect. Naturally, then, every Bahai is called upon to contribute his share to this general awakening and once you are out of the campus of your Alma Mater, you will be called upon to gird up the loins of endeavor and to spread among the present day religions and nations, that spirit of tolerance and freedom from prejudices which is so much needed.

"I can never forget the day in Washington when Abdul Baha called on the Ambassador of Turkey. He was sitting near the window watching the men and

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women in the street. At the time a young negro as black as coal, passed by. 'Did you see that young negro?' He asked. 'Yes' I answered. 'I declare by Baha-Ullah that I wish him to become as radiant as the

shining sun.’ This example will show you how Abdul Baha is anxious, and how he is working day and night — so that all mankind may advance daily along the degrees of spiritual and intellectual activities, ever marching upward.

“We must polish the mirrors of our hearts, we must make ourselves more receptive for the appearance of the hidden virtues of the world of humanity, otherwise, we will not be confirmed in the accomplishment of universal services.

“In his recent addresses and Tablets, Abdul Baha has repeatedly emphasized the principle of teaching the Cause, of awakening those who are asleep, of bestowing sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf and life to the dead! To-day, this is the greatest Service in the Cause of God. This is of paramount importance and must not be overlooked. In other parts of the world, East and West, North and South, the friends of God are doing their best to spread the Glad-tidings of the Kingdom. I know full well that for the present teaching in Syria, Turkey and Egypt is not allowed, but you can do one thing, and that is to prepare yourselves for the time to come. When a nation determines to go to war, the commissary department will make definite plans, fill the arsenals with powder and cartridges and keep the magazines well supplied with food. Therefore you must be always ready for war, the kind of war that destroys ignorance, wipes away spiritual prejudices and shatters the forces of darkness. Let us acquire knowledge, more knowledge and yet more knowledge; for that which decreases ignorance and increases wisdom is acceptable in the sight of the Lord!

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“Personally I have done little in the Cause, but during my stay in America I have learned one thing and that is, that the more one learns the greater is his ignorance. However, in this Supreme Dispensation, Baha-Ullah has promised us that, as we arise to serve the Cause, spiritual Confirmations will come to our assistance and from all sides the doors of God’s Graces will be opened before our eyes. Consequently, our trust is in the Lord of Hosts. We must at all times turn our hearts toward the Kingdom of Abha and rest assured that all our ideals will be realized as long as our aim is to promulgate the Cause and to scatter the teachings abroad.

“After the lapse of a few hours, you will return to college scenes and life which no doubt you cherish and love, but a few of us will yet stay here, near Abdul Baha to learn more of the lessons of selflessness, renunciation, holy enthusiasm, firmness and severance from all else save God.

“You are laden not only with the jewels of His words but your memory will be refreshed by the wafting of the Breeze of his presence. We all enjoyed your association, were stirred into cheerfulness by your

ringing Bahai songs and will ever remember these happy days. May the stars of your highest hopes dawn from the Eastern horizon! May you become true servants of the world of humanity! May you ever strive to serve the Cause of Universal Peace! May you be the founders of the palace of spiritual brotherhood! May you with one accord raise the melodious anthem of the kingdom of peace! May you unfurl the banner of human solidarity and invite all mankind to enter into the shade of the Tabernacle of eternal conciliation, Union and fraternity!"

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RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 29, 1913

1. The Persian Bahais are anxious to know all about the Western Bahais. 2. "Mahmal" or the Holy Carpet. 3. Abdul Baha speaks to the Bahai students before their departure for college. 4. Mirza Jalal and his wife arrive from London. 5. All the pilgrims are gone and the house deserted.

1. The Persian Bahais are Anxious to Know All About the Western Bahais

Our ten students, after hearing a few farewell words from Abdul Baha, departed for Syria, and two Kurdish theological students of the University of Al-Azhar who were visiting him returned to Cairo. Tomorrow our ex-governor from the Persian Gulf will depart for Teheran with another Bahai via Russia. It has been a source of great joy to come in contact with these men of various countries and climes, who bring to us the good news of the progress of the Cause. They are all eager to hear of the promotion of the Bahai Movement in America. What are the believers doing? Are they happy now that the Master has been in their midst? Are they carrying on the great work he has started? Are they teaching new souls? Are the Western people susceptible to spiritual emotions? Are the friends enkindled with the fire of the Love of God? Are they going to assist us in bringing about the Cause of Human brotherhood? Is the light of reality shining in their hearts? Do they really think and believe that we are their spiritual brothers and sisters? These are the questions they ask me one after another, so tender in their feelings, so true in the expression of their innermost thoughts, so beautiful in their attitude, so wonderful in their faith!

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“Yes,” one of them told me, “I have heard that the American Bahais are spreading the Cause very strenuously, and every night, before going to bed I pray for them from the depth of my heart. I beg of God to reinforce them with the angels of the kingdom and to surround them with universal Confirmations.”

2. “Mahmal” or the Holy Carpet

To-day “Mahmal” or the Holy Carpet was taken from Alexandria to be carried to Mecca. It arrived from Cairo and was paraded through the streets in a long procession, before it reached the steamer. As the story of “Mahmal” and its significance in the Mohammedan world is very important, I will later devote a few pages to its narration, so that our Western brothers and sisters may have a clear conception in regard to it.

3. Abdul Baha Speaks to the Bahai Students before Their Departure for College

In his farewell talk to the students, this morning at his own house, the Master praised God that they had come. For many days they have been here and with perfect joy and fragrance they associated together. These days passed in complete happiness. It is the hope that through the favors of the Blessed Perfection, they may finish their studies in the college of Beirut. Let them rest assured that they are confirmed. Many people are like unto sheep without a shepherd. They have no protector and no defender. But the students are the sheep and the Blessed Perfection is their Shepherd. He is kind to His flock. The majority of men are in great loss, but theirs is the spiritual profit. There are many who are retrograding, but they are progressing. Many trees are

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withered, but they are the young plants of the orchard of Abha and daily they are growing in freshness and delicacy. Others are like unto the fallen stars, but they are rising with great brilliancy from the horizon of Reality.

Then he spoke about the Mahmal, and told them to go and see it before they departed for Beirut. Their steamer sailed at 4 o'clock P.M.

4. Mirza Jalal and Wife Arrive from London

The Master and his family were surprised and delighted to welcome, unexpectedly, Mirza Jalal and his wife. I have just heard this news. To-morrow I will see him, and no doubt he will tell us of his

experiences after our departure from Paris. Sometime ago I had a letter from London telling me that they were visiting some believers there.

5. All the Pilgrims Gone and the House Seems Deserted

It is now late and I am writing these few words. I look all around the room and there is no trace of last night's party of students. I do not hear their songs. They are all gone. I may meet them again or I may not. Everything is in the hands of a higher Power. He brings us together and then separates us, but an indelible impression is left on the page of memory which will last during a lifetime. After all, we are travelers in this world. We stay a few days in this Caravanseraï, but the home of our spirits is the world of light.

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RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 30, 1913

1. The procession of Mahmal in Alexandria. 2. Mahmal a great annual event. 3. Koran verses woven in Mahmal. 4. Mahmal or Carpet is a sacred object. 5. People from all over Egypt come to visit and touch the Mahmal. 6. How Mahmal was originated. 7. Many Mahmals mentioned in history. 8. Hardships of Baha-Ullah to become the cause of the awakening of the world.

1. The Procession of Mahmal in Alexandria

Yesterday the Beloved ordered a number of us to go to Alexandria and see the gorgeous procession, carrying the Mahmal to Mecca. When we arrived, the main avenues through which the Mahmal was going to pass were thronged with thousands of Arabs — men and women and children, dressed in all the picturesque colors of the East. Egyptian soldiers and mounted guards kept the crowd in order. Although we could rent chairs in the front row by paying the royal sum of “two cents and a half,” we preferred to mix with the holiday makers.... We had to wait two hours in the sun before the head of the procession appeared. It is popularly believed that whosoever touches the Mahmal, God's blessings will descend upon him and his family. For this reason, there is always the fear that the crowd, in a burst of religious zeal, will gather around the Mahmal and in the confusion, trample many people under their feet.

Therefore the Government had ordered several regiments of soldiers to stand long the sidewalks, their rifles pointed at the crown, who, enthused at the sight of the Mahmal, were singing Pilgrims'

songs. The other day I was reading a book on the customs and manners of modern Egyptians. In one chapter the author gives an interesting account of this historic event and here I will quote a few extracts bearing on the subject.

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2. Mahmal a Great Annual Event

“One of the greatest events of the year in Egypt is the starting of the Holy Carpet for Mecca. As regularly as the month of fasting comes to a joyful end in the Bairam Feast, the populace begin to look forward to the festival of the Mahmal, as not only marking the time of the setting off of the pilgrims to the Holy City, but as an event of great moment to all men religiously inclined, especially to the poor who have few hopes of making the journey themselves.

“A surprising fact, if one did not know the East, when one learns that the cost of the Pilgrimage Caravan of the Egyptian Mahmal is no less than £250,000 a year, mostly born by the State, including the gifts sent to Arabia with it. My first interest was whetted by the permission given to visit the place where the Holy Carpet is woven every year and where the Mahmal and the beautiful door coverings and other sacred decorations are embroidered. ‘This is a government place,’ the boy told me at the gate with courteous welcome, ‘but it is kept under separate rule, and is not accessible as other government offices are.’ I turned to listen to the melodious voice of a Sheik reading the Koran in a balcony overlooking the courtyard. ‘Ours is the only place where under the government’s supervision the Holy Koran is read. This place is as sacred as a Mosque during all the time of the year.’ We were taken at once to a long room to see the spinning looms, where the raw yellow silk is prepared before being dyed. Next we saw the actual weaving of the Carpet — how it ever came by such a name cannot be imagined when one has seen it. In reality, of course, it is the outer cover of the Kaaba, and the name ‘Carpet’ is never applied to it by any but the Europeans, who persist in so naming it; and what is curious, who think

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at the same time, that the Mahmal, which is a camel palanquin, really goes to Mecca with a carpet inside it, and brings it back to Cairo. Tourists who think they are seeing the Holy Carpet’s return see only the Mahmal, coming back, as it went, quite empty.

3. Koran Verses Woven in Mahmal

“It would be better to speak of holy ‘Curtains’ of which there are eight used in the complete covering of the Kaaba... The curtains are black, and the art of making them consists of weaving the Koran texts into the material, also in black, with an effect like that of damask, the lettering, which is large, being in the decorative Arabic. The watered-silk effect of the lettering is most striking, and in certain lights, when the cover is hung upon the Kaaba, it can be read at a considerable distance....

“It was extremely interesting to be able to see and handle the famous band which encircles the Kaaba. This magnificent belt is about two and a half feet deep. The following from the Koran, called the throne verse is heavily embroidered on it in gold: “God! There is no God but He; the Living, the Eternal; nor slumber seizeth Him nor sleep; His whatsoever is in the heavens, and whatsoever is upon the earth.... His Throne reacheth over the Heavens and the Earth, and the upholding of both burdeneth Him not and He is the High, the Great.’

“That the carrying of all these sacred objects connected with the Carpet to Arabia is in itself a considerable undertaking, was brought home to us by seeing the tents and the waterskins and other requirements for the long journey.... We now went into the courtyard, and the two very fine camels — in a way held sacred too — which are kept here solely for the purpose of conveying the

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Mahmal to Mecca, were brought out for us. They are of great size and of the cream color which distinguishes the finer breeds. These animals live a secluded but luxurious life within these precincts. By the credulous populace all sorts of miraculous signs mark them out in the first instance for selection of their sacred task.... A celebration took in the building under the citadel on the night before the Kaaba hangings and the Mahmal start for Mecca. There the Mahmal was shown and, more interesting still, there was set up an exact model of the Kaaba, with all the curtains hung as they appear in the Holy City.

4. Mahmal or Carpet Is a Sacred Object

“There is no religious celebration in Cairo more impressive and beautiful than the festival, held on the eve of the setting of the Mahmal’s Pilgrimage to Mecca. There are other great public occasions, when the Oriental splendor of illumination breaks out, to the thrill of the thronging populace and the out-of-door excitement of the fair are linked with the claims of pious significance; but this official fête in the Pavilions at the foot of the citadel combines in equal proportions a sense of sacred office with that of subdued entertainment, a feeling of religious awe being curiously mingled with that of rejoicing....

“The real center which drew every Moslem man and child was the Mahmal, now to be seen in public for the first time since its return from last year’s pilgrimage. Round the Mahmal men crowded; they stroked a fringe of it, always with the right hand and then to imbibe the blessing immediately stroked their faces while they muttered a prayer. Little children were held up that they might repeat the parents’ act. As we stood near the

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Mahmal we could see seated on the floor at a short distance, in a double row, about twenty-four men facing each other, chanting praise of the prophet and reciting traditions about him. At a certain point they came to an end of chanting; all hands went up to the breast, upraised, as a sign of silent petition.... Occasionally there came a man who prayed with more than usual intentness and seemed as if he could not tear himself away from the Mahmal and others less devout would take his place, content perhaps with a touch.

5. People from All Over Egypt Come to Visit and Touch the Mahmal

“And why is this Mahmal, which in its material aspect is just a camel palanquin, so intensely revered? To begin its history at the end, there is no doubt that the reason for this deep reverence is that the Mahmal goes to Mecca every year exactly as a pilgrim goes, visits every spot that the devout pilgrim visits....

“I can never forget a scene near the Mahmal at Abbassieh, where the Pilgrimage is eventually organized for its actual start to Mecca. A number of poor women, whose accent betrayed that their origin was that of Upper Egypt, were sitting in a close group on the ground as near to the Mahmal as possible, singing very sweetly a song of the Pilgrimage. The Lord had denied them the privilege of praying in Mecca, but they were not left altogether desolate, for their eyes were rejoiced by seeing the blessed Mahmal.

6. How Mahmal Was Originated

“The Mahmal dates from the 13th century, when the first Mahmal was made by order of the Queen Shajarat-

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El-Dorr, to serve for the pilgrimage which she intended to make. The Queen’s name signifies ‘a tree hung with jewels’ and the Mahmal is sometimes called by this name. In the following year she sent the empty palanquin, as a symbol of Egypt, and in memory of her own

pilgrimage, and from this the annual custom grew up, to be followed by other countries, who take the occasion, as Egypt does, to send with their Mahmal the national tribute of money and food to the Holy City. The Court historian told me that he thought that the custom of sending a state symbol was older than the Queen's Mahmal, a special Camel termed the Mahmal, being sent with presents to Holy Kaaba, in pre-Islamic days. The prophet himself sent such a Mahmal from Medina to Mecca with presents.

7. Many Mahmals Mentioned in History

“Many Mahmals are mentioned in history — from Mesopotamia, from Yaman, from India.... The old rulers so exaggerated the importance and sacredness of the Mahmal, that they ordered every functionary through whose locality it passed, to kiss the foot of the Camel bearing it until Sultan Kakmak prohibited what had become a custom in the 15th century....

“When the Carpet arrives at Mecca it is handed to Sheik Sheiby in the presence of the chief Ulemas and notables, and kept by him till the day of sacrifice, when it is hung upon the Kaaba. None of these holy drapings come back to Egypt, but when they have fulfilled their purpose they become the property of the Sherif of Mecca, being in turn sold to pilgrims in special shops near the Kaaba. Rich people buy the beautiful door covers and portions of the Kaaba band. The poor are contented with a shred of the black coverings. ...

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“The making of a cover for the Kaaba goes back to the time of ignorance before Mohammad — the first being made of skin, and later ones of cloth, and all the tribes of Arabia took a share in paying for it.”

8. The Hardships of Baha-Ullah to Become the Cause of the Awakening of the People

For the last few days Abdul Baha often spoke about Mahmal and how people forget the spirit and cling to the letter; that while the fountain of the salubrious water was flowing, they were running after brakish [*sic*] water. This morning when the Zoroastrian believers stood in his presence, he asked them, what did they see yesterday? And then gave a detailed talk on the Mahmal and its significance.

In the afternoon before sunset, he called at Mirza Abul Fadl, and a number of friends, both Arabs and Persians were present. He talked on the severe trials and vicissitudes of Baha-Ullah, when He was exiled from Teheran to Bagdad and the hardships the party accompanying Him, had to go through. He hoped the results of those hardships would

be the illumination of the world of humanity and the emancipation of men from the defects of the animal nature.

RAMLEH, EGYPT, SEPTEMBER 1913

1. What it means to be with Abdul Baha. 2. The students consist of two large delegations. 3. The students sing Mrs. Shahnaz Waite's anthems. 4. Happiness and tranquility of heart. 5. Lasting enjoyment is for the moral man. 6. The meaning of faith. 7. The basic principle is the good-pleasure of God. 8. The successful student. 9. Light and Knowledge. 10. Letter from the President of Beirut College to the Persian students. 11. The Bahai Cause as interpreted by Abdul Baha.

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1. *What It Means to be with Abdul Baha*

To be with Abdul Baha, to taste the sweetness of his love, to drink the elixir of his affection, and to be intoxicated with the wine of his tenderness — is to be immersed in an ocean of spiritual lights; for is he not the essence of sweetness, the rose-garden of love, the source of affection, and the dawning-place of truth?

From the unattainable attitude and the unsearchable height of the heart, hidden beyond the mountains of his spiritual world, flow rivers of divine grace, broad and noble. And with majestic beauty and mystic light — these rivers ran through the arid land of the souls of humanity, causing miraculous transformations. Where formerly were thorns and briars, now there are hyacinths and violets; where before were wild jungles, now there are cultivated orchards; where in times gone by there was sterility, now there is fertility.

Like unto the rain, the Words fall from the heaven of his mind, creating thousands of rills and streamlets, and these in turn, converging toward one center and impelled by a common interest, make a mighty river, on the banks of which a heavenly civilization is developing. This celestial river flows through many deserts, always with the same effect of changing them into fragrant gardens, wherein the flowers of friendship and mutual helpfulness blossom, perfuming the nostrils of all those who are far and near.

These days in Ramleh and with Abdul Baha! Ah, me! How divinely spiritual! These are days touched with Promethean fire; — days taken out of the calendar of heaven; days flooded with the rays of the Sun of Reality; days blessed by the tender and loving presence of our Beloved and made significant and ever memorable by

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the revelation of holy tablets for the friends of the East and the West!

Daily he breathes into the half conscious body of the world the Breath of the Holy Spirits: — reinforcing the visitors with heavenly Confirmation, vivifying them with the principles of righteousness. He receives the devotees of all religions; shoulders the burdens of all his people and welcomes the adherents of every sect with a beatific smile. In his presence all are welcome. The sun of his Love pours upon all humanity, illumines the chambers of every heart and ennobles the ambition of every soul. He is not the respecter of persons but the lover of quality. If a man is a beggar but has a pure heart, he loves him more than a king in royal robes, surrounded by courtiers.

2. The Students Consist of a Large Delegation

As there is quite a large delegation of students and as they are to be the honored guests of the Master, he decided to divide them into two parties. The first party have come and gone. They stayed about ten days, received the benedictions of the Beloved, listened to his daily words and illumined their eyes by beholding his countenance. Then with songs of praise on their lips and paeans of thanksgiving in their hearts, they left for Haifa, that they might be ready to enter the College.

The second party has just arrived and will no doubt stay as many days as the Master wishes them to be here. The boys are from 12 to 25 years old. They live together, and the bond of Bahai love and good fellowship is strong and unbreakable between them. Unquestionably, they will not only form an invulnerable force for liberalism in Persia, but they will become the invincible army of the kingdom of Abha, and with the sword of

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love put to rout the forces of darkness and banish the ghosts of ignorance. They have consecrated their lives to the service of the Cause and once their zeal and enthusiasm shake hand with knowledge and experience, they will carry the flag of “Ya Baha-El-Abha” to the furthest corners of the earth. They have set their ambition very high and have made up their minds to attain to it. What would be the effect of the accumulated result of science and experience, if they were not devoted to the propagation of the Cause of Abha, which is the Cause of universal Peace, international brotherhood, and spiritual civilization?

3. The Students Sing Mrs. Shahnaz Waite's Anthems

Every one of the students studies and speaks English; they sing Bahai songs and the anthems of Mrs. Waite, which are translated into Persian verses by two of the great Bahai poets resident in Teheran. These anthems they sing with great feeling; and all over the East, the poems of our “American nightingale,” as the believers affectionately call Mrs. Waite in their poetic language, are sung by young men and women. She is loved and honored, because she is the poetic voice of the far West, crying in the wilderness of cold skepticism and summoning the people to the banquet of Bahai Peace and Love. How happy she would be — how grateful she would become, how her eyes would be filled with tears of joy if she could listen for one moment to the melodious voices of these Eastern brothers, singing her songs with true understanding and sympathy!

4. Happiness and Tranquility of Heart

In order to bring my remarks to an end, I will share

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with you the outline of two talks of Abdul Baha given to these students.

On one occasion, he stated that they are welcome to Ramleh. Are they happy? If they are not happy, then, in this wide world, who could claim happiness? Happiness is the most natural possession and immanent attribute of every Bahai. Praise be to God that they are free from every tie, are engaged in the study of spiritual and physical sciences and are beneath the protection of Baha-Ullah. God is with them, for they are not holding any thought which leads to intemperance and temptation.

The heavy-burdened people are afflicted with a hundred thousand sorrows and griefs and are at all times influenced and made unhappy by the changing conditions of life. In this world the greatest gift of God is the tranquility of the heart, especially when such a heart becomes the abiding place of the Love of God. This is the highest attainment in the world of creation!

But if, on the other hand, a man has all the wealth, comfort and luxuries of life, and does not possess tranquility of heart, all these things will become conducive of anxiety and nervous breakdown. When the tree is firmly rooted in the ground and the trunk well established in the earth, no matter how much the hurricane rages, the furious winds blow and the rushing rains fall, this will only add to the firmness and verdancy of the tree, and it will loom up toward the heavens with greater confidence and assurance. But if its root is not firm, even though the sun pours down, the winds blow, the rains descend and the breezes waft — there will be no foliage, no branch, no blossom and no fruit.

Now praise be to God, that the hearts of the believers are tranquil and assured in the Favors and bounties of the Blessed Perfection. What bestowal is greater than this? No matter what affliction may befall upon us, the

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heart is in the utmost tranquility, serene and full of rejoicing. We can withstand all kinds of afflictions and resist all manner of persecutions with imperturbable courage and faith. Those souls who are under the shade of the Cause of God, if they are not shaken and agitated, will advance through the infinite degrees of perfection. There is a vast difference between the bird which is already imprisoned in the cage, and the bird which after being set at liberty, is caught again in the net through its own negligence.

5. Lasting Enjoyment Is for the Moral Man

In speaking to the students on another occasion, He stated, that, when the heart is confident, man knows that all is well. At one time in Acca, thirteen Bahais lived in one room, but they radiated peace, joy and love.

Praise be to God, that they have come to Ramleh and stayed with him for nine days. They associated with one another and became His intimates. Their presence gave him much happiness. Likewise, they have spent many memorable days on Mount Carmel and in the vicinity of the Tombs of Baha-Ullah and the Blessed Bab. Now they are going to return, but let them rest assured that these experiences have been permeated with ideal results and the invisible Confirmation shall ever descend upon them.

It is his hope that they will study with persistence and perseverance. He is well satisfied with their conduct in the College of Beirut. Truly they have borne themselves with urbanity and dignity. May they ever become better, sweeter, more perfect and more accomplished! In this path lies life's enjoyment. The success and pleasure of this physical life lies in uprightness! What a difference exists between those souls who live

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in accord with the good-pleasure of the Lord and those who are guided by their own thoughts and self-interests! The former are always attracted, always enkindled, always immersed in the sea of God's Favors, always thinking of the well-being of humanity, always joyful and humble!

When you reflect carefully, you will observe that real and lasting contentment is in the possession of the moral man. Some may imagine that because they frequent theatres, accumulate wealth, or attend balls, they are always enjoying life; whereas, in reality, these things often scatter thoughts, confuse the minds and dissipate the faculties. The effect of these amusements is like the effect of the wine upon the body — it exhilarates at first, but its after effect leaves one weak and the mental faculties exhausted. But the man who is chaste and moral receives his strength from the hidden spring of the universe; he is stirred continually by the Divine Glad-tidings; he is spiritual and godlike.

Praise be to God that their life is directed by ethical laws and molded by moral principles. He hopes that day by day their dignity and composure may increase; that they may strive with greater exertion in their studies; that the spring of their beatitude and happiness may gush forth unfaillingly. The assistance of Baha-Ullah is with them and they shall precede all other students in their works.

6. The Meaning of Faith

Faith does not mean acknowledgement and mere confession. Faith means that one's conduct and behavior, one's character and life be in accord with the divine teachings. This is the quintessence of Faith. The greatest bestowal of the world of existence is a tranquil heart,

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and it is impossible to obtain a tranquil heart save through the good-pleasure of the Lord: i.e., man should so adorn the temple of his being with lofty attributes and philanthropic deeds as to be pleasing at the Threshold of the Almighty. There is no other path! Consider the condition of kings, ministers, captains of industry and the leaders of mankind! Looking at them from a superficial standpoint, you would think their hearts to be in the utmost composure, joy and peace, but if you reflect carefully, you will observe, that they live in great agitation, surrounded with haunting fears and griefs. They do not enjoy one moment of ease and rest!

7. The Basic Principle of the Good-Pleasure of God

The point is this: let all their thoughts, their ideals, and aims revolve day and night around one common object, and that is: — to live in accord with the good-pleasure of the Lord. Then all the doors of felicity will be opened before their faces, they will be successful in all their undertakings and will become confirmed in all their accomplishments. The basic principle is the good-pleasure of God and

the good-pleasure of God is obtained through the tranquility of the heart and the tranquility of the heart is obtained by living in accord with the divine teachings and exhortations.

When a person attains to this station, he is contented and peaceful. Then he will become prosperous in all affairs. This station is joy succeeded by joy, confidence after confidence, paradise after paradise. Thus we read in the blessed Koran: — O thou assured soul! Turn to thy Lord, confident and well-satisfied. If thou dost associate with my true servants, it is as though thou hast entered paradise. Having attained to this exalted

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station, man lives in paradise, although walking upon the earth; he lives in paradise when he departs from this world; his heart is ever in paradise; his spirit is in paradise; and he is encircled by the joys of paradise!

8. *The Successful Student*

Consider the condition of a student who attends school for five years and applies himself to a life of study. If at the time of examination he is not successful, he will become extremely despondent. He is living in a hell of despondency. But if, on the other hand, he passes examination with success, he is honored and beloved on all sides; receives his degree with pride and achieves great distinction in the world of humanity. In other words, he is living in a Paradise of fulfillment.

The students must, therefore, strive so that they may become thoroughly grounded in science and arts. Let them ever be thoughtful, supplicating and entreating before God. Then when they are attending their classes, heavenly confirmations will uninterruptedly descend upon them.

The foundation of life is morality. They must exert themselves to improve continually the moral side of their nature. If the morals of man are merciful, although he may not be a great scholar, yet will his character be loving; but if his morals are corrupt, even though he be a master of sciences, he will be a harmful agency in the body politic. Instead of becoming the cause of illumination of the world of humanity, he will become conducive to its darkness. Instead of helping the Cause of general construction, he will materially further the ends of destruction. Instead of adding to his energy for the cause of progress, he will enlist himself on the side of the cause of decline. On the other hand, if his

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character is merciful and he is also well grounded in sciences and arts — then, he will be light upon light.

9. *Light and Knowledge*

Here the Beloved paused for a few moments, and then gave a wonderfully illuminative interpretation of a verse in the Koran, which is known as the “verse of Light.” In phrase after phrase, He elucidated the Koranic words in the most comprehensive manner under the significance of knowledge. He closed his remarks with the statement that, it is evident that light is knowledge. If the light is shining in a black and sooty lamp, it will not shed any radiance; but if the light abides in a transparent glass — in other words, if knowledge abides in a clear heart, imbued with merciful morality, characterized with faith, assurance and holiness, enkindled with the fire of the love of God and attracted by the Fragrances of God, such a heart will become a center for the outpouring of divine Bestowals and this will be light upon light!

10. *Letter to the Students from the President of College*

I may quote herein a letter written to the Persian students by President Howard S. Bliss of the Beirut College. The letter is written on Board S.S. Royal Mail Steamship *Pannonia* and mailed from New York, dated April 14, 1913: —

“TO THE PERSIAN STUDENTS:

“DEAR FRIENDS:

“Before landing in New York, which we hope to do to-morrow, I wish to send you a special word of greeting

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and thanks for your very kind letter of farewell. I appreciate your thoughtful kindness very deeply and it has been a great pleasure to re-read your letter. We have had, a long but pleasant journey. We are now eager to see land and to receive word from loved ones in Syria. Of course this includes the College and all the students. I hope that the Persian students will have a prosperous ending to their years and all may be planning to return. I hope also that you may have addition to your numbers and that the good record that you have had during the past may be continued. I always look forward to returning to the campus which we love so ardently. My love goes to each one of you.
Your president

(Signed) "Howard S. Bliss."

Thus the East and the West join hands of communion! And these students, because they are acquiring material and spiritual sciences will be the greatest links of unity between America and Persia.

May they succeed as they have already succeeded in all their undertakings!

11. *The Bahai Cause as Interpreted by Abdul Baha*

The Bahai Cause as lived and interpreted by Abdul Baha is a clarion call for the unification of the people of the Orient and the Occident. It is a light to lead the storm-tossed travelers to the haven of peace and brotherhood. Millions of people all over the world are praying for the coming of the day when truth will reign and the clouds of prejudices will be dispelled from men's consciousness.

We as the followers of Abdul Baha are able to inspire these men and women with words of encouragement and examples of unselfish service. Let us unfurl the flag of

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the religion of God and gather in its shade all those who desire to enlist their names in the invincible army of the kingdom of Abha. Our supreme Commander is Baha-Ullah; our General is Abdul Baha; our rule is the Word of God; our guide is the power of the Holy Spirit; our aim is to establish upon the earth the dominion of heaven; our hope is to defeat the soldiers of ignorance and fanaticism; our resolution is to make this world the paradise of the Almighty and our purpose is to gain victory for the forces of Justice, Truth and Liberty.

We as Bahais have no other ambition, no other desire and no other plan. Let us fill the hearts with gladness; illumine the souls with the light of the Sun of Reality; refresh the minds with the breezes of the garden of universal Ideals and sing the thrilling anthem of the Union of the inhabitants of the East and of the West, of the North and of the South!

THE END

LIVING PICTURES

In the Great Drama of the 19th Century

By

MIRZA AHMAD SOHRAB

and

JULIE CHANLER



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To those who dared -



CLUSTER OF CYPRESS TREES ON THE SLOPE OF MOUNT CARMEL

P R O L O G U E

Place—The Earth

Time—Eternity

THE curtain of Night is hung over the Earth. Impenetrable darkness has taken possession of every object, animate and inanimate. Now and then streaks of lightning bring the scene and the actors into the visible—streaks of lightning in the timeless realm of Eternity.

A far-flung flash and we behold the river Nile, stretched between banks of glossy verdure, moving slowly toward the sea. There is the Sphinx crouched in contemplation; there is the awesome Valley of the Kings, prepared to receive the bodies of the Pharoës and to secrete them during countless ages. Cities well populated; men and women pursuing their varied occupations; pleasure boats darting hither and there; music, movement, color. It is more than five thousand years ago.

Presently our attention is attracted to the court of a temple. A youth, strong and straight is standing in a group of priests. His name is Amon Ra. It is the problem of immortality that is under discussion, and the arguments are heated and conflicting. The youth listens perplexed, uncertain, and then withdraws into the temple, where he sinks upon his knees at the foot of a great column. He lifts his arms, he lifts his face, his whole being transmuted into the Supreme Question; and then, sharp as a sword, a Ray strikes him and he falls upon the ground. Then in that radiant light, Naseem, broad winged Messenger of the Most High descends—whispering in his ear the Mystic Word; and Amon Ra springs to his feet radiant, issues from the temple, and goes forth teaching, that which he knows. Then do the people arise against him jeering and throwing stones, but he continues to speak with insistent solicitude, and his words are heard by a few. And from among these few, a tiny band gathers, following him, and he proceeds to the base of a very high Mountain, named Geyamat, and he begins to climb the Mountain.

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Traveller's Narrative—*Translated from the Persian by Professor Edward G. Browne*

As he advances slowly and with difficulty, Amon Ra time and again looks back. He sees the armies of the Pharoës marching through the sun-kissed land, carrying to every side their gifts of destruction and misery. He sees the Pyramids appearing one by one—monuments, not to the mummies laid within, but rather to the agony and despair of those who built them. He sees the sensuous flower of civilization springing from the mud of blood and tears, and he passes his hand before his eyes and weeps.

Amon Ra has grown old, his back is bent, his steps are painful. Could he have borne it all if he had known the end? The end! He looks again upon the valley and lo, Isis and Osiris are approaching on a path of light. Amon Ra straightens himself, and turning again to the pass he repeats in his heart the Mystic Word, and the curtain of Night falls upon the Valley of the Nile.

* * * * *

The lightning reveals another country watered by two giant rivers—flowing from the North and West. Here is the achievement of that day, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, and Babylon itself, and Babel's Tower arising in the distance. A thousand colors meet our eyes; a thousand perfumes steal upon our senses, and music like an opiate envelops us, charming, intoxicating, captivating us.

Now, on the broad Euphrates, we see a bark approaching, bearing the figure of Morduk. Morduk's far-visioned eyes are fixed on the mad luxurious cities, and he is lifting his heart heaven-ward, asking for the light of guidance. Then does the Light descend upon him, revealing the Secret, and Morduk the Teacher, directs his bark toward the flowering banks, and choosing Enlil and Ea as his companions, assails the forts of Mammon with resounding voice. Then are these three driven forth into the wilderness, followed by a little group and so, whispering among themselves the Mystic Secret, they place their feet upon the Mountain of Geyamat.

* * * * *

The city of Ninevah in the land of Assyria. Here is the oldest library in the world; its countless books, consisting of bricks inscribed with thoughts and deeds of ages past, are piled on myriad shelves. It is the famed collection of the monarch Ashur—Bonapal.

In this treasure store, we see the youthful Bel pouring, as he has poured for years, over the weighty volumes. He has been informed of noble lives, of glorious teachings revealed in Egypt and in Babylonia, and he seeks the Key. Presently, exhausted by his concentrated research, he falls asleep, and in his dream, Naseem descends from the blue ether, and touches him with the scintillating Torch of Knowledge.

In the period that follows, Bel wanders through the length and breadth of the land, offering his Message of Mercy. He crosses the paths of Shelmanesar, Sennachrib and Sargon, and waits in the rear of their armies to comfort the victims of battle. Throughout a long life he continues, among the fiercest warriors of history, until Ashur and Ishtur arise to his assistance and take up the Message of Mercy.

* * * * *

Islands rising like jewels in a blue sea, and a sweet throbbing melody. Yielding to irresistible impulse, we are drawn into a grove, and come upon Orpheus who stands, sweeping his fingers across the strings of a lyre. His face, raised skyward, is stamped with assurance and joy, for his children, the lovers of Beauty, have found it easy to learn.

We shift our gaze to the hill of the Acropolis, set with its snowy temples—types of a majestic and *serene religion, and on all sides, in every attitude, behold the purity of the human form at play, by its pure replica, immortalized in marble.*

But now the picture has changed; the Gods are driven from their cities while their statues are worshipped in the market place. Here is Socrates, drinking the cup of hemlock as the price of truth; there is truth meted out at a price in the sanctuary of its own temples. Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle have caught the echo of the Divine Voice; but the echo passes, and recedes, and is heard no more.

Now upon the Mountain, Orpheus veils his troubled eyes before the besmirched robe of Beauty, and wearily continues on his way, leaving behind him the Isles of Hellas glittering like diamonds in the sun.

* * * * *

High mountains—fjords and firths—stretches of sea. Three men of giant stature, Odin, Baldur and Thor stand in a little boat, dashed by the waves. And to them, perilously suspended between earth and heaven, comes simultaneous Awakening, and they steer to shore, disembark and separate, each going his own way.

So do the Lessons of Love come to the warriors of the Northlands, while the tribes rise in anger driving the Teachers away. And when that day is spent, and the Message has become a memory, the people erect bloody altars to the honor of Odin, Baldur and Thor.

* * * * *

Now our attention is centered on the Kingdom of Loo, in the mountainous land of China. Confucius, the wanderer, has returned to his native city, and

as Minister of State is reforming the Laws of the Nation. To him comes *Laotzu*; and *Nascem* speaks through the mouth of *Laotzu*, indicating the Rule given by Heaven. Then says Confucius "*Heretofore I have traveled to learn, now will I travel to teach,*" and moving from village to village, from court to court, he expounds his doctrines with unflagging energy and determination. Along the road he instructs Hwuy, his favorite disciple, telling him: "*A good man regards the root; he fixes the root, and all else flows out of it. The root is filial piety; the fruit is brotherly love.*"

The Message of Confucius does not fall upon deaf ears. He leads a multitude along the path of life, and finally overtaking *Laotzu*, begins to scale the Mountain in his company.

* * * * *

Indra, Varuna, Agni are leading an army of men and women across the vast plane of Central Asia. They have heard the whisper of *Nascem* and, following the directions given, are leaving their native land. After long journeying and many hardships they reach their destination, and we see them separating, forging ahead in many directions, and finally settling in forests and along great rivers. And always do they carry their Message—the watchword of their pilgrimage, and so do they spread about them the knowledge of a new Cause, and a method for a new way of living.

The act changes. We are on the banks of the Ganges. Here are devotees swinging on hooks in honor of Siva; there are worshippers hanging by the feet over fire, so tendering homage to Brahma; a Guru is jumping on a couch filled with sharp knives; a woman, young and lovely is burning on her husband's funeral pyre. The pure teachings of the ancient Rishis have been distorted and vitiated, and man seeks God along hideous ways of self-torture and mortification. The picture has become contradictory in every sense. On the one hand we see a Brahmin unwilling to tread upon the grass lest by chance he hurt an insect; on the other, priests sacrificing countless animals to appease the wrath of their grisly idols.

Sickened by the sight we turn away and the scene is replaced by a flowing river, a green bank, upon which a youth, divine in appearance, sits under a Bodhi-tree. He is praying for enlightenment as, on the self same spot he has prayed for six long years. Now his intense questioning has evoked the answer, and he is, of a sudden, flooded by the clear light of Nirvana.

Buddha and his disciples pass through the length and breadth of the land, teaching the "Four Noble Truths" and the "Eightfold Path." Adherents accumulate and grow in number, following to the base of the Mountain of Geyamat. As the Divine Youth sets his foot upon the perilous slope, he hears voices, coming to him through the upper mist—the voices of Indra, of Varuna, of Agni, of Brahma, of Vishnu, of Siva—he knows them all, and his heart is

uplifted and his spirit rejoices, and eagerly he presses forward along the side of the Mountain.

* * * * *

White-ruffed craters standing at attention above flowering gardens—a boy Jimmu Tenno—leagued to her people by their guardian Goddess, Amatharasu, seeks the Way of Life.

Knocking at the portals of Heaven, he gains admittance, through the mediation of Amatharasu, and possessed of the knowledge of Shinto returns, to scatter it among the islands of Nippon.

* * * * *

Sinai rearing its head above the battling clouds with, at its heart, a Burning Bush. A shepherd on the mountain side—slow of speech among men, he stands, erect and unperturbed, conversing with the Lord of Hosts.

The verdant land of Isaiah and of Amos rolling past Jordan. A young man kneeling in the wilderness praying to the God of his fathers. Through *days and nights he calls incessantly until, upon the fortieth day, he breaks the barriers of limitation and passes into the Heaven of Certainty. Then he returns into his own country, and gathers the Twelve about him, teaching them the Way, which is through Him, the shortest way to God. He heals the blind and the distressed, comforts the lonely, consorts with the outcast; he never rests, he never falters but, toward the end of his last journey, we see him weeping among the hills of Judea. "Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the Prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen dost gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!"*

Jesus, bruised and wounded, is nearing the Mountain of Geyamat. Those who loved him most of all, John and the three Marys are keeping close; while behind them a little company march singing—*Jews, women and a Roman soldier. Now is the veil of the Temple of Solomon rent from top to bottom; the graves are opened, and the bodies of the saints which slept, arise and follow after—into the darkness.*

* * * * *

The desert of the Sahara—caravans moving toward the Holy City, sprung up around the Kaaba, which descended from Heaven and was placed on this spot by Abraham. Gateways choked with arriving pilgrims, congested streets, *crowded caravanserais, and here the great bazaars, arenas for the trafficking of wares brought by those who come to worship.*

Within the temple, ranged round the Holy Spot, three hundred idols stand, while jostling throngs, profiting by the rare occasion, conclude bargains at their ungainly feet. Greed and license running riot—we turn from Mecca and our gaze, drifting across the breast of the desert, is caught by a rocky and forbidding pass. We choose to overlook it, and to explore the restful hills of sand undulating toward the horizon, but our eyes are drawn again to the craggy steeps and, yielding to the current of attraction, we pass under shelving rocks, into a cave.

Blinded by the sudden dark we wait, and presently discern the outline of a man writhing upon the ground. We hear his sobs and smothered cry "*The way! The way! Allah show me the way!*" And now the figure rises, staggering in circles to the open. It is a youth with burning eyes and streaming hair. We see him reeling on the perilous ledge, clutching the air with wide-spread arms and then, out of the golden midday sky, a White Light strikes, rolling him backward into safety.

Now the youth descends into the valley seeking the wife of his heart. "*Khadijeh! Is it madness to believe that which I have heard?*" and Khadijeh answers "*Thou art the Chosen of Allah! La Elahah Ellah Allah. Thou art the Prophet of Allah!*" So Mohammed goes forth among the wild tribes of the desert, delivering the Message of the Compassionate.

We see him ever moving, ever illumined; gathering the Faithful about him by the magic of his assurance; driven, pursued, triumphant—a hero-figure never to be dimmed by time. We see his Cause in the hands of successive Kaliphs; his Faith carried to every corner of the Orient; his Name imposed at the point of the sword. And then a civilization rising on the field of carnage; Bagdad the Golden City and far in the distance the silhouetted Alhambra—indelible, everlasting.

Amid the din of battle, the Prophet of Arabia reaches the Mountainside. Aged and worn he leans upon the shoulder of Ali, the Faithful pressing after, continually repeating "*Islam, Islam.*" He advances, ever gallantly, while the thunder of horses' hoofs rolls back and forth upon the valley, fainter and fainter; while the mist cloaking the little band loosens its hold. Now, on the pass ahead a garment flutters into view and Mohammed straightens himself, crying with ringing voice, "*Jesus, Spirit of God! Behold I am coming!*"

* * * * *

The plateau of Iran, where long ago, Zarathrustra, the excellent singer of Gathas, brought light to the court of the King.

Since then a civilization has waxed and waned, and now by the city of Shiraz, on the plane of Allaho-Akbar, we see a little mount whereon stands a

beautiful youth clothed in green. He is teaching a multitude gathered at his feet. *"I am as a ring upon the hand of Him whom God shall manifest."* His words are striking deep into the hearts of the people; we observe their faces—attentive, looking up, swept with adoration.

A dungeon in Teheran—dark, damp, suffocating. The floor is carpeted with sleeping bodies lying cramped and intermingled. One figure, weighted with a heavy chain, sits against the wall in an attitude of superb patience. *IT IS THE NIGHT OF NIGHTS.*

Now the Prisoner stirs. Something has touched him; it is passing over his breast; it is flowing upon him as a mighty torrent, turning his body into flame. He raises his head, listening with all his being, while from all sides these words salute him. *"Sorrow not for that which has befallen thee, and have no fear. Ere long shall the Lord send forth and reveal the treasures of the earth—men who will render thee victorious through Thyself and through thy Name, by which God will call to life the hearts of those that know."*

The slope of Mount Carmel—a patriarch clad in white robe and turban, has issued from the cave of Elijah. He stands looking, long and sorrowfully, upon the Mediterranean, and we follow the path of his vision, until we come upon the field of Armageddon stretching from pole to pole. Arrayed in full armor, the followers of the Prince of Peace are ranged upon the face of the world, and above the world, and below the world, while a Voice coming from the Temple of Heaven, says *"It is done."*

Then there are cries, and a great earthquake, and the cities and the nations collapse.

Babylon the Great is fallen, is fallen!

Abdul Baha withdraws his gaze from the surface of the globe, and turning to the Mountain, which looms before him, higher and higher, beyond the limits of the Carmel which he has known, he begins to climb. Sheets of rain are falling, lightning strikes, thunder shakes the ground, but the Leaders of the Sons of Men are yet advancing over the spaceless steeps of Time. Calling to each other through the dark, holding fast the Mystic Word they draw in, closing round the summit—and lo, the East is streaked with grey.

Then the Prophets of the Earth stretch out their arms and touch each others' fingers, and so they reach the crest and stand, outlined sharp against the sky—while with one voice they cry:

The Dawn!

The Dawn!

The Dawn!



APPROACH TO THE CITY OF SHIRAZ OVER THE PLAIN OF "ALLAH-O-AKBAR"

CHAPTER I

THE MESSENGER OF THE DAWN

October 20th, 1819—July 9th, 1850

"O Mehdi, Lord of the Age, hasten thy coming."

—Islamic Invocation

America—the city of Boston—a student pouring over the Bible. After two years of minute study, he deducts that the *"two thousand three hundred days"* spoken of by Daniel VIII 14, mean 2,300 years, and that these years began in 457 B.C. when Ezra went up into Jerusalem, and therefore ended in 1843 A.D. Again, after more study, he concludes that, taking Hebrew chronology, instead of Roman, the appointed time is to be one year later, namely 1844. According to Daniel *"then shall the sanctuary be cleansed."*

Miller, such is the student's name, travels extensively through the United States, announcing to the people that the Promised Hour has come—when the lion and the lamb shall lie down together and the nations shall learn war no more. He gathers a following who take his name, calling themselves Millerites, and these strip themselves of all their possessions, and, on the Day of their expectation, await the descent of the Lord.

* * * * *

SHEIKH AHMAD

In the early part of the nineteenth century, Sheikh Ahmad, far famed student of Persian and Arabic Holy Writ, leaves his home south of the Persian Gulf, and travels toward Shiraz, as though drawn by a magnet.

Here he settles down, while students, from all sides, gather to sit at his feet, and draw enlightenment from his unlimited stores of wisdom. Repeatedly does he designate to these the city where they live, extolling it with passionate fervor, while at all times he comports himself as though within the precincts of a shrine. *"Wonder not at my words,"* he announces to the learned who press him with questions, *"among you shall be a number who shall live to see a Day which the Prophets of old have yearned to witness."*

After the death of Sheikh Ahmad, Seyyed Kazim, the most forceful among his followers, repairs to Iraq, and in the city of Karbala—the very fortress of Islamic learning—gathers about him a group of pupils, and prepares them for the approaching hour. He even goes into detail regarding the qualities of Mehdi—the Promised One. *“He is a descendant of the Prophet. He is young in age and is possessed of innate wisdom. My knowledge is as a drop compared with the immensity of his knowledge; my attainments a speck of dust in the face of the wonders of his grace and power.”*

WHAT IS TRUTH?

A hall in Karbala—under windows which open to the sky. Seyyed Kazim is presiding at the head of the room; his pupils, some young, some of advanced age are ranged before him. The teacher is leading the eager minds among the intricacies of the Hadiths of Mohammed—scrutinizing the phrases one by one; offering interpretations, both old and new. Among his listeners, by far the most attracted and absorbed is a youth who sits by the door. This youth, a stranger in the city, has been attending the sessions regularly—coming in quietly when the class is assembled, and leaving as quietly when the work is done.

Now the discussion has centered on the ever elusive subject—Truth, and one of the students enquires point blank *“What is Truth?”* Seyyed Kazim lifts his eyes to the glass-covered roof, through which a ray of evening light enters, slanting across the room. Raising his hand he points: *“Where the Light strikes, there is Truth!”* All eyes are fixed on his finger, as he lowers it, following the ray, down to the shoulder of the youth who sits by the door.

Then the teacher recalls the minds of his pupils to the verses of the Hadiths.

THE SHEPHERD'S DREAM

On one occasion as, with his companions, he journeys from Karbala to visit the nearby shrines of the Imams, Seyyed Kazim, stopping on the high-road to offer up his noonday prayer, is approached by a shepherd who recounts a dream. Mohammed has appeared to him, has told him that, in three days, a traveler, followed by his friends, will stop, at the hour of noon, to pray in the shade of a palm tree; that he was to seek the presence of this traveler and deliver the following message: *“Rejoice for the moment of your departure is at hand. On your return to Karbala, there, three days after your arrival you will wing your flight to me. Then shortly, shall, He who is the Truth, be made manifest.”*

Seyyed Kazim completes his pilgrimage and goes back to Karbala where, on the third day, even as it had been announced by the shepherd, he passes from this earthly life.

THE QUEST

The interior of a mosque—men of various ages, seated on the floor in a large semi-circle, are engaged in a many sided discussion. It seems that they are reaching a conclusion, and Mullah Hussein, one of the pupils of Seyyed Kazim, rises to his feet, quoting from the Koran: "*Whoso maketh efforts for Us, in our ways will We guide him*" then he departs, followed by fifteen, and together these set forth on a journey.

As the little company proceeds along the road they converse among themselves saying: "*He who first discovers the whereabouts of the Promised One, he will notify the others,*" and they agree, "*This is a covenant made between us, in the sight of God.*"

Mullah Hussein is leading the little band toward Shiraz. He has, since the departure of his teacher, drawn certain recollections from the recesses of his mind. He has evoked the scene in the classroom at Karbala, when the shaft of light descended from the window and rested on the stranger, seated at the door. He remembers that this stranger had once addressed him, and mentioned the city of his birth, and he is possessed with desire to look again upon those features and contemplate that elusive personality.

Before the gateway of Shiraz—the travelers have reached their destination and have entered the city. Mullah Hussein waits behind, enjoying the peace of the late afternoon as he strolls to and fro. Suddenly he looks up—a youth of radiant countenance, wearing a *green turban and sash, has approached, and is greeting him with intimacy and affection. "*Oh,*" Mullah Hussein gasps, "*I have come to visit you.*" "*And I am here to receive you,*" the youth responds "*and to take you with me.*"

So together, they pass through the city gates, and along the narrow streets, until they reach a house of modest appearance, and the host stops and knocks. An Ethiopian servant admits them, ushering them into an upper room where tea is prepared—and they converse in this room.

Now Mullah Hussein is presenting a certain treatise, the mysterious allusions of which have baffled him all his life—allusions which even Sheikh Ahmad and Seyyed Kazim had been unable to fathom. The youth glances at the book and immediately, with vigor and assurance, begins to speak—expounding truths, profound and simple, bringing light, where light was not. Mullah Hussein listens with rapt attention, while a strange excitement begins to take possession of him. Thereafter every day, for forty days, he visits the little

* Emblems of descent from Mohammed.

house and he, who had been the first pupil of the first scholar in the land, sits before his new found friend learning like a little child.

A MEMORABLE DAY—MAY 23rd, 1844

America—on a high hill in New England, the assembled Millerites, dressed in white, await the appearance of the Lord.

Persia—in Teheran, Abbas (later known as Abdul Baha) first sees the light of day.

An upper chamber of a house in Shiraz, flooded with soft golden light—it is one hour before sunset, on the fortieth day of Mullah Hussein's visit to the city. An outward silence has fallen over teacher and pupil, but their spirits are in contact on the plane of the super-conscious.

The awaited moment has arrived!

Mullah Hussein breaks the stillness, "*Speak, and say who you are,*" and the answer comes:

"O Hussein, the first to believe in me! Verily I declare that I am the Bab—the Gate of God!"

Then he says: "*This night, this very hour will, in future times, be celebrated as one of the greatest and most significant of all festivals.*"

On the following day, May 24th, the first telegraph message is flashed from Baltimore to Washington: "*What God hath wrought.*"

THE EIGHTEEN LETTERS OF THE LIVING

Mullah Hussein, the first to whom the station of the Bab was revealed, receives the title of Babu'l-Bab—the Gate that leads to the Gate. He is the first disciple, and the First Letter of the Living.

Now, he, according to his promise, seeks out his companions, and these, beholding him, are struck by his changed expression, and realize without any spoken word, that some great event is upon them. Then, each in turn, either during sleep or while engaged in meditation, receives the light of guidance and, by his own unaided effort, comes into the desired Presence.

So, gradually, are sixteen accepted as apostles and enrolled as Letters of the Living, and here, Babu'l-Bab receives word from Kurratu'l-Ayne, foremost woman of Persia, enquiring, "*Have you, in your journeyings, found any trace of the Promised One?*" This communication is shown to the Bab, and he says, "*Write to Kurratu'l-Ayne; she shall be the Seventeenth Letter.*"

Again he says, "*The Letters must be eighteen. There remains one to complete the number. Tomorrow night, that Letter will arrive.*"

The next evening, as Babu'l-Bab walks along the street, a stranger, wild-eyed and dishevelled, throws himself upon him. *"Where is he? You can tell me, for you have been in his company!"* Babu'l-Bab promises that time will bring enlightenment, but the stranger will not be suppressed. *"Why do you seek to hide him from me? I have seen him; I recognized him by his gait."*

Babu'l-Bab reports this incident, and his Master observes, *"We have, in the world of spirit, been communing with this youth. We, indeed, await his coming. Go to him and summon him forthwith."*

This is Janabe Quddus—the Eighteenth Letter of the Living.

The Bab, himself becomes the Nineteenth Letter.

Now, the Bab interviews his disciples individually and collectively, and bids them go forth and scatter in every direction, carrying the glad tidings of a New Day, and of a New Revelation. *"Your faith,"* he says, *"must be immovable as the rock; it must weather every storm and survive every calamity. You are the first to leave the House of God and to suffer for His sake. If you are slain in His path, great will be your reward."*

He then bids them farewell and in the company of Janabe Quddus sets out on a pilgrimage to Mecca.

THE PILGRIMAGE

Arabia—the Holy City of Mecca, shrine of three hundred million Moham-medans. The Bab stands on a plain, teeming with pilgrims—pilgrims from India, from Persia, from Turkey, from Afganistan,—all devotees of the orthodox faith of Islam.

The Bab speaks: *"This is the Dawn of a New Era—an era in which all traditions must be annihilated. Verily, I claim to be the Gate that leads men to the knowledge of God."*

The same plain at evening—the Bab is seated in his tent, by a small oil lamp. Men of many races are gathered about him on the ground, and are crowding the entrance; now and then one leaves his place, and it is immediately filled; groups outside move to and fro; there is an atmosphere of tense excitement.

Two figures are approaching from the direction of the city, conversing in low tones. One is saying *"Enough my brother, of conflicting reports! We will judge for ourselves,"* and the other, *"We will hear him together, and so carry back the same impression to our people."*

They have reached the tent and are standing on the outskirts of the crowd at the entrance. The Bab is in the middle of a discourse; his accents come to them clearly, and they listen to his every word, weighing each tone of his voice. When the talk is over they move away and retrace their steps.



MECCA IN THE MONTH OF PILGRIMAGE.
COURT OF THE KAABA (HOLY OF HOLIES ENCLOSING THE BLACK STONE)

The one says, *"I have heard him with my own ears, and he is a fakir,"* and the other, *"I have heard him with my own ears and he is *Mehdi."*

THE MESSAGE

The news of the Bab's declaration at Mecca is spreading like wildfire throughout Persia. Men of every class are responding to the call—whispering the story, carrying the news, gathering in groups without fear and without restraint. All the while the Disciples are circulating throughout every province—freeing the minds from the chains of superstition; giving confidence by the magic of their confidence, teaching love by the magic of their love. It is the most sudden and astounding campaign of missionary work that the world has ever known.

Now the Shah becomes uneasy; the Mullahs violent in their denunciation, and the Government rises in alarm.

THE JOURNEY

The Messenger of the Dawn is being conducted, by a body of guardsmen through the northern provinces. All along the way, the people, gather, coming out from the towns and villages to see him pass. They observe his demeanor, they hear his words of winsome charm, and something in them changes—they follow him down the road. On this journey hundreds and hundreds accept the Message.

THE BAYAN

A prison cell in the fortress of Maku—the Bab is engaged in compiling his writings, his legacy to his followers, and to those who shall come after them—the Bayan is shaping itself. In this book the Bab asserts, ever and again, that he is the Gate through which men shall be led to *"Him whom God shall manifest."*

He fears that his people may be blinded by the love they bear him, and so fail to recognize that yet greater One, who shall be the Morning to his Dawn. He rejoices in his connection with him, who is yet to come; and in his faith in him. *"Verily,"* he writes, *"This is more honor to me than anything in the kingdom of heaven or earth."*

Again he writes, *"He is as a sun. If you place an infinity of mirrors before the sun, each one will reflect according to its capacity; and if you place no mirrors, the sun will rise and set just the same, and the loss will be for the mirrors,"* and again, *"If you read but a single verse of 'Him whom God shall*

* The Promised One.



کشته شده
 سید احمد
 طاعت
 با خوش منقذ
 از تبریز به قزوین
 انقلبه

Inscription on reverse side of original photograph addressed by Seyyed Assadullah to Mirza Ahmad Sohrab.

Photograph of Aga Jan Beg of Khamseh who, by means of his regiment, became the instrument of killing the Bab. It was sent to me from Tabriz. I present it to you.

ASSADULLAH.

manifest' it will be of more value than if you read the Bayan from cover to cover."

THE LAST SCENE

The citadel at Tabriz. The streets are packed with a dense throng; the roofs of the houses are laden with human beings; ten thousand people are gathered together; it is early morning.

Above a row of cells, on the wall of the barracks, two figures are suspended by ropes, fixed to the parapet above—the Messenger of the Dawn—and hung so close that his head rests on his Master's breast, the devoted Mirza Mohammed Ali.

On the square, a regiment of Mussulman stands with raised muskets; its colonel at the side. A long moment of suspense, then the signal—a volley of shot, and the scene is obscured by smoke.

At this very instant, a whirlwind which has been collecting its forces, suddenly bursts, driving the dust through the streets in clouds—enveloping the city in darkness. The people cling together, blinded, unnerved; then as quickly as it came, the gale passes on, and the atmosphere, by degrees, clears.

And now a clamor is breaking out on all sides; voices are raised. "*They have disappeared!*" "*He has gone to heaven.*" The multitude is panic-stricken.

The soldiers set out in a frenzied search, and presently discover the Bab seated in his cell, writing verses on the wall. The shower of bullets had simply severed the ropes which bound him. His body is unscathed.

A guard, seeking to prove if he is indeed man, pierces his arm with a sword and the blood flows forth.

Then the victims are once more raised upon the wall, and again the word of command is given; but this time the soldiers break ranks, throw down their arms and run away, and a Christian regiment replaces them.

Now the Bab raises his eyes to the East from which a roseate light is fast spreading over the heavens. His task is accomplished; his word is spoken; his thirty-one years of life have reached their destined end. He waits. Already the rhythm of a new state is pressing in on him and his spirit yearns to catch hold. A sharp report—the bonds snap—his body falls riddled with bullets—and the sun of a new day breaks upon the face of the world.



A CITY GATE, TEHERAN

CHAPTER II

THE GREAT CAPTIVE

November 12th, 1817—May 28th, 1892

Verily, Akka is a city of Syria which God in His mercy has distinguished.

I announce unto you a white city upon the borders of the sea; its whiteness is its beauty, given by God. Know that the voice which there, calls the Azan, will reach unto Paradise.

Happy is he who makes pilgrimage to Akka.

Happy is he who makes pilgrimage to the Pilgrim of Akka.

—From the Hadiths of Mohammed.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, a group of men, women and children leave their native province of Wuerttemberg, in the south of Germany, and migrate to Palestine. They settle at the base of Mount Carmel in the town of Haifa, forming a colony which spreads, as time goes on, to other parts of that land. Above the doorways of their houses they carve in bold letters, the words: "*Der Herr ist nach.*" (The Lord is at hand.)

* * * * *

THE CONFERENCE OF BADASHT

By the little hamlet of Badasht, a stretch of gardens leading into one another, has been rented by a noble of the court, Mirza Hussein Ali, for use as a camping ground. The space has been prepared so as to give as much simple comfort as possible, and the guests, to the number of eighty-one, have arrived and been shown to their quarters.

Evening falls. The travellers assemble in the central garden before the tent of their host; gathering in groups—comrades, old acquaintances, some strangers, brought together for a little while, and soon to be dispersed. A bond exists between them all, deep and vibrant—closer than is the bond of kinship, for these men are holding the fate of the New Cause in their eager inexperienced hands.

Now Mirza Hussein Ali is speaking: news has been received from their beloved Master, who sends his greetings to them all with assurance of his constant solicitude. Although distance separates them, his thoughts always attend his followers and once more he designates the rocky road that lies at their feet, promising to meet them at the journeys' end.

A silence falls upon the disciples of the Bab, as their minds reach out to him who wrote the letter in his far off prison cell; then their host gently gathers the straying thoughts and lays before them a definite plan of action.

So, night and morning they live in this garden and here, one by one, receive new names, so that each may be divested of past associations. As time passes, their vision steadies and clears; their purpose simplifies; their problems become solved. It seems as though a powerful Presence dominates them all—a presence giving assurance, certainty—creating a whole out of the many complex elements; and yet they are alone—disciples merely, with the Master far away.

During the proceedings Mirza Hussein Ali has announced that, hereafter he will be known as Baha-U-Llah.

A THUNDER BOLT

The gentle Prisoner has suffered the supreme penalty; his body, shot to pieces, has lain on the barracks-square of Tabriz. In all parts of Persia a cloud of gloom rises and settles upon the Babis, now leaderless in the face of their tremendous obligation. Where shall they turn for guidance and support? How can they, so scattered, so limited in number, continue to assail the fortified structure of Islam? At this dark hour two unfortunate men, grief stricken to the point of folly, make a crude attempt on the life of the Shah.

The city of Teheran is shaken to its foundation, and all suspected of adhering to the New Cause are thrown into prison. Especially is his Majesty's mother convulsed with fear and anger, and openly, she denounces Baha-U-Llah, as being chief instigator of the crime.

In a retired village to the north of the capitol, Baha-U-Llah receives news of the disaster, together with a warning that he remain concealed until the storm is over; then he, in spite of the entreaties of his friends, sets out at once for the seat of government, temporarily situated at some distance from the city.

Arriving at his destination he presents himself before the Grand Vizir and inquires if it is indeed true that criminal charges have been preferred against him. If such is the case, he is prepared to hear these accusations and to discuss them.

THE ARREST

The Minister is confused by this intrepid move and hesitates in so imposing a presence; but, at his very gates, the army is in a state of disorder and the people, of all classes, are clamoring for revenge. After all, whatever his rank, a Babi is no more than a Babi. Baha-U-Llah is, therefore, turned over to the authorities.

The prisoner is being conducted to the capitol. Bare headed, bare footed, heavy chains about his neck, he passes through the furious crowd, amid a

pelting shower of stones and abuse. An old woman, her eyes glowing with fanaticism, stumbles after him "*Give me a chance*" she cries with panting breath "*To throw a stone in his face.*" Baha-U-Llah stops in the middle of the road, and waits "*Suffer not this woman to be disappointed,*" he says to the guards "*nor deny her, what she regards as a meritorious act in the sight of God.*"

THE DUNGEON

Arriving at the prison in Teheran, Baha-U-Llah is led through a dismal corridor, and escorted three flights below the level of the ground to a dungeon, already occupied by nearly one hundred and fifty men. Here a chain, of weight so appalling that it is known throughout the land under a special name, being that of *Quarakakar* (Black Horses) is brought and fastened upon his neck; then the door, the only outlet to the place, is closed.

It is very cold; the living bodies are crowded close, so giving one another a little warmth. It is damp; no one among them has a coat. It is dark and there is no air.

Silence, broken by groans, and gasping breaths, and then a voice raised—praising Allah the Clement, the Compassionate. *Baha-U-Llah is praying.*

And so days and nights of unspeakable deprivation pass in this infected pit, and here, during long hours when the torment of the chain and the stifling atmosphere allow him little sleep, it occasionally befalls that, upon raising his head, something flows over the breast of Baha-U-Llah, even as a mighty torrent which, descending from the summit of a lofty mountain, distributes itself over the earth. Then all his body is aflame. At such moments he hears words which mortal ears cannot hear.

The imprisonment in this dungeon lasts four months after which time, owing to the insistent demands of the Ambassador of Russia, Baha-U-Llah is released. He is then, in the company of his family and a few friends, exiled to Turkey.

THE LONELY FAMILY

A little house in the city of Bagdad where the wife and children of Baha-U-Llah are passing their days. This has become the center to which the Babis turn and believers, from every part of Persia have, either openly or in secret, travelled here to receive directions as to the carrying on of their work. Now the visitors continue to arrive, although the one whom they desire to see has been absent for some time. They come to the door, again and again inquiring if there are any tidings of him, but the young son, Abbas shakes his head wearily—it is long since Baha-U-Llah has left them, and since his departure they have had no news.

THE HERMIT

The rocky mountains of Kurdistan shelving upward to forbidding heights; valleys rolling one into another toward ancient horizons. On those horizons Babylon rose, flourished and decayed. On those horizons Abraham gathered

the tribes about him and taught them the way of God. On those horizons Adam ate of the tree of knowledge and was driven forthwith out of the Garden of Eden because of that which he knew.

Half way up the side of one of the tallest mountains, is a group of shepherds—seated, looking upward. The earth is yielding up her perfumes which rise and cling; the trees are whispering to each other, the sun is sinking into the violet distance.

Now a sound breaks upon the ardent twilight, coming from the ledge above; it is a voice of melodious power. The shepherds dwell upon every tone, following each cadence as it mounts upward, carrying its message to God. Then, when the chant ceases they rise, separating without a word, and go their separate ways into the valley.

So each nightfall, they come and quietly listen to the evening prayer, but at morning they are bolder. Then they climb eagerly to the very entrance of the cave, which gives upon the upper ledge and lay, at its threshold, bowls of milk and baskets of fresh dates. Often the hermit comes out and speaks to them—their Dervish—their Saint—their Holy Man—and he gathers them about him and teaches them to read, to write, and to memorize verses of the Koran.

On occasions, at long intervals, the shepherds bring some travelling Sufi leader to visit their beloved friend, and listen with pride and wonder as the two converse on the evolution of the soul. The Sufis ask searching questions, and learn many mystic truths, and the hermit promises to, some day, write an explanation concerning these things.

So pass two years, and now the shepherds sit disconsolate before a vacant cave; the hermit has disappeared from the mountain—and Baha-U-Llah is again with his family in Bagdad.

DAYS IN BAGDAD

News of the return has spread abroad and a steady stream of guests is flowing past the door of the little house—not Babis only, but visitors coming from distant climes to seek enlightenment and inspiration. The Turkish authorities observe this commotion with cold disfavor and the Persian Consul General sends repeated complaints to his Majesty in Teheran.

It is customary for Baha-U-Llah to retire, at the end of the day, from the busy community, and during these solitary hours, as he strolls beside the winding Tigris, verses of great mystical significance come crowding into his mind. He writes them down and later, the Babis collect the bits of paper and study the verses in secret. They call them the "*Hidden Words*."

At this period also, Baha-U-Llah writes an account of the soul's journey to the Celestial City, addressing it to one of the Sufi leaders who had reflected on this problem in the mountains of Kurdistan. This writing becomes known as the "*Seven Valleys*."

EXILE TO CONSTANTINOPLE

And now, after a few years of relative tranquility, the Babis are again on the march. The Sultan of Turkey has not yielded to a recommendation, coming from the Shah, that Baha-U-Llah be returned to Persia, but has decided to, instead, send him into further exile. A caravan is being prepared for the journey to Constantinople, and the adherents of the Cause, having wound up the various activities by means of which they had been supporting themselves, have said farewell to the pleasant city which they have come to regard as home. They are facing new perils, new fatigues, new hardships, yet their chief thought is, fear of being left behind. They wish to follow their leader at whatever cost to themselves, and to take part in the uncertainties of his lot.

THE GARDEN OF THE RIZWAN

The travellers are assembled on an estate known as the "Garden of the Rizwan." This, the first stage of the journey, has been chosen at a short distance from Bagdad, so as to make it possible for late-comers to catch up and join the caravan. Everything is in order, the last arrival has finally made his appearance and the group waits, crowded together, hesitant before the future—bewildered, apprehensive. It is the hour of sunset on April 21st, 1863.

Now Baha-U-Llah rises to his feet and stands among his people. This is no time for regret, he says, this is no time for fear. The destiny which beckons them is more radiant than their most vivid dreams; the Cause, which they have accepted, more imposing than their most ardent conception. Did the Bab, indeed, appear to liberate the Islamic mind alone? No, God worked through him toward a greater end. The limitations attached to *all* religions are to be swept away, and the Pearls of Truth concealed in each of them disclosed; and these Pearls, gathered together, and strung on a silken strand, shall make the glorious adornment of a mature—of an awakened race. This is their task; this is their mission; this is to be their supreme attainment.

The people are transfixed by the vastness of the plan and tremble before the panorama unveiled, so suddenly to their eyes; then before they have time to regain their balance, Baha-U-Llah continues asserting that, from now on the Babis exist no longer; they, the Bahais, are in the presence of Him whom the Bab announced; that a New Power has been released, a New Rhythm set in motion—that Dawn has deepened into Morning.

Following this declaration a few, a very few, separate themselves from the caravan and retrace their steps to Bagdad and the Bahais, seventy-five in number, men, women and children, continue with their Master Baha-U-Llah toward Constantinople.

THE GREAT PRISON

The blue Mediterranean—a wide bay—a fortified city glowing like phosphorus on the curving shore—a white city—Akka—a Prophet's prison.



AKKA, PALESTINE

Publishers Photo Service

Past three great moats, behind gigantic walls, twenty feet in thickness, Baha-U-Llah sits in his cell. He has reached his final exile and on this spot, from which he can catch glimpses of the dazzling sea, the Great Prisoner writes to the Kings and Rulers of the earth, commanding each in turn, and designating the calamities which will befall them unless they arise for the renovation of the world.

EXTRACT FROM THE TABLET TO THE SULTAN OF TURKEY

"Before God, a handful of dust is greater than your kingdom; than your sovereignty, glory and dominion, and should He so desire, He would scatter these as the sands of the desert. Ere long His wrath shall overtake you; revolutions shall appear in your midst and your countries will be divided. Then will you weep and lament and nowhere shall you find protection."

EXTRACT FROM THE TABLET TO THE KING OF PRUSSIA

"O Banks of the River Rhine! We have seen you drenched in blood, because the swords of retribution have been drawn against you; and you shall have yet another turn. We can hear the lamentations of Berlin, although it be, today, in manifest glory."

EXTRACT FROM THE TABLET TO NAPOLEON III

"Had the old religion been your choice, then why did you set aside that which was prescribed in the Bible and the Gospels? . . .

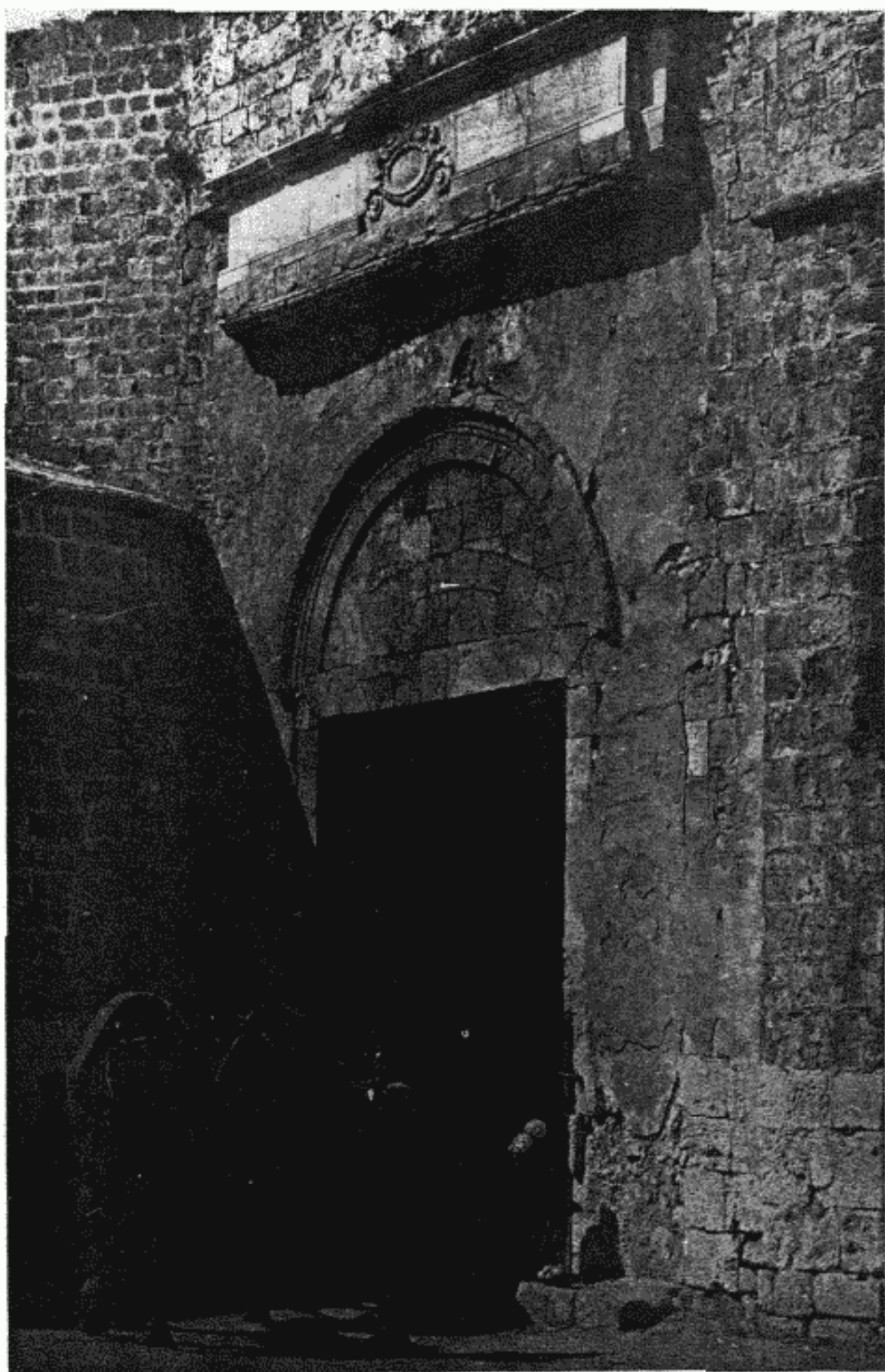
"In punishment for that which you have done, matters shall be changed in your kingdom; the spirit of revolt will possess your people and, unless you arise to assist this Cause, following the spirit along the straight path, your power will fall from your grasp. . . . Your glory has made you proud. By my life, it shall not endure. . . . We have seen humiliation hastening after you while you remained asleep."

EXTRACT FROM THE TABLET TO THE CZAR

"When I was in chains and fetters in the prison of Teheran, your ambassador befriended me, therefore God has reserved for you a station which none but Himself can comprehend."

THE GERMAN COLONY

Toward the close of his life, the attitude of the Government relaxes and Baha-U-Llah is allowed to retire to a beautiful estate in the country. From here, he comes and goes as he pleases, and sometimes, walking along the road, which sweeps into the town of Haifa, and on to the base of Mount Carmel, he passes the houses of the German colonists who, long since, had settled in these regions with supreme anticipation. Under the stone archways of their doors, carved with the words *"Der Herr ist nach,"* the villagers glance casually at the majestic figure before their very gates. At intervals, the dream, which brought



GATE OF AKKA

them here, flashes back to their minds and they wonder when, if ever, will be the time of fulfillment.

AN INTERVIEW

The only European, on record as having met Baha-U-Llah, is the distinguished Orientalist, Professor Edward G. Browne of the University of Cambridge. Of this interview he writes:

"My conductor paused for a moment while I removed my shoes. Then with a quick movement of the hand he withdrew, and as I passed, replaced the curtain; and I found myself in a large apartment, along the upper end of which ran a low divan, while on the side opposite to the door were placed two or three chairs. Though I dimly suspected whither I was going, and whom I was to behold (for no distinct intimation had been given to me), a second or two elapsed ere, with a throb of wonder and awe, I became definitely conscious that the room was not untenanted. In the corner where the divan met the wall sat a wondrous and venerable figure, crowned with a felt headress of the kind called *taj* by dervishes (but of unusual height and make), round the base of which was wound a small white turban. The face of him on whom I gazed I can never forget, though I cannot describe it. Those piercing eyes seemed to read one's very soul; power and authority sat on that ample brow; while the deep lines on the forehead and face implied an age which the jet-black hair and beard, flowing down in indistinguishable luxuriance almost to the waist, seemed to belie. No need to ask in whose presence I stood, as I bowed myself before One who is the object of a devotion and love which kings might envy and emperors sigh for in vain!

"A mild, dignified voice bade me to be seated, and then continued: . . . *'We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; yet they deem us a stirrer-up of strife and sedition worthy of bondage and banishment. . . . That all nations should become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men should be strengthened; that diversity of religion should cease, and differences of race be annulled—what harm is there in this? . . . Yet so it shall be. These fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come. . . . Do not you in Europe need this also? Is not this that which Christ foretold? . . . Yet do we see your kings and rulers lavishing their treasures more freely on means for the destruction of the human race than on that which would conduce to the happiness of mankind. . . . These strifes, this bloodshed and discord must cease, and all men be as one kindred and one family. . . . Let not a man glory in this, that he loves his country; let him rather glory in this, that he loves his kind. . . .'*

"Such, so far as I can recall them, were the words which, beside many others, I heard from Baha. Let those who read them consider well with themselves whether such doctrines merit death and bonds, and whether the world is more likely to gain or lose by their diffusion."



ABBAS EFFENDI, LATER KNOWN AS ABDUL BAHÁ

CHAPTER III

THE SERVANT OF BAHA

May 23rd, 1844—November 28th, 1921

"Servitude is an essence the core of which is divinity."
—Islamic Tradition.

A mountain in the province of the Mazandaran, topped with a vast table-land on which thousands of sheep and goats are grazing. Huge bonfires burn in several places, and peasants crowd about them as they prepare the evening meal. There is music, wild and primitive, and rustic dancing and much merriment; it is a unique occasion, for the owner of these broad lands has sent his little son to visit his tenants and inspect his flocks.

Ere long evening approaches; it is time to say farewell. The shepherds gather about the child as he stands in his long white gown and Persian lamb cap, laughing happily and praising everybody. Now the chief of the shepherds is whispering to him *"It is customary on these occasions for the master to offer a gift."* The child is startled, *"I have none. I did not bring anything with me,"* and then, *"Oh yes, I know what I can do. Give each man a little flock of sheep."*

When the child reaches home his alarming generosity is reported to his father. What shall be done about the gifts that the Little Master has made! Mirza Hussein Ali laughs, *"The gifts are already given"* and then more seriously, *"Some day he will give himself!"*

* * * * *

THE DESERTED FAMILY

A devastated mansion in Teheran. The walls have been stripped, the furnishings removed, the servants have fled. One room, destitute of all but the barest necessities, is occupied by a little family. A mother, a boy of eight years, a tiny girl and a baby are huddled, clasping each other, praying, trembling, weeping. From the street the cries of a ferocious mob reach their ears; a new victim is being tortured or executed—it may be the beloved father—there is no way of getting news. And now the children are hungry and there is no money. The mother cuts the gold buttons from their garments and, at nightfall, slipping out, sells the buttons and buys something to eat. *Sometimes she goes to the prison and gives a few coins to the jailors; perhaps they will give food to Baha-U-Llah if he is still there.*

A WINTER'S JOURNEY

A mountain route. The father has been released and, with his family and a number of Babis, is being conducted, under military escort, to Bagdad. He is very ill and his neck is raw and bears marks of chains. The mother also is ill and much worried for only two of her children are with her; she has been forced to leave her baby behind. It is bitterly cold and all are insufficiently clad. The boy Abbas rides on a horse; his hands and feet are frost bitten and he suffers. The journey lasts a month.

"MOVE ON"

Bagdad. Baha-U-Llah is the center of a community of Babis, all of whom turn to him for illumination and guidance. It is eleven years since his arrival in this city.

Now the Sultan of Turkey issues an order to the effect that the family must move on, and preparations are made for another journey. Four days before the caravan is to set out Baha-U-Llah has revealed to his son the fact that he, himself, is the one whose coming had been foretold by the Bab. After this Abbas Effendi watches over his father at all times.

The march to Constantinople extends over a period of four months. The weather is inclement; food is very scarce. Abbas Effendi has constituted himself his father's bodyguard. He sits at the entrance of his tent by night, and rides beside his wagon during the day. Sometimes, in order to get a little rest, he gallops ahead of the caravan to a considerable distance, where dismounting, and causing his horse to lie down, he stretches himself on the ground, laying his head on the animal's neck. So he sleeps till the cavalcade catches up with him.

Two months in Constantinople, then another order—another journey, this time to Adrianople. It is winter, heavy snow is falling, all are ill; the feet of Abbas Effendi are again frozen.

FINAL EXILE

Five years in Adrianople, then a voyage by sea and Baha-U-Llah, his family and followers have reached the end of their long journey—Akka on seashore of Palestine. Now the sentence is read; these men are murderers; they have corrupted the people; they have leagued to overthrow the Ottoman empire; they must be treated with utmost severity.

The barracks. Seventy men, women and children packed together—little food—bad water—no water in which to wash—almost all have fallen ill—it is midsummer. Abbas Effendi waits on everyone. He nurses the sick,

watches over them, cheers them; he takes no rest; then some of the patients die and he himself succumbs.

Visitors are not admitted within the walls of the fortress, but sometimes these gather on the plain outside the third moat. Pilgrims from Persia—they have traveled on foot to see their beloved Master, and here they can catch glimpses of him through his window. Then they return home to carry on his work with new vigor. The confinement in this barrack covers a period of two years.

Now the restrictions are mitigated. The family is confined for seven years in a house in the city of Akka, and finally is allowed to take possession of a lovely country place named Bahjee, where Baha-U-Llah spends his last days.

AN OFFICE IN AKKA

A large room in the house of Abbas Effendi. A courier from Cairo has brought in bags of letters—letters from Asia, from Africa, from Europe, from America, all enquiring about the New Cause which is to unify the world. Four secretaries are sorting the letters, translating their contents and writing answers. Abbas Effendi, with his inclusive mind, is directing all of them—dictating to this one, listening to that one, and to the next; then going back to the first—taking up the thread where he had left off. Now the replies are packed into the bags and the courier returns to Cairo. So are the seeds of fresh ideals scattered to the four corners of the earth.

In years, Abbas Effendi is old; his hair is white, his beard lies silver on his breast; yet his movements are the movements of a youth and his back is straight as an arrow.

Baha-U-Llah had written of his son, *"Verily he is Myself—the Shining Place of my Identity, the East of my Cause,"* but Abbas Effendi said, *"My name is Abdul Baha. My reality is Abdul Baha. No title, no commendation, no mention will I ever have, except Abdul Baha—the servant of Baha."*

THE INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE

Akka is under surveillance. A commission sent by the Sultan is presenting charges against Abdul Baha. The city is in turmoil; ominous rumors of exile to Feysan and even of a death sentence are spreading; there is an atmosphere of impending doom.

The interior of the courtroom—the committee, consisting of four officers in uniform, is placed at a table. The suspect unattended, stands before them in long brown robe and white turban. The accusations, which have come from Turkey, are being read.

Abbas of Persia is charged, firstly, of cherishing ideas of sovereignty.



ABDUL BAHÁ'S HOUSE AT AKKA

Secondly of having prepared and distributed a new flag. Thirdly of constructing a fortress on Mount Carmel.

As he has no lawyer, Abdul Baha answers for himself. He begins by thanking his Majesty Sultan Abdul Hamid for having divested him of all titles. In referring to him simply as Abbas of Persia he has included him in the company of those, whose servant he is—the Prophet of Arabia, who was known as Mohammed and Jesus, who was called the Nazarene.

As to the first charge, it is alleged that he harbors privately the thought of kingship. Now, in this, the Ottoman Empire overestimates the ambitions of an exile—one who is encircled day and night by spies. As it happens this prisoner has, all his life, and before the world, striven to attain the station of servitude, and has looked for no higher honor.

Secondly, it is said that he has circulated, in all parts, a white flag inscribed with the words, "*Ya-Baha-El-Abha*" which at a given time, is to be raised as signal of rebellion. But, as none of the officials of Turkey or of Arabia have seen this emblem, could it not be that it is an unmanifest flag, flying between earth and heaven, and that the hosts of the Almighty are themselves, taking part in its unfurling?

Thirdly, he is accused of supervising the erection of a fortress on Mount Carmel. If he, who has neither acquaintance with engineers, nor knowledge of military strategy has done this thing, it surely is an achievement; but is it not more likely that this is a spiritual tower, designed to diffuse the light of God?

Now the accused is notified that the Government is aware of the existence of certain revolutionary documents transmitted to his safekeeping by European agents. Should he make denial, there are witnesses in readiness to swear, on the Koran, to this effect.

Abdul Baha answers that he has no knowledge of any such papers, and that he wishes the fact to be well established that he has harbored no earthly ambition, has broken no law, and committed no sin. Only, he is a Bahai. To this he pleads guilty, and if they order out their regiments and make of him a target, as they did of the Bab, that will but fulfill his highest aspiration; that will be his greatest glory.

The investigating committee has adjourned. With its findings well in order, it has left Palestine, and is on its way back to Turkey.

AN UNEXPECTED FRIEND

The house in Akka—a group of Bahais are excitedly discussing a message which has been brought to them, coming from an Italian battleship recently arrived in the harbor. The captain, in view of the imminent danger which



VIEW TAKEN FROM THE SLOPE OF MOUNT CARMEL,
LOOKING OVER HAIFA IN THE DIRECTION OF AKKA

threatens, has anchored, under pretext of loading with wheat, and places himself and his ship at the disposal of Abbas Effendi. He is prepared to start at any time, and to make for any port on the Mediterranean Sea.

Abdul Baha sits in silence looking over the bay. Presently he asks his followers if they have arrived at a decision. They answer: yes, that he is the Center of the Cause; he is all that they have; he must be sent to a place of safety.

The Master, then, says that he will tell them the conclusion which he has reached. The Bab did not run away. Baha-U-Llah did not run away. God will deal with His own according to His intention. Abdul Baha will remain!

THE GAME OF FATE

It is the year 1908. The Ottoman Government has been overturned by the Young Turks, and the Committee of Union and Progress has declared a new Constitution, which constitution confers full and unconditional liberty upon all political prisoners throughout the Empire. So Abdul Hamid, following a long and tyrannical reign, is thrown into prison; as Abdul Baha, after forty years of serene service in captivity, walks out a free man.

The Investigating Commission arrives in Constantinople, and its members, being part of the old regime, are immediately forced to flee for their lives. One of them is killed by a sentry, another is exiled, a third, having been stripped of all his possessions, dies in abject poverty, while the fourth, escaping to Egypt, arrives in Cairo with nothing in his pockets. He is cared for by a Bahai and finally disappears and is heard of no more.

FIRST WORDS TO THE WEST

London—the City Temple filled to capacity. A majestic figure in white turban and gown stands in the pulpit. Abdul Baha is giving a public address for the first time in his life.

"This is a new cycle of human power. All the horizons are luminous, and the world will, indeed, become as a garden and a paradise. It is the hour of the unity of the sons of men, and of the drawing together of all races and all classes. . . . The gift of God to this enlightened age is the knowledge of the oneness of mankind and of the fundamental oneness of religion."

THE POOR ARE MINE

New York—the Bowery Mission. Abdul Baha is speaking to the poor of the city.

"Jesus Christ said 'Blessed are the poor.' . . . When he appeared it was the poor who first accepted him, not the rich. Consequently you are his disciples, his comrades. One night, when Jesus was in the fields, it began to rain, and there being no place where he could seek shelter, he lifted up his eyes toward

heaven, saying: *Oh Father! my bed is the cold ground, my lamps are the stars and my food the grass of the fields, yet am I not destitute; for to me Thou hast granted this blessing—Thou hast given me the poor; they are mine. Therefore am I the richest man on earth!* ”

When Abdul Baha leaves the meeting he places a twenty-five cent piece in the palm of each of the four hundred men present. The Bahais, following after him, try to buy some of these coins for fifty cents; but not one exchange is made.

THE FARMER OF GALILEE

War is passing over Palestine: the doors are again closed—no news can come in or out. A plague of locusts, added to Turkey's unprecedented extortions, and to Germany's extensive buying of foodstuffs to be shipped to the "*Fatherland*," has brought about a state of awful famine. In the cities men, women and children walk about like skeletons; forgetting all standards, all ties, striving only to preserve life a little longer. Bodies lie along the road unnoticed. In Lebanon alone one hundred thousand die of starvation.

On the plains of Tiberias and of Adassieh, Abdul Baha is supervising extensive works of agriculture. At the outset of hostilities he had procured and planted a vast acreage of land, and now the harvests are periodically, and continuously being reaped, and the wheat and corn distributed among the poor.

Abdul Baha by his resourcefulness and energy has saved the communities of Akka and Haifa.

SUNSET ON MOUNT CARMEL

A cluster of cypress trees, on the slope of Mount Carmel; very slim, very green, they lift their arms high toward the heavens. In their fragrant shade sits the Servant of Baha surrounded by his disciples, and wistfully he speaks to them, at the close of his long day.

"I am straining my ears toward the East and toward the West, toward the North and toward the South, that haply I may hear the songs of harmony and fellowship. Oh how I yearn to see men united, even as pearls on a shining strand; as the brilliant Pleiades; as the rays of the sun; as the gazelles on the meadow.

"The Mystic Nightingale is singing for them, will they not listen? The Bird of Paradise is warbling, will they not hear? The Angel of the Kingdom is hailing them; will they not waken? The Messenger of the Covenant is pleading; will they not heed?

"Ah, I am waiting, waiting for the glad news that my friends are the embodiment of truth and candor; the incarnation of love and benevolence and the manifestation of unity and concord! Will they not rejoice my heart? Will they not fulfill my hopes? Will they not answer my call?

"I am waiting, I am patiently waiting!"

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NASIRU'D DIN SHAH

CHAPTER IV

THE MARTYRS

*"If thy hair be dyed in thine own blood, this is
greater to me than the creation of two worlds."*

Hidden Words—Baha-U-Llah

The Bab is in prison. His followers, persecuted and pursued, are seeking asylum in many directions. A company of about three hundred and twenty men, under the leadership of Jenabe Quddus have possessed themselves of the castle of Tabarsi, and are taking measures for its defense. A wall is being constructed around the castle, while within, armorers are unceasingly occupied in the making of swords. Through it all, and constantly, those who are conversant with the ethics of the New Cause are teaching all who lack learning, so that the faith of every one may be based on understanding, rather than on blind devotion.

THE CASTLE OF TABARSI

Presently news of the intrenched Babís has spread abroad, and the fortress is surrounded by a host, of from two to three thousand skilled soldiers and experienced marksmen, under the command of Prince Mehdi Kuli Mirza. Jenabe Quddus, being aware of the fact that the besiegers expect yet greater enforcements, prepares for a sortie. At nightfall, riding with Babu'l-Bab at his side, he issues forth followed by three hundred men, and sets fire to the magazine of the enemy. In the confusion that follows, he falls upon the royal troops pressing hard his advantage, and these, taken utterly by surprise, are put to flight.

The Babís have retired, leaving only three of their number on the field, but they carry with them their beloved chief, grievously wounded. Quddus still commands, although his teeth have been knocked out and half his face is shattered. For three months he tastes nothing except a little tea and broth, yet he shows, at no time, the least trace of pain or uneasiness.

The royalists continue to attack unremittingly, and seek by every device to capture the fort, but all their efforts fail. The little garrison, completely resigned, yet animated by superhuman heroism, has so far proved unconquerable.

THE SORTIE

Now Babu'l-Bab seeks the presence of Quddus, saying "*I can no longer bear to look upon the wound which mars your glorious visage. Suffer me, I pray you, to lay down my life this night,*" and Quddus gives permission.

Babu'l-Bab has made it a practice to ride out at nightfall, followed by nineteen companions, to attack the splendidly accoutred enemy with simple handmade weapons. On each occasion he has wrought considerable havoc and has returned to the castle without loss. This time, in the same fashion, he calmly advances toward the very center of the hostile army, now seven thousand strong.

The night is dark; rain is falling heavily; the Babis are wearing white shawls across their shoulders so that they may not harm one another by mistake. At the last moment Babu'l-Bab turns to the one who walks beside him, "*Mount behind me on my horse, and when I say, 'Bear me to the castle' turn back with all speed.*" Then he gives command to charge.

In the conflict that ensues, he forges ahead like a streak of lightning, every obstacle going down before him, and he has passed to a point beyond the seventh entrenchment of the enemy, when a bullet strikes him in the breast. Faintly he whispers, '*Bear me to the Castle,*' and his companion, turning his horse's head, gallops back.

THE FAREWELL

On reaching the fort Babu'l-Bab is borne, unconscious, into the presence of Quddus who, at the sight of him, neither moves from his place nor makes the least demonstration of grief. He only says "*Leave me with him,*" and motions that the door be closed. An hour elapses and the Babis, watching in the hallway, hear the sound of two voices. This continues until finally, losing restraint, they peer through a fissure in the wall, into the room.

Babu'l-Bab on bended knees is seated by his chief, listening attentively as though to instructions. He is heard to ask "*Are you well pleased with me?*"

Another hour passes, then Quddus opens the door saying, "*Things which previously I deemed it unallowable to utter, I have shared with him. Now I have said my farewells—take the body away.*"

In this manner passes the First Disciple—the First Letter of the Living.

THE TREATY

Now the provisions in the castle are exhausted and the garrison, which for long has been subsisting on grass and leather, drawing its strength, only, from

the words and example of Quddus, is impatient for the bliss of martyrdom. Presently word is brought from the Prince, "*For nine months have both sides been engaged in hostilities without any truce or respite. Now we consent, for the sake of peace, to agree to the terms you may propose.*"

Quddus reads the letter and says: "*Although he meditates treachery, yet, because his designs conform with destiny, will we suffer his schemes to prevail.*" He therefore writes, "*If you will guarantee our safety we will depart out of your land,*" and the Prince swears on the Koran to respect these terms, adding in a letter, "*None shall let or hinder you in any way.*"

THE FEAST

The siege is over. Quddus, with a handful of his officers, is being entertained in the Prince's headquarters. Outside, on the plain before the royal tent, a feast is spread, and the Babis having been relieved of their arms, are invited to sit and appease their hunger. They draw near hesitant, but attracted, looking with famished eyes upon the steaming meats—they who for long have tasted not even of grass.

They have taken their places when, suddenly, the soldiers lift their rifles aiming at the banquet board and, at a word of command, fire.

So does the garrison of Tabarsi feast at the table of martyrdom.

THE LEADER OF THE BABIS

Now the victory is celebrated. Three hundred and twenty men have, after nine months, been vanquished by an army of seven thousand. The relief and delight of the royal troops of Persia know no bounds.

The Prince is entering Barfursh, native city of Quddus, which is filled with a rejoicing multitude, and decorated as though for a great holiday. A handful of captives, so weakened by starvation that they can hardly stand, are driven in his train. Barefooted, laden with chains, they pass through the howling mob.

The Chief of the Ulemas has Quddus brought before him and asks by whose authority he dares wear the green turban. Quddus answers that his mother was a lineal descendant of the Prophet, and that, in adopting this emblem, he is within his rights. The priest, grasps the turban, throws it to the ground and stamps upon it. "*Soon he will claim to be the mouthpiece of God, the revealer of His will,*" and drawing his sword, cuts off his ears. Then he delivers him to the people who, with shrieks of fanatical fury, fall upon their prey and cut him to pieces.

Amid the din, the voice of Quddus is heard crying "*Would that my mother could see the splendor of my nuptials!*"

So dies, the Great Warrior, the Great Teacher, the Great Mystic—the Eighteenth Letter of the Living.

On hearing of the tragedy of Tabarsi, the Bab in his prison, is overwhelmed with grief. Tears rain from his eyes and for days he is unwilling to taste of food. He sends one of the believers, who is attending him, on a pilgrimage to the places which enshrine the bodies of these heroes who had sealed their faith with their blood. "*Bring back to me,*" he says, "*a handful of that holy earth which covers my beloved ones—Quddus and Babu'l-Bab.*"

THE SIEGE OF ZANJAN

The scene which was enacted in Tabarsi is repeated in the cities of Neyriz and Zanzan. For months, tiny garrisons hold their own against overwhelming odds, and the armies of Persia stand baffled in the face of adversaries whose power they cannot measure.

In Zanzan, Zeynab, whose heart has been inflamed with love of the New Cause, having adopted boy's attire, insinuates herself behind the barricade and, in the encounter that follows, shows such audacity and resourcefulness, that the commander of the fortress, watching from one of the turrets, picks her out for special commendation. When she is brought before him, he recognizes her as a maiden from one of the nearby villages, and asks the reason for her joining their forces. "*Do not deny me,*" she begs, "*The privilege of throwing in my lot with you, or withhold from me the crown of martyrdom!*"

So for nine months Zeynab continues among the defenders, being given no especial post, but serving wherever she pleases. Hardly eating or sleeping, her sword ever at her side, she inspires her companions by her flaming ardor, and becomes known and feared by her enemies.

One morning she seeks the commander of the fort and throws herself at his feet. "*My life,*" she says, "*is nearing its end. Intercede for me with my Master.*"

During the course of that day she falls on the field riddled with bullets.

THE CAUSE SPREADS

The Babis persist in their teaching, though nowhere are they safe from spies; citizens denounce their oldest friends and brother betrays brother. Persecution has become the order of the day and adherence to the New Faith is almost tantamount to a death warrant.

In spite of these conditions students meet, study and discuss the doctrine of the Bab, willing to follow the truth at whatever price; then once convinced, they issue forth and themselves carry on the work. So does the influence of the Cause increase, as the blood spilled on the marketplace adds its compelling voice to the whispered fervor of the Babis.

DEATH HAS NO TERRORS

Now the Grand Vizir addresses the uncle of the Bab surnamed Khal-i-Azam. *"We are loath to inflict the slightest injury upon you. A word of recantation is sufficient to set you free,"* and the answer comes, *"Your Excellency! To refuse to acknowledge the Mission of the Bab would be to deny the divine character of the Message which Mohammed, Jesus, Moses and all the Prophets have revealed. God knows that whatever I have heard and read concerning the sayings and doings of those Messengers, I have been privileged to witness in this Youth—this beloved kinsman of mine, from his earliest boyhood."*

As he is being conducted to his death Khal-i-Azam cries to the multitude: *"For a thousand years you have prayed that the Promised One be made manifest, and now that he is come, you have driven him into hopeless exile, and have arisen to exterminate his companions. With my last breath I pray that the Almighty may wipe away the stain of your guilt and enable you to awaken from the sleep of heedlessness."*

At these words the headsman hesitates and pressure has to be brought upon him to fulfill his task. After the execution, he leaves the city and seeks another form of employment, to the end of his life recalling this incident with repentance and tears.

Mirza Qurban Ali, an outstanding figure in the community, is arrested in Teheran. *"I am unwilling,"* remarks his judge, *"to pronounce a sentence of death against the possessor of so exalted a station."* *"Why do you hesitate,"* the prisoner exclaims. *"He in whose path I am laying down my life has, from time immemorial, inscribed my name on the scroll of his chosen martyrs. This indeed is the day in which I shall seal my faith with my life-blood."*

Suleyman Khan, his body studded with lighted candles, walks singing along the streets.

*"Happy he, whom love's intoxication
Has so possessed, that he scarce knows,
Whether, at the feet of the Beloved,
Be head or turban that he throws."*



ROYAL PAVILLION ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF TEHERAN

"Why do you not dance," the people cry mockingly, "since you find death so pleasant?"

So Suleyman Khan complies and dances, a living torch, towards the market-place.

Years pass. According to the inclination of the priests in the different cities, persecution now waxes, now wanes. One province is the scene of the most horrible atrocities, while the serenity of a neighboring one continues undisturbed. The believers, rearing their families in the shadow of death, meet that death when it comes, according to their own various temperaments—some with complete submission, others by heroic defense of themselves and of their families.

So turns the last page in Babi history.

THE WAY OF NON-RESISTANCE

Baha-U-Llah is guiding the affairs of the Cause. He, who had been indicated by his great Forerunner, has assumed leadership of the Babis (hereafter to be known as Bahais) and from his exile in Turkey, there issues a new teaching. *"It is better that you be killed than that you kill one another,"* and the ringing announcement, *"We have taken from you the law of murder."*

These words being spoken, the days of self-protection are over.

Now in the land of Persia a strange scene is being enacted. Men and women behold the unspeakable agony of their associates, making the while, not the least remonstrance; only standing by to reinforce the courage of the beloved victims, with their own exalted courage.

At this period, the number of martyrdoms approaches the appalling figure of thirty thousand—a total in which many children are included.

THE MESSENGER

From the window of the Royal Pavillion, on the outskirts of Teheran, the Shah, examining the countryside through a telescope, discerns in the distance, the figure of a man outlined on a rock. The next morning he notices him again, and the next, and on the fourth day, seeing that the strange sentinel is still at attention, orders him to be brought into his presence.

The man is escorted to the audience chamber, and it is seen that he is a youth of remarkable nobility of bearing. On receiving permission to approach, he walks boldly to the dais and offers a letter to the Shah. *"I have come to your Majesty,"* he says, in an assured but respectful tone, *"with a firman from my Lord Baha-U-Llah."*



BADI IN CHAINS

The attitude of the messenger, his terms and especially his reference to the redoubtable Captive throws the court into confusion. The Ministers are appalled; the Shah is incensed with anger. How does this country boy dare to mention one who has caused so much disturbance! He is asked to give his reasons for using the word firman. Does he not know that a firman is issued only by a king?

The youth answers simply that the letter did come from a king. It came from Baha-U-Llah.

The attendants drag him to an outer tent and place his feet in the bastinado. What is his name? Badi. Who are his friends? He has no friends; he has come from Akka; he has spoken to no one. He has desired, only, to fulfill his mission; now that it is accomplished he has nothing more to fear. The Shah sends word that the names of his associates must be revealed and the ferrashes apply themselves to their task; but although his feet become fountains of blood, the victim continues firm, and the executioners are the first to tire.

"Say then, that you have brought a petition," they exclaimed breathlessly, "and we will give you respite!" But Badi replies with utmost serenity, "I have carried a firman from my Lord Baha-U-Llah."

Now iron rods and bricks are piled in a brazier and these, when they have become red-hot, are applied to his breast, his arms, his feet. Badi does not flinch, he shows no sign of pain, he even helps his tormentors, himself placing the burning bricks upon his body, and sometimes he cries out, *"Oh my God! I thank Thee for so eminent a favor!"* This continues at intervals for eight days.

One morning the Shah passes the tent and calls out, *"Has the young man confessed?"*

"Your Majesty, we have tried everything. We cannot make him suffer."

"Then," says the Shah, "let him die."

A block of wood is brought, and one of the ferrashes raises a heavy bludgeon.

"Young man, you will be freed if you say that you have brought a petition to his Majesty."

"Do not speak of freedom to one who is completely free, so now, for the last time, I tell you," and he raises his voice triumphantly, "that I have carried a firman from my Lord Baha-U-Llah."

With this the mace crashes down, and the great soul of Badi passes from the confines of the earth.

THE TABLET

The Shah sits in his study, turning over the pages of the letter. His face is congested with anger, and his body trembles; nevertheless he reads:

"Oh Shah, I was, in truth, an ordinary man asleep upon my couch, when the breezes of the Most Glorious passed over me, giving understanding of that which has been. This thing is not from me, but from One mighty and all-knowing. He it was who ordered me to sound the proclamation between earth and heaven, and for this has there befallen that, whereat the eyes of those who know, overflow with tears. I did not enter school or college. Inquire of the city wherein I lived, that you may be assured that I am not of those who speak falsely. This is a leaf which the breezes of the will of your God, the mighty, the extolled, had stirred. Could it be still when the rushing winds blew? No, by my Lord of Names and Attributes, for it was moved according to His will; in the presence of the Eternal, non-entity has no resistance. His imperial command it was, which obliged me to speak for His celebration among the nations. In truth I was as dead when I became animated by the hand of your Lord. . . .

"Oh Shah! Consider this Oppressed One with equity, and judge fairly concerning that which has befallen him. Verily, God has appointed you His shadow among His servants, and the symbol of His power before the dwellers in the land. Judge between ourselves, and those who have persecuted us without proof. Truly, they who surround you, love you for themselves, whereas I love you for yourself, and desire but that which will assist you unto the station of grace, and turn you toward the right hand of justice. Your Lord is witness unto this. Oh Shah! If you could hear the cooing of the Dove of Eternity, upon the branches of the Sadratu'l Montaha, verily it would cause you to attain unto a station from which you would behold upon the earth, naught but the splendor of the Adored One. Then would you regard dominion as a thing of small account, and resigning it to the first comer, turn toward the Horizon aglow with the lights of His Countenance; enduring no more the burden of Empire except as a means to assist in the Cause of your Lord. . . .

"Oh Shah! I conjure you to consider His servants with pitying eyes!"



HAJI MIRZA AQASI

CHAPTER V

THE ENEMIES

"The enemies plot and God plots but God is best plotter."
—Mohammed.

The summer palace of Mirza Buzurg, Minister of the Court. A colorful group of nobles and officials of State are gathered on the terrace around a great table, which is laden with delicacies from various climes. There is music from a stringed orchestra, and chanting and much merriment. It is the wedding feast of the youthful son of the house.

As evening approaches a platform is raised in the garden. It is set with a city square, fronting a royal pavillion—all in miniature form—and illumined by lanterns hung at angles on the nearby trees.

When all is in readiness, the guests leave the banquet board and approach the improvised theater, grouping themselves among the flower beds, while a child appears on an upper gallery of the house. This is Mirza Hussein Ali, young kinsman of the bridegroom who, from a distance, is taking part in the festivities.

The play begins. Little figures are sweeping the ground and sprinkling it with water; courtiers, in velvets and silks are emerging from the wings and taking their places about the dais; a trumpet is heard, a voice cries "*Prepare the way. Prepare the way*" and the Shah, with golden crown upon his head, with ermine robe trailing behind him, enters and seats himself upon the throne.

Now the Grand Vizir presents a document; his Majesty signs with a flourish, and immediately the army passes, marching to the front. Then booming of cannon, cries of triumph, songs of victory, and amid clouds of smoke and dust the conqueror returns, dragging behind him a captive in chains.

The Shah watches the effective entry, and with proud gesture commands "*Off with his head!*" So the executioner hurries in with a minute block and axe, and sets to work on the spot.

The last scene is a stirring one. A review, the national anthem, waving of flags; finally a herald advancing to the center of the stage, blows a fanfare on his trumpet and proclaims that the war is over.

The guests have said their farewells, and are leaving on horseback and in their carriages; the servants are stripping the table of its goblets and golden dishes; the host is engaged with his son, and the ladies of the household with the bride, and a child with pink cheeks and starry eyes, runs about the garden searching under the trees.

"Little Master, what can I do for you?" the showman calls out as he passes down the road, with his properties well packed away.

"Where is the Shah?" the child is trembling with excitement. "Where is the Grand Vizir? Where is the Executioner?"

The showman smiles, then pointing to his baggage he answers "They are all in the box."

* * * * *

A PROPOSED INTERVIEW

The Bab's public declaration at Mecca, and the whirlwind activities of his disciples are discomfiting to the government; for not only do the people respond to the New Message, with restless eagerness, but the most eminent scholars also, are giving it undue attention. Therefore when the Bab forwards a letter to the Royal presence, begging that an audience be accorded him, the learned divines of the capital express their willingness to hear and consider his claim.

Even Mohammed Shah is stirred to interest. He has heard that the young Reformer is possessed of strange powers, and that already he has performed several miraculous cures, and being in a state of gout, which causes him continued discomfort, the royal sufferer is willing to listen to these expositions on the bare chance of deriving physical benefit.

A PRECAUTIONARY MEASURE

So circumstances are inclining toward an interview, when the Grand Vizir, who for thirteen years has enjoyed unrivalled ascendancy over the mind of his sovereign, becomes apprehensive. Utterly ignorant and vain, extravagant and lazy, he has lowered the prestige of the nation and carried it to the verge of bankruptcy. Now, should the Shah be allowed within the radius of this young man's influence, he might be affected by his apparently irresistible charm; he might even be cured, and then become involved with new ideas, and awake to consider the interests of the people!

Haji Mirza Aqasi decides that the proposed meeting shall not take place.

As a natural sequence, therefore, the Shah, writes to the Bab, in his own hand: "*Since the royal train is on the verge of departure from Teheran; to meet in a befitting manner is impossible. Do you go to Maku, and there abide and rest for a while, engaged in praying for our victorious state.*"

So the Bab is escorted to the Fortress of Maku, situated in the native province of the Grand Vizir.

One day, following these events, as Haji Mirza Aqasi walks through the park, accompanying one of the royal princes, the boy says to him "*Haji, why did you send the Bab to Maku?*" and the Minister makes answer, "*You are still young, and there are certain things which you cannot understand, but know that if he had come to Teheran, you and I would not be here, as we are, strolling care-free in the cool shade of the trees.*"

In spite of his precautions, the hour arrives when Haji Mirza Aqasi, after a long life spent in acquiring wealth at the expense of his country, is forced into an ignominious exile, where he spends his last days.

THE CROWN PRINCE

An assembly room at Tabriz. The Bab is being examined by Haji Mullah Mahmud in the presence of the priests and of the Crown Prince.

Question. "*Did you compose these books?*"

The Bab. "*They are from God.*"

Question. "*If they are yours, say so.*"

The Bab. "*They are mine.*"

Question. "*Then your tongue is like the Tree on Sinai! Now who gave you the name of Bab?*"

The Bab. "*God gave it to me.*"

Question. "*What is its meaning?*"

The Bab. "*The same as the word bab.*"

Question. "*Then you are the Gate to the City of Knowledge.*"

The Bab. "*Yes.*"

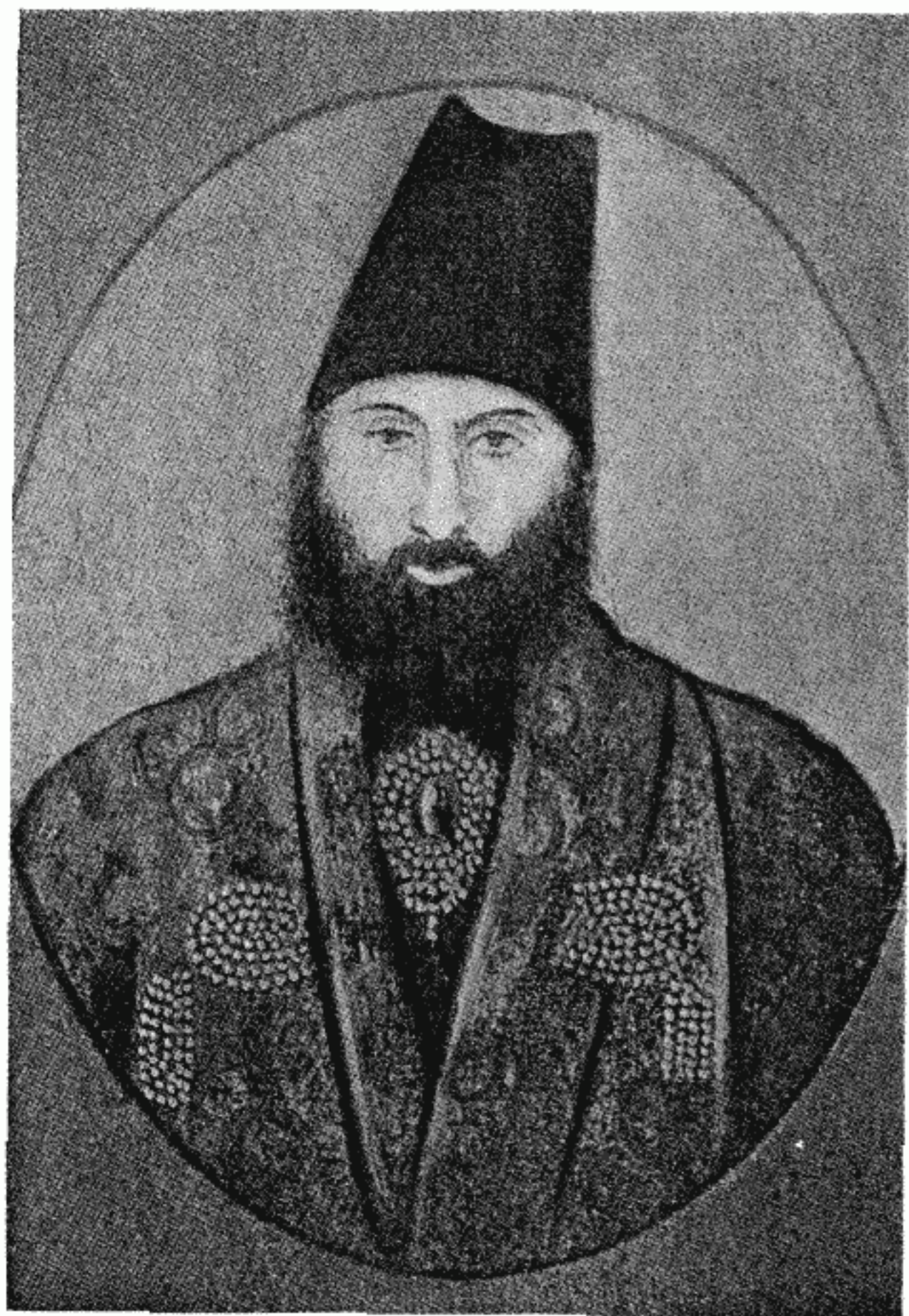
Question. "*Show me a miracle suitable to your claim.*"

The Bab. "*What miracle do you desire?*"

Question. "*His Majesty Mohammed Shah is sick. Restore him to health.*"

The Crown Prince hastily, "*Why go so far? Rather let him restore you to youthfulness.*"

The Bab. "*It is not in my power.*"



MIRZA TAKI KHAN

Here the conference breaks up, and the following day the Bab is subjected to the bastinado.

The Crown Prince seemed to be somewhat apprehensive concerning the supernatural powers attributed to the Bab, and did not propose that miracles be attempted in the case of his dying father. And now the illness of the Shah has completed its term and Nasiru'd Din, at the age of eighteen, succeeds him.

THE GRAND VIZIR

With the accession of the new monarch, Mirza Taki Khan seizes the reins of government and, as a first step toward the absolutism which he demands, turns with awful concentration upon the Babi Movement. Under his direction, the church and state join forces for the extermination of the unwelcome sect, pursuing their object with relentless energy; and the pages of Persian history become clotted with blood, while unsavory rumors penetrate to foreign lands.

Now the Grand Vizir assembles his councillors about him and points out the inconsistency of dealing with the followers, while the Leader is left unmolested. *"Behold the storm which this man has provoked in the hearts of my fellow countrymen! Nothing short of his public execution will enable this distracted land to recover its tranquility."* With this he signs the death warrant of the Bab and settles back with the pleasant assurance, that the Light which shines, with such devastating brightness, from behind prison walls, will shortly be extinguished.

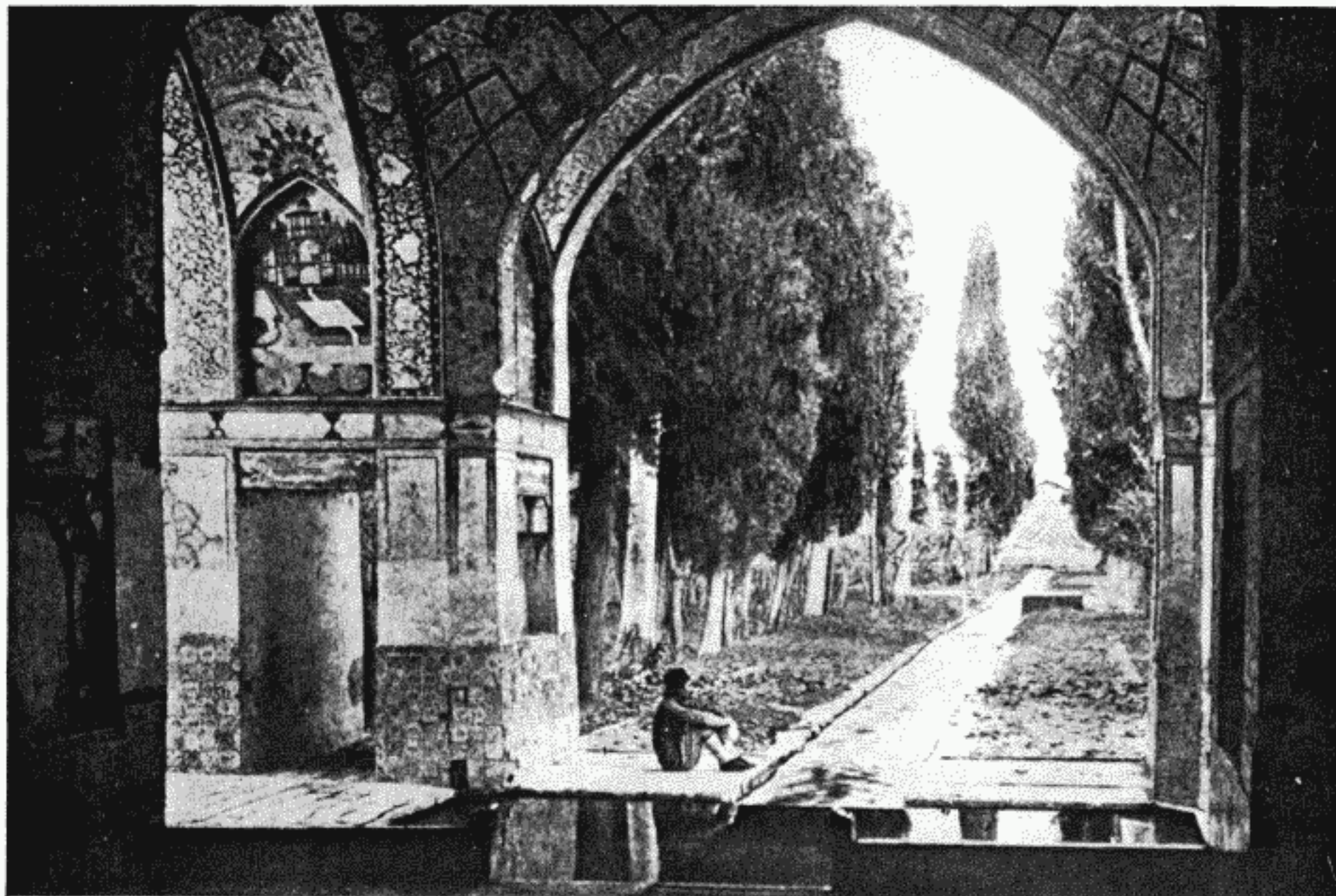
This order having been carried out, the fortunate star of Mirza Taki Khan, little by little, begins to wane. The arrogance of his manner, the overbearing authority which he exercises at all times, becomes increasingly irksome to the youthful sovereign, and the time arrives when the Grand Vizir deems it advisable to absent himself from court. In the company of his wife, a Princess of royal birth whose position has so far safeguarded him, he retreats to his Palace of Fin, situated south of Kashan, and here receives the startling news that choice, in the mode of his death, will be given him.

Mirza Taki Khan retires to the bath and allows his veins to be opened.

A RED LETTER DAY

Time passes bringing with it an event, the consequences of which cannot be measured.

Nasiru'd Din Shah is riding in the country, followed by the Royal Cavalcade when, two young men, standing by the roadside, suddenly press close crying out *"We offer a petition! We offer a petition!"* The Shah reins in his horse exclaiming irritably, *"Fools, what do you want?"* At that minute the men open fire.



THE PALACE OF FIN

It is an awkward and desperate act, perpetrated by two simple-minded Babis, completely unbalanced by the fate of their Master. The pistols were charged with bird-shot and could not have inflicted serious injury upon anyone; nevertheless the Royal Person is severely shaken, and the insolence of the attempt gives the already exasperated government excuse to, still further, accentuate its program of severity.

A CARNIVAL OF BLOOD

Now dawns, in Teheran, a day of such horror, that history itself can present none to make parallel. The Babis, who are unwilling to deny their faith, are allotted, individually, to the officials of the crown, and divided among the priest and merchant classes—these to put their victims to death, each and every one, according to his own personal fancy. The Shah disposes of his Babi by proxy, but his Ministers show themselves less delicate, while the tradesmen are eager and competent to perform their task. So as these amateur executioners vie with one another to devise hitherto undreamed of tortures, the streets and bazaars of the capitol run deep with innocent blood.

A strange incident is afforded by a citizen who stands by, prepared to enjoy the unusual spectacle. This man is so struck by the fortitude of the martyrs, that he rushes forward crying out "*Kill me too! I also am a Babi*" and so shares the fate of those he had come to condemn.

And now silence falls upon the city of Teheran. The Shah retires to his chamber; the attendants softly draw the curtains of his bed, and wish his Majesty good night.

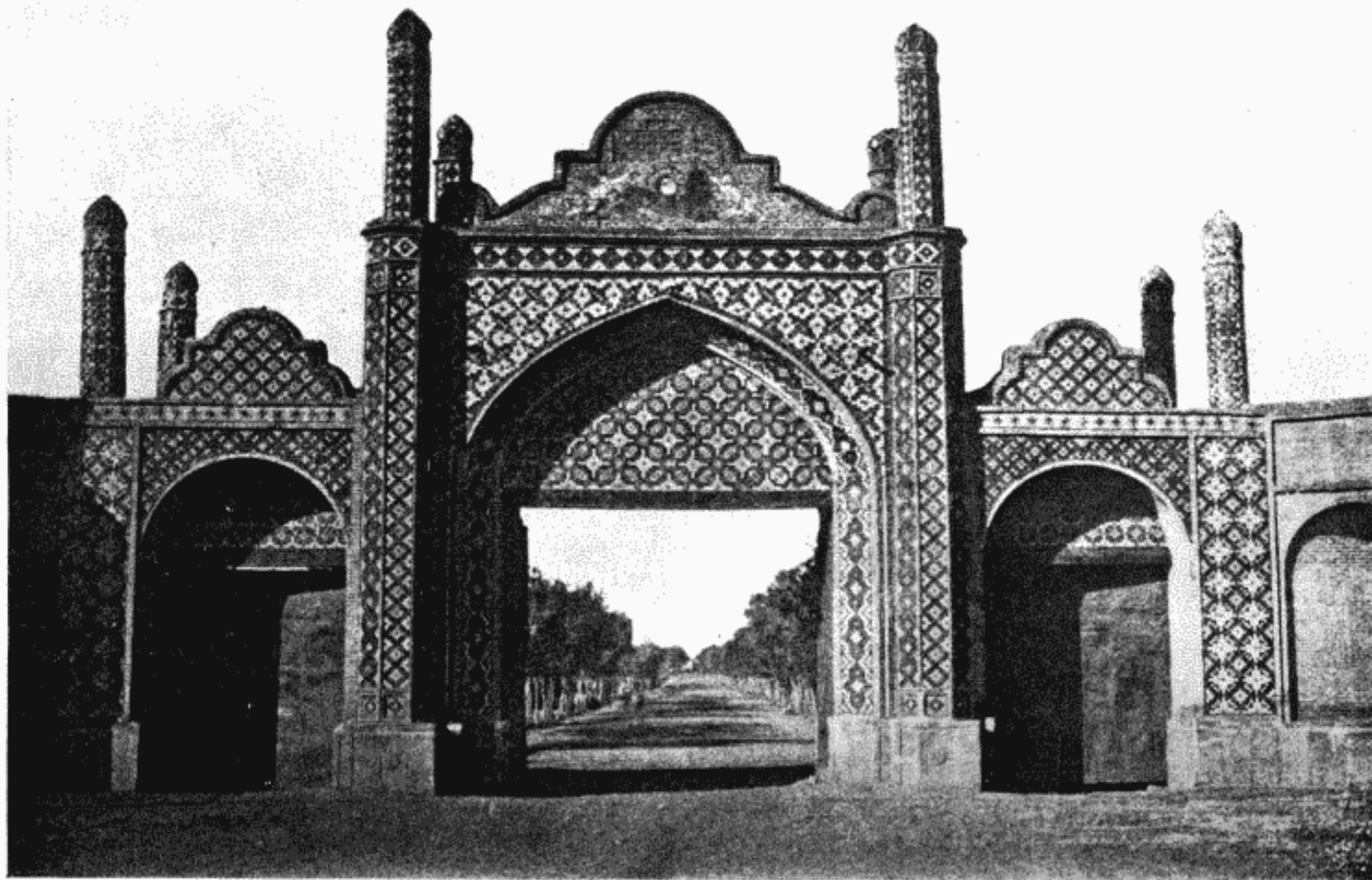
THE AGE OF STEEL

The chief characteristics of Nasiru'd Din Shah is fear of the new—fear of new ideas, of new manners, of new methods. Consistently he lays a heavy hand on the reins of progress, and keeps his people far in the rear guard of civilization. He is, on one occasion, heard to remark, "*I want Ministers who do not know whether Brussels is a capitol or a cabbage.*"

The New Faith, taking root and flourishing at the footstool of his throne, therefore, fills him with abhorrance. Aiming, as it does, at the very heart of *Islamic theology it appears, in his eyes, both a blasphemy and a menace, and becomes the obsession of his life.*

The reign of Nasiru'd Din Shah is an ordeal through which the Champions of Freedom have to pass, and the memory of him is to remain the reverse side of a glorious picture which time will serve, only to intensify.

In 1896, on the eve of his Golden Jubilee, Nasiru'd Din Shah is killed by the bullet of a revolutionary.



GATE OF KAZVIN

CHAPTER VI

THE WOMAN

"The Striking!

"What is the Striking?

"And what shall make you to understand how the Striking will be?

"On that day men shall be as moths scattered abroad, and the mountains shall become like carded wool of various colors driven by the wind."

—Koran.

In the province of Kazvin a child has been growing into girlhood. Possessed of rare beauty, of quick wit, of striking originality of thought and manner, she has become an idol to her family and a joy to the community at large.

For these reasons her father, yielding to her in all things, has given her opportunities of learning never before afforded, in the land of Persia, to one of the female sex; even he has gone so far as to permit her to attend, from behind drawn curtains, the discussions of the divines who habitually frequent his house. *"Would that she had been born a boy,"* he often exclaims, deploring the prospect of this vital personality forever immured behind the walls of a harem.

It is at this time that Seyyed Kazim is holding his classes in Karbala, and from there, rumors of his startling interpretations of the holy books of Islam begin to circulate in many parts. The girl's interest is stirred by these reports and she initiates a correspondence with the great scholar, who evidently considers her worthy of receiving, at his hands, personal consideration and guidance. He even addresses her by a name of his own giving, being that of Kurratu'l-Ayne (Consolation of the Eyes) and the girl accepts this name and uses it as her own.

THE PILGRIMAGE

Time passes. The girl has become a poetess of repute, and her name is respected throughout the land. She has been given in marriage to her uncle's son to whom she has borne three children, but the restrictions of domestic life lie heavy upon her and the time arrives when, to the horror of her friends, she bids farewell to those who are dear to her and sets out to seek Seyyed Kazim.

As she nears Karbala her heart is aglow with excitement. Her past associations, severed temporarily but probably never to be renewed, do not concern her. She is thinking of the Teacher who has so fired her imagination. When she meets him he will tell her what to expect of the future; he will explain the steps that have led him to his conclusions; he will lead her, support her, and indicate the approach of the initiate. Position, comfort, security, even good name—these do not matter.

On arriving in the city Kurratu'l-Ayne learns that Seyyed Kazim is dead.

THE DREAM

An upper chamber of a house in Karbala—two candles are burning on a table which is covered with the writings of Seyyed Kazim. The young woman, broken by disappointment and exhausted by long reflection, has fallen asleep, her head resting on the scattered pages in the circle of light.

And as she sleeps in that silent room her spirit, wandering in the land of dreams, comes upon a radiant Personage who appears, standing just a little above the earth. She clearly sees his long coat, his green turban, and she hears his voice of a sweetness that is painful, and she understands his words. Then, in the dream, she says to herself that she must remember something of this that she is hearing, and she catches a phrase and holds it and repeats it, and waking still repeating it, writes it down.

STAR PUPIL

Kurratu'l-Ayne has joined the pupils of Seyyed Kazim and is learning from them the lessons given by their master. Her years of preparation have so developed her mind that, in a short time, she is able to grasp this system of education and presently, herself, becomes instructress of the others. By degrees her fame spreads abroad and doctors and sages travel from afar to discover the basis of her theories. From behind drawn curtains she meets these most experienced minds, reveals the sources of her deductions, and leading the way into unexpected depths, baffles them by her skill and eloquence.

It is at this time that she receives a letter from Mullah Hussein, which informs her that the expected One has been found.

THE PATH OF DESTINY

Kurratu'l-Ayne has embraced the faith of the Bab. Spontaneously, definitely and with utmost vigor she has grasped the banner of the Cause, and holds it high for the world to see. Moving from group to group, her features hid by the customary veil, she announces the approach of an era of freedom, and teaches new standards to be conferred upon a new generation.

She has written to the Bab declaring her belief in him, and has been enrolled among his disciples as the Seventeenth Letter of the Living. Being in constant communication she has received a copy of one of his commentaries, *and as she studies it verse by verse, she comes upon a phrase which is startlingly familiar.* Hurriedly, eagerly she searches among her papers till she discovers the page upon which she had written that first night in Karbala, on awaking from a dream. Comparing the two phrases she sees that they are identical, and realizes that she has indeed stepped upon the path of her destiny.

THE YOUNG MISSIONARY

Kurratu'l-Ayne, followed by a group of her ardent admirers, has carried the Message to Bagdad, in the land of Iraq. Openly deprecating the restrictions imposed on her sex by church and state, boldly setting forth a new plan by means of which woman shall be freed from hereditary bondage, she has stirred the imagination of the Islamic, Jewish and Christian communities and provoked, at the same time, the opposition of their leaders. Nevertheless, wherever she goes she is received with esteem and high consideration, and men of every rank gather about her to praise her virtues and perfections. In the neighboring villages, which she visits untiringly, people by the hundreds arise, begging to be allowed to follow her, but she consistently recommends that they remain at home, to carry on the work of the Cause in their own environment.

Presently, breaking upon these activities an order arrives, coming from the Central Government, and the lovely Missionary is forced to leave the dominion of Turkey.

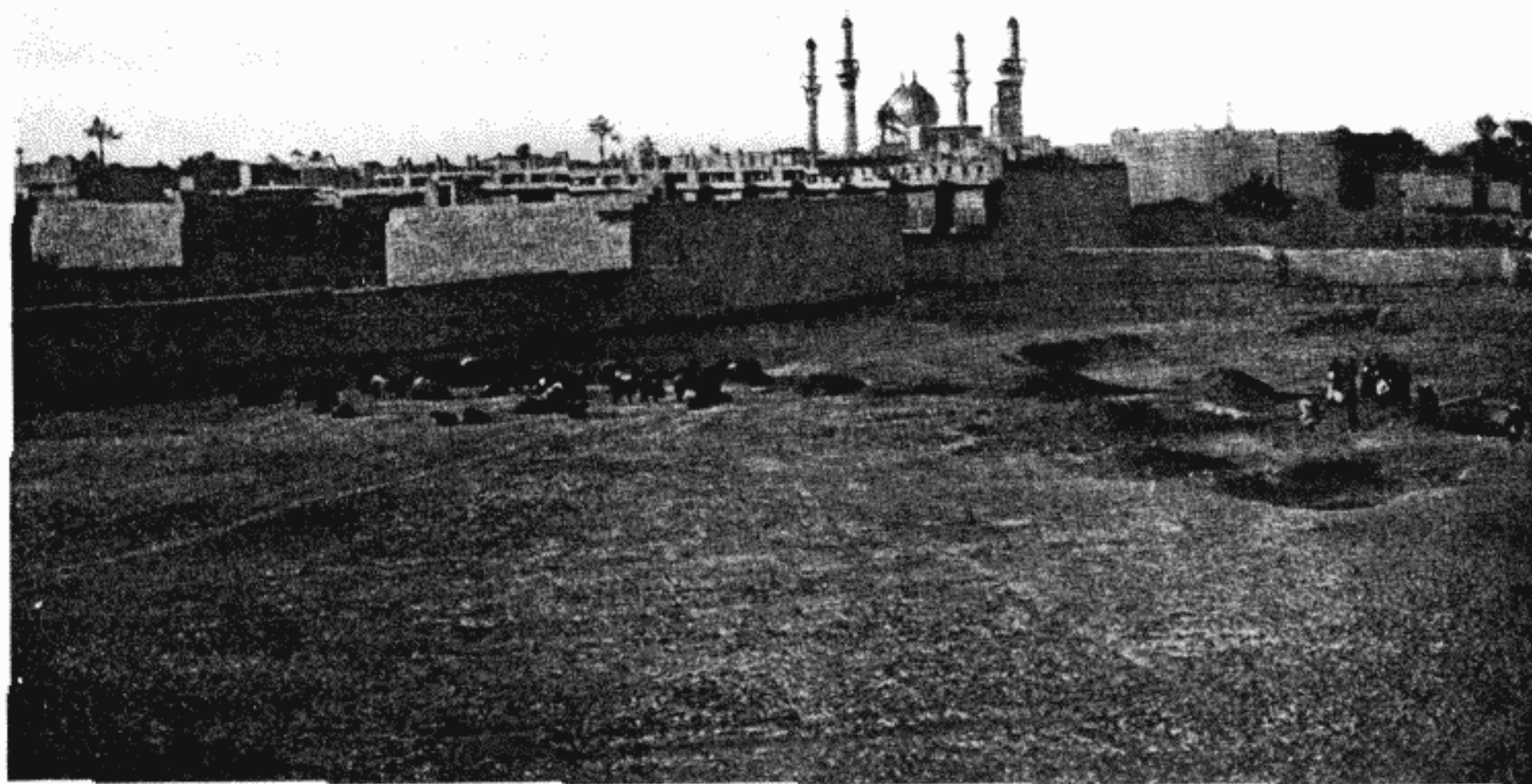
THE RETURN

Now, in her native province, Kurratu'l-Ayne organizes a powerful party while her father looks on with disapproval. *"If you,"* he says to her, *"with your scholarship and intelligence were yourself, to claim to be the Bab, I would readily agree; but what can I do when you choose to follow this simple lad from Shiraz."* And his daughter answers:

"With the knowledge that I possess it is impossible that I should be mistaken in the acceptance of Him whom all peoples anxiously expect. I have duly recognized him by the proofs of reason."

THE MURDER

At this time an ardent disciple of Seyyed Kazim passes through the city, on his way to the fortress of Maku. This scholar's curiosity concerning the New Cause has been aroused, and he hopes to have opportunity of meeting the Bab in his prison, and of discussing his claims.



BAGDAD, IRAQ

As he strolls in the market-place of Kazvin, he comes upon a crowd of *ruffians engaged in tormenting a citizen*. The man's turban has been twisted around his neck, and by it he is being dragged through the streets—a helpless target for blows and abuse. "*What has been his crime?*" the stranger asks and the answer is given "*Haji Mullah Taki has declared this man a heretic because he has dared extoll in public the attainments of Seyyed Kazim.*" On hearing this, the stranger is carried away by a fanatical desire to avenge the memory of his beloved Master, so he seeks the presence of Haji Mullah Taki and drives a dagger into his breast.

The murdered man is the uncle of Kurratu'l-Ayne.

CONSEQUENCES

The city is in a state of tumultuous excitement and many Babis are mentioned as having participated in the crime. The stranger realizing the danger which threatens the innocent, therefore appears before the governor and offers to deliver the murderer into his hands, on condition that those suspected will be exonerated. The agreement is made and the stranger then proclaims himself to be the one whom they seek.

Now the heirs of Mullah Taki are not willing to satisfy themselves with a single victim and a campaign of barbarity is initiated in the town of Kazvin. Among those to suffer death is Sheykh Salih. He is the first Babi martyr—the first of a great company soon to follow after.

THE ESCAPE

Kurratu'l-Ayne is accused of having instigated the murder of her uncle and the authorities have her under surveillance. One day, as she sits in her room lost in meditation, she is aroused by a gentle knock, and a woman in the garments of a beggar enters, hastily closing the door behind her. The prisoner inquires the reason for this unexpected visit and the woman explains: Mirza Hussein Ali, a rich and influential Babi, living in Teheran, has arranged for an escape; at nightfall three horses will be in readiness at the garden gate and the woman herself with her husband will take charge of the journey and deliver her into the keeping of their master.

That night Kurratu'l-Ayne flees from her father's house and sets out to join Mirza Hussein Ali.

"THE STRIKING"

By the banks of a little stream which flows near the hamlet of Badasht the followers of the Bab are congregated in a series of gardens. They have come from many parts for the purpose of studying the New Cause and of discussing means whereby its principles may be put into action. These men,

dazzled by the personality of their leader, are ready to adhere to him at whatever cost, yet hampered by the traditions of the past, do not yet realize that theirs is the privilege of applying these teachings and of making the first example.

On the outskirts of the farthest garden, a tent has been erected for the accommodation of the one woman in the assemblage. Hidden by the customary veil, and separated by convention from her fellow disciples, this woman has taken but small part in the proceedings and, with the approval of all, has remained aloof in her sequestered quarters. Her presence nevertheless has been felt for she is looked upon with infinite love, and her comrades have conferred upon her a new name expressing their veneration. Hereafter Kurratu'l-Ayne is to be called Tahireh (the Pure).

The Babis are grouped about the tent of Mirza Hussein Ali, now known as Baha-U-Llah, while he being indisposed, presides over the discussions from his bed. It is evening. The sun, like a golden globe, is sinking past the horizon and a breeze, enriched by the flowers to overwhelming sweetness, plays back and forth over the water which whispers as it rushes by. The charm of the hour is, little by little, taking possession of the disciples, and the peace of spiritual ease descends upon them bringing with it—silence.

A moment—then from out the shadows a figure comes into view. It is a woman tall, majestic, with radiant face exposed to the eyes of all. The Babis, startled from reveries, spring to their feet in amazement, in consternation—turning their heads away, murmuring their disapproval. Then someone curses beneath his breath, another cries aloud and a third, having drawn his sword, presses its blade to his throat, and gasping, covered with blood, falls convulsed upon the ground. Quddus, the beloved of the Bab, sits in his place his face dark with disapproval and the woman with utmost assurance, advances to his side and standing there begins to speak:—

Wherefore do they fear to put into practice that which they are ready to endorse with their life-blood? Did not the Bab proclaim a day when woman, the deprived, the repressed, shall open the lattice of the harem and step forth to take her place beside man? That day has dawned, and she has seen its dawning; that sun has risen and she has dared to look it in the face. With this she turns, flashing a look straight at Baha-U-Llah and continues:—

“The Striking! What is the Striking? And what shall make you to understand how the Striking will be?”

“Oh men, the time is fixed and the hour is present. The trumpet that you expected—verily it is I! The bell that you awaited—it is I—it is I! The old is finished, the old is dead; a new life is breathed into all existing things.

* “*‘Amid gardens and rivers shall the pious dwell in the presence of the potent King.’ Behold, I announce the Day of Resurrection!*”

The Babis are listening confused—perplexed; some are weeping quietly; Quddus has risen, and stands as if turned to stone.

Baha-U-Llah watches Tahireh with infinite satisfaction.

AN AUDIENCE

In the early days of her acceptance of the New Faith, before the mists of opposition had thickened on the horizon, Kurratu'l-Ayne greatly desired an interview with Mohammed Shah. This experience had been denied her, and now that the clouds of calamity are hanging low on every side, an order is issued for her appearance before his successor.

The audience chamber of Nasiru'd Din Shah crowded with nobles and state officials—his Majesty reclines among his cushions, his mother heavily veiled at his side. The golden midday sun streams through the latticed casements, forming tortuous patterns on the rich carpet and over the moving figures of the guests. There is sound of whispering voices broken into by smothered laughter; the Shah irritably taps his fingers on the jeweled arms of his throne.

Now, at the far end of the hall, a curtain has been lifted and replaced, and a veiled figure is advancing through the crowd which separates before her. The room has become absolutely still. At a distance of a few feet from the Royal Presence, the woman stops—every eye is trained on that spot—then with utmost deliberation, she throws back her veil and looking straight into the eyes of the Shah, begins to speak.

His Majesty has sent for her, she says, and she has eagerly responded to his summons. How happy is she to look upon the face of her king, and tell him of that which so insistently clamors at her heart. It is the consciousness of a time when the distinctions between the sexes will be abolished and the male and female set side by side; it is the vision of a day of service and steadfast action for the women of Persia, and of freedom to learn and to live.

The melody of her voice has ceased, but the eyes of Tahireh still hold the Shah's eyes while a smile, slowly dawning on her lips, begins to reflect itself on his. A nation's history wavers on its path, then with imperious gesture the Queen Mother rises, “*Remove this woman or, in another instant, my son himself will fall into her net!*”

THE HIGHEST FELICITY

Shortly after this event Tahireh is apprehended and confined in the house of the Mayor of Teheran. Here the noble ladies of the court come to visit the

*—Koran.



DIAMOND GATE OF THE ROYAL PALACE, TEHERAN

notorious prisoner, and their curiosity is immediately converted into complete subjection. Like many colored butterflies they hover about her, staring at her, timidly touching her, serving her with wistful solicitude. And Tahireh opens her heart to these children of her own sex, and tells them of the Hero who has come to set them free. And she composes a poem, addressing that hero as a tyrant who lays claim to her life, and she repeats the poem:—

*The thralls of yearning love constrain, in the bonds of pain and calamity,
These broken-hearted lovers of Thine to yield their lives in their zeal
for Thee.*

*Since with sword in hand my Darling stand, with intent to slay, though
I sinless be,*

If it pleases Him—a tyrant's whim—I am well content with His tyranny.

*As in sleep I lay at the break of day, that cruel Charmer came to me,
And in the grace of His form and face, the dawn of the morn I seemed
to see.*

*The musk of Cathay might perfume gain from the scent those silken
tresses rain,*

*While His eyes demolish a faith in vain attacked by the pagans of
Tartary.*

*With those who turn from both love and wine, to the hermit's cell and
the zealot's shrine,*

What can I do? For our faith divine they hold as a thing of infamy.

*The tangled curls of thy sweetheart's hair, and thy saddle and steed
are thine only care,*

*In thy heart the infinite hath no share, nor the thought of the poor
man's poverty.*

*Alexander's pomp and display be thine, the Kalandar's habit and way
be mine,*

That, if it pleases thee, I resign, this, though hard is enough for me.

The country of "I" and "We" forsake; thy home in annihilation make,

And fearing not this step to take, thou shalt gain the highest felicity.

THE DAY OF FULFILLMENT

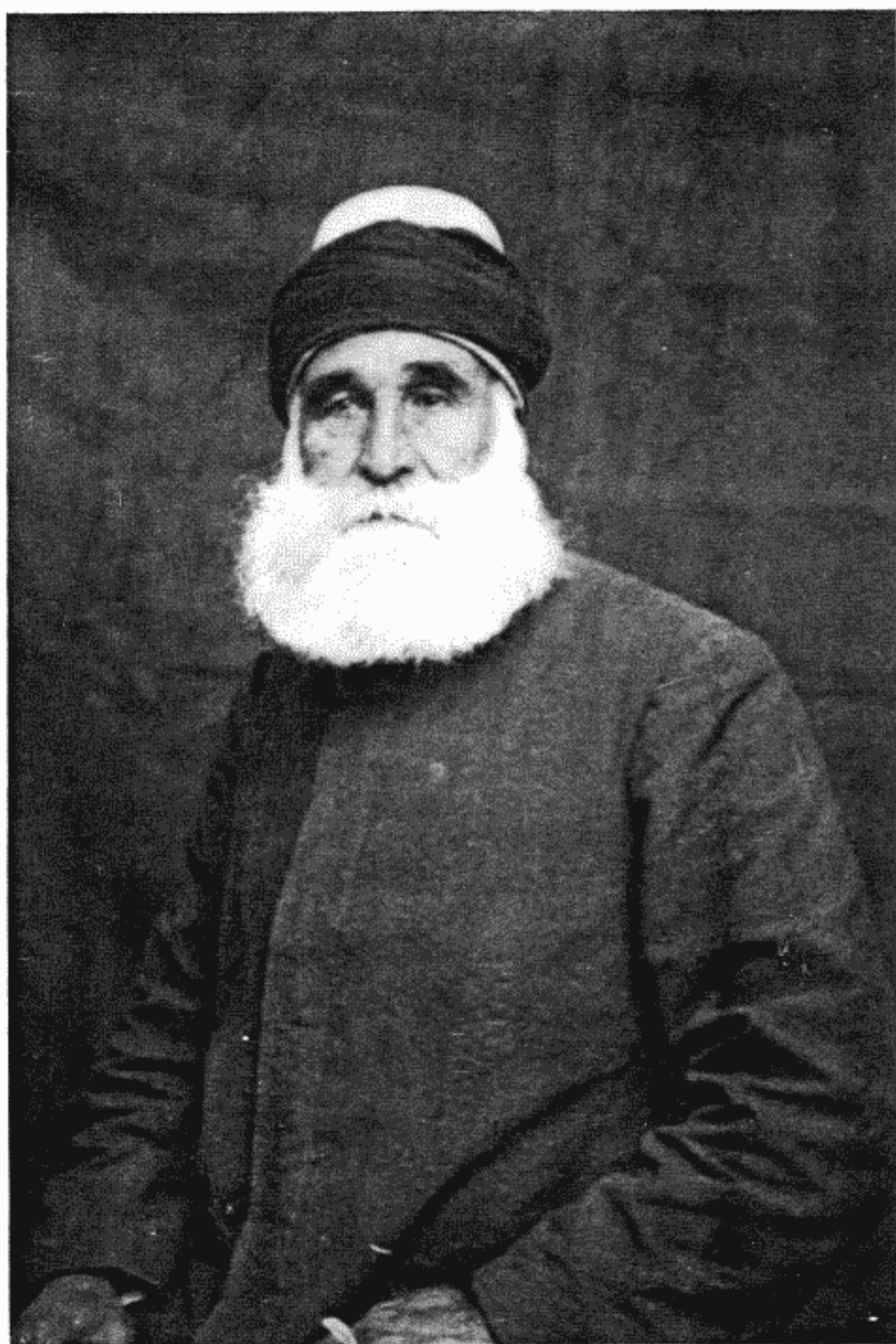
Evening is falling on the city of Teheran and the Mayor's wife seeks the distinguished guest to wish her good-night. Crossing the threshold she comes into an atmosphere heavy with perfume, and in the flickering candlelight beholds her friend, clothed in white silk and adorned as a bride. Answering her startled look, Tahireh embraces her with warm affection urging her to be brave and to withhold her tears. "*The hour of my martyrdom is fast approaching,*" she explains, "*therefore permit no one to enter my room. From now on I intend to fast—a fast which I shall not break until I am brought face to face with my Beloved.*"

In accordance with these instructions the hostess, leaving Tahireh alone, sits on guard in the hall through the night and during the next day. And in that lonely watch, the voice which has enchanted thousands comes to her, through the panels of the door, intoning praises of the Beloved, and in her despair the woman cries "*Lord, Lord! Turn from her this cup which her lips so desire to drink!*"

It is on the second night that a strident knocking is heard at the garden gate and a man presents himself demanding admittance to the prisoner. Trembling so that she can hardly move, the Mayor's wife leads the way into the presence of her guest, whom she finds waiting expectantly, veiled from head to foot.

Tahireh is conducted, by a troop of ferrashes, to a park on the outskirts of the capitol, where a company of officers is engaged in riotous feasting. On her approach, a young lieutenant, completely under the influence of wine, rises to meet her. He leads her to a little distance from the banquet table and, as she stands in serene acquiescence, winds her own silken kerchief round and round her neck—tightening it till the breath leaves her body.

So is silenced that passionate voice which, rising from the curtained harem, proclaimed the dawn of a New Day—when Woman shall be the equal of Man.



SEYYED ASSADULLAH

CHAPTER VII

THE TEACHERS

*"And he said unto them 'Follow me and I will
make you fishers of men.'"* —Mark 4:19,

It is during the infancy of Baha-U-Llah that Mirza Buzurg dreams a dream. He sees his child swimming in a vast illumined sea and the child's black hair floats behind him, spreading itself far and wide upon the waves. And fish of many colors arise to the surface and attach themselves, each to a separate hair; and they increase in number and keep increasing till they fill the waters back to the very horizon. And all the while the child continues to swim with great ease, and the fish of the sea follow after him—holding to his streaming locks.

* * * * *

THE UNIVERSITY OF AKKA

A Universal University in the town of Akka. Its dome is the sky; its columns are flowering trees; its books are the precepts of all the Prophets of the past; its president is Baha-U-Llah—and later his great son. And through the gates of this university pass Turks, Arabs, Persians, Hindus, Europeans, Americans—students from all the countries of the world, clothed in their native dress; and these seated on the ground, absorb according to their various capacities, the teachings which are to renovate the world.

INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION OF TRUTH

In following the faith of their ancestors, men are groping in mazes of tradition and dogma; the original Truth having been obscured and oftentimes entirely lost. The individual is consequently in a position where he must content himself with the husk, and he functions blindly, actuated chiefly by vague hopes and fears. However, if he seeks Truth with sincerity and courage, he will find that Reality is one; that it does not admit of multiplicity and is not divisible.

THE ONENESS OF HUMANITY

In the beginning, the earth was a particle shot out into space—coming from the sun. Everything that thereafter developed upon it was of identical substance—Sun-substance. The races have therefore the one origin and do

not differ in essentials. They have equal rights on this planet, which is their mutual home.

RELIGION MUST CONFORM WITH SCIENCE AND REASON

Science and religion are balanced wings upon which man may ascend. Science brings the invisible into the realm of understanding; religion is aware of the invisible which has not yet been discovered. Science and religion both aspire to the same end—that of illumination. If man counts upon science alone, he will land in the bog of materialism; if he depends upon religion alone, he will fall into the slough of superstition. The true scientist and the true religionist do not deny each other.

THE FOUNDATION OF ALL RELIGIONS IS ONE

Truth is the foundation of all religions. It has operated through different Individuals in various epochs. These Individuals, conscious of their connection with the Divine Source, have proclaimed themselves to be the *way* by means of which men may progress to a higher state of spiritual development. They are sign-posts indicating the *same* trail of ascent; partners in the *same* task; voices proclaiming the *same* Message. No wonder that the Great Religions have remained practically intact. The followers of each *know* that they have the Truth, and their faith remains unshaken in the face of efforts made by the officious who would convert them. Yet the thing that they do not know is that *all* have the Truth. There are no heathen among those who seek God.

REVELATION

Each Divine Revelation is in two parts. The first is the exposition of divine truths and principles; this is essential and belongs to the eternal world. The second deals with practical life according to the evolution of man and the exigencies of the times; this, as society develops and outgrows it, is unimportant. The first part is identical in all revelations; it is the foundation of the One Religion—the Religion of God.

PREJUDICE OF ALL KINDS MUST BE FORGOTTEN

Prejudice is not the result of common sense. It is a quality developed through inheritance, ignorance and bad association. Prejudice is the greatest obstacle on the path toward Unity. It is a triviality that will melt away under the light of Knowledge—which brings understanding. It is the essence of self. When the chalice is full of self, there is no room for the water of life.

EQUALITY OF THE SEXES

Men and women must enjoy equal rights, equal privileges and equal opportunities. According to the spirit of this age, woman must advance and *fulfill her mission in all departments of life*. The world, in the past, has been ruled by strength, and man has dominated woman by reason of his more forceful and aggressive qualities, both of body and mind. But the balance is already shifting; force is losing its dominance, and mental alertness, intuition and the spiritual qualities of love and service are gaining ascendancy. A better civilization will be brought about by a balancing of the masculine and feminine elements.

UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE

In this day, when the peoples of the world have free access to one another, a universal language is essential. By this means men will be enabled to form acquaintance and initiate works in common, and a new comradeship will be established upon the face of the entire globe. This new language is to be auxiliary, and will be used side by side with the native tongue; the study of it will be obligatory in all schools. The universal language will be chosen from among those already existing, or else will be formed from the component parts of many.

THE ECONOMIC QUESTION

The plan of society must be one that will eliminate poverty so that everyone, according to his capacity and position, may share in comfort and well-being. Some men are overburdened with riches while others starve in the streets. This condition is wrong and has to be remedied.

Now the remedy must be carefully undertaken. Absolute equality would be impracticable; even if it could be brought about, it would not continue. Humanity, like a great army, requires generals, captains, officers and soldiers—all with their appointed duties. Degrees are required so that a stable organization may be ensured; and an organization is necessary to control and improve the state. There must be a limit to riches and also to poverty; but this condition will not come into being through an array of capital against labor, and of labor against capital; but rather by a voluntary attitude which will, in time, develop. A proper balancing will not be accomplished by means of war and bloodshed.

Employees shall not be paid merely by wages; rather shall they be partners in every work. All the governments of the world must unite and organize an Assembly which will act with wisdom and power to protect the rights of all.

PATRIOTISM

In former ages it has been said: *"To love one's native land is faith"* but

today the instructions are: "*Let not a man glory in this, that he loves his country; let him rather glory in this, that he loves his kind.*" Therefore, loyalty is to be given to man, for land rightly belongs, not to individual nations but to humanity as a whole.

WORLD UNION

The people are to aspire to, and work for a unified commonwealth, governed by representatives of all the nations; which representatives shall in no wise consider their fellow-countrymen as their constituents, but rather the inhabitants of the entire globe. These federated states, having disposed of their armies and navies, and retaining such force only, as will act as international police, will be free to devote their attention and resources to the upbuilding of conditions in all parts.

This is the plan of a new democracy; the organism of a new society:

THE UNITED STATES OF THE WORLD

When the students have learned the lessons they bid farewell to the beloved Master and scatter, each in a state of utmost dedication, going his way.

THE WAY OF RELIGION

Haji Ameen returns to Persia and here, providing himself with a stock of small accessories such as women use, he travels from city to city, from house to house, supporting himself as he goes along by the proceeds of his sales; at the same time diffusing information concerning the Cause. When he meets with response, he tarries a while in that region, to indicate the first approaches to a Universal Faith and then, taking up his bundle, continues on his way. Proceeding in this manner, he makes circuit of his native land, leaving behind him a trail of friends; and always he operates in secret and recommends that like discretion be used after his departure.

At certain seasons of the year his pupils begin to think of his return. They have, during his absence, been carrying on the work, and ever larger groups await the advent of their peddler-teacher. He does not fail them; as quietly as he had left he reappears and, resuming the lessons where they had been left off, conducts his class toward wider vistas of understanding.

Presently the scholars themselves develop into teachers, and these, following the example of their master, issue forth and spread over the land of Persia, a shimmering network composed of the universal ideals of *Baha-U-Llah*.

THE WAY OF MYSTICISM

Jamal-Ed-Din journeys to India and settles down in the town of Rangoon, near Calcutta. Gathering different groups about him, he lectures on the

principles of the Cause, yet finds that social ethics do not attract the mystical Hindu temperament. He therefore publishes an edition of the *Seven Valleys* written by Baha-U-Llah, and with this book in hand, addresses his audiences on the stages of the soul's journey from the earthly home to the divine dwelling; which stages are seven.

The first is

THE VALLEY OF SEARCH

In which the traveller mounts the steed of Patience. Without the service of this steed he will make no headway and can not attain the goal.

Here he will be encompassed by beings in a state of frenzied search. How many a Jacob he meets, wandering in quest of Joseph! What crowds journeying toward the Adored One! What enamored hosts following the Desired One! His heart, detached from this world and the next, each moment discerns a new mystery, each hour a new law, and so guided by the Invisible, who, at every step fans his ardor, he continues on his way toward the Horizon of the Beloved. . . .

The second stage is

THE VALLEY OF LOVE

where his heart will be wholly melted.

Here, under the canopy of attraction, the gorgeous Sun of Desire blazes-- shooting off rays that consume all reason. . . .

Pain waits in this valley, no other steed knows the way. . . .

Here the traveller has no thought but of his love, and no longing but for his goal. Each moment he flings away his life, and at every step he lays his head at the feet of the Beloved. . . .

The third stage is

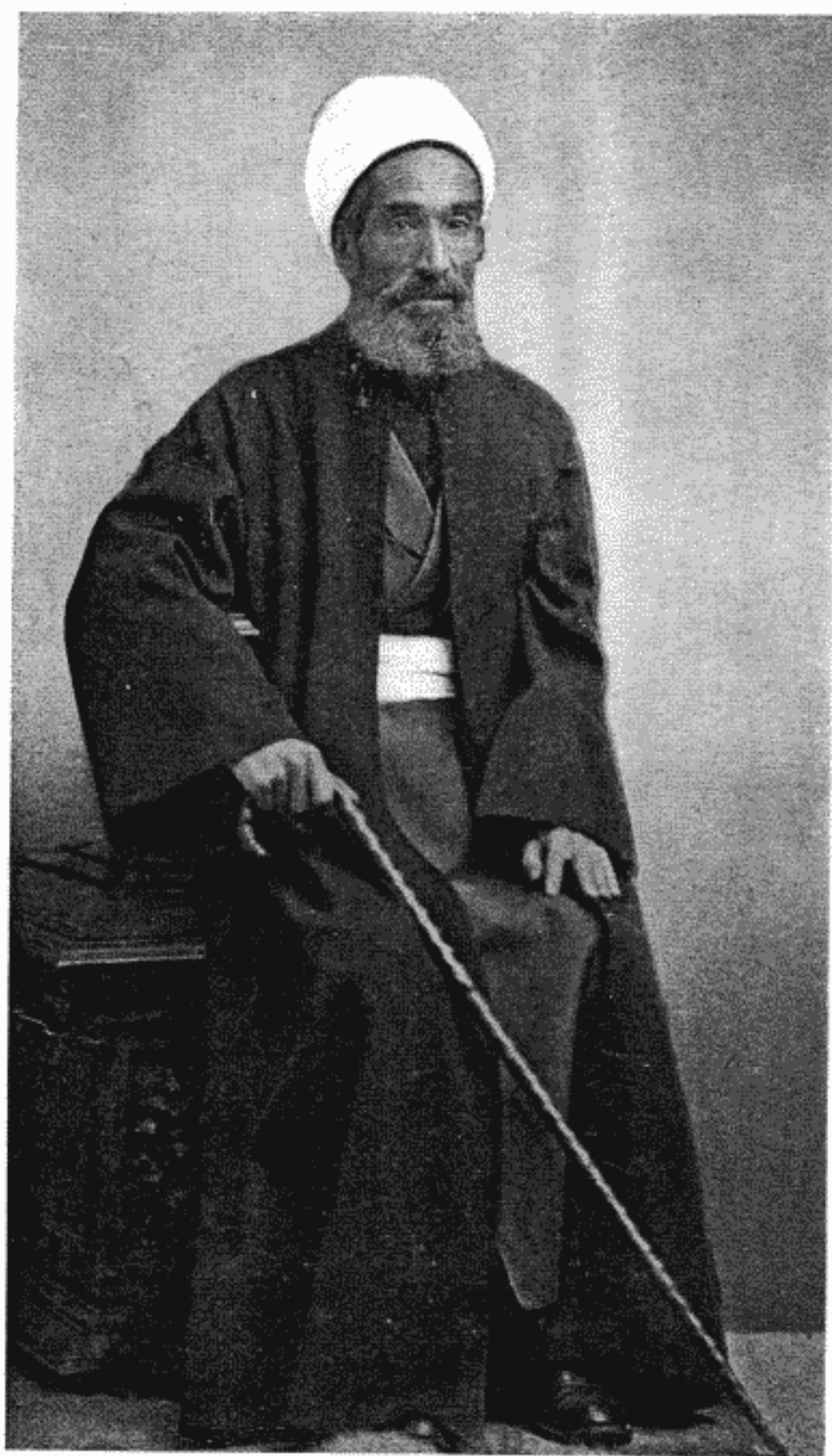
THE VALLEY OF WISDOM

Here he applies the eye of intelligence, and opening the door of utter devotion as he closes those of superficiality, begins to converse in secret with the Beloved. In this state he will yield his will to the Divine Will and thus will see Peace in War and Immortality in Death. With a purified heart, using both the eye of the flesh and the eye of the spirit, he will recognize Divine Intention operating in God's infinite manifestations. In an ocean he will discern a drop, in a drop the mysteries of an ocean. . . .

The fourth stage is

THE VALLEY OF ONENESS

Then the veils, making boundary between one state and another, shall be rent and he will pass from the material world into the Heaven of Unity.



MIRZA ABUL FAZL

He will hear with the hearing of God; behold, with Divine Vision, the secrets of Eternal Art and penetrate to the retreat of the Friend. He will be a favorite in and about His tents and will draw the Hand of God from the pocket of the Absolute—so exemplifying the mystery of Power. . . .

The fifth stage is

THE VALLEY OF AFFLUENCE

Here the breezes of divine Contentment, blowing from the Sahara of the Spirit, inflame and consume the veils of want. In the visible and in the invisible, in the without and in the within, he will behold that Day in which "God will make all things self-sufficing." He shall have passed from sorrow unto joy; from agony unto beatitude; from languor unto exaltation.

In this valley, although apparently dwelling on the earth, the traveller in truth shall recline on the lofty terrace of Significances, tasting of the eternal Favors, drinking of the exquisite Wine. . . .

The sixth stage is

THE VALLEY OF BEWILDERMENT

where he plunges into seas of grandeur.

In this valley the traveller is disconcerted (this condition being one of merit to the eyes of those who have attained) and so, amazement giving way to amazement, he proceeds, marvelling at a marvellous world, until he is submerged and completely lost in the New Creation of the King of Oneness.

The seventh stage is

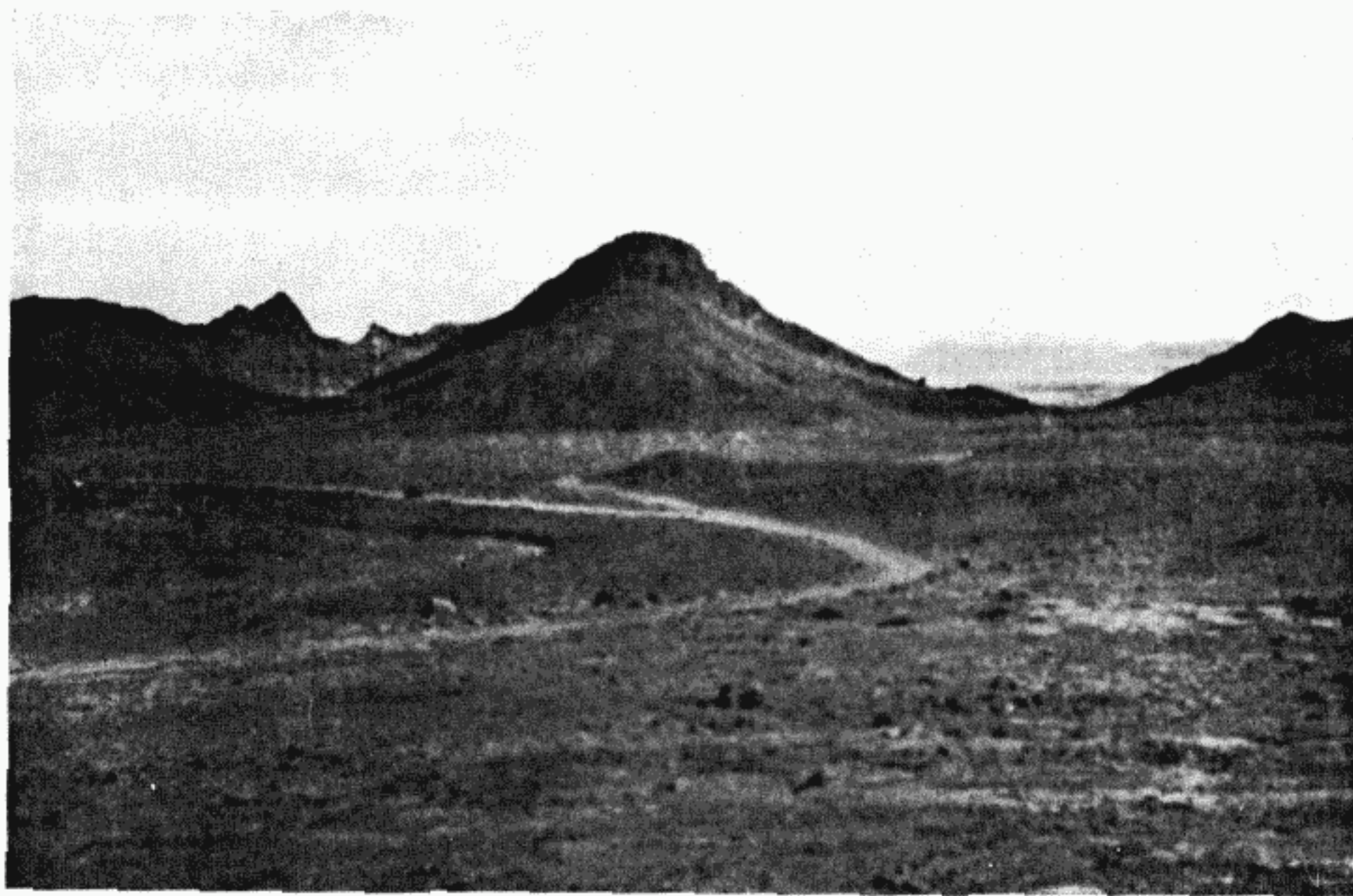
THE VALLEY OF ANNIHILATION

Now, when the true lover comes in contact with the Beloved, the light of the Divine Beauty catches fire in the warmth of his own breast, and in the conflagration that ensues all veils are consumed and all differences whatsoever—and God alone is left. . . .

By teaching the spiritual lessons of the *Seven Valleys* and through the wide circulation of the book, Jamal-Ed-Din is enabled to enkindle countless hearts in the land of India.

THE WAY OF KNOWLEDGE

Mirza Abul Fazl, of the College of Teheran, is known in the scientific world as being possessed of one of the keenest intellects of the day, and when he falls under the influence of the Bahai teachings, the consternation among his colleagues is great. Every means is used to induce him to conceal his growing belief, but Mirza Abul Fazl is accustomed to teach openly the best that he knows. As a consequence he is forced to endure severe hardship and repeated imprisonment but, with the passing years, his conviction fortifies, until his faith is established on such firm foundation, that no scholar is able to combat his claims or refute his proofs. He writes many treatises and books



ROAD LEADING SOUTH, FROM ESPHAHAN

and spreads the knowledge of the Cause, through his own findings and interpretations, in the highest circles of learning.

THE WAY OF BEAUTY AND ROMANCE

An enclosed garden in the city of Esphahan. Great lilac trees, sturdily bearing their massed burdens of flowers, flank its walls. Rose bushes, budding into varied colors, blend their perfume with the little straight hyacinths that grow in their shade. A rivulet flows clear and cool among the iris, past a fountain that tosses its waters into mist. Nightingales sing in the pomegranate trees. It is eventide.

On the terrace which fronts a long, low dwelling, sixty men and a boy are gathered in a semi-circle—seated on their bended knees. They are listening to their host, Zein-El-Abedeen, as he teaches them, through the medium of poetry and romance, the ethics of a New Religion of Beauty. His is a wise philosophy where Art is God, and God is infallible Art; and the Bahais hang on every word—losing themselves in mazes of spiritual satisfaction.

The talk has ended, and the voices in unison are rising, chanting Baha-U-Llah's *Tablet of Visitation*, when an aggressive knock is heard at the entrance. It is followed by a command that the gate be unbarred. The men spring to their feet—they need no further warning—and scatter to the far end of the garden, disappearing over the wall.

Now impatient shouting—coming from the street; murmuring of voices, sound of moving, jostling bodies, and the sharp, regular blows of axes. Then splintering of wood, tearing of hinges, and the door falls inward under the tramping feet of the mob.

All the while the boy has stood on the terrace, ignoring the entreaties of the women of the household, whispered from the upper windows, and the crowd surges past him to every corner of the house, stables and garden. Their prey has escaped, and the assailants have to satisfy themselves by stripping the rooms of their furnishings and the stalls of their live-stock: then, rushing the boy—their only captive—before them, they leave the garden of Zein-El-Abedeen.

The boy has been placed in the *bastinado*, his feet suspended high above his head. The *ferrashes* stand at the side, with young branches in their hands: Who are the Bahais in Esphahan? Who are the friends of his uncle Zein-El-Abedeen? The boy answers that he does not remember, and the lithe whips are applied to the soles of his feet, with regular intensity, interrupted only by repetition of the demand.

The boy's feet are now streaming with blood and he faints away—the questions remaining unanswered.

Then his inert body is carried back and left before the shattered entrance of his home.

A little donkey stands saddled by the gate. Hidden in the hay at the farthest corner of the stable, he had been unnoticed by the raiders. Zein-El-Abedeem, with broken leg—result of his jump over the wall—is carried in the arms of the women and hoisted onto the back of the animal. The boy, his feet bound in cloths, is mounted behind and then, after hurried kisses, blessings, and a prayer for protection, the little party of three—the uncle, the boy and the donkey—start out, down the road.

The women watch them till they are out of sight and, weeping, turn back to the dismantled house—it is the hour of dawn.

In this wise, the refugees travel among the hills, making for the south; and often the villagers receive and care for them, offering food and homely remedies. *Zein-El-Abedeem makes return for such hospitality by recounting his inimitable stories; and never does he fail to make allusion to the Cause—so leaving behind him a code of simple standards for a new and more lovely way of living.*

At the end of four months they reach the city of Shiraz, where they come in contact with the aged Seyyed Assadullah. Then the boy bids farewell to his uncle and, under the protection of the Seyyed, sets out for Akka—the home of Abdul Baha.

THE WAY OF EXAMPLE

Seyyed Assadullah has taught extensively in Persia, Turkey and India, and later has travelled in Europe and America, attending Abdul Baha. Through it all, no danger is to his mind, a risk; no work an effort; no service, however humble, a menial one. His eyes are fixed on the Eternal Glory, and his every faculty is dedicated and given long ago.

One day he seeks the presence of Abdul Baha and begs permission to carry the Message to the Caucasus. *My Lord, I am an old man, I question if I can accomplish anything for the Cause, yet I supplicate you to let me try. I do not wish to be a pensioner—to flicker out on the bed of rest; but rather I long to end on the battlefield—fighting the good fight to the last moment of my life.*

So the veteran of many engagements enlists again in the ranks of service, and enters on a new campaign.

Seyyed Assadullah, at the age of seventy-six, turns his face toward Russia.



ABDUL BAHÁ

Mrs. Chanler was conscious of the fact that she would be lost if she answered this question directly. She was now sparring for time. Her reply was as follows:—

April 17, 1929.

. . . In my service this winter, I have made use of an instrument prepared for this work by the Master himself. In view of the fact that when this instrument was in their hands, the Local Assembly did not find it in their hearts to allow the Cause to profit by it, and being convinced that it should be used, at this time when instruments are few, I, with the help of God only, brought the Bahai Cause before the public of New York with an effectiveness unequalled since the days of Abdul Baha.

Now, since these services have, in the estimation of the Local Board, made me undesirable as a voter, I will, in conformance with their suggestion, absent myself for the present from the Bahai Center.

A second letter to Mrs. Chanler from the Local Assembly of New York continues:

April 19, 1929.

Every member of this Spiritual Assembly hopes, desires and prays that you may continue as a voting member of this Cause, but the principles of Bahai Administration are clear as to the qualifications of a voter. . . .

The question already submitted to you in our previous letter is whether or not, according to the qualifications quoted above, you consider yourself a member of this Assembly and are willing to comply with these requirements. This is a choice *you alone* can make, you cannot shift the responsibility of making this choice to the local Spiritual Assembly.

are upon them; the invisible cohorts are about them. And now you are to witness the birth of a great Plan. Bring pen and paper; I will dictate a tablet to America."

Then fluently he continues, without an instant's intermission, addressing:
The Friends and Maid servants of God in

THE NORTHEASTERN STATES

The Cause of Baha-U-Llah must be given to the world. This is no time for the silent treasuring of these seeds; they must be offered freely, abundantly, lavishly—scattered far and wide in the variegated soil of the hearts. God has said in the Koran: "*One seed will bring forth seven sheaves, and each sheaf shall count one hundred grains.*" In other words, *one grain will become seven hundred*, and if God so wills He will double these also. The people must not dwell upon their own limitations, nay rather they must consider the capacity of the Creator, who has made the drop to find the expression of the sea, and the atom the quality of the sun. Abdul Baha is calling upon the Bahais of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York to raise the cry of the Oneness of the World of Humanity and to establish the Cause in these States and throughout the world.

* * * * *

At Haifa, during the festival of the New Year, Abdul Baha dictates a tablet to

THE SOUTHERN STATES

In Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky, Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas, the Bahais are few; yet it is indicated that the Cause shall flourish in these regions—situated as they are in the temperate zone.

Here the powers of man function in perfect order, for moderation of climate, and beauty of scenery have great effect on mind and temperament. In these sixteen States the light of the Sun of Reality shall shine with great intensity and the clouds of ignorance and prejudice will be dispelled from their horizons.

Nearly two thousand years ago, Armenia was enveloped in impenetrable darkness; yet *one soul*, from among the disciples of Christ hastening to that land, was enabled to illumine the entire country.

The past century has been one of wondrous achievement. Discoveries have been made; inventions have been perfected; extensive fields of activity have been opened. Consequently, as counterpart of these changes in the outer

world, Divine Wisdom has created a new spiritual plan in the inner world, so that the era of justice and true democracy may be inaugurated.

Glad-tidings! Glad-tidings! The sleepy ones are awakened and the negligent ones are made mindful!

Glad-tidings! Glad-tidings! The light of brotherhood has encircled the East and the West!

Glad-tidings! Glad-tidings! The period of bloodshed and carnage has passed away and the century of Universal Peace and of the gathering together of the nations has dawned!

* * * * *

While he walks to and fro in the courtyard of his house at Akka, Abdul Baha considers

THE CENTRAL STATES

The Bahai Cause was first offered to America at the World Exposition of 1893 in Chicago; and as the Central States may be likened unto the heart, which reinforces the organs of the body and fortifies the physical structure, it was appropriate that the Call of Oneness should be raised in that section. Abdul Baha is now addressing Illinois, Wisconsin, Ohio, Michigan, Minnesota, Indiana, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, and summons the people of these States to walk in the New Way.

He has prepared this high road for their feet and has drawn a chart for their guidance during the coming years. He has given them the standards of baha-U-Llah; nevertheless the promulgation of these great principles depends upon them, and upon their efforts.

To sit, to talk, to listen, there is no virtue in that. To rise, to act, to help, that is the Bahai life.

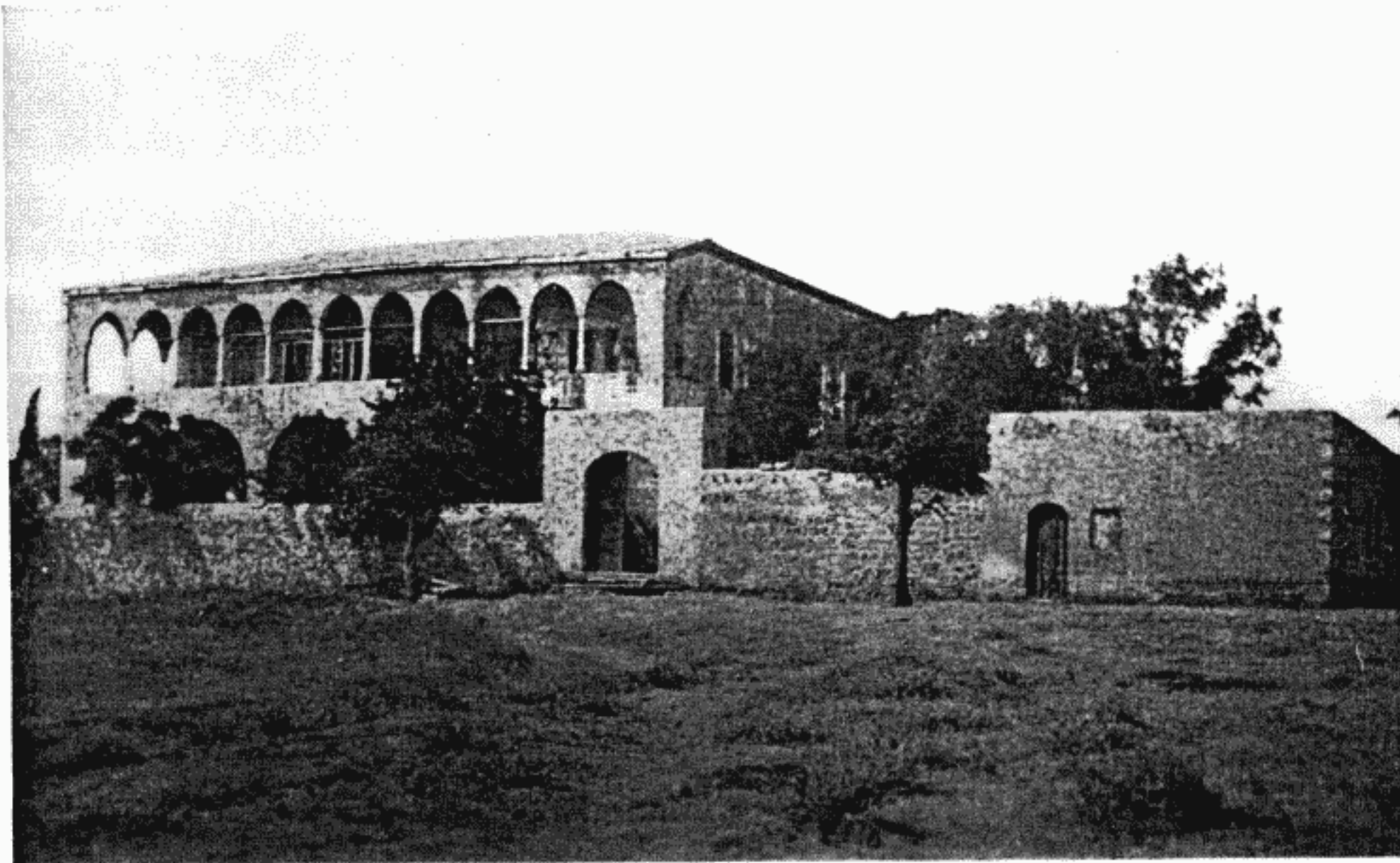
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In Baha-U-Llah's room at Akka, Abdul Baha reveals the Tablet to

THE WESTERN STATES

He recalls his talks, given in America, in which he had compared the continent of Europe to an arsenal, the conflagration of which was dependent upon one spark. He then had said that, within two years, that which was recorded, in the Book of Daniel and in the Revelation of John, would come to pass. Now these things have indeed been accomplished, and the time for superhuman service toward world reconstruction is here.

The Western shore of the continent, in many places resembles that of the Holy Land, and even the flowers of Palestine appear in this region. Therefore let California, New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, Nevada, Wyoming, Montana,



BAHJEE IN THE VICINITY OF AKKA
HOUSE AND ENCLOSED GARDEN OF BAHU-U-LLAH

Idaho, Oregon, Washington, Utah, acquire also a spiritual resemblance to the land which, through the years, has rung with the voices of the Prophets.

Now, in the Bahai Cause, there must appear geniuses, peerless souls, wonders of the Kingdom of God—beings who in knowledge, sociability, tenderness, brilliancy are unique. These lordly radiant teachers must be embodied spirit, remaining in a state of constant and perfect attraction. Let them say:

"Oh, Lord! I am single and alone. For me there is no support save Thee, no helper except Thee, no sustainer beside Thee. Confirm me in Thy service, assist me with Thine Angels, make me victorious in the promotion of Thy Word. Verily Thou art the Custodian of the poor and the defender of the little ones, and verily Thou art the Powerful, the Mighty, the Unconstrained."

* * * * *

The garden of Bahjee. On the one hand a few steps lead into a carpeted court, breeze-swept, sun-kissed, vibrant with bird-songs, perfumed by orange blossoms—the Shrine of Baha-U-Llah; on the other hand glossy, silver-leaved olive groves spread themselves, undulating toward the sea. Abdul Baha stands by a bush holding three roses in his hand, one white, one pink and one red. For long he looks upon them, realizing to the full their loveliness, then raising his head he speaks in measured tones of

THE DOMINION OF CANADA

From a material and from a spiritual standpoint, the future of Canada is very great. Continuously it shall develop in civilization and in independence.

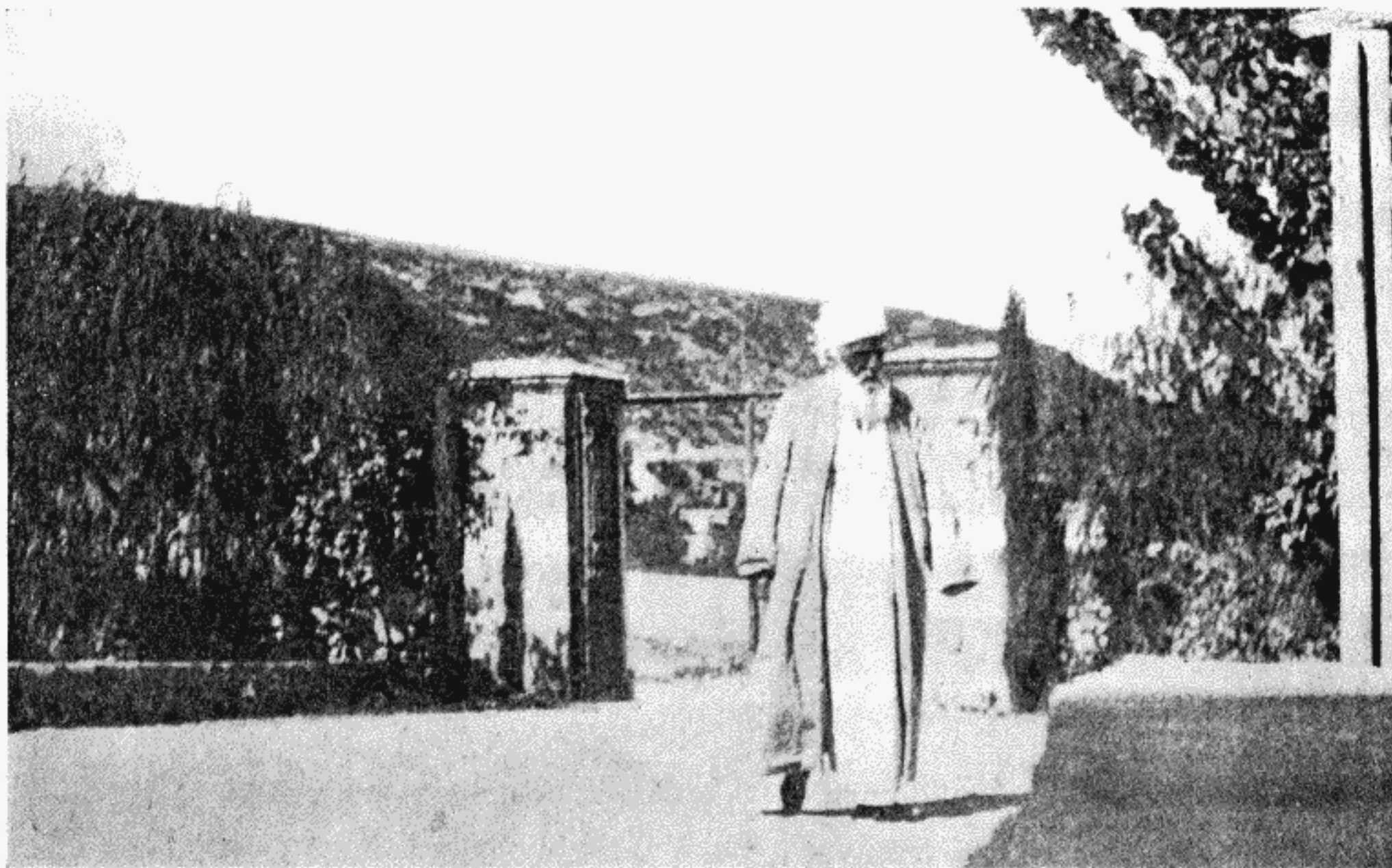
The Bahais must forge ahead in the way of Progress—taking part in the solution of the intricate problems of the age. *To advance always; to achieve some new service every day; to hourly widen the horizon of intellect—these three rules must become the program of their lives.* With steadfast resolution, they must face each difficulty and make stepping-stones of their every trial. Undoubtedly such souls will at last be crowned with the diadem of eternal success.

The field of the Cause is limitless; every sincere soul is welcome to enter therein. The bounties of God are not monopolized, nor are His favors localized. In the Cause of Baha-U-Llah there are no Brahmins and no Pariahs; its doors are open to all.

In the world of divine knowledge, there must be tempestuous seas and pearl-bringing waves.

In the Paradise of the Merciful there must be laughing flowers.

* * * * *



ABDUL BAHÁ IN HIS GARDEN AT HAIFA
WITH MOUNT CARMEL IN THE BACKGROUND

Presently, from Haifa, Abdul Baba turns his attention to

THE COUNTRIES OF CENTRAL AMERICA AND SOUTH AMERICA AND THE ISLANDS OF THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE

Christ said: *"Travel to the East and to the West and summon the people to the Kingdom of God."*

It is time that the Bahais divest themselves of the garment of attachment to this phenomenal realm, and become angels of heaven—travelling and *teaching throughout the regions*. The vast country of Alaska awaits the Message of Unity. The Republic of Mexico is a field for great accomplishment. Here the majority is totally unaware of the reality of the Old Testament, of the Gospels, and of the New Divine Teachings. The people do not know that the basis of the religions of God is one; and that the Manifestations are like unto the sun which rises from different dawning-places. They are submerged in seas of dogma; yet if one breath of Life be blown over them, great will be the result.

Fluent speakers, familiar with the Spanish tongue, must travel to the six Central American Republics—Guatemala, Honduras, Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama. *This latter must receive especial attention, for the Occident and the Orient are here united by means of the Canal; and once the Cause is established at this point, it will effect the East and the West.* The British Honduras must be considered, and the Indians in all districts—the aborigines of America—a race which will become so enlightened, that it in turn, will carry understanding to many parts.

Likewise the Islands of the West Indies such as Cuba, Haiti, Porto Rico, Jamaica, the Islands of the lesser Antilles, the Bahama Islands and even the small Watling Islands must be scenes of noble effort; also the Republics of Haiti and Santo Domingo, situated in the cluster of the Greater Antilles, and the Island of Bermuda in the Atlantic Ocean.

In a similar way the Cause must reach the Republics of the Continent of South America—Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Brazil, British Guiana, Dutch Guiana, French Guiana, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Venezuela; also the Islands in the north, east and west of South America, such as the Faulkland Islands, Galapago, Juan Fernandez, Tobago, Trinidad; and notably the city of Bahia, situated on the eastern shore of Brazil.

May God be the supporter of the teachers who travel to these countries, and their helper.

Formerly they were as moths, but they shall become as royal falcons. Formerly they were as bubbles, but they shall become the sea.

* * * * *

Looking over the plane of Akka, and beyond the glittering Mediterranean to

EUROPE, ASIA, AFRICA, AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND AND THE ISLANDS OF THE PACIFIC OCEAN

Abdul Baha affirms that the invincible cohorts of the Kingdom shall attend his army of Love.

The Bahais are to journey across the seven seas and along the five continents, carrying the Glad-tidings of a New Day to all the races of the world.

Abdul Baha has travelled. Although in a state of utmost bodily feebleness, he has lifted his voice in churches, meetings, and conventions throughout Europe and America. *He wishes that he might yet continue to serve God in this manner.* In poverty, even on foot he would pass through cities, villages, mountains, deserts and oceans to promote the Teachings of Baha-U-Llah. Yet for him this cannot be. He therefore calls upon the Bahais to carry on the work. Never should they think of comfort nor of rest; for the teaching of the Cause is more important than the founding of empires.

Let them advance toward the Continent of Africa, to the Canary Islands, Cape Verde Islands, Madeira Islands, Reunion Islands, St. Helena, Zanzibar, Mauritius and other Islands. It would be advisable to form a commission of men and women to visit Japan and China and there to establish the work. Books and pamphlets must be published in the various languages — either translations or new writings — and circulated to all parts.

May the Bahais expend the greatest effort in spreading the synopsis of the teachings in the British Isles, France, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Russia, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Roumania, Serbia, Poland, Finland, Ukrainia, Montenegro, Bulgaria, Greece, Andora, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, San Marino and the Balearic Isles.

Parties of men and women, speaking the necessary languages, must travel throughout the three great Island Groups of the Pacific Ocean—Polynesia, Micronesia, Mylanesia and the Islands attached to them, such as New Guinea, Borneo, Java, Sumatra, Philippine Islands, Solomon Islands, Fiji Islands, New Hebrides, Loyalty Islands, New Caledonia, Bismark Archipelago, Ceram, Celebes, Friendly Islands, Samoa Islands, Society Islands, Caroline Islands, Low Archipelago, Marquesas, Hawaiian Islands, Gilbert Islands, Moluccas, Marshall Islands, Timor and yet others.

Of a certainty wherever these teachers shall enter a meeting, Divine Fragrances shall encircle them, and the Favors of Baha-U-Llah shall descend upon them.

Teachers must voyage to the continent of Australia and to New Zealand,

Tasmania, Asiatic Russia, Korea, Indo-China, Siam, Straits Settlements, India and Ceylon, as well as to Greenland, Iceland, Corsica, Sardinia, Sicily, Crete, Malta, Falkland, Faroe Islands, Shetland Islands, Hebrides and Orkney Islands.

The apostles of Christ did not, in their day, command much respect, yet their station became evident in later times. May the severance, energy and fortitude of the early followers of Baha-U-Llah, loose a like reverberation through the pillars of the earth!

Today there are individuals so possessed with love that the body is completely mastered. They are the conquerors of the East and the West.

Should one of these beings turn his face in a certain direction, all the ideal forces and lordly confirmations will rush to his support. He will behold open doors and fallen barriers. Singly and alone he will attack the established armies, shatter their regiments at the right and at the left and, breaking through the lines of the nations, carry the assault to the very center of the earth.

Such souls will be the Apostles of Baha-U-Llah!

* * * * *

Now the Master turns his far-seeing eyes upon his secretary and speaks to him:

Day and night for nearly eight years you have lived with me. At home and abroad, on land and at sea you have been my companion. Ever have I planned your travel to America, so that you might spend your days in the service of the Cause. Now the time has come. From this Divine College you shall go into the world; therefore gird up the loins of endeavor and magnify your aim. I am sending you to that vast continent with these Tablets—the Glad-tidings of the Lord. They will constitute your capital; they will be the foundation of your life.

And now I have given my Teachings; I have indicated my hopes, and revealed my aspirations.

What, therefore, will the Bahais show forth in degrees of devotion and severance?



Baha'i Haircut Law: Why Create a Law if you're going to break it yourself?

According to Baha'i law, shaving one's head and allowing hair to grow longer than the lobe of the ear is forbidden:

Of course the second law only applies to men (what happened to equality of men and women?!):

However, Baha'u'llah, Abdu'l-Baha, and even Baha'u'llah's scribe (Mishkin Qalam) completely ignored this law:

What's the use of a law that the Prophet, His successor, and his closest companions aren't willing to implement themselves, then expect their followers to implement them?! If you can't abide by your own rules then why do expect others to do so?

Source : <https://www.religiousforums.com/threads/bahai-haircut-law-why-create-a-law-if-your-going-to-break-it-youself.216112/>

Universal House of Justice □ International Teaching Center

Bahaism and its claims

<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/36585/36585-h/36585-h.htm>

Rigid hierarchy has taken over Baha'i religion, dissidents say

...but conservative leaders maintain that orthodoxy has not been altered.

Juan Cole, a professor at the University of Michigan, is a former Baha'i who thinks the faith has been taken over by its conservative leaders.

By IRA RIFKIN Religion News Service

The first 19 days of March are a special time for Baha'is, members of a worldwide religion with a liberal reputation based on its vision of the underlying unity of all faiths, the oneness of humanity and the harmony of science and religion.

The Baha'i faith grew out of Islam, and like the Muslim month of Ramadan, Baha'is set aside the 10 days the month of 'Ala according to the Baha'i calendar – as a period of dawn-to-sunset fasting and spiritual reflection. The month ends with the Feast of Nawruz, the Baha'i new year. It's a festive time of community gatherings featuring prayers, spiritual readings, socializing and lots of food.

For former Baha'i Juan Cole, however, this year's feast will be anything but festive.

Cole, a professor of Middle East History at the University of Michigan is among the nation's leading experts on the faith. Until last May, when he formally resigned from the movement, he had been a Baha'i for 25 years.

Now he counts himself among a small but influential group of past and present liberal Baha'is who are angry over what they say is the hijacking of the faith by a cadre of conservative leaders who are more interested in preserving their authority than the Baha'i principle of "independent investigation of reality."

That principle is among the core tenets of the Baha'i faith first articulated by its founder, the 19th-century Persian prophet known as Baha'u'llah (the Glory of God) and who is revered by the faithful as an incarnation of God akin to Jesus.

According to the critics, the National Spiritual Assembly, which oversees the American Baha'i movement is dominated by a tight-knit group of authoritarian officials who keep the lid on free expression by threatening dissidents with excommunication and by manipulating the process by which NSA members are elected.

In the Baha'i faith, excommunication can include total shunning by family members and friends.

Spreading their message via the internet, the dissidents – many of whom, like Cole once were members of the faith's intellectual elite – say the nine-member National Spiritual Assembly also hides the truth about the faith's shrinking American following.

"Baha'is are not open – repeat, not open – about how controlling this organization is" Cole said. "Virtually no one who comes into this faith realizes that by becoming a Baha'i you are making your individual conscience hostage to the dictates of the leadership.

"The Baha'is started out Unitarian and ended up Calvinist."

Emphasis on order

For their part, American Baha'i leaders with headquarters in the Chicago suburb of Wilmette, Ill., dismiss the critics as an inconsequential group of disgruntled elitists who blinded by their attraction to the faith's more liberal aspects overlooked its deeply conservative side.

This includes an emphasis on "administrative order" as a prime religious goal. Baha'u'llah taught that religions fail in large part because of the disunity that tears them apart following their initial burst of spiritual energy.

As a result, tight controls are placed on all public statements made by Baha'is including the work of scholars, who are required to submit their writings for pre-publication review.

"We always seek consensus. But if there is no unanimity, then the majority must prevail," said Firuz Kazemzadeh, a National Spiritual Assembly member and its secretary for external affairs.

Not all Baha'i scholars find fault with this.

"I personally don't buy the totalitarian argument," said Canadian Baha'i B. Todd Lawson, an assistant professor of Islamic studies at McGill University in Montreal.

Michael McMullen, an assistant professor of sociology at the University of Houston at Clear Lake, said prior review "makes sense" because much of the writings of Baha'u'llah and his successors remain untranslated from their original Persian and Arabic, and therefore are inaccessible to the majority of American Baha'is.

"My experience has been that what is corrected are factual errors, not interpretation," said McMullen, who is a local Baha'i leader in League City, Texas.

The dissidents also claim the Baha'i prohibition against public campaigning or nominating candidates for spots on the National Spiritual Assembly

serves to keep it a closed body controlled by the American Baha'i establishment.

Baha'i leaders say they are only following an orthodoxy established by Baha'u'llah and his successors — his son, Abdu'l-Baha, and his great-grandson, Shoghi Effendi, who died in 1957.

Assembly members are elected annually by a fixed number of 171 delegates who represent local Baha'i assemblies across the continental United States.

Robert C. Henderson, a former Atlanta businessman who is the assembly's secretary-general, making him the highest ranking American Baha'i (the faith has no ordained clergy), said there had been 12 changes in the assembly's membership the last 15 years.

"That's not indicative of a closed group," he said.

Robert C. Henderson is secretary-general of the National Spiritual Assembly and the highest-ranking American Baha'i.

Free local debate

However, Cole said each change resulted from retirement, death or a member moving out of the country. No incumbent who has sought re-election has been defeated since 1961, he said.

Cole also noted that family and other close associations are common among American Baha'i leaders. Six of the nine current assembly members have family or professional connections.

McMullen, the University of Houston sociologist, acknowledged that the prohibition against nominations and campaigning made it hard for those outside the Baha'i establishment to win election to the National Spiritual Assembly.

But on the local level, he added, there is a much higher leadership turnover. Moreover, on this level of authority, he said, even controversial issues are freely debated without fear of official disapproval.

Henderson also said that "Baha'is are specifically asked to air their grievances" at local and national conventions "There are specific channels for such expression, but it must remain within these established channels.

"The Baha'i faith is outwardly liberal but inwardly conservative," he continued. "It's a matter of scripture."

Baha'is claim a worldwide membership of more than 5 million people living in more than 200 nations and territories about half in India.

In Iran — where the faith first emerged in the 1840s when Baha'u'llah proclaimed himself to be the divine manifestation for the modern era — there are 300,000 Baha'is. Considered heretics by the Muslim authorities they live as a persecuted minority.

The heresy charge stems from Baha'u'llah's claim to prophet status some 1,200 years after Muhammad, the founder of Islam, proclaimed himself God's final prophet.

How many in America?

In the United States Baha'is claim about 130,000 members a third of whom are African-Americans. About 21,000 live in California, and the largest concentration more than 6,000 is in greater Los Angeles.

Baha'is are also relatively strong in South Carolina, Texas, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Illinois, Arizona and Washington state.

However, Baha'i critics say the religion's membership numbers are wildly inflated. Citing friendly but unnamed sources at Baha'i headquarters in Wilmette, the dissidents say no more than 30,000 names represent active Baha'is with verifiable addresses.

A 1993 book on Americans' religious affiliations *One Nation Under God* by demographers Barry Kosmin and Seymour Lachman, estimated the number of adult Baha'is in the United States at 28,000.

"Every new religious movement that is in a missionary phase tends to overestimate its members," Kosmin, currently at the Institute for Jewish Policy Research in London, said in an interview. "They count people coming in, but never count those who leave."

Kazemzadeh, the Baha'i official, insisted that the 130,000 figure was "essentially accurate." But he also said that "if active means contributing funds and serving locally, it's probably about half the names on the list.

Sizable Baha'i communities in the South are traceable to the influx of mostly rural African-Americans who joined the faith in the 1960s and '70s, drawn by its strong rejection of racial prejudice.

During those same years, relatively large numbers of white liberals, attracted by the faith's emphasis on a society free of social injustice, also joined. It is mostly members of this group — many of them scholars of Baha'i texts, the Middle East and its languages — that today lead the dissident movement.

Linda Walbridge, an anthropologist at the University of Indiana — specializing in the growth of Islam in America, became a Baha'i in 1966 when

she was a 19-year-old VISTA volunteer on the Navajo Reservation. Despite her anger at the hierarchy, she remains a Baha'i.

Raised Roman Catholic, Walbridge said she was attracted to the Baha'i faith by its "promise of a universalist vision... It was far more open than anything I had experienced."

Walbridge's public dissent has prompted Baha'i officials to threaten to label her a "covenant breaker" – a form of Excommunication that would require her Baha'i husband to divorce her or risk his own excommunication.

"It was supposed to be the most liberal, broad-based religion on the face of the earth," Said Walbridge "Instead, it turned out to be a straitjacket."

Source : The Kansas City Star (Kansas City, Missouri) • 01 Mar 1997, Sat • Page 62

Soli Sorabjee, former Attorney General of India dies due to COVID-19 at the age of 91 in Delhi, India

Courtesy : <http://singaporebahai.blogspot.com/>

Born into a Zoroastrian family, he married Zena Sorabjee, a Baha'i by faith. He did not accept the Baha'i faith for his whole life. The Apex organisation of the Baha'i Faith, the Universal House of Justice was aware of the influence and power which Soli Sorabjee yielded with the Government of India. The House of Justice was aware that a non-Baha'i – Soli Sorabjee, is more helpful to them than a Baha'i one. So, they never insisted on his being converted to the Baha'i Faith. Once he became old, sick and useless, the UHJ asked his wife Zena Sorabjee to resign from the National Spiritual Assembly of India, on which she was duly elected that year.

Soli Sorabjee assisted the Baha'is with major projects like the construction of the Baha'i Lotus Temple in Delhi.

He was also a major point of contact for the Baha'is to get their works done with the Indian government.

His influence was used by the Baha'is to get the huge piece of land from Delhi authorities.

He also helped Lotus temple trustees when they were accused of “document forgery” and “embezzling funds”. They have used him in all possible ways for the overall benefit of the Baha'i faith in India.

Soli used to make fun of the Baha'is when he used to hear that there are 3 to 4 million Baha'is in the world! He used to say, “either you say 3 million, or 4 million, or better you say, you don't know the number! You cannot fool the intelligent people.”

Today, the UHJ is playing the same game with his daughter Zia Mody. Zia an imminent lawyer is handling all legal matters of the Baha'i organisation, free of cost! She also donates huge amounts to the Baha'i administration, in return she receives a letter from the Universal House of Justice that they will pray at the threshold of the Shrines! All missionary activities of the Baha'is in India is carried out with Zia's contributions to various Baha'i funds.

What Soli Sorabjee received from the Baha'is?

There will be memorial meetings at the Baha'i Centres in various cities. Soli Sorabjee will be remembered as a friend of the faith, but he will be listed among the influential persons who have converted to the Baha'i Faith!

These kinds of personalities are always regarded as Baha'is after their death! Don't forget the Queen of Romania who remained a devout Christian until her death but is counted among the “influential Baha'is” due to her connection with the Baha'is.

The Baha'i organization is nothing but a group of full-time hypocrites.

Persecution of Persian Baha'is in Baha'i Administration

Courtesy : <https://bahaism.blogspot.com>

Received by Email, identity of the author is kept hidden on their request.

Since the advent of different Sects of Baha'is, The Baha'i Administration is trying very hard to purge the Persian Baha'is from Baha'i Administration. The Baha'is especially those from Jewish background are of the opinion that Persian Baha'is are behind the development of sects. Recently with the appointment of Nosratullah Bahramand, a Persian by origin, as the fourth guardian, the Persian Baha'is are having soft corner for him. The Persian Baha'is are feeling that their due right is not being given by the Baha'i administration although they have sacrificed and served a lot and faced of persecution in most of the countries. Very recently A prominent Heterodox Baha'i, Omid Seioshansian, who was born in Qatar, is blacklisted in Qatar. Government authorities in the country have leveled criminal and national security charges against him. Mr. Omid now will have to face severe penalties in Qatar's judicial system. And will be denied entry. Although Bani Duggal, the BIC's Principal Representative to the United Nations. Said that The Baha'i International Community is saddened that the State of Qatar has chosen to expel members of a community that has peacefully coexisted in and contributed to the progress of the country but many prominent Baha'is are of the opinion that Universal House of Justice is behind the expelling of Omid as they are in cleansing process of Persian Baha'is and Omid a high ranking Persian Baha'i in the Baha'i Administration, with an eye on getting selected to the UHJ has a lot of cloud in country like India. Recently another high ranking Persian Baha'i, a counselor, Dr. Jabbar Eidelkhani who has served for many years in Bangladesh was also removed from his post and a very insignificant Indian Baha'i was asked to wear his shoes. Another Persian Lady, a former counselor, Mrs. Zena Sorabjee and member of the NSA of India was asked to resign/retire from NSA after being elected on NSA. In Heterodox organisation a thought is prevailing that Persian Baha'is are working in groups and are having soft corner for the Persian fourth Guardian Nosratullah Bahramand of the Orthodox Baha'i Faith who is calling his shots from Australia. We have to wait and watch who is next in their list of persecution.

What caused you to leave the Baha'i Faith?

I hope this doesn't get to be too long, but I was a Bahai for more than 40 years before I withdrew from the Baha'i faith in March 2019.

I was a seeker of religion from the time I was 12 years old when upon taking communion for the first time at a Methodist church. While I was kneeling I gazed at a stained-glass figure of Christ. As I took the wafer and juice, I heard a voice that said "I am not in the Church." Although after this incident I didn't search actively for an alternative to Christianity, I was aware that there were many issues within what I had witnessed within that small Southern church. I began to visit different services and even wanted to attend a Jewish synagogue! Later, as a teenager within a household that had long been headed toward divorce, I retreated to the local library and read books on religion, witchcraft, astrology and metaphysical subjects. Then in the summer of 1973, I heard the soaringly beautiful music of Seals and Crofts. After buying a couple of albums, I discovered that their music included lyrics and concepts taken from the Baha'i writings. I rushed back to the library to search for Baha'i. It wasn't long before I found some old copies of Baha'i books including *This Earth One Country* by JB Esslemont, and another one titled the *Baha'i World Faith*, both of which helped to satisfy an 18-year-old's curiosity about the basis of Baha'i teachings.

Within a few months of my investigation, I called the local Baha'i Center and attended my first meeting. I was very nervous because I thought perhaps it was a cult, and that I might see people smoking water pipes or other strange things. However, everything I heard and experienced that first time seemed to fit my every need at that time in my young life. Two weeks later, I signed a declaration card on August 26, 1973. Since my parents were in the middle of a divorce, they simply didn't have time or the emotional energy to try to talk to me about my decision, and I began hanging out almost exclusively with other young Baha'is, teaching the Baha'i faith, and spending almost my every waking moment either reading, studying, praying or listening to the music of Seals and Crofts. Not long after, I began to date a talented Baha'i musician who was also the nephew of the producer of Seals and Crofts. We married two years later, almost immediately had a child, and moved to another town. In the ensuing years, although the local community where I started my life as a Baha'i had been a warm cocoon to help me heal after my parents divorce, subsequent years with Baha'is and the larger Baha'i community became more and more disillusioning. My disappointment was especially strong when in 1982, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States disbanded the local assembly where I had declared. I felt strongly that the individuals within that Assembly had been unjustly wronged and their families practically destroyed.

This began a couple of decades of trying to right the wrongs that I had seen done to that previous community, as well as for me to become the "best Baha'i" I could be, serving on local assemblies, coordinating teaching efforts, co-sponsoring a performing arts youth workshop, and other activities. Yet in my heart I knew that something was rotten at the core of the Baha'i faith. I saw it becoming more and more political, more emphasis being placed on wealth and power, as well as a vast difference in the approach of the national administration in the years leading up to 2000, as compared to the 1970s. I began to withdraw from active life more and more and finally in 2011 was accosted by a couple of individuals who suddenly visited my home from the community where I had declared. I was in total shock at the revelation from these people from that Assembly. They had never asked to meet with me in over 20 years time, and yet declared that there had been "problems" with me for years – that individual Baha'is and even other institutions had asked that Assembly to place sanctions on my behaviors. There were so many parts of this final blow to my belief that were wrong on so many levels, but the biggest flaw was the fact that a Baha'i governing body had decided to hold onto my many so-called wrongs for decades before ever contacting me either in writing, by a phone call or in person.

There was no ability to discuss, to present the facts or even to know who my accusers were- just to be read a laundry list of restrictions to my personal and religious life! After that fateful weekend, it took almost a decade for me to decide to officially withdraw my belief in the Baha'i faith, but I finally did, and I now feel so much better! I am now a student of metaphysical teachings and pagan beliefs, and host a monthly women's Moon Circle. I feel much more my true self, and do not miss any of the restrictions, the judgments and imperious behaviors of many within the Bahai Faith and _ especially_ its tragically flawed so-called administration. I'm very thankful for the opportunity to be able to share a portion of my experience on this forum.

Thank you!!

Lisa Armstrong

Courtesy : <https://www.quora.com/What-caused-you-to-leave-the-The-Bahai-Faith>

Baha'u'llah's great grand-daughter

Nigar Bahai Ansalem of Haifa talks to an interviewer.

Whatever is happening in this World is for New World Order of Baha'u'llah – Baha'i Scholar

Mr. Afshin says that the Baha'is are supposed to stand and see the destruction of the Old World Order excitingly and as the pillars of old World Order collapses, the Baha'is should build a new pillar by teaching their cause to the suffering humanity. This is the Baha'i plan and all this is happening due to Baha'i Faith. Do you agree with this ?



April 2 :On this date in 2000, Ben Dlamini, a leading Bahá'í, wrote for the Times of Swaziland that Pope John Paul II on his recent visit to Israel “made no effort to meet the Bahá'ís.

Courtesy : <https://onthisdateinbahaihistory.blogspot.com/2020/>

What a spiritual loss for the Pope's pilgrimage to Israel! By Dr. Ben Dlamini The pilgrimage of the Pope to Israel has been very significant in that though Christianity originated in Israel but the Headquarters of the Roman Catholic Church has been established outside Israel. The Popes were responsible for the crusades which devastated Israel through many years of wars conducted by the Western powers against the Moslems who had occupied Israel. There are four major religions in Israel. It is Judaism, Christianity, Islam and the Bahá'í Faith. It is very surprising that the Pope made an effort to meet Jews and Moslems, but made no effort to meet the Bahá'ís. This was a serious omission on his part which will cause a great spiritual deprivation which he will regret in this life and in the life to come. The Emperor of Austria did visit Israel in the 1870's and omitted to go to Akka where Bahá'u'lláh was imprisoned and received a rebuke from God. Bahá'u'lláh wrote to him and said: "O Emperor of Austria! He who is the Dayspring of God's light dwelt in Prison of Akka at the time when thou didst set forth to visit the Aqsa Mosque. Thou passed Him by, and enquired not about Him by whom every house is exalted and every lofty gate unlocked." The failure of the Emperor to enquire about Baha'u'llah was followed by retribution which cost the Emperor his throne. Today Baha'u'llah is no longer in Akka. His shrine and the Headquarters of His religion is still in Akka and Haifa, hence there is no excuse for the Pope to omit to visit them when he undertook the pilgrimage to Israel. He cannot say that he did not know about these places, because the Israeli government has prepared the most beautiful brochures about the Baha'i holy places for all tourists to Israel. The Bahá'í buildings and gardens can [not] be found in Jerusalem, Nazareth or the sea of Galilee. In the 1870's Bahá'u'lláh wrote to Pope Pius IX a long tablet declaring that He has come to fulfill the promises made by Jesus the Christ that he would come again in the Glory of the Father. Many Christians expect that Christ will come sitting on a cloud. This is fiction. The cloud Jesus Christ referred to is that which we see today. Christ has come in flesh and in a new name Bahá'u'lláh, and the learned priests including the Popes fail to recognise Him that it is the person they have been waiting for the last 2000 years. When the Pope undertook a pilgrimage to Israel I watched carefully whether he would be able to correct the great error of Pope Pius IX. It was to Pius IX and the priests of his generation that Bahá'u'lláh made the most astounding claim of being the return of Christ. Since Pius IX failed to heed this challenge and to test its validity, it was a great chance for the present Pope, when he made his pilgrimage to Israel to investigate the great claims made to his predecessor. In the following quote Bahá'u'lláh is asking all Christians whether they fail to recognise Him as the returned Christ because of His new name. When He came 2000 years ago it was Jesus Christ, but now it is Bahá'u'lláh, the Glory of God: "Say, O followers of the Son! Have ye shut out yourselves from Me by reason of My Name?" Bahá'u'lláh, though a Prisoner of the Ottoman Empire, incarcerated in the Prison of Akka, gave direct instructions to Kings, the Pope and to all the priests as a King would command his vassals: "O concourse of Priests! Leave the bells, and come forth, then, from your churches, It behoveth you, in this day, to proclaim aloud the Most Great Name among the Nations. Prefer ye to be silent, whilst every stone and every tree shouteth aloud: "The Lord is come in His great glory." It was God's promise to Israel from time immemorial that the throne of God would be established on Mt Carmel. Bahá'u'lláh came to confirm that that time has now come. Today the throne of God has been established on Mt Cannel. The establishment of the throne of God on Mt Carmel has turned Mt Carmel from a desolate place into a blossoming valley with the most beautiful gardens which confirm the vision of Isaiah: "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose." The name Bahá'u'lláh is Arabic, which in English means the Glory of God, and there is no question that the coming of Bahá'u'lláh to Akka as Prisoner was no mistake. Those who opposed Bahá'u'lláh's claim that He was a Messenger of God did not know that exiling Him to Akka was only a plan of God to fulfill the ancient prophecies of all the prophets even those of Muhammad. When Bahá'u'lláh promised Mt Carmel that the throne of God would be established on it He further assured Mt Carmel that: "Ere long will God sail His Ark upon thee, and will manifest the people of Bahá who have been mentioned in the Book of Names". Bahá'u'lláh told Mt Carmel that in a short while it will receive the body of the Bab, the forerunner of Bahá'u'lláh, and his body would be buried on Mt Carmel and also the world embracing administrative structure of the Bahá'í Faith would be established on Mt Carmel, led by the Universal House of Justice whose seat would be built on Mt Carmel. Today the seat of the Universal House of Justice is established on Mt Carmel. People from all the nations of the world come to it. It issues laws which rebuke all the nations of the world to follow the laws of God. "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord, to the House of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths, for out of Zion shall go forth the Law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore."

نبذة عن البابية والبهاية

Islamic Fatwa on Baha’i Faith

Is the Baha'i Faith Compatible with Christianity?

The literature and promotional websites for the Baha'i Faith claim that one can accept the Baha'i Faith and remain a committed Christian. But is this the case?

To be a Christian, you must acknowledge that you are a sinner, in need of a Savior. You must then "repent", and be willing to be changed into a new creature in accordance with God's will for your life. You must then confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart



that God has raised Him from the dead, in order to be saved. You must believe not only with your mind, but also with your heart – receiving Him into your heart. For it says "as many as received Him, to the gave He the power to become the sons of God" (John 1).

What else is it that you are called to believe and to do as a Christian, according to the bible, and the words of the Lord Jesus?

- **Believe the essential doctrines of Christianity** (encapsulated in the Nicene Creed) that there is one God, the Father of all, Creator of Heaven and earth. That God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit – one God in three persons.
- **Believe that Jesus is the "one and only" Son of God** that Jesus alone is the "image of the invisible God", and that He is the alone is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life". Reject the notion the Jesus is just one of many "divine manifestations". The bible says "there is no other name under heaven by which we can be saved". That Jesus was "God come in the flesh" – that He was God who came down for our sakes, took on a human body, lived a sinless, sacrificial life, then willingly died on a cross and paid the penalty for your sins and the sins of all humanity – past, present and future.
- **Believe that He rose again from the dead, ascended into heaven, and will come again to judge the living and the dead at the last day.**
- **Repent, believe with your mind, and ask Jesus Christ to come into your heart by His Spirit**– so that He may put His Holy Spirit within you, to regenerate your spirit, and make you a new creation in Christ. He will begin to change you from the inside out, and day be day, you will experience new joy in Jesus! Your living faith in Jesus will then produce "good works" – giving of your time, resources and talents to others, helping, serving, and doing what Christ did as He gave us example. Day be day your life will begin to look a little more like the life of Jesus – which is what being a Christian is all about!

The Baha'i Faith religious material, web sites, and publications **claim that you can accept and believe in the teaching of the Bahai, and still believe and accept the teaching of the bible – and remain a Christian**. But is that really true? **NO!** As the bible says, "there is a way that seems right to a man, but the end thereof is the way of death". As the saying goes, "**looks can be deceiving**", and this is one of those cases where **many are being deceived** by this pleasant sounding false religion.

Indeed there are some admirable qualities of the Baha'i religion. They promote peace, love, positive virtues, and even aspects of the Christian faith. But there are **striking contradictions** to Christianity, and what the bible teaches. **You cannot in truth "become a Baha'i" and remain a Christian. If you accept the Baha'i teachings, you are rejecting many of the teaching of the bible, and of Jesus Christ.**

Do not be deceived! The evil one has been and is a deceiver from the beginning, and this religion, although it sounds and looks good at first glance, is in direct contradiction with what the bible teaches, and with the core tenets of Christianity.

What is the Baha'i Faith?

The Baha'i Faith is one of the newer world religions, promoting the oneness of God, the unity of humanity, and the essential harmony of all religions. According to the messaging on their web site, Baha'is believe in "peace, justice, love, altruism, and unity". Their web site also proclaims that their teachings "promote the agreement of science and religion, the equality of the sexes, and the elimination of all prejudice and racism".

Sounds like a religion "tailor made" for today, especially when one considers the issues we struggle with in the

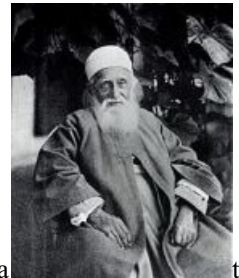


21st century. One could almost say that this is a religion designed for the "post modern era". A "**feel good**" religion. Baha'i messaging claims they are the "world's second most widespread religion after Christianity" (what ever that means),

and that **they are “working to unite it” (the world)**. Interesting – could this be the seed of a new “one world religion?”. This is in stark contrast to what Jesus said, when asked by Pilate “where is your kingdom?” What did Jesus say? **“My kingdom is not of this world”**. The world was turned over to the evil one when humankind fell and rebelled against their Creator. But take care – Jesus is coming back, to bring His reign as King of kings again upon the earth. He will take possession of the earth once again.

According to their teachings :’ The millions of Baha’is in the world come from every ethnicity, nationality, tribe, age, racial group, religious background and economic and social class. Gentle, peaceful, warm and welcoming, diverse Baha’i communities exist just about everywhere. Baha’is **accept the validity of each of the founders and prophets of the major world religions**, and believe in **progressive revelation**, the unique Baha’i principle that views every great Faith as a link in a single spiritual system progressively revealed by God to humanity.” (Source: <http://bahaiteachings.org/bahai-faith>). **The problem is, one cannot logically “accept” the validity of all of the major world regions? Why? Because each make conflicting claims** that cannot be reconciled logically (see below for more on this topic).

Where Did the Baha’i Faith Come From?



The Bahá’í Faith was founded by [Bahá’u’lláh](#) in 19th-century [Persia](#). Bahá’u’lláh was exiled for his teachings from Persia to the [Ottoman Empire](#) and died while officially still a prisoner. After Bahá’u’lláh’s death, under the leadership of his son, [‘Abdu’l-Bahá](#), the religion spread from its Persian and Ottoman roots, and gained a footing in Europe and America, and was consolidated in Iran, where it suffers intense [persecution](#). After the death of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, the leadership of the Bahá’í community entered a new phase, evolving from a single individual to an administrative order with both elected bodies and appointed individuals. There are probably more than **5 million Bahá’is around the world in more than 200 countries and territories**. Source: Wikipedia)

Courtesy : <https://evidencetobelieve.net/bahai-faith-vs-christianity/>

An open letter to a follower of the Baha'i faith

My experience as a member of the Baha'i Faith

By Dennis James Rogers

I became a member of the Baha'i Faith in the early seventies while an undergraduate at a small private midwestern university. The initial attraction was to the social teachings of the Faith particularly the tenets about gender and racial equality. I had been raised as a Roman Catholic and had attended parochial and public schools, but was not very well versed in Biblical Christianity. Since the sixties and seventies were a time of social upheaval and turmoil, the Baha'i Faith seemed like a rational alternative to traditional religious dogma. My connection to the group was minimal during my college years but picked up after I graduated in 1973. I had "accepted" the Faith based on a conversation with a Baha'i teacher who asked me if I agreed with the basic nine tenets of the Faith, I told him I did and he said I was a Baha'i. This was quite ironic considering that one of the basic tenets is "independent investigation of the truth". I had not taken the time to investigate nor done a thorough examination of its history or doctrine, something that I would not do until many years later while pursuing a role as a Baha'i apologetic.

In 1974 there was an International Convention held in St. Louis to initiate one of the plans that the Baha'i Administrative Order imposes on the rank and file. The plans originated with Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Baha'i Faith, they are ten-year plans, five-year plans, four-year plans, and seven-year plans or as little as one year plans. The plans have goals for teaching (expansion and consolidation) and "pioneers" which are similar to missionaries with the exception that pioneers are not subsidized by the organization, pioneers are expected to finance their own travel expenses, find employment and establish themselves as part of the city, village or community in which they are pioneering. The pioneer is to teach the faith, find new converts, establish a local spiritual assembly, (a local governing body consisting of nine adults) and then move on to a new pioneering post after the task has been completed. The Universal House of Justice, the international governing body for the Bahá'ís, generally established what the goal areas were with input from the National Spiritual Assemblies, the national governing bodies. I must comment that many pioneers I met, rarely if ever established Local Spiritual Assemblies and generally left their "posts" to return home. Pioneering is considered a glorious spiritual station and a certain degree of social pressure is put upon the members to become pioneers. The pioneers I met in the United States who came from the Middle East, primarily from Iran, were people of means, educated and wealthy. The early pioneers of the Baha'i Faith (from the West) were also people of means. This can be verified by the early written Baha'i history of the United States and Canada.

Being a new member of the group, I was not aware of the Baha'i culture, I was first asked to answer telephone calls from people interested in the Faith, there was considerable publicity on television, bill boards and newspapers about the convention with a phone number to call for people interested in finding out more information concerning the Faith. I was to answer questions, secure addresses and phone numbers to send literature for follow up by Baha'i teachers. The older members, not wanting to answer phones, attended the conference, which was presented by the ruling Baha'i elite. The nine members of the Universal House of Justice and the remaining living "Hands of the Cause". The Hands were individuals who had been appointed by Bahá-u-lláh, Abdul Bahá or Shoghi Effendi. The rank and file members, due to their high spiritual station of "servitude", regarded them as spiritual giants. Their main function was to protect and propagate the Faith. They were to protect the Faith from schism, but were apparently unsuccessful after the death of Shoghi Effendi in 1957, the only appointed Guardian of the Baha'i Faith. There have been, since his death, two main splinter groups, the Orthodox Bahá'ís and the Bahá'ís Under the Provision of the Covenant (BUPC) that I am aware of. I do not know what the other group's membership numbers are or their exact doctrines since contact with them is forbidden. They are to be shunned as "covenant breakers" and are considered "spiritually diseased" by the Baha'i Administrative Order. To be quite honest, I really was not that interested in them.

I attended a general session where several of the "Hands" spoke. Most of the talks were anecdotal in nature, encouraging the members to bring in more converts and step up the "teaching efforts". Though Bahá'ís claim they do not proselytize, semantics, all their efforts are aimed at bringing in more new members to establish the "New World Order"; this is to occur when there are mass conversions or "entry by troops". A term I discovered taken from Sura 110 in the Qu'ran entitled. "Help". (Rodwell's edition pg.429).

One of the elements that I found disturbing during the conference was an underlying anti-Christian sentiment, which is what eventually contributed to my leaving the Bahá'ís later, it was and is something not so overt as much as an arrogant attitude that many Bahá'ís feel. There were Christians offering literature outside of the convention center, which were not allowed in, and heavily criticized by the Baha'i attendee's. They consider themselves to be spiritually superior to Christians because Bahá'ís believe they have all the answers to humanity's problems for this day. One of the "Hands" stated that most Christians "were dead from the neck up." I purchased this speech on audiocassette tape and had also heard the comment live. This individual was upset that the Christians had more heart and moral fiber than the Bahá'ís. Christians were getting into Africa, South/Central America and Asia with missionaries before the Baha'i pioneers could "open" those areas. This "Hand" also felt that Americans were really not worth trying to teach the Faith to, since they were so entrenched in the culture and their churches. They were basically doomed, not worth saving. The Bahá'ís should therefore concentrate their efforts on native peoples who did not have so many "veils". A term frequently used by the membership to denote someone who could not accept the station of Bahá-u-lláh as God's savior for the world. After the conference was over, I was introduced to a Baha'i couple that lived in the municipality where I resided. This introduction and my experience with this couple would have lasting implications for me for the rest of my life.

Mr. and Mrs. Smith, as I will call them, were a very charismatic and charming couple, they took me into their home and became my "spiritual parents". Though I did not live with them I spent much time there. They were in their mid forties and had an adult daughter, whom I never met. Mr. Smith was about six foot four and had a very intimidating presence if he chose to and Mrs. Smith was about five foot seven and on the full figured side. She was very soft spoken with a mild southern drawl.

The couple immediately took me under their wing, seeing I was a new young and impressionable recruit gave them license to teach me as they saw fit. We began having "firesides", weekly teaching meetings in their home, for "seekers" as they are referred to (potential Bahá'ís). We held public meetings at the local library and community center, picnics at parks, anywhere we could attract attention to the Faith to bring in new members or

seekers to invite to firesides. During this time I became a very persuasive teacher under Mr. Smith's tutelage and as a result many young people "declared" their belief in Bahá'u-lláh, including one of my older brothers, his wife and several of my friends. So many people were enrolling in the Baha'i Faith, coming to firesides and meetings that it attracted the attention of the National Spiritual Assembly and they began to send people to investigate our activities. I found out decades later that the more conservative Baha'i administration at that time were alarmed at the number of "long hair hippie types" and African-Americans who were enrolling into the Baha'i Faith. Professor Juan R.I. Cole, a historian and former member of the Bahá'is has gone into this in some detail in a published paper entitled "The Baha'i Faith as Panopticon". The website address is: <https://www-personal.umich.edu/~jrcole/bahai/1999/jssr/bhjsr.htm>

The Smiths had me under their control and completely indoctrinated into the Baha'i Faith. I was their "spiritual son" and anything Mr. Smith said I took as truth. He began handing out "fez's", hats like the early Middle Eastern Bahá'is wore, to the younger male Bahá'is in the community. A symbol of his discipleship I suppose. This was alarming to the members of the National Spiritual Assembly who really took offense at this action, but did not confront Mr. Smith about it directly. I on the other hand and the other new young believers thought this was normal, wearing the fez, since none of the other older Bahá'is in the area said anything to him or us about it. At this time I was alienated from my family and former non-Baha'i friends. Everything I did was Baha'i, I felt I had all the answers and refused to listen to anyone else outside of the Baha'i Faith. Mr. Smith began to get verbally abusive and authoritarian with me if I disagreed with him on any issue. He never struck me, but he did on one occasion force me to prostrate myself before him and beg for forgiveness because I had disappointed him. I had wanted to get married and start a family and he wanted me to move away to another state with him. I need to add without going into too much detail that Mr. Smith sometimes would slip drugs into glasses of punch that he would give me and others to drink while we were guests in his home. On several occasions after giving me the "punch", he proceeded to lock me in a small room on the second floor of his house, a prayer closet he called it, and tell me to pray and meditate. Several times I hallucinated while in the "prayer closet" and he would grill me as to what I had experienced. It was some years later that I realized what he had done to me and how sick an individual Mr. Smith really was. To this day I do not know what the nature of the drugs were he had given to me.

The Smiths moved away out of state, as there were enough adult members in the community to form a Local Spiritual Assembly. (LSA). I was elected Chairman of the LSA and had been in that position for less than a year when the Assembly was summoned to a meeting at a local hotel with members of the Baha'i Administration. I must add that when Mr. and Mrs. Smith left the area I was greatly relieved and thought to myself "good riddance". I did occasionally speak to him on the telephone, when he called to see how I was doing.

What happened next when the LSA met with the Administrative representatives was something that I had kept to myself for over twenty years. We, the Local Spiritual Assembly members, thought we were going to be praised for all the teaching activity that had occurred and tripling the number of new believers. On the contrary, we were seated in a large hotel suite and then I was read a list of charges against me which included "conspiring" with Mr. Smith to run the Local Spiritual Assembly from out of state and for "claiming a station", whatever that meant. When I protested and attempted to defend myself, I was told to "sit down and shut up, we know all about you and anything you say will be just lies." I said I was leaving and they locked and blocked the door leading out of the room, there were about seven of them and they forced me and the other members of the Local Spiritual Assembly to listen to them for two hours. This is what the Bahá'is call "loving and frank consultation". I was humiliated, demeaned and my character assassinated in this meeting. Two of the members of the Local Spiritual Assembly came to my defense and stated that the charges were not true and that the picture that was being presented of me by them was inaccurate. My accusers never confronted me; I came to find out later that the National Spiritual Assembly and other Administrative bodies had used members of the Local Spiritual Assembly and the community as "informants". The concept of due process is foreign in the Baha'i Faith.

The result of this "consultation" had me removed from the assembly and ostracized from the community at large. Several of the Local Spiritual Assembly members left the Faith after this incident; as did several people that I had taught the Faith to. I seriously considered it, but decided not to because I was isolated and felt I deserved to be punished because of my association with the Smiths. I was instructed not to ever speak to them or have contact with the Smiths again, but not told why. If they contacted me I was to report it immediately to the Baha'i Administration.

The next step that the Baha'i Administration did was to "reeducate" me in the Baha'i teachings. They arranged for me to attend "deepening classes" (a Baha'i term used to denote in-depth study) with an older Baha'i teacher who had very little regard for me, almost to the point of open hostility. If I questioned him about certain doctrines that did not make sense to me he would become extremely defensive and caustic in speech. One time he hung up on me during the course of a telephone conversation after calling me an arrogant punk when questioning him about a prophetic statement in the Baha'i writings. He stated there was no such passage and when I read it to him over the phone he became very upset and hung up. I did not study with him much after that. Many of the Bahá'is and the Baha'i Administration considered him one of the best teachers in the United States and would rave about him. I found him to be offensive, sarcastic, demeaning to his students and to be without any formal training as an educator. He published a book through the Baha'i Publishing Trust, which I thought was confusing and incoherent, he was in his mid sixties when I met him.

Since many of the new Bahá'is we had taught had left the faith, the numbers in the community went down, so I was reinstated to the Local Spiritual Assembly by default. Much of my time was spent planning firesides, public meetings, picnics and fundraising. In the fifteen years that followed there was very little growth in the community in terms of the numbers of new believers, there was a revolving door so to speak, and people would come into the Faith and then either become inactive or just resign. This was particularly true of the African-American Bahá'is coming from a church background. There was very little structure or community life that resembles a church community. Most, if not all of Baha'i activity centers on meetings, teaching activities and fundraising. There was very little time left to develop interpersonal relationships or socialization.

One last painful episode, which further alienated me from the faith, was the fact that my wife at the time, we are now divorced, developed a close friendship with a "home front pioneer". These are Bahá'is that move to an area for a short time to fulfill some arbitrary local goal of the Baha'i Administration to establish a group or Local Spiritual Assembly. This individual, unbeknownst to me, tried to coerce my wife to divorce me and marry him during his tenure in the community. She told me about the relationship after he left the country to pioneer to South America. She is still on the rolls of the Baha'i Faith to my knowledge.

During the divorce process the community abandoned me, since divorce is frowned upon. An incident that occurred while going through the divorce, (a year of patience is required by Baha'i law), was when I attended a Baha'i Sunday class where I was confronted by several members of the community and chastised in the class for going through the divorce, I did not defend myself, but I must add that a Persian Baha'i man stood up for me and said in my defense that no one knows what goes on between two people and that it was not for anyone to judge. Despite that I did not attend any meetings for the next two years, nor was I contacted by any of the "friends" during that time. The community has a history of abandoning its members when they no longer can attend the meetings or participate in teaching activities.

I cannot truly characterize the Baha'i Faith as a "cult", though in my opinion there are strong social controls in place by the Baha'i Administration. Those controls filter down to the individuals who are afraid of openly questioning the decisions of that administration for fear of being labeled a "covenant breaker". Which is tantamount to being excommunicated from the community. The leadership has used this effectively since the beginnings of the religion to "purge the ranks of the believers". Once a person has been declared a covenant breaker, the Baha'i community shuns that person and contact with such an individual could cause "spiritual contamination" of the "Cause" as it is referred to. There are parallels in the Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormon groups, as I understand it. The discussion of "unquestioning loyalty and obedience" to the Baha'i covenant and administration is paramount to maintaining order within the community. Though membership in the Baha'i Faith is completely voluntary, individuals such as myself who based their entire lifestyle around the faith find it difficult to separate themselves from family and friends who are Baha'i even if they know there are contradictions within Baha'i doctrine. One risks those relationships and being isolated from the community. It took me three painful years to extricate myself and resign as an enrolled member. Since leaving the Baha'i Faith in the fall of 2000, I have had little or no contact with people I had been friends with for many years, friends whose children grew up with my children. Most of them believe I lost my faith in God. Those that I have spoken to are surprised that I am doing fine, that I attend church and perform in a gospel band.

Some of the contradictions that began to surface for me were a result of a radio broadcast I heard by Rev. Robert Pardon of the New England Institute of Religious Research (NEIRR) on a Lutheran radio station in St. Louis. He was giving an overview of the Baha'i Faith and I called to challenge him and his sources. I felt he was misrepresenting the Faith and had gotten his source material from "covenant breakers" or enemies of the Faith. I thought about what he had said and contacted him through his web site, I was finally beginning to investigate the Baha'i Faith after twenty-seven years. He sent me facsimiles of his source material and I began to meticulously go over it. Checking it against what had been presented to me by the Bahá'is. I also began writing letters and asking questions of Baha'i administrators and academics. I discovered that several contemporary Baha'i historians and academics had been forced out of the Faith because of their research and publications. Baha'i academics have to go through a review process before publishing anything about the Faith. If an author does not pass the review process one is not published. Their work essentially is censored. This is why almost all Baha'i literature and historical works are redundant. All the books and pamphlets are rewritten from the same "approved" source material. As a result of this, most Bahá'is are unaware of the early history of the Faith, the power struggles that ensued from the founders family members and instead are directed to the Baha'i approved materials. Other sources are considered suspect, labeled as unauthorized or from enemies of the faith.

Though the Faith teaches tolerance for other religions, the truth is taught that the Baha'i Faith is the "Ultimate Truth" for this day. All the previous "Manifestations of God" and revealed religions are essentially null and void. Humanity must follow the Baha'i Faith or suffer severe punishment. Jesus Christ, the Messiah and Savior for the entire human race is reduced to the station of a "Divine Educator". His revelation is no longer considered relevant for this day, in fact Christ's dispensation ended with the coming of Muhammad in the sixth century C.E. The clergy and a misunderstanding of scriptural interpretation have led all Christians astray. Personal salvation is no longer important; the salvation of the human race is the priority now. An intimate personal relationship with God is not possible, "the door leading unto the Ancient of Days is forever closed to man", (paraphrase from the Baha'i Writings). As I began to study the Bible in depth and outside of a Baha'i context, I began to understand the perspective of the Christian objection to the Baha'i Faith. A great deal of the social teachings and all of the spiritual teachings, which the faith presented as new, I discovered in Old and New Testament scripture. Some of the phrases from the Bible I found transcribed into Baha'i prayers. However the main source of contention for me was the arrogance of many Baha'i who became incensed at Christian authors trying to give accurate accounts regarding the Baha'i Faith and it's history. Yet they thought nothing of explaining away two thousands years of historical Christianity and exegetical study, while engaging in the worst form of eisegesis.

On a more personal level, I was concerned about my soul and salvation, I never really felt forgiven or saved as a Baha'i or that Bahá-u-lláh was a personal savior. When reading how Jesus taught us to forgive our enemies and to pray for them in the Gospels, I compared that to how the Baha'i Faith historically condemned and shunned its enemies. (Many who were the disciples, spouses and relatives of the central figures of the Faith, even Shoghi Effendi, the Baha'i Guardian, excommunicated his own parents!). I began to ask God to open my eyes and guide me to the truth.

With the help of Rev. Bob Pardon, (NEIRR) Pastor Todd Wilken and Jeff Schwartz of radio station KFUE in St. Louis, I began the task of "testing the spirits" to determine what was true. I tested the Bahá'is by raising questions at Baha'i meetings about historical and doctrinal contradictions as well as prophetic statements in the Baha'i Faith that had not come to pass. Dates had been given where certain events were to have transpired and did not occur. Many Bahá'is were desperately trying to rationalize these unfulfilled prophecies. This line of questioning was making me very unpopular to say the least, particularly when I began to post those questions on the local Baha'i chat list. I started to receive calls from the local Baha'i authorities as well as from some of the "friends". (A term Bahá'is use to refer to each other). I finally officially withdrew my membership and posted it on the chat list. I received numerous calls and e-mails from the "friends" wanting to counsel me, I then posted and requested that I not be contacted, which of course did not occur, finally I posted my reasons for leaving the Baha'i Faith and that I no longer could follow the doctrines or obey the Administrative Order. An Administrative Representative who wished to meet with me concerning my statements contacted me. His real intent was to declare me a "covenant breaker" and therefore have me shunned so as not to "infect" any other Bahá'is with doubt. I agreed to meet with him. He had books with him and was prepared to contend with me. I chose not to engage him on doctrinal issues, I instead stated that I did not believe that Bahá-u-lláh was the return of Christ and relayed to him the incidents I had suffered at the hands of Bahá'is and the Administration. He repeatedly apologized and stated he would ask the Bahá'is to respect my wishes that I not be contacted and harassed about my decision.

I have since accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Savior and have found a peaceful assurance that I had never experienced as a Baha'i. I bear no malice towards the Baha'i Faith or individual Bahá'is. Some of them are very kind, gentle and loving souls. This testimony is intended to help those members of the Baha'i community, who may have experienced similar situations and come to a personal realization regarding doctrinal contradictions. There is hope, peace and life outside of the Baha'i Faith for those who choose to seek it.

Source : <https://fglaysiaher.com/bahaicensorship/Ex16.htm>

Is the Baha'i Faith a Persecuted Religion ?

Written by an Ex-Baha'i Member

I am a former Baha'i and a student (admirer) of Shia Islam. I don't see any intolerance towards Baha'is in any Islamic country, except Iran.

In Iran also, Baha'is are tolerated and entitled to all basic human rights that other Iranians are entitled to. They are only forbidden to teach their 'religion' to others and they are also not allowed to form any 'administration.' AFAIK, if religion is your personal affair then no one in Iran cares about what you believe.

Baha'i Faith has a very strong administration and tight control over its members. They have political connections with the so called 'world powers' and they have 'Office of External Affairs' in every country that maintains relations with government offices and influence their foreign policies. They have extremely good relations with Iran hostile countries.

Baha'i Faith is not a 'simple' religion like any other religion! This is a religion with strong administration. There is surveillance by Baha'i Police (the ABMs for protection), that monitors individual Baha'i activities, in case of suspicion, problematic Baha'is are warned / punished with sanctions / shunned / ex-communicated. Baha'i faith is considered a dangerous NWO cult in Iran.

Baha'i faith has a long history of violence in Iran, its predecessor, the Babi faith was responsible for at least 3 civil wars that killed 1000s of Iranians.

So, all Baha'i activities are minutely monitored by Iranian government and those Baha'is are prosecuted who violate Iranian laws. Iran hostile countries term this "prosecution" as "persecution" because this serves their agenda. Today there are more than 300000 Baha'is in Iran but only ~70 of them are in prisons for several crimes.

In all other Islamic countries, Baha'is enjoy full freedom. In Pakistan they are a recognized minority, they are represented very well, their holidays are respected and they enjoy all benefits that other minorities enjoy.

In Pakistan Shia community is a more persecuted community. They have lost 1000s of lives in past 3–4 decades.

Look at the positions of the Baha'i community in relation to the Palestinian Human Rights

These days the tragic dimensions of Gaza, has shown its inhuman face, Every condemnation of the crimes of the various groups around the world face (such as the recent rally Mothers for Peace). Every time news of the crime spread and the number of victims in Gaza is increasing. Not only the quality or quantity of victims of crime are surprised observers have earned. Israel's use of strange and unusual weapons in an attack on residential areas of Gaza and killing innocents, anger, surprise and sorrow of human society followed. See mortars, each 3 cm over 5000 small metal darts thrown at a radius of 300 meters, has not escaped any moving object. Combine ugly, strange, symbolic of primitivism and civilization. When the World Cup reaches its climax, Palestinian children went to the beach to play, and hours later, the little victims play dirty and deadly Israeli politicians. These days it is not easy to watch the news conference. Not in front of the TV lounge with tea Astkany the "Change the World" followed. The speakers these days, when the news reached Palestine have to repeat the phrase that "some of the images and reports for children and heart patients ..." is not appropriate. Not only for the patients whose mutilated corpse watch the children drown in blood is not suitable for any survivors and freedoms. But that's not all scenes. Behind the scenes pictures of the wall and over the hills overlooking the Gaza released. Mobile cafe where they had set up a group of Israeli bombing in Gaza beer "from above" and safely enjoy watching crime watch, it is also close to lose.

When tragedy at Auschwitz, male and female, young and old for the "Final Solution" was sent to the chambers of death, savagery and violence that was always the big question is how far it can go? And now what is happening in Gaza shows that the descendants of the victims of yesterday, the criminals easily have filled yesterday. Crime and murder have gone on more and more horrible than the Nazi antisemites saw the Jews of Europe, the leaders of Israel and the people of Gaza are abandoned. This is not a tale of crime and savagery and turned that tramples the rights outright, approach the history of Israel.

Now the day of Israel's crimes face becomes clearer and louder voices condemning the crimes of Israel from around the world. People from anywhere and from any race, color, religion, nationality, against the crimes of Israel and Israel's disregard for human rights protest. The groups and NGOs that work on human rights, above all and before all the objections have been raised. In Gaza, the clearest and most natural way, because a human right, not as hard as the property can be easily and conveniently. No other explanation was not accepted. Whoever knocks on the door of human rights, the tragedy of Gaza can only be watched.

The collective behavior of my fellow citizens who, due to the historical injustice to them and their rights have been abused, has always been said and written of human rights, it is strange to me. I mean of course the price of your fellow citizens. Baha'is are always and everywhere the perspective of human rights in Iran, especially after the revolution they contend gone. Groups and human rights organizations from this perspective, has always protested human rights violations in Iran. I also have with him the hearts and the word and the fundamental rights of the Baha'is of protesters. What irrespective of religion or belief of his being, people know because being human, I believe that they are entitled to the same rights as others. But the behavior of the Baha'is in dealing with Israel during the time of blood on the night of the disaster intercourse. Human rights were not just protesting the violation of their rights. Human rights, human rights violations against the rights of all human beings and knows it, wherever and to whatever that is objected to. I do not know why the Baha'is of the world's smallest objection to his crimes in Gaza show? They are protesting against the violation of human rights of Iranian Baha'is their duty, did, in fact, the "human rights" believe? Or that the Baha'i Declaration of Human Rights as an excuse for temporary use? If you believe in human rights for all human beings, and those who protested against the violations, because all these years, not in distant lands right ear Universal House of Justice, the latest of oppression and the protest of the Baha'i community and there is no disaster struck did not hear? Off the coast of Gaza, all flowers blossom Palestinian children shot in chest and throat to fission, but Mosaffa Acre Gardens, Bang Brnkhas any bird. Why? Except the Baha'i claim that they are following the oneness of humanity? How can seek the oneness of humanity and all human beings "once one of the branches and leaves of a" brutal killings and massacres against the Israelis knew that all of protest against the respecting the right of the silence of forced the fellow Take advantage of the media and raised his voice? Bhyyan not in the eyes of the people of the Baha'i fresh leaves, green leaves and useless branches of Palestinian women and children "humanity" are? The House of Justice does not like the attention and support of the Israeli government, to manage the affairs of the Baha'i world and promote the development of the Baha'i Faith is busy, can not protest against the cruelty of long-standing Israel does Not to draw guests in host recognition can be cruel irritability? What then should be asked how the Universal House of justice and injustice and tyrants who cast her in a skirt? How to be proactive seekers of justice was cruel? What kind of justice is that all people are free to contend against injustice, silence is? New evidence of the excuse is worse than a sin. The question of souls is free of cost. Universal House of unacceptable excuses aside, it's all Baha'i organizations and various groups around the world have, because none of these are permanent protest human rights violations in Iran, in the face of this latest tragedy nothing Do? When it all visionaries, artists and cultural activists and intellectuals, either collectively or individually, in various forms, statement or in the form of art or of street protests and in the Gaza atrocities condemn. Why no price band so far in the history of Israel's crimes did not show any reaction? Despite the claim that they are not Baha'is, Baha'is because of his special servants of God know? Baha'is do not believe they are God's chosen people and the other peoples of the protest is going on?

I think this disaster is going on in Gaza, bombs and missiles, and a variety of modern weapons over the Hawar Palestinian people and Palestinian children's blood that stained the dirt playing fields, examination of human rights for everyone who knocks on the door. I remember some of the defendants' lawyers Bahai in Iran, Ms. Ebadi. He also defended the court finds that the rights of his famous sermons in the Nobel award ceremony, lost no opportunity to protest the violation of Palestinian rights. Baha'is But unlike his famous lawyer in this field are silent. His silence may indicate disbelief of Human Rights. Silence can be alarming. Let us not forget that the criminal slaughter in Gaza are children of Holocaust victims

Baha'i Seminar on Teaching Christians More Effectively, by David Young.

Access and download a completely free version of this handbook at:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B7wi2k1ZZvuYTXVkQU...>

Baha'i Faith and Polygamy

Baha'u'llah contrary to his own laws that permits two wives, and contrary to the laws of his predecessor the Bab who only permitted a single wife, practiced polygamy and was married to three wives (officially). He also had another wife that Baha'is usually don't speak about who was a young maid in his house.

Form the 3 official wives, two WERE LABELLED as covenant breakers. You see they didn't break the covenant, they were labelled as covenant breakers due to their opposition to Abdu'l-Baha hogging power and usurping the right of his half-brother Muhammad Ali. The only wife that was not kicked out of the faith was guess who: Yes Abdu'l-Baha's mother.

Unfortunately, people labelled as covenant breakers are treated very inhumanely in Baha'ism and are severely persecuted. No one is allowed to speak or socialize with them even their own children and spouses and if they do so they will be given the same treatment.

Further more in the words of Baha'i leaders they are referred to using very hateful words like contamination, haters of the light, and sufferers from spiritual leprosy:

"Announce to Hands and all National Assemblies that following the loss of the appeal to the Supreme Court, the Government expropriation order has been implemented, resulting in the complete evacuation of the remnant of Covenant-breakers and the transfer of all their belongings from the precincts of the Most Holy Shrine, and the **purification**, after six long decades, of the Haram-i-Aqdas from every trace of their **contamination**. Measures under way to effect transfer of title deeds of the evacuated property to the triumphant Bahá'í community." (Shoghi Effendi, Messages to the Bahá'í World: 1950–1957, p. 124) [Messages to the Bahá'í World: 1950–1957](#)

"It is better not to read books by Covenant-breakers because they are **haters of the Light, sufferers from a spiritual leprosy**, so to speak." (Helen Bassett Hornby, *Lights of Guidance: A Baha'i Reference File* (New Delhi: Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1983), chap. XII, no. 628)

Unfortunately this is the true face of the Baha'i cult that is usually kept hidden from outsiders.

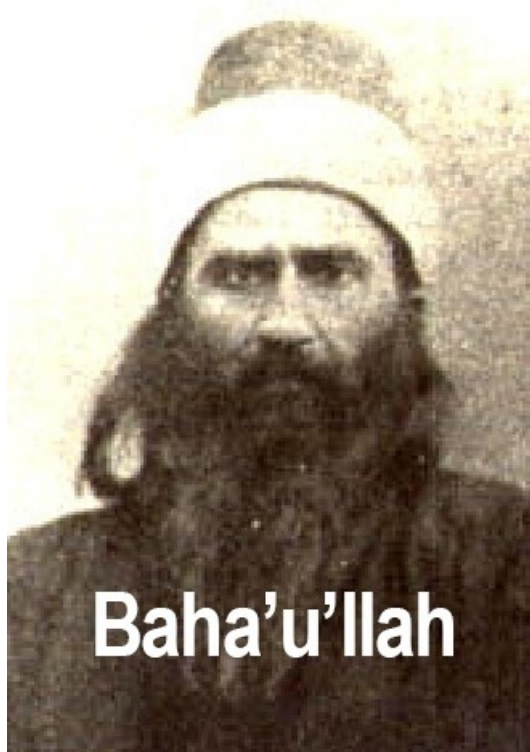
What is the aim of bicentennial celebrations of the Birth of Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb?

Who is the promised one of Babi Faith? Subh-i-Azal, Baha'u'llah or someone yet to come?

Let us examine each of these three possibilities from Bayani point of view:

- Many Bayanis did believe that Subh-i-Azal was the Promised One of Bayan, such as Mirza Jani and August J. Stenstrand; however, nowhere in the writings of Subh-i-Azal do we see that he ever made these claims. In practice, Subh-i-Azal denied that the Promised One of Bayan could appear so quickly, rebuking all people who claimed to be him. And once again, **he never claimed to be him**. It is clear he was not Azal.
- The Primal Point states in the Persian Bayan: **“If He [whom God shall manifest] shall appear in the number of Ghiyath and all shall enter in, not one shall remain in the Fire. If He tarry until [the number of] Mustaghath, all shall enter in, not one shall remain in the Fire, but all shall be transformed into His light”** (2:17). The numerical value of the word Ghiyath is 1511, and the numerical value of the word Mustaghath is 2001. These numbers refer to years on the Bayanic calendar, meaning that He can only appear after 1511 Bayanic years have elapsed. This is also confirmed by the fact that the Bayan presupposes that at least Persia will adopt Bayan as the state religion (see Persian Bayan 5:18; 5:19; 6:12; 7:3; 7:16. Arabic Bayan 9:3; 11:2); it is predicted Bayani sheikhs, imams, and judges, etc. will appear (see Persian Bayan 5:8). It is clear Bayan was meant to last a time similar to other dispensations such as that of Jesus, Moses, and Muhammad. It is clear he was not Baha.
- It is clear from this evidence that, since Baha is not him, nor are the 14 other people who claimed to be him, and neither was he Subh-i-Azal, **the Promised One of Bayan has yet to come, and the verses of the Bayan testify to this fact.**

What do Bayanis think of Baha'u'llah?



The Bayánis view Bahá as a usurper who pretended to be He Whom God shall make manifest in order to undermine his brother, Subh-i-Azal who he was jealous of, as he was granted leadership of the Bayání community by the Primal Point.

“After a while, Baha thought of making his own claim. He would often write what he called verses and then would have them washed out in the sea and would say that ‘they were the share of the fish!’ Elders of the Babi [Bayani] community went to Baghdad and admonished Baha for his improper behavior. As a result, he took to the Suleymaniyya where he stayed for two years. There, he also made fresh claims as a result of which he received death threats and saw no option but writing to Subh-i-Azal asking for permission to return which was granted” ([Atiyya Ruhi, “A Brief Biography of His Holiness Subh-i-Azal”](#)).

Even during the years before the Bayani-Baha'i schism, Baha in private created his own circle of friends constantly trying to undermine Subh-i-Azal. He was constantly flip flopping because he was at instances caught red handed making claims forcing him to retreat and recant.

Bahá says:

“I swear by God that if any one of the People of the Bayan were to mention that the Book [the Bayan] is abrogated, may God smash the mouth of the speaker and the calumniator, and by him who holds my soul and myself in his hands one letter from the Bayan is the most loved with me than all that are in the heavens and on the earth” ([1862 Letter of Bahá during the Baghdad Period](#)).

And he also says:

“Consider bygone ages and reflect upon what god had inflicted on their peoples for having contended amongst themselves, for having turned aside from His Countenance, for having strayed away from His path, for having done wrong to His Cause, and for having associated any creature with the Sovereign of His Unity, for which they were of the perished. Have you ever heard religion of god to exist before it is confirmed, or commandment of god to be abrogated before it becomes manifest? ... Nay, by my lord, the lord of heavens, no one can abrogate one letter from that which has been revealed in the Bayan” ([Letter of Bahá to Sayyid Ibrahim, a Follower of Dayyán](#)).

The Baha'i leadership have tried with all their might to slander and destroy the reputation of His Holiness Subh-i-Azal and have resorted to the most deceitful methods to discredit him, and the allegations they have made against His Eminence found in unsourced, unscholarly books of propaganda such as *God Passes By* authored by Shoghi Effendi are at times nothing short of foul language.

Bahá's work, the *Kitab-i-Badi*, which the Baha'i administration has not yet translated contains the most severe of insults and foul language against His Holiness Subh-i-Azal and his followers:

“When the one who turned away from God halted (in accepting me) and fell off the path, in that moment his body left the garb of humanness and appeared and became visible in the skin of animals. Sanctified is He who changes the beings how he likes” (*Kitab-i-Badi*, p. 110).

“From this day, any individual that mentions as human [or humanness] a single person from those who deny me — whether that

[denier] has a high or low stature — they will be excluded from all of (God's) Merciful Graces, let alone trying to prove [those deniers] have dignity or stature” (*Kitab-i-Badi*, p. 140).

“Say, Oh you donkeys! Whatever God says is the truth and will not become void by the words of the polytheists (deniers of Baha’ism)” (*Kitab-i-Badi*, p. 174).

The Hasht Bihsht records an incident where Bahá himself attempted to murder Subh-i-Azal:

“The first juggle and trick of sorcery which he [i.e. Baha] outlined was this, that he brought to Hazrat-i Azal [i.e. Subh-i Azal] a dish of plain food, with one side of which he had mixed with some poison, intending to poison His Holiness. For hitherto the apportioned breakfast and supper of His Holiness the Fruit [Hazrat-i Thamara, one of the titles conferred on Subh-i Azal by the Point] had been from the house of Mirza Husayn Ali [i.e. Baha]. When that poisoned dish was placed before His Holiness, Mirza Husayn Ali pressed him to partake of it. By a fortunate chance the smell of onions was perceptible in the food, and His Holiness, being averse to taste it. Mirza Husayn Ali continued to press him urgently to eat. He replied, “it smells of onions, I will not eat it; if it is so good, eat it yourself. From this answer Mirza Husayn Ali supposed that His Holiness had divined his evil design, and, simply put the view of disguising the truth and putting a better appearance on the matter, ate a little from the other side [i.e. the unpoisoned side] of the dish, in order that the suspicion of His Holiness might perhaps be dispelled and he might eat the poisoned side. But His Holiness, because of the smell of onion would not eat.”

However, some of the poison had diffused into that side of the dish, and Bahá as a result was poisoned. Following this, he resorted to telling people that Subh-i-Azal had poisoned him.

Bayánis do not believe that Bahá is He Whom God shall make manifest.

All those who claimed this office based their pretensions on a misinterpreted passage in the *Arabic Bayán* (6:15) where it says:

فلنقو من انتم كلکم لجمعون اذا تسمعن ذکر من تظهره باسم القائم و لتراقبن فوق القائم والقيوم ثم فی سنة التسع کل خير تتركون

“...in the year nine ye will attain unto all good.”

But there is nothing in this passage to invalidate the limit of time fixed by the Primal Point in the Persian Bayán for the appearance of He Whom God shall make manifest, a minimum period of 1511 years, and a maximum period of 2001 years in the Bayánic calendar.

It is clear from Bahá's actions that his flimsy divine claims were put forward for the sole reason that he wanted to undermine his brother.

Subh-i-Azal, in his letter to Bahá, as quoted by the renowned Bayání scribe, Mirza Mustafá Katib, says the following:

“...O faithless brother, what has happened that in vain you joined hands to violate my honour, and to stain your own hand with my blood. You gathered round yourself a band of persons addicted to vice ... you excited this gang of villains to hate me ... I appointed you to act for me. I ordered my friends to obey you ... you are now out to destroy me. I was your guest, you abused me. You swore at me in my face. That which you yourself deserved you ascribed to me. You inspired your servants with rancorous hatred of me. Even you taught your own barber your own falsehoods. He gave false evidence against the truth. You set in motion this great sedition ... Outwardly you pretended to be my friend. You attended my feast. You ate my meal of trust. Inwardly you manifested your falsehood until Shawal 23 [Presumably March 11, 1866] when I was keeping a fast you withheld bread and water from me. ... By deceit you intercepted my epistles. Some of them which were to your advantage you paraded before the inhabitants of the city [i.e. Edirne]. At present I am in straitened circumstances and you are in affluence. And yet you pretend the contrary...” ([In Response to Zayn-al-Muqarrabin](#)).

Baha'i Guidance on Teaching the Muslims

The following guidance was dropped in the U S in 1998.

Bahá'is are not permitted to single out Muslims from the Middle-East and North Africa, especially Iranian Muslims, to teach them the Faith. Should such a person become spontaneously attracted to the Faith he or she may, with caution, be taught. Enrolment in the Faith is, however, a different issue which must be considered on a case by case basis:- The instructions of the beloved Guardian regarding teaching orientals from the Middle East are to be upheld, even more so at this time because of the present situation in Iran. Iranian Muslims in particular should not be sought out in order to teach them the Faith. **(letter written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to a National Spiritual Assembly, dated February 6, 1986)**

There are certain principles governing association with persons from Middle Eastern Muslim countries. Bahá'is in the West are not to initiate any attempts to teach the Faith to Muslims from Middle Eastern countries. This includes Muslims from Iran, North Africa and Arab countries. Muslims from these countries who have become citizens of the United States or have acquired permanent resident status and who show a genuine interest in learning about the Faith may be taught the Faith but it is they who must take the initiative. If a Muslim should ask for information on the Faith, the information he seeks may be given according to the dictates of wisdom, but Baha'is should not exceed the request that has been made by attempting to convert the person, interest him further or invite him to Baha'i meetings. In short, Baha'is are not to make a project of teaching Muslims. Although there are certain restrictions about teaching Muslims from some countries and accepting them into the Faith, it is a different situation with Muslims from India or Pakistan as compared with those from Iran or the Near East.

(letter written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to a National Spiritual Assembly, dated September 22, 1983)



David Bowie The following is an extract from an 8 October 2004 letter from the Canadian National Spiritual Assembly to all Local Spiritual Assemblies and Regional Bahá'í Councils. The emphasis is in the original.

"The National Spiritual Assembly has received through regular mail a letter dated 1 August 2004 from the Universal House of Justice to selected National Assemblies regarding teaching the Faith to Muslims. The House of Justice has advised that, owing to the sensitive nature of this communication, the following guidance should not be distributed electronically, posted on Web sites, or published in newsletters. You should also advise the believers that they may not share the following content in email communications and should not raise the subject in Internet discussion groups (emphasis added). We will rely on your institutions to do everything possible to see that these instructions are scrupulously upheld by all the friends."

So obviously at that time there was still reason for concern and wisdom. So much so that the House of Justice did not send its letter electronically. Because of the restriction in the above extract I can't share the text with you.

I also don't know if the subject is still as sensitive today.

I honestly think individuals should be asking their own administration if the guidance troubles them.

Like · Reply · 5h



Haifan Bahais are part of the AngloZionist empire's global espionage apparatus

Exactly. And here is recent proof that Haifan Bahais are part of the AngloZionist empire's global espionage apparatus:

is the co-author of "Spy the Lie", a publication in which "Three former [CIA](#) officers—among the world's foremost authorities on recognizing deceptive behavior—share their proven techniques for uncovering a lie.". The book was authored with the assistance of former CIA officers, [Philip Houston](#), [Michael Floyd](#), and [Susan Carnicero](#), who, according the publisher's website, "are among the world's best at recognizing deceptive behavior. Spy the Lie chronicles the captivating story of how they used a methodology Houston developed to detect deception in the counterterrorism and criminal investigation realms, and shows how these techniques can be applied in our daily lives."

A former [National Security Agency](#) analyst, Tennant is also partner at the "deception-detection services provider [QVerity](#)".

According to his employment profile, Tennant is "A veteran business/technology journalist and speaker" who "began his career with the [National Security Agency](#) as a research analyst covering international economic issues. His proficiency in the Chinese language and experience in producing key intelligence reports for senior U.S. policymakers prepared him for a venture into journalism, beginning in Hong Kong where he served as the Editor in Chief of the Hong Kong edition of Computerworld. He returned to the U.S. to become Editor in Chief of the flagship U.S. edition of Computerworld, and later assumed the editorial directorship of Computerworld and InfoWorld. Don has conducted in-depth interviews with hundreds of top corporate executives and dozens of high-profile CEOs, from [Bill Gates](#) and [Steve Ballmer](#) of [Microsoft](#), to [Oracle](#)'s [Larry Ellison](#) and [Xerox](#)'s [Anne Mulcahy](#)."

As his profile further states: "Don was presented with the 2007 Timothy White Award for Editorial Integrity by American Business Media, and he is a recipient of the prestigious Jesse H. Neal National Business Journalism Award for editorial excellence in news coverage. His weekly editorial column in Computerworld won the national gold award from the American Society of Business Publication Editors (ASBPE) in 2006, 2007, and 2008, and the national gold award from Trade, Association and Business Publications International (TABPI) in 2006. Under his leadership, Computerworld won dozens of editorial awards, including ASBPE's Magazine of the Year Award in 2004 and 2006. Don holds a B.S. in Language from Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. Follow him on Twitter [@dontennant](#)."

Tennant's author profile in "Spy the Lie", states that "his experience in producing key policy reports for senior U.S. policy makers prepared him for a venture into journalism, which led to his appointment as editor-in-chief of Computerworld."

Tennant is a member of the [Baha'i Faith](#), and "lives with his wife, Ardith" at the campus of the [Green Acre Baha'i School](#) in Eliot, Maine,, where Ardith Tennant is a program coordinator.

Ref: http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/Don_Tennant

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Why Abdu'l Baha was awarded Knighthood by British Government ?!

Ex-Lover of Baha'u'llah writes about the murders committed by the “New Manifestation!”

This article is the first in a series which has been compiled from the book “Kashful Heel” written by Abdul Husain Aayati. He lived amongst the Bahais for 20 years and served them through these years. He was popularly known as “Awareh” which means the one who wandered about in love (of Bahaullah). After these years, he saw the corruptions of the Bahais first hand, renounced the Bahai Faith and finally reverted back to Islam. Thereafter he wrote the book “Kashful Heel” to reveal the true face and hypocrisy of the Bahais. The life history of Awareh is full of interesting events and episodes which outline the true face of the Bahais as revealed by an insider.

Professor E. G. Browne wrote a book about the Bahais known as “Materials for the Study of Babi Religion.” On page 7 of this book, he writes, “Bahauallah migrated from Baghdad to Sulaymania Kurdistan with his servant Abul Qasim in the year 1271 AH. His servant died on the way. He said that I have heard from Abbas Afandi that Abul Qasim was Hamdani and he went from Sulaymania to Hamdan as per the wish of Bahauallah. After having sold all his property in Hamdan, he was returning to Sulaymania and since Bahauallah knew that Abul Qasim had cash with him, he killed him”.

He said at another instance that the news of the murder of Abul Qasim was published in the newspaper. It was written in the paper that “Abul Qasim Hamdani is killed near Sulaymani and his head is cut off and his belongings have been taken away but his killer is not known.”

Abbas Afandi said at another place that, “We understood from the killing of Abul Qasim that Bahauallah was in Kurdistan.”

One of the Bahais said: “We can derive from all these saying of Abbas Afandi that the killer of Abul Qasim is the same person who betrayed Abul Qasim and convinced him that he should encash his property and should go to Sulaymanai but as soon as he reached there, he took him to desert of Sulaymania and put him to death and usurped his belongings and his cash.”

At another place he said, “Before Abul Qasim could meet Bahauallah, he was killed and his cash was stolen and his murder was portrayed as a normal death to Professor Browne who made many changes in the history under the influence of Bahais. Since many such huge murders were committed by Bahauallah and his sons, most of the Bahais have asserted that the killer of Abul Qasim is no one other than Bahauallah and it is not surprising at all!

Professor Browne has recorded another incident at page 10 of his book as follows, “Aqa Sayyed Ismael Zawareha left Baghdad and went to Kazmain in the year 1284 AH and committed suicide.”

The details of this story are given below. It is well known among Bahais that Sayyed Ismael pleaded with Bahauallah that he should show him his holiness. Bahauallah refused by saying that he did not have the capacity to bear it but since he insisted, Bahauallah showed him his holiness as a result of which Sayyed Ismael committed suicide as it was unbearable for him. Some people believe that Syed Ismael was also killed by Bahauallah. They said that Syed Ismael wanted to cut off his relationship with them since he became aware of the wickedness of Bahauallah and his sons and hence he wanted to move to Kazmain so as to make atonement for his sins.

The Consul General of Britain who was residing in Baghdad gave protection to Bahauallah and suggested to him that he should go to India where he would easily find people who would follow his whims and ideas.

At another place he quoted an incident of Syed Mohammed and Mirza Reza at page no 52 of his book as follows, “Syed Mohammed Isfahani and Mirza Reza Qali Tafrishi and his sister opposed Bahauallah strongly. They collected many tablets and saying of Bahauallah and published many different articles in the form of copies among the people against him. After a lot of meetings and consultation, Bahais of Akka arrived at the conclusion of getting rid of them. Hence they called their helper Naseer Baghdadi known as Haji Abbas from Beirut to kill Syed Mohammed Isfahani but left their plan later on.

Haji Abbas whose real name was Naseer was well known for his wickedness in Baghdad and was loyal to Bahauallah and Abdul Baha. Abdul Baha, during his stay in Bagdad, preached to Naseer Baghdadi who was a man of 40 years at that time and Bahais themselves have asserted that Naseer or Haji Abbas was a staunch lover of Bahauallah and had brutally murdered several times on behalf of them. The first murder which was committed by Naseer was of Mulla Rajab Ali Qaheer who was the brother of the wife of Syed Bab in Karbala. Mulla Rajab Ali did not support Mirza Husain Ali (Bahauallah) and said that his uprising is against the laws of Babi, Naseer was therefore called to kill him in Karbala.

The detailed explanation of this incident is mentioned at page 220 of Prof Browne's book. Bahais did not shun the plot of killing Syed Mohammed in Akka completely but rather they realised that since many of his companions were killed, therefore killing of Syed Mohammed could be a problem for Naseer. Hence they shunned the idea of killing him. Another reason of leaving the idea of killing Syed Mohammed is that since the calling of Naseer from Beirut was widely publicized, they realised that the situation was not appropriate for the same and hence they assigned the task of killing Syed Mohammed to somebody else.

The description of killing Syed Mohammed and his companion have been recorded at page number 55 as follows. Seven persons were selected to kill Syed Mohammed. These 7 persons killed Syed Mohammed and Mirza Qali on 12th Zilqad 1288 AH. The government of Akka caught hold of all Bahais along with Bahauallah and his sons and Aqa Jaan Kashani who was known as Khademullah. They imprisoned Bahauallah and Mohammed Ali Afandi in Shahwardi and Abbas Afandi in Bandar Abbas and Mohammed Ali Qali in some other place but they chained severely Khademullah and other Bahais in prison. After 6 days of imprisonment they sent 7 killers of Syed Mohammed to Bandar Abbas and the other 26 Bahais to Shahwardi. They were imprisoned for 6 months and 6 days. It was decreed that some of the 7 killers should be imprisoned for a period of 7 years where as others should be imprisoned for 15 years.

It should be noted that this history was narrated by Mirza Jawad Qazwini who was one of the supporters of Bahaullah to Professor Browne. Though he turned away from Abbas Afandi after the death of Bahaullah, but when he narrated this history to Professor Browne, he was enumerated as one of the obedient lovers of Bahaullah at that time. Hence he was aware of most of the realities which he has written and this was frequently the cause of the displeasure of Bahais since they wanted that such history should not be written. Rather, it should be overlooked. Bahais even removed most of the realities from my book "Kawkabud Durrih" inspite of my disapproval. They brought about many changes in my book due to which it is now not reliable in front of me. This was the cause of annoyance between me and their chief as I wanted my book to remain untouched whereas they wanted to make changes in it. In spite of so many changes which they have made in my books there are still such famous murders and killings that none of the Bahai is reject it. Bahais and their sons were very ahead in crime. Abbas Afandi was himself involved in such types of killing and used to give orders on behalf of his father.

Abbas Afandi was involved in killing of Syed Mohammed and due to this reason he was called by Bahais as Maseeh and Syed Mohammed as Dajjal since Dajjal would be killed by the sword of Hazrat Esa. The motive behind this was that they wanted to designate the title of Esa to Abbas Afandi. After few days they realized that such type of narration is funny therefore they left it. Two more people, Mahmud Khan and his friend were secretly killed in Akka by them. Mohammed's body was hidden in the foundation of the wall and their bones were discovered some distance away. They did not take an old friend of Bahaullah, who was a doctor along with them and she had signed on the board which was lying there and had borne witness that these two people died of cholera and due to the epidemic of cholera nobody reached to bury these body. Therefore these people hid these two bodies at this place.

Aawarah said that he himself heard that she had taken 1,000 tuman to give this witness and after few years when she was no longer young to enjoy her youth, she revealed the reality to her near and dear ones. It can be seen as to what extent Bahaullah and his supporters can stoop to achieve their purpose. How many people he has killed and how many thefts he has committed. He sent money to Akka for committing other such types of corruptions and all such money was sent from Iran to Akka since the beginning. Such money was used in committing different corruptions or it was used as a bribe to so and so judge to so and so witness and some money was used on American and Jewish girls. Some money was kept in a bank as a provision for the future and some money was used in purchasing and making buildings.

There were many such people who were fond of Abbas Afandi, his brother and their chief earlier but later on when the reality was revealed to them and they wanted to show it to the world or wanted to disclose their real faces, they used to bear the same consequences (difficulty) as was met by Syed Mohammed and his companions. Such people were either killed by the sword of Mirza Abbas Afandi or his statements against them were made ineffective by them. Fortunately if person, like Awarah was saved from their conspiracy he used to disclose all their realities to the other follower of Bahais.

Abbas Afandi followed the same way for a long time. If any of his followers wanted to say anything against him, he was scared of him and therefore refrained from saying anything against him and Abbas Afandi never allowed him to sit in the circle of his friends and used to make fun of him in the presence of others. In this way Abbas Afandi humiliated that person and also discouraged others from saying anything against him. But if, anyway, any of his tricks did not work, he did not desist from exaggerating himself. For example, if any of his followers turned away from him and may be living peacefully in any other city but Abbas Afandi used to say as follows regarding him, "What a humiliation he is facing!."

Sometimes he used to take the support of the Ayat of Surah Taha: 124, "Whosoever keep away from my remembrance, his sustenance would be cut off" to prove his point and his followers who were not aware of that person used to think that this is the revelation of Almighty and used to think about that person he might be begging alongside road or that his head and body may be afflicted by leprosy. And if coincidentally anybody see that person in a good state other Bahais would reject it by saying as to who knows better whether he or Sarkare Akaa (Abdul Baha)? They said that Aaka had informed them in the Tablet revealed to him by Allah that such person was humiliated and that he was afflicted by disease. Then how it was possible that other could see that person in a good position and in a honourable state? Ultimately that person had to revert back from what he had seen and he had to curse himself thousand times that what he had seen was mistaken.

Reference: Kashful Heel, pgs. 705-714

C O U R T E S Y <https://abdulhusainaayati.wordpress.com/2016/02/09/ex-lover-of-bahaullah-writes-about-the-murders-committed-by-the-new-manifestation/>

How the Baha'is benefitted from the 1917-19 British engineered holocaust in Iran

<http://wahidazal.blogspot.com/2018/07/how-bahais-benefitted-from-1917-18.html>

July 04, 2018 How the Baha'is benefitted from the 1917-19 British engineered holocaust in Iran

What follows is the account of an eminent Persian Bahá'í, Mírzá Áqá Khán Qá'im-Maqámí—the great-grandson of Mírzá Abu'l-Qásim Qá'im-Maqám Faráhání, the prime minister under Muhammad Shah and the man lauded by Bahá'u'lláh Himself as “the Prince of the City of Statesmanship and Literary Accomplishment” (Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 65)—who used his immense wealth to keep all the Bahá'is of Persia well-fed as a devastating famine ravaged the country. The anecdote is derived from a larger biographical sketch of Mírzá Áqá Khán Qá'im-Maqámí by the late Hasan Nushabadi, who wrote up his remembrances and published them as an article entitled *Rajul-i-Rashid* (“The Man of Courage”) in the Persian-language *Áhang-i-Badí* (“New Melody”) magazine, which I have been working to translate for some time. I hope you enjoy this inspiring story.

It was towards the beginning of autumn in 1916 when I [Hasan Nushabadi] myself left Arák for Tíhrán. Qá'im-Maqámí said to me:

“The coming winter will bring dire scarcity and famine. The Bahá'is must be made aware of this fact, and urged to prepare, to the greatest extent possible, wintertime provisions and victuals for themselves and their families. In assemblies and gatherings, advise the Bahá'is openly and privately even to sell their furniture, and to buy and hold on to wheat, barley, sangak bread, lima beans, and maize.” He also said:

“Abdu'l-Bahá appeared to me in a dream and stated, ‘Scarcity and famine are in store this year. Woe betide the wealthy among the Bahá'is if even one of their impoverished brethren should starve to death!’”

Owing to Qá'im-Maqámí's persistence and insistence—as well as this poor servant's efforts to share the aforementioned anecdote with others and urgently exhort them to act accordingly, believing as I did in the significance of Qá'im-Maqámí's dreams and remarks—the Bahá'is were eventually persuaded to prepare their wintertime provisions by whatever means necessary, even if it meant selling their rugs and other furnishings. In addition, those who had been charged with spiritual affairs began to gather resources that would aid the poor during the winter. To that end, these individuals solicited funds from every one of the most eminently wealthy Bahá'is, and successfully secured written commitments from them to donate large sums of money. Ultimately, a record of all these commitments was given to Qá'im-Maqámí; he calculated the total sum of these donations, and committed to match that amount from his own funds. With all this money, Qá'im-Maqámí purchased an ample supply of food in the name of the poor, and kept it in storage. Furthermore, he appointed a special committee that would visit the homes of every Bahá'í in Tíhrán, determine the number of people in each family, and make a note of their income and expenses. Those who could not make ends meet, or did not have a cent to their name, did not escape the vigilant attention of Qá'im-Maqámí; every one of those needy souls received rations. Indeed, from the first sign of privation and paucity until the following spring, Qá'im-Maqámí saw to it that provisions were regularly given to every family that needed them. Even on the eve of the Persian New Year, he prepared rice cooked with shortening—so much so that there was plenty to go around—and he offered it to everyone so they could have a proper meal and remain in high spirits.

In brief, Qá'im-Maqámí did not allow even one Bahá'í to go hungry or live in dire straits—and this at a time when so many other people starved to death. Those poor souls would go to the slaughterhouse, drink whatever blood they could find, and ultimately die. Others would repair to the wilderness and eat grass—and there, too, would they perish. It was even heard that some of these people would kill and eat their own children, and also those of others. And yet, as far as the impoverished Bahá'is were concerned, not one of them starved to death.

It can truly be said that all these blessings allotted to the Bahá'is, poor and rich alike—inasmuch as the poor were rescued from hunger, and the rich were made the recipients of God's grace and guidance—stemmed from the prudence, the purity of heart, the effectual measures, and the generosity of this noble man.

(Source: Hasan Nushabadi, “The Man of Courage: A Brief Account of the Bahá'í Life of Mírzá Áqá Khán Qá'im-Maqámí.” Article written on February 6, 1954, and published posthumously in the Persian-language *Áhang-i-Badí* magazine, nos. 9 and 10, 1973, pp. 18–39. This excerpt taken from p. 30.)

Note : This is a copy-paste from a Baha'i Facebook page.

Introducing the Baha'i Jewish Lobby

The anti-Iranian nature of the missionary affair continues to reverberate within the Iranian Baha'i community. Iran has been the cradle of this British manufactured, Zionist supported cult from the very beginning. Most of its adherents have come from Iran. In fact, for all their posturing that they have managed to convert large populations in the Third World – and who for some reason can't actually be found anywhere –, no other country in the world has been so receptive to the Baha'i idea than Iranians and particularly Iranian Jews.

These days, predominantly of former Jewish and sometimes Zoroastrian backgrounds, the current make up of Baha'is in Iran is vastly different to what it was in the late nineteenth century. The Baha'i faith lost its appeal to the mainstream Iranian community in the early 1900s during the Constitutional Revolution when Abbas Effendi not only failed to support the constitutional movement, but tacitly even supported the Russian involvement in Iranian internal politics and its sponsoring of Muhammad Ali Shah's coup d'état against the Parliament and people of Iran. Later in the mid 1950s Shoghi Effendi directly instructed Iranian Baha'is to work closely with the Pahlavi regime, ergo Habib Sabet. The exodus of Baha'is from Muslim backgrounds resulted in the reduction in the intellectual output of the community. Coupled with that came the influx of new believers from these Iranian Jewish and Zoroastrian minorities. The new believers had been under persecution in their respective religions and saw the new faith as an opportunity to exert control over others.

Brought together by their dislike of Muslim influences on Iranian culture, the Jewish Baha'is began to gradually purge the Iranian Baha'i community from its Islamic roots and origins. This can be witnessed in their whitewashings of the militant Shi'ite and Babi past. This agenda fitted well with Shoghi Effendi's vision of abandoning Iran in favour of exporting the cult to other parts of the world. With the death of Shoghi Effendi in 1957 and the rise of the new UHJ oligarchy, the new Jewish (and sometimes Zoroastrian) adherents were quickly promoted through the ranks to high places within the Iranian and International Baha'i communities.

Key members of the Iranian NSA and continental Board of Counselors came from this new ethnic grouping in the Baha'i cult. Following the 1979 revolution, most of the Jewish Baha'i elite migrated to Western Europe and California, USA, where their monies helped buy properties for the AO. The completion of the ARC project is owed to a large part to donations given from these two groups. Several confidential trips by UHJ members Fatheazam and Nakhjavani to LA and Australia in 1989 ensured that all the monies required for the ARC were secured from these groups. In fact the whole of these monies had been raised long before the advertising campaign for fundraising ever begun, much of through their own investments, with smatterings of large grants and subsidies given them by the Israeli government.

During the late 80s and early 90s many of the donors and their relatives were rewarded by the BWC by being nominated to key positions on the Continental Board and the ITC. In fact a quick scan of existing Counsellors in Europe, Australia and North America since 1985 suggests that former Zoroastrians and Jews have done quite well in this regard, but not their Muslim background counterparts.

The UHJs decision to adopt a more rabid form of fundamentalism and hardline position in 1996 bode well for the Baha'i Jews especially. They were the ones that successfully lobbied the UHJ to:

1) Instruct Iranian Baha'is not to attend Naw-Ruz celebrations by Iranian exile communities; 2) Instruct Iranian Baha'is not to associate with the general Iranian community in exile, thereby attempting to foist a Baha'i-only – rather than a universally Iranian – Naw-Ruz culture.

Counsellor Manijeh Reyhani, for example, who was instrumental in getting Hamid Taheri excommunicated comes from a dual Zoroastrian and Jewish background. These people control the Payam-i Bahai magazine (run by '60s-'70s Pahlavi insider Shapour Rasekh a.k.a. Delaram Mashhuri), the Andalib magazine, and, until its demise Landegg in Switzerland, as well as Radio Bahai (broadcasting in Persian), not to mention composition of the Ruhi modules.

Iran has always been rich in supplying and exporting Baha'i travel teachers around the world. The Baha'i Jewish lobby now wants to dominate and silence the mainstream Iranian Baha'i community by exporting their hyper-fundamentalist reading of the cult into Iran. They have funded companies and businesses through the missionaries in order to "teach the youth" and set up Ruhi Institutes. The Baha'i community in Iran has suffered enormously at the hands of the Islamic regime. It has lost some of its most charismatic Baha'i intellectuals like the Bakhtavars or Davudis. The present elite leadership is exclusively made up of former Jews. There are deep divisions in the community and some of the truly learned ones have boycotted the current crop of leaders and their activities.

So this latest effort to export missionaries is aimed at demonstrating "the correct version of the faith" to the rank and file at the same time isolating (and hopefully driving out) the voices of dissent. It is also a means, among others, by the Israelis to gain further footholds inside Iran itself. Both policies, it would appear, have now failed.

The Iranian Baha'i community is racked with dissension and schism, and the IR finally blew its top (and reasonably so given all the freedoms they had given the Baha'is since the mid '90s) with this ridiculous allegation of genocide by the Jewish Baha'i leadership. One wonders if maybe deep down these Jewish Baha'is actually pray for a holocaust to occur in Iran so that they can politically capitalize on it for their future designs, just as their European Jewish counterparts vis-a-vis Palestine.

-Wahid Azal

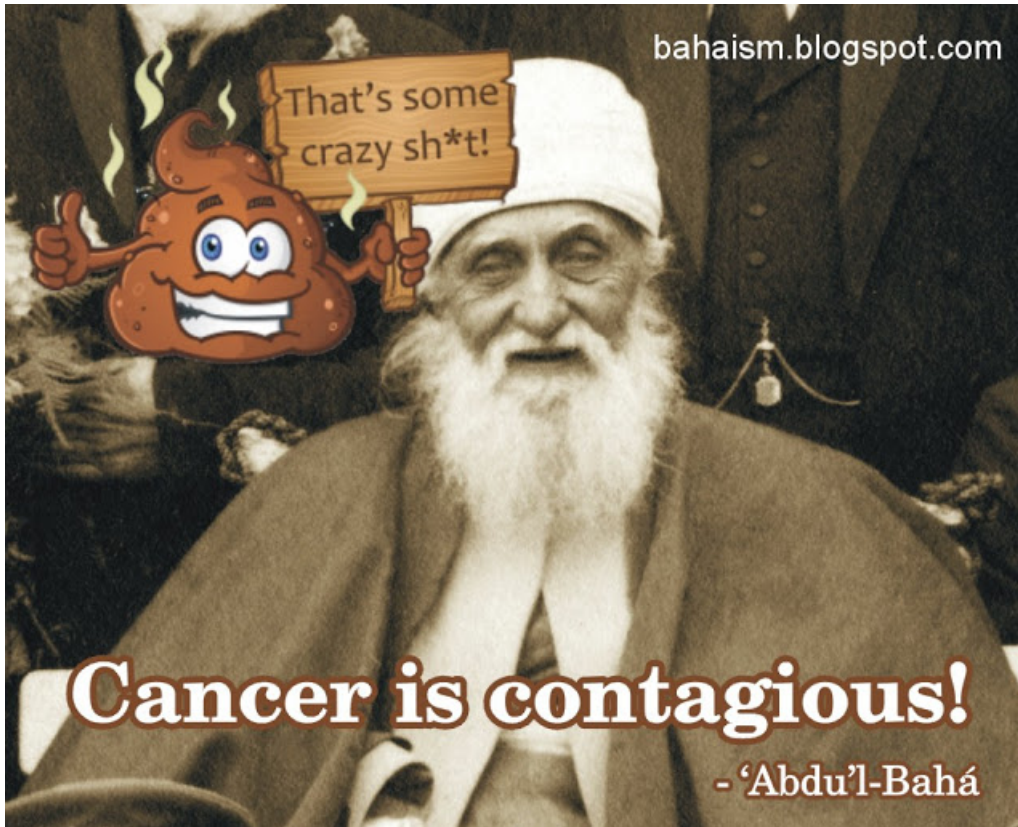
Former Baha'i Mahshid Ziyaei reveals truth about the Baha'i Faith – Persian

Bahaism and the Establishment

A podcast with Matthew Barker and Wahid Azal discussing the intimate ties of the Haifa Baha'i organization with the Establishment. NOTE: The official documents relating to Abbas Effendi 'Abdu'l-Baha's Knighting in 1919 by the British Empire "for services rendered unto the British government" during WWI: <https://archive.org/details/AbbasEffe...>

See also, Bahai CULT FAQ <http://bahaicultfaq.blogspot.com/>

The harmony of science and religion is one of the fundamental principles of the Bahá'í Faith!!!! What?



Cancer is Contagious – Abdul-Baha

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Tablet to an individual believer, October 1921: Star of the West, Vol. XII, No. 14, p. 233)

Source : https://www.reddit.com/r/exbahai/comments/a7g3y0/according_to_abdulbaha_cancer_is_contagious/

Some notes on the early relationship of the Baha'is with the Zionists.

On May 14, 1948, the Arab village of [al-Nuqayb](#), where 'Abdu'l-Bahá had owned land and grown grain, was [depopulated](#) in the fighting which broke out after the U.N. General Assembly's adoption on November 29, 1947 of the [Partition Plan for Palestine](#).

[Al-Nuqayb](#) (transliterated as Nughayb in the [Bahá'í orthography](#)) is mentioned in [Lady Blomfield's](#) The Chosen Highway, in the section titled [Bahá'í Villages](#).

Land was also acquired in the villages of [Samrih](#), [Nughayb](#), and ['Adasiyyih](#), situated near the Jordan.

In his book [All That Remains: The Palestinian Villages Occupied and Depopulated by Israel in 1948](#) the historian [Walid Khalidi](#) details the history of many of these Palestinian villages and how they were depopulated. For example, he notes that in the 1880s most of the village land of [al-Nuqayb](#) was purchased by [Bahá'u'lláh](#), with the villagers continuing to farm as tenant farmers. In the 1920s, this land was sold by Shoghi Effendi to the [Jewish National Fund](#).

[Bahá'í Villages](#) in The Chosen Highway chronicles in some detail how 'Abdu'l-Bahá used the grain he had grown in these villages to supply the British Army during World War I.

[According](#) to [Harry Charles Luke](#), an official in the British Colonial Office who served as assistant Governor of Jerusalem,

On April 27, 1920, 'Abdu'l-Bahá was ceremonially knighted, an event which was [prominently reported](#) in the Bahá'í periodical [Star of the West](#).

On February 23, 1914, at the eve of World War I, ['Abdu'l-Bahá had hosted](#) Baron [Edmond James de Rothschild](#) a member of the [Rothschild banking family](#) who was a leading [advocate and financier](#) of the Zionist movement, during one of his early trips to Palestine.

On September 8, 1919, subsequent to the British occupation of Palestine, at a time when tens of thousands of Jewish settlers were arriving under the auspices of the [Palestine Jewish Colonization Association](#) an article in the "Star of the West" quoted ['Abdu'l-Bahá praising the Zionist movement](#), proclaiming that "There is too much talk today of what the Zionists are going to do here. There is no need of it. Let them come and do more and say less" and that "A Jewish government might come later."

At the time of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's death, Shoghi Effendi was matriculated at [Balliol College](#). In a [letter](#) to [Marzieh Gail](#) Shoghi Effendi outlined his educational ambitions at [Balliol College](#), specifically to study with eminent professors and [Orientalists](#), noting alumni who were all [Imperialists](#).

After 'Abdu'l-Bahá's death, Shoghi Effendi would continue to have close relations with the leading political administrators and prominent Zionist leaders. For example, on January 24, 1922, Shoghi Effendi [received a letter](#) from [Herbert Samuel](#), the British High Commissioner for Palestine. The receipt of the letter is mentioned in [Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum's](#) [The Priceless Pearl](#). As High Commissioner, Herbert Samuel was the first Jew to govern the historic land of Israel in 2,000 years, and his appointment was regarded by the [Muslim-Christian Associations](#) as the "first step in formation of Zionist national home in the midst of Arab people." Herbert Samuel welcomed the arrival of Jewish settlers under the auspices of the [Palestine Jewish Colonization Association](#) and recognised Hebrew as one of the three official languages of the Mandate territory.

Source : <https://www.reddit.com/r/exbahai/comments/8jg9wc/palestine/>

“Baha’u’llah’s Family Chart

Mirza Husayn Ali Commonly called “Baha” or “Baha’u’llah” was the founder and prophet of the Bahá’í Faith. He was born in 1817 to Khadíjih Khánum and MirzáBuzurg of Nur (in the province of Mazandaran), a Persian man, and went on to be a follower of Islam then follower in the Bábi movement/Faith, and then established the Bahá’í Faith in 1863.

He married:

Asiya is stated to have been surnamed the mother of the Universe. This is denied by the followers of Mirza Muhammad Ali and dismissed as devoid of historical foundation. To his first wife (Asiya) he gave the title Nawwaba, because she was the daughter of Nawwab of Tehran (Al-Kawakib-al-Durriyya by Awara, vol. II., p. 4; Materials, p. 62).

Ásiyih was “Bahá’u’lláh”’s first and best-known wife. She was a daughter of a nobleman, Mirza Isma’il-i-Vazir. Her date of birth is not known. They married some time between 24 September and 22 October, 1835 in Tehran and she had seven of “Bahá’u’lláh”’s children, of whom only three made to adulthood. She was given the title Navváb by which she is best known within Bahá’í circles. She died in 1886 in ‘Akká.

She bore him Navváb bore at least three other children, but due to their early deaths little is known about them • Sádiq who died aged 3-4 • Alí Muhammad who died in Mázarán at the age of 7 • Alí Muhammad who was born and died in Baghdad at the age of 2

Born in 1844 and died 1921 He was the oldest child of Ásiyih and “Bahá’u’lláh”. He was variously referred to by “Bahá’u’lláh” as “Mystery of God”, “The Master”, “Perfect Exemplar” and “the Most Great Branch”. “Abdu’l-Bahá” went on to be the Centre of the Covenant of the Bahá’í Faith after the death of His father.

During this time, he bore attacks from his half-brother Muhammad ‘Alí, who was not given a leadership role or authority by “Bahá’u’lláh”. Muhammad ‘Alí claimed that “Abdu’l-Bahá” was taking on too much authority; Bahá’ís refute this claim by citing “Bahá’u’lláh”’s Lawh-i-Ghusn (Tablet of the Branch) (National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of the United States (ed.) [1943] (1976). Bahá’í World Faith: Selected Writings of Bahá’u’lláh and Abdu’l-Bahá, pp. 204-207), Kitáb-i-Ahd (The Book of the Covenant) (Bahá’u’lláh [1873-92] (1994). Tablets of Bahá’u’lláh Revealed After the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, pp. 219-223), and the Kitáb-i-Aqdas (The Most Holy Book) (Bahá’u’lláh [1873] (1992). The Kitáb-i-Aqdas: The Most Holy Book, para. 121) as clear appointments of “Abdu’l-Bahá” as his sole successor and interpreter of his writings. The struggle led to increasingly deteriorating prison conditions until “Abdu’l-Bahá” was released after the Turkish Revolution. During Bahá’u’lláh’s lifetime, he referred to his eldest son, Abbás, by terms such as “Sirru’lláh” (Mystery of God), or “Sarkár-i-Áqá” (the Master). After the passing of “Bahá’u’lláh”, he chose the title “Abdu’l-Bahá” (Servant of Bahá’).

She died a spinster.

Born in 1846 she was called Bahíyyih Khánum and entitled the Greatest holy Leaf. She was particularly dear to her father and is seen within the Bahá’í Faith as one of the greatest women to have lived: “Verily, We have elevated thee to the rank of one of the most distinguished among thy sex, and granted thee, in My court, a station such as none other woman hath surpassed.” (Bahá’u’llah, quoted in The Bahá’í World, vol. V, p. 171)

She stood by and remained faithful to the Centers of the Covenant over years of infighting within the “Bahá’u’lláh”’s family that led to the expelling of many of them. Shoghi Effendi in particular felt her support during difficult times such as the passing of “Abdu’l-Bahá”, and in the years afterwards when she was entrusted with the Faith when he was absent from the Bahá’í World Center in Haifa. She died on 15 July 1932 was buried in the Bahá’í gardens below the Bahá’í Arc on Mount Carmel not far from her two brothers and mother. The shock to the administration meant that religious festivals were suspended for nine months.

Mirzá Mihdí in 1868 Born in 1848 and entitled the Purest Branch, Mirzá Mihdí died on 23 June 1870. He was chanting Qasidiy-i-Varqa’iyyih (a poem written by “Bahá’u’lláh” in Kurdistan) (Bahá’u’lláh [1873] (1992). The Kitáb-i-Aqdas: The Most Holy Book, para. 121) when he fell through a skylight in the prison city of ‘Akká while pacing back and forth in prayer and meditation. He was 22 at the time. The death is significant as Bahá’ís believe that “Bahá’u’lláh” offered him the chance of being cured, however he chose to use his life as a sacrifice so that the prison gates would open and the pilgrims would be able to visit “Bahá’u’lláh” in prison. It reflected one of the toughest times for them, but restrictions on them did lift in the years to come with them eventually being allowed to live a short distance outside the prison city. Mirzá Mihdí was eventually buried alongside his mother in the gardens below the Bahá’í Arc on Mount Carmel in Haifa near his brother and sister.

Fatima surnamed the Supreme Cradle (Mahd-i-Ulya) born in 1828 and generally known as Mahd-i-’Ulya, Fatimih was one of “Bahá’u’lláh”’s first cousins, and later became his second wife. They married in 1849 in Tehran and she had six of Bahá’u’lláh’s children, of whom only four survived to adulthood. She was said to have harbored great enmity towards “Abdu’l-Bahá”. **She died in 1904, BiBi Fatima and her four children were excommunicated by “Abbas Effendi”.** To his second wife (BiBi Fatima) he gave the title ‘The Supreme Cradle’ [a title reserved for the Queen-Mother in Iran, T.A p. 361] (al-Kawakib, ibid, p.8; Materials, p.63) She bore him: 4. Muhammad Ali 5. Samadiyya 6. Ziyaullah 7. Badiullah BiB. Fatima (Mahd-i-’Ulya) bore at least two other children: • ‘Alí Muhammad who died at the age of 2 in Baghdad • Sádhiyya Khánim who was born in Baghdad and died at the age of 2 in Constantinople

Born in Baghdad in approximately 1852, his father called him the “Greater Branch”. When “Bahá’u’lláh” declared “Abdu’l-Bahá” his successor, he set that Muhammad ‘Alí was next in rank after him (Bahá’u’lláh [1873-92] (1994). Tablets of Bahá’u’lláh Revealed After the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, p. 221). When “Abdu’l-Bahá” died, his Will went into great detail about how Muhammad ‘Alí had been unfaithful to the Covenant, labelling him a Covenant-breaker (‘Abdu’l-Bahá [1901-08] (1992). The Will And Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, p. 5), and appointing Shoghi Effendi his successor instead. **Muhammad ‘Alí is often described as the “Arch-Breaker of Bahá’u’lláh’s Covenant”** (Shoghi Effendi (1944). God Passes By, p.

263 & p.317). He died in 1937.

She was born at Baghdad. Married Majdu'd-Din (son of "Bahá'u'lláh"'s faithful brother Aqay-i-Kalim also known as Mirzá Musa), who was one of "Abdu'l-Bahá"'s greatest critics. Both were eventually declared Covenant-breakers. She died at age 49 in 1904/5 and her husband died at over one-hundred years of age in 1955.

Relatively little is known about Díyá'u'lláh (Ziyaullah), so it is difficult to piece together an accurate account of his life, but we do know: • Born 15 August 1864 in Edirne (modern day Adrianople) • Married Thurayya • He swayed between the two sides in his brothers' argument, and died before taking part in an act against "Abdu'l-Bahá", but has still been labelled a Covenant-breaker • He died in 30 October 1898 (without issue) and was buried in the room next to where "Bahá'u'lláh" was buried • His body was moved by relatives to a building covering the grave of his brother Muhammad 'Alí

Gawhar was "Bahá'u'lláh"'s third wife. They are said to have married in Baghdad some time before he declared his mission. When "Bahá'u'lláh" left Baghdad in 1863 she and her daughter stayed and lived with her brother Mirza Mihdiy-i- Kashani. Later, on her way to join "Bahá'u'lláh" and the family she is reported to have been taken captive along with other believers, and for some years she was among the Bahá'í refugees in Mosul. She later went to Akká at "Bahá'u'lláh"'s instruction. (Letter from Universal House of Justice: 1998, Apr 06, Memorandum re Wives of Bahá'u'lláh) Gawhar may have been a maid of the first wife of "Bahá'u'lláh" when he married her. (Juan Cole. A Brief Biography of Baha'u'llah) Both mother and daughter were declared Covenant-breakers by Mirza Abbas Effendi after the death of "Bahá'u'lláh". Gawhar died during the ministry of "Abdu'l-Bahá", thus between 1892 and 1921. She bore him:

Relatively little is known about Furughiyyih so it is difficult to write a documented account. What is known is: • Until her mother moved to Akká, she was raised by her in the area around Mosul • She married Siyyid Ali (the son of the Báb's brother-in-law) on 17 May 1886 and bore him two sons • She, her husband and her children (in particular her eldest Nayyir), all rebelled against "Abdu'l-Bahá"'s authority as Centre of the Covenant, and became Covenant-breakers • According to Shoghi Effendi she died of cancer (date unknown) 1. Abbas Married Munira, who bore him

10. Tuba 11. Ruha 12. Munawwar.

13. Shoghi 14. Ruh-Angiz (married 25) 15. Mihr-Angiz (married 28) 16. Husayn 17. Riyadh 13 to 15 were surnamed Rabbani. Mirza Hadi Afnar and their children (14-17) were excommunicated by Shoghi Effendi (13), on whom the title of Effendi was conferred by Mirza Abbas Effendi.

18. Ruhi (married 23) 19. Suhayl 20. Thuraiyya (married 27) Muhsin Afnar, Tuba and their children were excommunicated by Shoghi Effendi.

21. Munir 22. Hasan 23. Zahra (married 18) Jalal Shahid, Ruha and their children were excommunicated by Shoghi Effendi.

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No further detail found. **Ahmad Yazdi and Munawwar were excommunicated by Shoghi Effendi.**

24. Husayn 25. Nayyir (married 14) 26. Hasan (married 15) 27. Fawzi (married 20) Sayyid Ali Afnar, and Furughiyya were excommunicated by Abbas Effendi. Their children were excommunicated by Shoghi Effendi and Husayn posthumously.

i) Masuma, who bore him: 28. Shuaullah 29. Aminullah ii) Hizariyya who bore him: 30. Musa (married 35) **Mirza Muhammad Ali, his wives and children were excommunicated by Abbas Effendi.**

31. Maryam 32. Zar-Azngiz **Majd-al-Din Musa, Samadiyya and their children were excommunicated by Abbas Effendi.**

No further detail found. **Ziyaullah and his wife were excommunicated by Abbas Effendi**

33. Sazitch 34. Salah 35. Ghamar married 36. Iffat 37. Ismat (married Jalal Azal) Badiullah, Aliya and their children were excommunicated by Abbas Effendi. Baha's full brother Musa surnamed Kalim (Interlocutor) because he talked with god, "Baha".

His children: 38. Majd-al Din (married 5) 39. Jamil 40. Jalal / Jaleh 41. Hizaiyya (married 4) Note: One of "Bahá'u'lláh"'s titles is Sadratu'l-Muntahá, which translates from Arabic as the tree beyond which there is no passing. In this connection, "Bahá'u'lláh" entitled his descendants as follows:

His male descendants were given the title of Aghsán (Arabic for "Branches") which in singular form is "Ghusn". In particular, three of his sons were given specific "branch" titles • 'Abdu'l-Bahá (given name, Abbás): Ghush-i-A'zam (Arabic) "The Most Great Branch" • Mirzá Muhammad 'Alí: Ghush n-i-Akbar, (Arabic) "The Greater Branch" (Note 1) • Mirzá Mihdí: Ghush n-i-Áthár, (Arabic) "The Purest Branch". His daughters were given the title of Afrián (translated from Arabic as "Leaves"). This title should not be confused with the Afrián title given by "Bahá'u'lláh" to the maternal relatives of the "Báb", which is translated as "twigs", and was adopted by their descendants as a surname. Thus "Bahá'u'lláh"'s eldest daughter, Bahiyyih (given name, Fatimih), was given the title of the Greatest Holy Leaf. Note 1: Ghush-i-A'zam and Ghush-i-Akbar can both be translated as "the great branch, "the greater branch" or "the most great branch". A'zam carries a higher status in Arabic, so Bahá'í authors and others translate 'Abdu'l-Bahá's title as "Most Great" and Muhammad 'Alí's title as "Greater" (Taherzadeh, 2000, p. 256.). Some authors have reversed the English translations (Maulana, 1933, p.56). However the designations of Ghush-i-A'zam and Ghush-i-Akbar are clear. (Browne, 1918, p. 61, & p. 85)

Baha'i Temples: Living proof that Baha'i activities are based on promoting Baha'ism and not humanitarian issues.

Baha'i Deceptive Children's Classes

Differences Between the Unitarian and Haifan Baha'i Faith

Unitarian Bahaiism as understood and practiced in the Unitarian Bahai Association, and mainline conservative Bahaiism as practiced in the Haifa-based Baha'i Faith organization, are very different from each other. Here is a list of the major differences between these two Bahai traditions.

- Unitarian Bahais sometimes use the academic term— in widespread popular use until a few decades ago — to refer to the Bahai faith, as a way of distinguishing between the religion itself and the Haifan Bahai organization which refers to itself as “the Baha'i Faith.” The Haifan denomination sees itself as the only legitimate form of Bahaiism, and this is why they use the same term to refer both to the religion and their organization. We consider this to be an inaccurate and presumptuous conflation. Also read about [dropping the apostrophe in the word](#).
- Unitarian Bahais mostly meet in Unitarian Universalist churches, wherever such congregations already exist, rather than in private homes. We regard UU churches and any other buildings where all-inclusive, interfaith spiritual communities meet as the Bahai (house of worship).
- The Unitarian Bahai Association accepts openly gay and lesbian Bahais — including those in committed same-sex relationships — as fully equal members of our organization.



- Women are eligible to be elected to the international Board of Directors of the Unitarian Bahai Association.
- The Unitarian Bahai Association does not prohibit its members from participating in partisan politics. In fact, we encourage responsible political activism and public service in democratically elected office as ways that Bahais can work to implement the social principles of the Bahai cause.
- Many members of the Unitarian Bahai Association choose to be full members of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), which allows its members to belong to specific religious traditions and organizations in addition to the UUA. UBA members are allowed to be members of other spiritual communities as well, such as Christian churches, Islamic mosques, Jewish synagogues, Hindu or Buddhist temples, etc. All spiritual paths have value and Bahaiism is not intended to nullify one's interest or relationship with other religions. In fact, the UBA encourages its members to explore various religious traditions and practices and to attend different worship services from time to time, to develop and maintain a full appreciation for the rich tapestry of human spirituality.
- Bahais who live in Islamic countries that forbid organized Bahaiism are allowed by the Unitarian Bahai Association to hide their Bahai faith and publicly identify and worship as Muslims, while maintaining a private relationship with the UBA. This practice is known as (wisdom), and is intended to preserve peace in society and prevent needless discrimination, harassment, imprisonment, torture, or death of believers. Many early Bahais in the Middle East continued to follow Islamic religious traditions after becoming Bahai — even Abdul-Baha, the son and successor of Bahauallah, regularly attended mosque his entire life. In the Christian West during the same period, many ministers and church members secretly believed in Bahaiism but continued practicing Christianity as well, to avoid losing their social and professional relationships. The UBA accepts the practice of hikmat, as long as it is done for serious reasons and in good conscience.
- Residents of Israel are allowed to become members of the Unitarian Bahai Association.
- Unitarian Bahais are free to interpret the Bahai scriptures according to their own study, reason, and conscience, rather than being required to agree or pretend to agree with “official” interpretations and doctrines.
- Unitarian Bahais are free to translate Bahai scriptures themselves from the original Persian and Arabic text, and to read and use any translations they prefer, rather than only using one “official” version. In general, Unitarian Bahais tend to regard the translations of Shoghi Effendi and the Haifan denomination as needlessly old-fashioned (e.g. using King James or Shakespearean English) and in some cases inaccurate and misleadingly distorted in meaning.
- Unitarian Bahais are free to write and publish books, articles, and scholarly papers about the Bahai faith and Bahai issues without needing to get permission and be subject to censorship (“pre-publication review”) by any Bahai institution.
- Unitarian Bahais reject the concept of “Covenant-breaking” and believe that what Haifan Bahais refer to as “the Lesser Covenant” (or simply “the Covenant” for short) — the successorship of individuals or institutions of supposedly infallible religious leadership in the Bahai faith — does not exist in reality. There were successors of Bahauallah but they fought among each other and none of them have been infallible, and no Bahai organization today has leadership institutions that are infallible.

- All of the blood descendants of Bahauallah – including those descended from people who are considered “Covenant-breakers” in the Haifan tradition and who do not wish to renounce and condemn their ancestors – are welcome in the Unitarian Bahai Association as fully equal members.
- Unitarian Bahais do not believe in shunning Bahais of other denominations and traditions. We are open to fellowship with all, regardless of differences of opinion or organizational allegiance.
- Unitarian Bahais regard Abdul-Baha as the first successor of Bahauallah and Ghusn-i-Akbar as the second successor, as appointed in Bahauallah’s will. We regard Shoghi Effendi as a competitor to leadership (alongside Ghusn-i-Akbar), whose position was created by Abdul-Baha in his will. In a sense, Shoghi Effendi could be considered the third successor of Bahauallah, since he outlived Ghusn-i-Akbar by about 20 years and had considerable influence on the development of the Bahai faith; but his appointment was of questionable legitimacy and much of his work and teachings were of a sectarian nature. We do not regard any of these three men as perfect or infallible. We do not believe there are any other successors of Bahauallah after them – neither individuals, as some small Bahai denominations believe, nor oligarchic institutions as the Haifan denomination believes.
- Unitarian Bahais have a different understanding of the institution of the House of Justice. We follow what Bahauallah wrote in his book of laws, the : that the House of Justice consists of local meetings in which at least nine believers (who may be both men and women) gather to discuss and vote on matters of charity, education, politics, and other applications of Bahai principles. Houses of Justice throughout a region, such as a state or country or even the whole world, may agree to vote on the same resolution and thus reach a mutual decision relevant beyond a single locality. The Haifan “Universal” House of Justice conforms neither to Bahauallah’s original plan nor to the modified plan of his successor Abdul-Baha, and it views itself primarily as a doctrinal and administrative body – functions not assigned to the (House of Justice) in Bahauallah’s writings.

Source :<http://unitarianbahai.angelfire.com/>

Why I Joined and Left the Baha'i Faith

I was introduced to the Baha'i faith during my first year in college, by my next-door neighbor in my dorm. I decided to attend a Baha'i meeting because it sounded interesting. I had always been very interested in various religions and philosophies ever since I was old enough to begin exploring these things for myself. The Baha'is I met at the meeting seemed like nice people, and they held an idealistic view of human potential, emphasizing ideas such as world peace, racial reconciliation, and respect for all major religions. I would say that two things attracted me most to the Baha'is and their religion: the people themselves and their optimistic spirit about the future of humanity.

I decided to believe in Baha'ism and join the organized Baha'i Faith after a few months of studying the religion and socializing with Baha'is. Looking back, I would say that there were many details of Baha'i beliefs and practices that I wasn't aware of when I joined, which if I had known about might have prevented me from joining their religious organization. It was the overall spirit of the Baha'is and their faith – the big picture view – that drew me in, and at that time I probably would not have even wanted to know anything about the Baha'i Faith that would have turned me off from it!

Throughout my college years, I was an active and serious Baha'i. I participated in local Baha'i community meetings and Baha'i college club meetings. I followed the religion's rituals of daily prayer and the annual period of fasting. I enthusiastically tried to share my Baha'i faith with other people, because Baha'is place a great emphasis on "teaching" the faith (trying to educate people about the existence of the Baha'i faith and encourage them to study it and join). I even went on two Baha'i "teaching trips" to a rural, impoverished area where we attempted to befriend and evangelize Native Americans and other people living in poverty. I also wrote a draft of an introductory book presenting the Baha'i faith for a Christian audience (but I left the faith before seeking a publisher).

As I became more and more involved in the Baha'i Faith community, I began to notice some things that bothered me. There were two things in particular that troubled me the most: first, that Baha'i Faith members overemphasize obedience to their religious institutions and believe the highest leadership organ of their religion is directly guided by God and infallible in all its decisions; and second, that they tend to have an unhealthy liking for bureaucracy and downplay the importance and benefits of individual free thought and activity. I strongly disagreed with the long-standing policy that all Baha'i scholars and writers must submit everything they write about the faith to a Baha'i "pre-publication review committee" for official approval. I was also frustrated by the fact that the Baha'i Faith organization prohibits its members from participating in politics, since political activism had previously been an interest of mine.

After a few years, I decided to leave the Baha'i Faith for these reasons as well as others. At the time, I regarded the Baha'i Faith organization and the faith itself to be basically synonymous – as most Baha'is do – so I didn't think much about the possibility of remaining a Baha'i without in some way supporting the dominant Baha'i tradition (which is sometimes called "Haifan" Baha'ism, because the organization representing this tradition is based in Haifa, Israel). I did briefly feel compelled to try to promote some ideas for reforming the religion and its institutions, but I did this in an arrogant and ineffective way and soon gave up on it.

I began to feel attracted to Jesus more than any other great historical religious leader, so I decided to become a Christian, got baptized, and joined the Assemblies of God church. However, my broad-minded attitude prevented me from fully buying into Evangelical Christianity, and over the years I have grown increasingly liberal and universalist in my understanding of the Gospel. I can say that the Baha'i faith had a positive influence on me in helping me to see the value in all religious paths, but that I found organized Haifan Baha'ism to be too fundamentalist and restrictive for my free-thinking mind and mystical heart.

Issues in the Baha'i Faith: "Manifestations of God"

There are some theological reasons why I left the Baha'i faith – it was not only because of disagreements with the Baha'i Faith organization. When I first became a Christian, I did so in large part because I had come to the conclusion that Jesus Christ was far greater than any other prophet, such as Moses, Muhammad or Baha'u'llah. Contrary to Baha'i doctrine, I believed that Jesus occupied a special place as the unique "Son of God" – the human being who ever was the perfect Manifestation of Divinity. I did not believe that other founders of religions were on the same level as Jesus.

Over time, my views have evolved. Today, I still believe that Jesus was the greatest example of the fusion of the human and the divine that is known to history, but I have come to believe that all human beings are "manifestations of God" in some sense or to some degree. I no longer believe in the Trinitarian notion that Jesus was divine and everyone else isn't; instead I believe in the Unitarian view that he was a great spiritual master but human like the rest of us, and that there have been others similar to him who are great examples of divine qualities in human beings.

Most Baha'is interpret their faith as teaching that only the founders of the great religions are Manifestations of God and all others are mere servants, just as most Christians believe only Jesus is the Son of God and all others must bow down to him as Lord. I disagree with this idea. I think all humans fall on a continuum of spiritual development, rather than being divided neatly into categories of "Manifestations" of the divine attributes or "Non-Manifestations."

All human beings are manifestations of divinity, because we were all created in the image of God and we are all God's children. This teaching is found in the Old Testament, the New Testament, and in the writings of many modern spiritual leaders. Conservative Baha'is (which is most Baha'is) draw an ontological distinction between Manifestations of God and regular human beings, but there is no such distinction. There may be a

small number of people whose special role in history was to found religions, but they were imperfect and fallible like all other humans. All humans are on a journey which begins when one's eternal spirit is birthed from the Womb of God, comes to earth in a physical body, and continues after death in other lifetimes and/or other dimensions of existence as we grow from spiritual infancy through stages of childhood, adolescence, and eventually adulthood. Given enough ages for development, will ultimately reach the level of great spiritual masters such as Jesus, Buddha, etc. Even Jesus himself promised this! (see Luke 6:40).

It may be possible for Baha'ism to be reinterpreted in this way, since one of the core Baha'i beliefs is the idea of the continual progress of all souls in the afterlife. The Baha'i faith teaches that no soul is forever lost, and all will keep progressing toward God through ages of time. Perhaps the Great Prophets or "Manifestations" of God are at a much higher level than other souls, because they have existed for far longer back in time than most people alive on earth. Perhaps, as Buddhists believe about the , they consent to return to earth when religion needs to be renewed – even though they have already ascended to higher levels of spiritual existence.

Issues in the Baha'i Faith: "Progressive Revelation"

The Baha'i faith sees all major world religions as being part of a dispensational progression of spiritual knowledge revealed by God. While this idea has some merit, it is an oversimplification of human spiritual history. The Baha'i faith, as it is interpreted by most of its followers, ignores some important religious traditions such as Taoism and Sikhism; excessively downplays the very real differences that exist between religions; and puts all religions on one track of progressive development, when in fact they emerged on more than one parallel tracks and on different timelines in different parts of the world.

The Baha'i concept of "progressive revelation" is true as a big picture idea – that humans have gradually come to apprehend the Divine in more mature and sophisticated ways over time – but the specific details taught by Baha'u'llah and his successors are too limited to an Abrahamic paradigm. Baha'u'llah's background was Islam, which envisioned religion as progressing by means of a discrete series of prophets chosen by God. He seems to have known little about Eastern religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Taoism, and Confucianism. He wrote almost nothing about these, even though billions of human beings have followed and been inspired by these traditions – probably because he had little contact with people from those parts of the world and most of his followers were Muslims.

Abdu'l-Baha and his grandson and successor Shoghi Effendi expanded the Baha'i view of religious unity to include acceptance of the divine inspiration of some of the Eastern religions, because they sincerely believed in the goal of uniting all humanity with one interfaith vision of truth. This was Baha'u'llah's goal too, but the time and culture in which he lived defined the way he presented the message. He simply didn't have much of any exposure to ideas from outside of Islam, Christianity and Judaism.

If we are to be intellectually honest, we must admit that the linear Baha'i concept of God sending a "new Manifestation" to "reveal" a "new Dispensation" with a "new Book" for the world roughly every 1000 years does not take into account all the great diversity and complexity of historical religious development. This idea comes directly from Islam and has a heavy Abrahamic bias. Baha'ism has attempted to embrace some non-Abrahamic religions by fitting them into the Islamic paradigm of religious history. This is a nice theoretical attempt with good motivations behind it, but I think it needs to be reevaluated.

The Baha'i concept of progressive revelation makes sense if it is interpreted in a broader way, focusing on the archetypal journey of human beings continually seeking The Source and periodically creating new religions reflecting their evolving perspective on life and existence. In fact, to embrace this basic idea as the core of how we understand the phenomenon of religion – that it is not static but evolutionary, representing a never-ending dance between the Human and the Divine – is a beautiful way of thinking. The Baha'i faith has the potential to conceive of religious history through this liberal lens, if fundamentalist interpretations of Baha'i theology are cast aside.

Issues in the Baha'i Faith: The "Most Holy Book"

One of the reasons I decided to leave the Baha'i faith was because of the , which in Arabic means the Most Holy Book. Baha'u'llah wrote this book to establish a set of laws, commandments, regulations, and rituals for the Baha'i religion which would differentiate it from Islam. Baha'u'llah said that the whole world should follow the teachings of his Most Holy Book for the next 1000 years.

While some ideas in the are good and represent significant progress beyond the laws of the Qur'an and Islam, some of them are simply unsuitable for modern 21st century civilization and show that Baha'u'llah's mentality was to some degree limited by the standards of the time and culture in which he lived. For example, Baha'u'llah commands in his Most Holy Book that a thief should have a visible mark put on his forehead after the third offense – presumably some kind of brand or tattoo. This is much better than the Qur'anic punishment for stealing (amputation of a hand), but it's hardly compatible with the values of modern times.

I also disagree with Baha'u'llah's claim that all people must recognize his absolute spiritual authority and must accept and follow all the laws and teachings in his book. I do not believe in an infallible Bible nor an infallible Qur'an or any other scripture that conservative religious people believe is perfect. Although I think Baha'u'llah taught many beneficial and inspiring things in his writings, there are some things he taught that I simply disagree with – just as I disagree with some things taught by Moses, Jesus, Saint Paul, Muhammad, Buddha, or any other spiritual teacher who has left behind writings or sayings. I wish that Christians, Jews, Muslims, and people of other faiths would move beyond the idea of rigid support for every law and teaching contained within their own preferred religious scripture.

Some ideas in the Old Testament, the New Testament, the Qur'an, and other scriptures are outdated and should no longer be followed. Similarly, some of Baha'u'llah's ideas in his Aqdas have already passed into the realm of the historical rather than the currently applicable – before they were ever even applied. Baha'is should take a fresh look at the Kitab-i-Aqdas and be honest with themselves about which parts of it should still be followed; which parts should be followed but need to be reinterpreted in a more modern or liberal way; and which parts of it ought to be put aside

as relics of a past era. There are many positive and relevant aspects of the Baha'i spiritual tradition – including in the Most Holy Book of the Baha'i faith – but in order for these to shine forth more fully, Bahais need to be willing to engage in modern liberal hermeneutics, textual criticism, and historical contextualization of their scriptures. This is what progressive adherents of all other religions are doing, and it is necessary to keep any religion relevant in changing times and cultural settings.

Issues in the Baha'i Faith: The “Covenant” and “Covenant-breakers”

By far, the worst problem with the Baha'i faith as most Baha'is understand it today is the Baha'i concept called “the Covenant” and the treatment of Baha'is who are considered heretics, called “Covenant-breakers.” Ever since Baha'u'llah passed away and his eldest son Abdu'l-Baha became the leader of the faith, Baha'is have had the notion of a special “Covenant” between God and the Baha'is, that the Baha'i religion will always remain united under one organization and will always have a perfect and infallible source of divine guidance in this world in the form of the highest Baha'i leader or institution. Baha'is who do not believe this, or who support alternative Baha'i organizations, may be declared to be Covenant-breakers and shunned by all members of the Haifa Baha'i Faith organization.

This fundamentalist, even cultlike idea and practice originated in the teachings of Abdu'l-Baha, who claimed that his appointment to lead the Baha'is after Baha'u'llah meant that all Baha'is must regard him as morally perfect and infallible; that all his writings were to carry the same authority as scripture; and that he had the authority to tell all Baha'is what to believe and do. His younger brother, Ghusn-i-Akbar (usually called by his given name, Muhammad Ali), objected to these claims of Abdu'l-Baha and believed that no religious leader other than the Manifestations of God should have that much authority. Ghusn-i-Akbar had been appointed by Baha'u'llah in his Will and Testament to become his second successor, after Abdu'l-Baha. Instead, Abdu'l-Baha declared him a heretic, excommunicated him, and demanded that all Baha'is shun him. Most of Baha'u'llah's children and other descendants and relatives sympathized with Ghusn-i-Akbar and disagreed with Abdu'l-Baha's claims, and they were also excommunicated and shunned by the majority of Baha'is, who were loyal to Abdu'l-Baha.

This is how the concept of “Covenant-breaking” was born in the Baha'i faith. Abdu'l-Baha appointed his own grandson, Shoghi Effendi, to be his successor instead of Ghusn-i-Akbar, and called him the “Guardian” of the faith. He instructed him to appoint a successor before his death from among his own children or relatives to become the next Guardian. However, Shoghi Effendi found himself unable to have children of his own, and during his lifetime he declared all of his relatives to be Covenant-breakers because, in his view, they were not sufficiently obedient to his supposedly absolute authority over the Baha'is.

Therefore, the chain of succession of individual Baha'i leaders came to an end. Shoghi Effendi died suddenly without leaving a will, and did not provide specific instructions during his lifetime about who should lead the Baha'i Faith after his death. As one might imagine, this situation led to a power struggle. Ultimately, the vast majority of Baha'is consolidated under the authority of an elected institution called the Universal House of Justice. However, according to Abdu'l-Baha and Shoghi Effendi, this institution was required to have a Guardian as its chairman, who would have the right to insist on reconsideration of its decisions and to expel its members if necessary.

Therefore, a Baha'i who adheres to all the writings and teachings of the recognized successors of Baha'u'llah could legitimately question whether the current leadership organ of the Baha'i Faith known as the UHJ could possibly be perfect and infallible without a Guardian heading it. However, Baha'i Faith members are not allowed to question this or to regard the UHJ as merely a council of religious leaders making human decisions for the Baha'i Faith organization. Instead, they must profess belief that the Baha'i Covenant is still intact, that an infallible chain of succession of spiritual authority has never been broken. Baha'is are not supposed to disagree with any decision of the UHJ, since this institution is regarded as speaking for God.

I disagree with this on two levels: For one thing, it seems clear to me from the facts of Baha'i history that the Covenant did not pan out the way it was supposed to, first because the person who was originally supposed to become Abdu'l-Baha's successor was excommunicated unfairly; and furthermore because of the untimely death of his replacement, Shoghi Effendi, who did not appoint a successor.

Secondly, I simply do not believe there could ever be such a thing as a perfect chain of infallible spiritual authority. The Holy Spirit doesn't want to be limited to working through such a single channel, and what happened in the Baha'i faith ironically proves this. It's almost as if God Himself intervened to make sure that it would be impossible to believe, in a logical and intellectually honest way, in the fundamentalist Baha'i idea of “the Covenant.” Also, since the time of Baha'u'llah there have been various other spiritual leaders and movements that were not part of the Baha'i faith, and some of these clearly were infused with divine inspiration. Examples include the Unitarians and Universalists, Transcendentalists, the New Thought and New Age movements, and the Charismatic movement.

Today, most Baha'is consider Baha'is who reject the claims of infallible authority by the Haifa Baha'i Faith's highest leadership institution to be “Covenant-breakers,” terrible heretics who are reviled and shunned by “true” Baha'is. Two alternative Baha'i organizations were sued by the mainstream Baha'i Faith organization, simply because they use the word to describe their beliefs. The Baha'i Faith's leaders actually had the audacity to claim that the word Baha'i is trademarked by their own organization and that such a trademark – on the name of a religion – is legitimate. It would be as if the Roman Catholic Church claimed that Protestants cannot describe themselves as Christian and sued their churches. Such attitudes among Baha'is are intolerant, fanatical, and characteristic of cults rather than the major world religion for modern times that the Baha'i faith aspires to be. In 2010, the court sided with the small Baha'i denominations and ruled that the name of the Baha'i religion is in the public domain.

Baha'is should put aside the notion of a special Covenant decreed by God that demands that all Baha'is must only support one Baha'i organization and always agree with its leadership. This idea has been disproved by Baha'i history, and it is incompatible with the modern, progressive ideals of religious tolerance and diversity that the Baha'i faith is supposed to stand for.

Issues in the Baha'i Faith: The “Universal House of Justice”

Members of the Baha'i Faith organization not only believe that their Universal House of Justice is infallibly inspired by God and that all Baha'is must unquestioningly obey its decisions, but they also believe that eventually all the peoples and nations of the world should come under the authority of this Baha'i religious institution. Specifically, conservative Baha'i doctrine asserts that all matters of state should be referred to the House of Justice; or as they understand it, that the UHJ should one day hold a higher position of power than the governments of the world. This appears to be based on a misinterpretation of one sentence that Baha'u'llah wrote in a text appended to his Most Holy Book.

Seat of the UHJ, Haifa, Israel

Haifa Baha'ism includes theocracy as one of its teachings, but it is far from clear that this is how the faith should be interpreted. Some Baha'i scholars disagree with this interpretation, but they have either been expelled from membership in the organized Baha'i Faith or must keep quiet about their beliefs. Most of Baha'u'llah's writings clearly promote secular democracy rather than theocracy – in fact, there is a great deal of evidence to indicate that Baha'u'llah envisioned a world in which people of all religions would have equal rights and freedoms and would form democratic national parliaments to serve as a check on the power of kings, clergy, and other autocratic rulers. Despite this, a pro-theocracy view is almost totally dominant in the Baha'i Faith today, and looks to remain so, because this doctrine is promoted by the “infallible” UHJ itself.

As for the “Universal House of Justice” such as has been created as the head institution of the mainstream Baha'i Faith organization, this is only one possible interpretation of what Baha'u'llah wrote on the subject of democratic spiritual leadership. Baha'u'llah taught that a local institution called simply the (“House of Justice”) should be formed in each city, and he described it as something very similar to a New England town meeting. Such bodies were supposed to replace the institution of the clergy in previous religions – and presumably Houses of Justice could be created at national or international levels as well – but Baha'u'llah does not define it or limit it, except to say that at least nine people must participate in the meetings of each House. Women were not excluded in theory as they have been in practice (the restriction of the UHJ to men only was a later interpretation by Abdu'l-Baha), nor did Baha'u'llah say that a House of Justice necessarily has to be restricted only to Baha'is or members of a particular organized religious community.

It is very unlikely that the Haifa-based Baha'i Faith organization will ever grow large enough to begin pushing for the kind of sweeping political power that it desires, so non-Baha'is need not worry. But regardless of practical realities, the fundamentalist Baha'i theory of future theocratic governance is a bad idea. In my opinion – and the opinion of the vast majority of progressive-thinking people in the world today – the leadership organs of any one religion should not aspire to assert authority over government. Instead, there should be separation of religion and state. Humanity is moving away from the idea of having popes, bishops, shaykhs, imams, ayatollahs, or any other kind of religious leaders holding a great deal of worldly power – and this is a very good development for the progress of civilization!

Baha'is need to put aside outdated theories and ideas that are not even clearly taught in Baha'u'llah's own writings. It was Shoghi Effendi, the successor of Abdu'l-Baha, who wrote in favor of theocracy and interpreted the Baha'i scriptures in a way that fit with his own preference for a one-world government ruled by the Universal House of Justice of the Baha'i Faith. Baha'is should move beyond such fantasies that belong to a bygone era, and reinterpret the Baha'i faith's teachings about politics and government to be fully compatible with 21st century democratic values.

Moving Beyond a Fundamentalist View of the Baha'i Faith

The Baha'i religion, if believed in a conservative and dogmatic way as many Baha'is do, is just like so many other philosophies and religions that claim absolute truth and authority while falling short of that impossible level of perfection. Baha'ism has played a valuable role in human spiritual history and continues to benefit many people today, but spiritually mature individuals (whether they choose to consider themselves “Baha'i” or not) should be able to perceive and admit its flaws and refrain from adhering to this faith with a literalistic and fundamentalist attitude – just as we should avoid all fundamentalisms so that we may continue the never-ending search for greater knowledge, understanding, truth, and meaning.

If you agree with a lot of Baha'i principles – such as the unity of humanity, world peace, equality of women and men, racial equality, and interfaith reconciliation – but disagree with the conservative way the Baha'i faith has been interpreted in the mainstream organized Baha'i community, you may be interested to check out these groups and websites:

- [Unitarian Baha'i Discussion Forum](#) – A Yahoo Group for liberal Baha'is and Unitarian Universalists to discuss the Baha'i faith from an open-minded, Unitarian perspective.
- [Unitarian Universalist Association](#) – Non-creedal religious congregations where you may explore various world religions from a liberal perspective, in a free-thinking and tolerant atmosphere.
- [The Center for Human Conscience](#) – A newly forming international non-governmental organization advancing a vision of global awareness and peace, universal human rights, democracy, education, culture and conscience.

Blessings to you in your spiritual journey, and may God be with you always!

Love, Light, and Peace, *Eric Stetson*

Reference : <http://www.bahai-faith.com/>

Al-Kitāb Al-Aqdas: Elder & Miller Translation

The next individual to be elected to the Universal House of Justice will be Juan Francisco Mora.

Bab's second wife Fátimih Khánum was a Covenant Breaker!

(1822-1916) was an Isfahání girl who was the second wife of the Báb. Fátimih was the sister of a prominent Bábí, Mullá Rajab-‘Alí. She was married around 1847 aged twenty-five, to serve the Báb during His sojourn to Isfahán. In Persia, it was regarded as dishonourable for a woman to serve a man unless she was not related to him. The couple had no children, and after the Báb left Isfahán she did not accompany Him. After His martyrdom, despite the fact that the Báb asked His wives not remarry, Fátimih Khánum married Azal for one month, until he divorced her and gave her to Siyyid Muhammad Isfahání. Fátimih agreed to these marriages, and is therefore a Covenant Breaker.

Reference : [https://bahaikipedia.org/F%C3%A1timih_Kh%C3%A1num_\(wife_of_the_B%C3%A1b\)](https://bahaikipedia.org/F%C3%A1timih_Kh%C3%A1num_(wife_of_the_B%C3%A1b))

The fatal flaw in Baha'i authority

Baha'i moral activities in New Era High School (Panchgani – India)

These are Baha'i Teachers. The case of Dilavara Mirshahi is very popular in Panchgani. Each and every Baha'i knows about this. If Baha'is want to spread their religion with these moral values then they are requested to return back to their countries from where they are exported to India.

What they teach in Baha'i Children Class?

Baha'ism and Christianity

Baha'i figures have said different things at different times regarding Jesus.

For example, on June 24, 1947, Shoghi Effendi [stated](#) (also [here](#)) "The churches are waiting for the coming of Jesus Christ; we believe He has come again in the Glory of the Father. The churches teach doctrines—various ones in various creeds—which we as Bahá'is do not accept; such as the bodily Resurrection, confession, or, in some creeds, the denial of the Immaculate Conception."

On May 28, 1984, the Universal House of Justice [addressed a letter](#) stating "From a Bahá'í point of view the belief that the Resurrection was the return to life of a body of flesh and blood, which later rose from the earth into the sky is not reasonable, nor is it necessary to the essential truth of the disciples' experience, which is that Jesus did not cease to exist when He was crucified (as would have the belief of many Jews of that period), but that His Spirit, released from the body, ascended to the presence of God and continued to inspire and guide His followers and preside over the destinies of His Dispensation."

Bahai's in the West have historically argued that their religion is the fulfillment of Christian prophecy, particularly based on Seventh-day [Adventist](#) literature and the teachings of Baptist preacher [William Miller](#). [William Sears](#), named a Hand of the Cause of God by Shoghi Effendi in 1957, was a popular radio and television personality, who wrote a best-selling book, *[Thief in the Night](#)*. [William Miller](#), a Baptist preacher, predicted that on October 22, 1844, Christ would return to the Earth. Although the prophecy was not fulfilled, leading to what was called the [Great Disappointment](#), the [Millerites](#) would go on to form the various [Adventist churches](#).

[Thief in the Night](#), argues that Miller's interpretation of biblical prophecies for the signs and dates of the coming of Jesus were correct and fulfilled by the Báb who declared that he was the "Promised One" on May 23, 1844, and began openly teaching in Iran in October 1844. In 2016, a Baha'i movie came out loosely based on these events called [The Miller Prediction](#).

Source : <https://www.reddit.com/user/A35821361/>

Did the Baha'is in the Ottoman Empire and the following British Mandate cooperate with the Zionist movement?

To give a brief timeline, the Bahá'ís, including Bahá'u'lláh and his family, arrived in Acre on August 31, 1868. Bahá'u'lláh lived in Acre until 1877, when he moved to a mansion in [Mazra'a](#) where he lived for two years. From 1879 until his death in 1892, he lived at the [Mansion of Bahjí](#).

The [First Zionist Congress](#) was held in Basel, Switzerland, from August 29 to August 31, 1897. The British conquered Palestine from the Ottomans during World War I in [a series of campaigns](#) lasting from March through November of 1917. It was only after the British occupation of Palestine that mass immigration of Jewish settlers occurred. Looking at [census data for Palestine](#), for example, in 1922 there were 83,290 Jews and by 1946 that number had risen to 608,225.

On February 23, 1914, at the eve of World War I, 'Abdu'l-Bahá hosted [Baron Edmond James de Rothschild](#) a member of the [Rothschild banking family](#) who was a leading advocate and financier of the Zionist movement, during one of his early trips to Palestine. This event [was reported](#) in "Star of the West" magazine.

On September 8, 1919, subsequent to the British occupation of Palestine, at a time when tens of thousands of Jewish settlers were arriving under the auspices of the [Palestine Jewish Colonization Association](#), an article in the "Star of the West" quoted '[Abdu'l-Bahá praising the Zionist movement](#)', proclaiming that "There is too much talk today of what the Zionists are going to do here. There is no need of it. Let them come and do more and say less" and that "A Jewish government might come later."

On January 24, 1922, Shoghi Effendi [received a letter](#) from [Herbert Samuel](#), the British High Commissioner for Palestine. The receipt of the letter is mentioned in [Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum's The Priceless Pearl](#). As High Commissioner, Herbert Samuel was the first Jew to govern the historic land of Israel in 2,000 years, and his appointment was regarded by the [Muslim-Christian Associations](#) as the "first step in formation of Zionist national home in the midst of Arab people." Herbert Samuel welcomed the arrival of Jewish settlers under the auspices of the [Palestine Jewish Colonization Association](#) and recognised Hebrew as one of the three official languages of the [Mandate territory](#).

On December 16, 1950, a little over a year after the international recognition of the State of Israel, the mansion at [Mazra'a](#) was leased from the Israeli government by the Bahá'í Administrative Order. Bahá'u'lláh lived there from 1877 until 1879, before moving to the [Mansion at Bahjí](#).

The transaction is [described in Baha'i News, no. 244, June 1951, p. 4](#)

The mansion at [Mazra'a](#) would later be purchased by the Bahá'í Administrative Order from the Israeli government as [reported in Messages from the Universal House of Justice 1968-1973, published 1976; Ridván Message 1973, p. 119](#)

On November 12, 1952, [a cablegram](#) sent by Shoghi Effendi announced the "acquisition of vitally-needed property" of the [Mansion of Bahjí](#) and the area around it from "[the Development Authority of the State of Israel](#)". The exchange of said property, including land and houses, was made possible by the [precipitate flight of the former Arab owners](#)."

On January 21, 1949, Shoghi Effendi met with [David Ben Gurion](#). In the chapter titled [The Heart and Nerve Centre](#) in her book [The Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith](#), [Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum](#) describes this meeting. . .

Recent Messages from the President and the Vice President of India for the Baha'is

The below messages of the President and the Vice President of India is being circulated by the Baha'is of India in Social Media, Bahai Forums and Websites wherein they have taken pride that the topmost Government officials have wished them on the Bicentennial Celebration of Bab and Baha'u'llah.

The interesting part in these message is that they have smartly fooled them by providing them the fake information that they are 2 million in India while the Government of India census figure clearly states that Baha'is are only 4573 in numbers.(REF [‘Data on Religion’ by the Census Department of Government of India states the Baha’i population as](#).)

Bahais have deceived these personalities and exploited their contacts to extract such letters from them. There could be some rich and influential Baha'is who are in friendly contacts with Government officials through whom they had been successful in carrying out such works.

People of India must be careful about these recent development and must take a note that Baha'is in India are fooling the people through RUHI books, Youth Empowerment Programmes , Children Classes and other so called Moral Activities. Their hidden agenda is to convert more and more People to Bahai faith so that they could acquire Minority Status in India. I think that is also one of the reason that on their official websites they have highly exaggerated their numbers and now with the help of these messages they wanted to prove to the World that they are indeed 2 millions in India.



सत्यमेव जयते

राष्ट्रपति

भारत गणतंत्र

PRESIDENT

REPUBLIC OF INDIA

MESSAGE

I convey warm greetings and heartfelt good wishes to the Bahá'í community of India on the occasion of the Bicentennial Birth Anniversary of Founder Prophet Baha'u'llah of the Bahá'í Faith, whose words "The earth is but one country and mankind its citizens" remain as relevant today as when they were first uttered by Him.

India takes pride in being home to the largest Bahá'í community in the world, a community as diverse as the country itself and one that has co-existed peacefully and harmoniously with fellow citizens of every faith and belief for almost 150 years.

Baha'u'llah's legacy endures in the efforts of the Baha'i community as it strives with countless others to translate His vision into reality and work for the peace and happiness of all.

I call upon the Bahá'í community as well as all Indians to use this occasion to reflect on Baha'u'llah's life, His vision for the unity of humanity and the monumental body of His Writings about the moral and spiritual transformation of the individual and society.

(Pranab Mukherjee)

New Delhi
February 14, 2017



भारत के उपराष्ट्रपति
VICE-PRESIDENT OF INDIA

MESSAGE

I am happy to learn that National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of India is organizing the bicentennial birth anniversary of Baha'u'llah, the founder of Baha'I Faith.

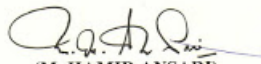
The Baha'i community in India adds to the great diversity of our land. India has been associated with the Baha'i Faith right from its inception in 1844. Today, with over 2 million adherents of the Bhai faith, India is home to the largest community of Bahis in the world.

The community has made significant contributions to the social causes through its charitable work in education, healthcare and employment generation for all members of the society. The Baha'i House of worship in India has become a symbol of communal harmony and brotherhood.

India has, for centuries, provided a unique social and intellectual environment in which many distinct religions and faiths have not only co-existed peacefully but have also enriched each other. To Jawaharlal Nehru, India was a palimpsest on which many had written their contribution and none were to be disowned. The poet Ragupati Rai Firaq expressed the process in a couplet;

*Sar zamin-e-Hind par aqwam-e-aalam ke Firaq
Karwaan aate gaye, Hindostan banta gaya*

I extend my greetings and good wishes to all the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of India and wish the event all success.


(M. HAMID ANSARI)

New Delhi
23rd March, 2017.

The Two Mirzas – Mirza Golam Ahmed & Mirza Hosain Ali

Mirza Golam Ahmed

Mirza Hosain Ali



Ghulam Ahmad has often been compared with Baha'u'llah. There is a close affinity between the ideas and preaching of these two men. Baha'u'llah was born twenty-two years before Ghulam Ahmad, and died when the latter was past fifty and had yet eighteen years to live. Baha'u'llah and Ghulam Ahmad never met each other, but that circumstance cannot preclude influence of one upon the other. The Iranian is reflected in the Qadiani, and no protestations to the contrary can dislodge him from the hold he seems to have over Ghulam Ahmad's mind. There is a marked family resemblance between the Baha'i and the Qadiani movements. The present chapter is an attempt to compare and contrast Qadianism and Baha'ism.

Baha'u'llah was a disciple of Ali Muhammad Bab, who belonged to the dervish order of Shekhis in Iran, distinguished by its expectancy of a divine messenger. Ali Muhammad declared himself to be the Bab or medium of divine grace. He claimed at first to be a harbinger, a John the Baptist, in relation to the impending advent of the Mehdi; later on he stepped into Mehdihood; and, finally, he meant to be regarded as the most privileged among the chosen, the expected of all expectants, and "the primal, pivotal and focal point" of the universe. His claims naturally jarred upon his countrymen, who called in persecution to stamp out the heresy. But the blood of martyrs served only to cement the Babi church. The Bab was publicly shot in 1850. The central and inalienable part of his claim, notwithstanding its metamorphoses, was that he was essentially a man of the seed-time, and that he was preparing the way for a 'Manifestation of God.' He had no clear ideas upon the subject that engrossed him so entirely. He could say nothing as to the time of the new dispensation. But he could say with something like certainty that the advent he gloried in would not be delayed by more than two thousand years.

Hardly had the Bab's voice ceased to vibrate when Baha'u'llah, who was two years his senior, declared himself to be the redeemer of the Bab's prophecies. He called himself the 'Manifestation of God.' He claimed to be a law-giver with a message for the whole world. He represented his revelations as the latest arrivals from heaven, which rendered allegiance to the older faiths unnecessary. Baha'ism, in the eyes of its founder, is to Islam what Islam is to Christianity, or what Christianity is to Judaism. Baha'u'llah has set up a new religion which has its own canon law, its own scriptures, and its own holy land. He has seceded from Islam and would not have it even for his label.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad tried to do all that a secessionist would. But he is anxious to be called a Muslim and a founder of a sect. He is conscious of his prophethood being extraneous to Islam. At times he tries to explain it away by calling it metaphorical and a figure of speech. But he does, whenever he can, surreptitiously introduce references to his prophethood being superior to every other and second to none. He discourages the Haj pilgrimage by example rather than precept. The way he consecrates Qadian can leave us in no doubt as to his real intent. The spiritual compass of a Qadiani points to Qadian and not Mecca. It was Ghulam Ahmad's boast that he had stilled the cry of Jihad for all time. He could not say that without implying that he had amended Quran in a very material respect, and yet he professes implicit faith in the Quran, nay, in every jot and tittle of it.

Baha'u'llah seems to have been Ghulam Ahmad's ideal. The difference between these two men is only this: The Iranian is plain and direct; he has abandoned the religion of his fore-fathers, and makes no secret of it. Ghulam Ahmad is devious and roundabout; he cannot make up his mind to risk an open breach with Islam; he must, therefore, disrupt it from within. He professes a votary's love for the Prophet and yet declares his own advent to be attended by more numerous and cogent signs than was the Prophet's. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad does not draw the conclusion to which

he is logically committed. Is it due to fear of consequences or to a sickly vacillation of mind?

Baha'u'llah does not question the Muslim doctrine of Finality of Prophethood. He calls himself 'a Manifestation of God.' His idea seems to be that prophethood has fulfilled its mission ; it is no longer necessary ; the future lies not with prophets, but with 'Manifestations of God.' The term 'Manifestation of God' has not been given an exact definition by Baha'u'llah, but certain it is that he does not apply it to Prophets like Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad. He seems to place a 'Manifestation of God' higher than a prophet, and to present himself as the first incumbent of that more exalted office. A 'Manifestation of God' is nothing short of God incarnate.

Ghulam Ahmad is conscious of an obstacle in the doctrine of Finality of Prophethood. And he tries to overcome it by declaring himself to be the selfsame Muhammad that preached Islam in Arabia thirteen hundred years ago. Ghulam Ahmad is not Ghulam Ahmad, but Muhammad reborn and revisiting the world. Those who take him to be himself are in error. He is plainly invoking metempsychosis to cut the Gordian knot. He tries to break the law without challenging its letter and seeks to pervert rather than discard the doctrine of Finality of Prophethood. At the top of his voice he cries hosanna to a provident Finality that had held him in reserve all these thirteen hundred years.

Whatever their claims, the net result of the teachings of Baha'u'llah and Ghulam Ahmad is much the same. The former declares Islam to have had its day, while the latter predicts for Islam an endless vista of glory under his sole auspices. "Jihad stands abrogated," says Baha'u'llah. "Islam needs Jihad no longer," re-echoes Ghulam Ahmad, "and I am here to deliver the funeral oration over it." "Acre and not Mecca shall henceforth attract pilgrims," says Baha'u'llah. "But," interposes Ghulam Ahmad, "Qadian is decidedly better than Acre and certainly as good as Mecca, for I have been shown in a vision Qadian mentioned in the Quran besides Mecca and Medina."

Baha'u'llah and Ghulam Ahmad represent themselves as world teachers and not as belonging to this, that, or the other community or country. Baha'u'llah seems to acquit himself of this role with greater credit and better grace than Ghulam Ahmad. The Baha'is are expected to consort with people of every religion, and they would pray with Muslims in a mosque, with Christians in a church, and with Jews in a synagogue. But Ghulam Ahmad forbids his followers all contact with Muslims, not to mention Hindus, Jews or Christians.

There is a fundamental difference between the anti-Jihadism of Baha'u'llah and of Ghulam Ahmad. The former exhorts the world to turn the sword into the plough-share, and the pacifist in him advocates something like universal disarmament. Ghulam Ahmad is unacquainted with these issues. He would be content only if the Muslims forgot that their forbears ever wielded the sword. He does not tender the same advice to the Christian world.

As a political thinker Baha'u'llah shows some talent which is denied to Ghulam Ahmad. He wants a League of Nations to settle international disputes, though he cannot be said to have sponsored the league-idea as the Baha'is believe. Baha'u'llah is anxious to unify the human race and he stresses the need of a universal language to promote better understanding and harmony. The invention of Esperanto was hailed by the Baha'is as the dawn of a new era, and they have made the cause of this language their own.

Baha'u'llah, like Ghulam Ahmad, is an emissary of Western imperialism. He denies to backward peoples the right to govern themselves. The pre-war 'spheres of influence' and the post-war 'mandates' are in complete harmony with his political ethics. Nobody welcomed and blessed more enthusiastically the unrighteous mandate in Palestine, the adopted home of Baha'u'llah and his successors, than Abdul Baha Abbas, the eldest son of Baha'u'llah, who received a Knighthood of the British Empire in recognition of his benediction.

Baha'u'llah condemns industrial slavery, but lifts the ban imposed by Islam on interest. It is interest that makes possible the accumulation and centralization of capital in a few hands, and makes the rich richer and the poor poorer. Interest is the parent of which industrial slavery is the child. It is doubtful whether Baha'u'llah's teaching has been exercised to any appreciable extent on behalf of the labourer. But he has certainly earned the gratitude of the capitalist.

Baha'u'llah is anxious to curry favour with the West. His ethics is most accommodating to its foibles. Purdah, Jihad, and Polygamy are tabooed. Interest is permitted, and European land-grabbing provided for. His predecessor, the Bab, had prohibited tobacco. But Baha'u'llah knows the prohibition will militate against the spread of Baha'ism in Europe and America; he, therefore, withdraws it. He is an opportunist beyond doubt.

Both Ghulam Ahmad and Baha'u'llah want their followers to be total abstainers from politics. It is a faulty conception of religion that divorces it from politics. The politics of a country mould the lives and destinies of its people and have a way of victimizing those who have no voice or share in determining them. Divine messengers are known to have actively shaped the politics of their times. Moses knew well enough that it was the tyranny of the Pharaohs that had reduced the Israelites to serfdom and blighted their genius. He did not say to them : "Let politics take care of themselves and let the Pharaoh have his way : we can carry on reform without touching one or the other." The emancipator in Moses precedes the reformer and the lawgiver. Alien rule is the worst that can happen to a community; it uproots initiative and deforms character. A prophet cannot shut his eyes to iniquity governing human relations. Far be it from him to acquiesce in, or countenance, dehumanization of man. Ghulam Ahmad and Baha'u'llah amply deserve the censure contained in Sa'adi's words: "Tell that unfeeling and disobliging wasp that since it will not yield honey, it should spare us its sting."

The methods of Baha'i propaganda have greatly influenced Ghulam Ahmad and his successors. Baha'u'llah styles himself a 'Manifestation of God' a term that has occasioned a good deal of equivocation and sophistry. Christian converts to Baha'ism have transferred to Baha'u'llah the divinity with which as Christians they had invested Jesus. They look upon Baha'u'llah's advent as the coming of the Father Himself. The pill of Baha'u'llah's Godhead is difficult for a Muslim to swallow and he can be fed on the more palatable diet of prophethood. To the mystically-minded Baha'u'llah's divinity is represented as the mystic's license. The Baha'i preachers have tried to adapt Baha'u'llah to the beliefs, prejudices, and idiosyncracies of his prospective votaries. They do not mind what Baha'u'llah is made of so long as he is accepted.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad resembles Baha'u'llah in this respect much as a child favours its father. His prophethood is chameleonic and opportunist. When challenged it resolves itself into Mehdihood. The Mehdi, again, has a way of rendering himself less obtrusive in the guise of an inspired

reformer whose mission is limited to a century. The mystic's pose is not unknown to Ghulam Ahmad. It can serve to hide his inconsistencies and make room for his extreme self-exaltation. Ghulam Ahmad is anxious to be accepted rather than understood. He would not like to be committed irrevocably to one proposition or other, as the Qadianis and the Lahoris are trying to identify him with their respective points of view. Ghulam Ahmad is at once a Lahori and a Qadiani, and, at times, he transcends and eludes both. The Lahoris do not, and the Qadianis will not, understand him when he asserts that his advent outshines the Holy Prophet's.

Baha'ism is a secret cult. The Baha'is cannot be pardoned for having done away with the 'Bayan' of the Bab, a book on which Baha'u'llah originally based his claim and which, nevertheless, is believed to contain matter not very complementary to it. The very fact that the Baha'is have suppressed this work does show that the Bab's teaching must have discountenanced Baha'u'llah, whose claim could not prosper so long as the Bab stood in the way. Whatever little we know of the Bab, we know through the Baha'is, who are an interested party, and utilize the Bab as a forerunner and a mouth-piece of Baha'u'llah. The Baha'is emulate the Ismailis in being secretive about their creed. They do not present Baha'u'llah's Book of Aqdas as unreservedly as Muslims present the Quran. That shows that Baha'ism, as preached in the common Baha'i literature, omits something vital to that religion. The neophyte is initiated into the mysteries of the faith by degrees. He must believe before he is permitted to understand. Might we not think that a religion, the propagation of which is accompanied by a systematic concealment of its original, official, and authoritative records surely suffers from some grave disability which, if made public, would react unfavourably on the cause ?

Qadianism is not as mysterious as Baha'ism. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad prefers to insert his meaning between the lines rather than entrust it to the unsafe custody of secret circulation. He is covert rather than uncommunicative. His dynastic ambition is clothed in metaphor, and while it is persistent, it is seldom allowed to grow so articulate as to arouse suspicion. He has his asides, and it is to these rather than to his lengthy speeches that we must refer to be the better acquainted with his mind. In one of his asides he predicts the downfall of the British Empire and yet he has all his life been fawning upon the British Government. In another aside he arrogates to himself the station of a prophet and a law-giver. For once he has acquiesced in what has always sounded in his ears as a slanderous imputation. He disclaims his asides when they are overheard. They are his private thoughts not meant for the rag-tag and bobtail. Thus we can say of Qadianism, as we said of Baha'ism, that its common literature does not tell the whole truth.

Both Ghulam Ahmad and Baha-ullah are authors. Their writings are voluminous and vague. The Qadiani calls himself the "Sovereign Writer" and the Iranian entitles himself the "Supreme Pen". Both are notorious for their bad grammar. Baha'u'llah's mother tongue is Iranian, of which he is an undisputed master. But his Arabic takes leave of grammar as well as idiom. And his divine mission seems labouring under an inferiority complex when it chooses Arabic, a foreign tongue, as the language of by far the most important of his works, Kitab-ul-Aqdas (the Holy Book), which is to the Baha'is what the Quran is to the Muslims. He seems to think the Iranian language to be lacking in, and incapable of acquiring, notwithstanding his advent, the ascendancy that belongs to Arabic. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad spoke the language of the Central Punjab, which is not a language of literary expression. He generally wrote in Urdu and occasionally in Arabic and Persian, but of none of these can he be said to be even a tolerable master. He has pretensions to being the most gifted author in the world. His is a cheap scholarship that fails to see its own limitations. He has the habit of offering cash prizes, far beyond his means, to those who might successfully rebut his arguments and he exults like a victor over his repeated challenge remaining unanswered. His writings are wanting in moral tone, a disadvantage that Baha-ullah does not share with him. The latter has nowhere in his works bastardized his opponents, or characterized them as filth-eaters, which the former has done in prose as well as in rhyme. The "Sovereign Writer" has much to learn from the "Supreme Pen."

The Baha'is and the Qadianis have many an oddity in common. The sophistries characteristic of the Qadianis belong to the Baha'is as well. The Baha'is have ransacked the Scriptures of Christianity and Islam in their attempts to find Baha'u'llah mentioned in the prophecies. The Qadianis have undertaken as much on behalf of Ghulam Ahmad. These researches have not been very fruitful, but the followers of these newfangled faiths believe that their masters are deducible from the Bible and the Quran. They would do any violence to the text in order to make it yield the meaning they have decided to extract from it.

The Baha'is as well as the Qadianis are regular traders on the prophecies emanating from their respective teachers. It is for them to decide whether it was Ghulam Ahmad's ill-will or Bahullah's curse that overthrew Ottoman Turkey, that had ignored the former and interned the latter. It should be equally debatable whether the German defeat in the Great European War was the Messiah's doing or Baha'u'llah's; the former had visualized torrents of blood, and the latter had actually pronounced his malediction on the German victor of Napoleon III. Let the Baha'i and the Qadiani also decide whether the British 'sphere of influence' in Iran was the Messiah's parting gift to the British nation or Baha'u'llah's visitation upon the people that had persecuted the Babis and the Baha'is. Be that as it may, the Ahmadi will insist, and the Baha'i should gladly allow, that pestilence and earthquakes are the Messiah's monopoly. It is not for us to say whether it is the Baha'i or the Qadiani that has the upper hand. Each finds his match in the other. They are as twins, and have certainly gone to school together.

Ghulam Ahmad and Baha'u'llah have a passive attitude towards life. They can expatiate for hours and hours on the sublimity they claim for their preaching; they can dilate upon the wrongs, fancied or real, that they have suffered, and seem masochistically to delight in doing so; they are the loudest in condemning the world, but far too afraid of its might to risk hostilities. They represent their weakness as strength, their necessity as virtue, and their inferiority as superiority. They borrow its values from the world and create none of their own; they are pupil-teachers at their best. Propagandists, parodists and mountebanks, they sought to impose upon the world. But the world is not to be taken in by sheer legerdemain. It knows its Titans from its pignies; it bows before the former and jostles away the latter.

From the book : HIS HOLINESS by PHOENIX, Lahore, India (1935)

Courtesy : <http://bahaism.blogspot.com>

‘Persecuted’ Baha’is (Yaaran) of Iran !!

The So called ‘Persecuted’ Baha’is (Yaaran) of Iran are enjoying Life in Prison !!!

Some of the Exclusively Pics of the Yaaran from the Prison in Iran









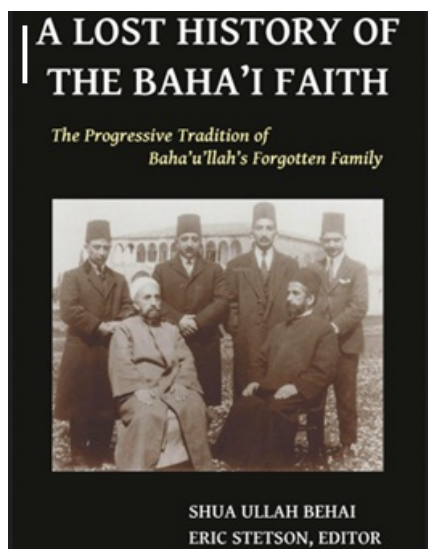


Are there Members of Baha'u'llah's Family Alive today ????

It is Strange to see that a Baha'i doesn't have knowledge about the family members of Baha'u'llah !!!!!

Universal House of Justice, the Supreme body of Baha'i Administration have been fooling the unaware Baha'is that no members of Baha'u'llah family is alive today. Baha'is who are taught 'independant investigation of truth' as one of the most important Baha'i Principle are denied investigation in such an Important matter. Whenever any Baha'is try to investigate the matter, he is immediately declared as 'Covenant Breaker'.

Eric Stetson and the grandson of Baha'u'llah – Shua Ullah Behai has exposed the lies of Universal House of Justice in their celebrated book – THE LOST HISTORY OF BAHAI FAITH.



Fortunately this book is now online and available for everyone to read. Baha'is are advised to read this book with open mind and find out the truth behind the ex-communication of immediate family members of Baha'u'llah by Abdul Baha and Shoghi Effendi.

For more detail :

<http://www.voxhunri.com/books/a-lost-history-of-the-bahai-faith/foreword/>

To read the book online.... Please visit.

<https://historyofbahaifaith.wordpress.com>

To download in .PDF Format... please click below

[Download in .PDF](#)

The Failed Baha'i Prophecy About All Iranian Jews Converting to Baha'ism

Courtesy : <http://www.bahai-bahai.com/eng/index.php/articles?id=95>

In one of his letters on the occasion of the death of a number of Baha'is in Yazd and Isfahan, Abdu'l-Baha tries to blame the Scholars of Iran for their death and claims these deaths were the result of the Jealousy of Shia scholars due to the massive conversion of Persians to Baha'ism. This is what he states in a section of this letter that is part of the suppressed Baha'i texts that Baha'is simply refuse to translate to English:

(۱۲۴)

ندارند * ولی چون بامر مبرم الهی مأمور بصلح عمومی هستند
و مکلف بمظلومیت کبری لهذا اگر ستمکاری دست تطاول بکشاید
و مانند کرک تیز چنک هجوم نماید احبای الهی مانند اغنام تسلیم
شوند * ابداً مقاومت نمایند * بلکه تیغ و شمشیر را بشهد
و شیر مقابله نمایند * زخم بجگرگاه خورند * دست قاتل را
ببوسند * و در سبیل الهی جانفشانی نمایند * از برای ستمکار
استغفار کنند * و طلب عفو از پروردگار نمایند *
این روش و سلوک سبب کشته که آن حیوانهای درنده
و مار و عقرب کزنده روز بروز بر جسارت افزودند و بخون
مظلومان دست خویش آلودند و راه جفا پیمودند * و ابداً رحم
نمودند * این واقعه جدید و ظلم شدید بر وقوعات سابقه
ببفزود و مصائب و بلاهای قدیمه را محو نمود *
مختصر اینست که چون در این ایام علمای شیعه یعنی مذهب
قدیم در ایران ملاحظه نمودند که ندای الهی بلند شد * و شرق
و غرب بحرکت آمد * انوار شمس حقیقت چنان سطوع نمود
که چشمها روشن شد * رایت امر الله مرتفع گردید * نفوس
فوج فوج در ظل کلمه الله در آیند و شیعیان بهائیان کردند حتی
اسرائیلیان چنان شور و واهی یافتند که غریب نفسی از ایشان
در ایران باقی نماند مگر آنکه مهتدی بهدایت کبری گردد *
و همچنین فارسیان که ملت قدیمه ایرانند و منکر جمیع انبیاء

(۱۲۵)

از ابراهیم و موسی * و همچنین منکر حضرت مسیح و حضرت
رسول الله بودند * حال اکثر مقرر و معترف بجمیع کتب و رسل
و انبیای الهی کشتند و در نهایت صدق و صفا از زمره بهائیان
شدند *
خلاصه این قضیه بسیار سبب خقد و حسد علمای سوء شده
بقسمیکه صبر و تحمل بر باد رفته * در هر نفسی اتشی افروزند
و فتنه بر پا نمایند * و با انواع وسائل جهله قوم و هزله ورزله
پرلومرا بر ریختن خون مظلومان تشویق و اجبار نمایند * یکی
از آن علماء سوء شخصی موجود در اصفهان (نجفی)
و پدرش چون بخون حضرت سلطان الشهداء و محبوب الشهداء
دست ییالود حضرت بهاء الله پدر را ذنب و پسر را ابن ذنب لقب
فرمود هر کس متحیر بود که حکمت این لقب چه چیز است
و چه خواهد کرد تا آنکه در این ایام ظاهر شد * بدایت این فتنه
از جهلای امت و علمای سوء در ایران در ولایت رشت در ماه
مارث (سنه ۱۹۰۳) که مطابق ماه محرم (سنه ۱۳۲۱) واقع بر پا گشت
اول علمای جهلا عوام خلق را از اراذل و اوباش تشویق بر تالان
و تاراج احباب کردند و تحریض بر اذیت و جفا اثر را بطمع غارت
اموال مانند کرک بر اغنام الهی هجوم نمودند * و یک نفر از احبای
الهی را که تازه فوت نموده از زیر خاک بیرون آوردند * قطعه
قطعه کرده آتش زدند * و حال آنکه انمظلوم با جمیع خلق در مدت

"In summary, in these days the scholars of the Shia [belief], meaning the former religion of Iran, noticed that the call of God has been raised, and the East and West have stirred, the lights of the sun of truth have spread to such an extent that the eyes have become illuminated, the flag of the cause of God has been hoisted, the people enter by troops under the word of God (i.e. they are converting to Baha'ism), and the Shia have become Baha'is. Even the Israelites (Jews) are so excited and astonished that soon not a single one of them will remain in Iran but that he will be guided to the highest guidance (i.e. he would become a Baha'i). Also the majority of the Parsis (Zoroastrians), who are the ancient people of Iran and deny all the Prophets like Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and the Messenger of Allah (Muhammad), testify and admit that all Books, Messengers, and Divine Prophets [are legitimate] and with the utmost truthfulness and serenity have become Baha'is. This has become a source of animosity and jealousy for the evil scholars..." (Abdu'l-Baha, *Makاتب [Letters]*, vol. 3, pp. 124-125)

The aforementioned paragraph is replete with false statements:

- 1- Shia Islam is called the "former religion of Iran" thus making it seem that Baha'ism is now officially the religion of Iranians and most of the population have converted to Baha'ism. The intention to induce such a meaning is evident from what Abdu'l-baha states in the remainder of the paragraph.
- 2- It is stated that "the people enter by troops under the word of God (i.e. they are converting to Baha'ism), and the Shia have become Baha'is." This is also false because the percentage of Baha'i converts in Iran among the population was minute and still is.

3- He claims **“Even the Israelites (Jews) are so excited and astonished that ere long not a single one of them will remain in Iran but that he will be guided to the highest guidance (i.e. they will all become Baha’is).”** This is obviously false and a failed prophecy because more than a century has passed since this claim was made but Iran still retains the second-highest Jewish population in the middle-east.

4- He also claims that the majority of Zoroastrians are now Baha’is. The falsity of this sentence is self-evident and needs no further explanation.

If one were to read these statements in light of Baha’i claims about the station of Abdu’l-Baha, including the infallibility of his Pen,[1] his superhuman knowledge,[2] the reception of direct inspirations from Baha’u’llah,[3] his own claims about knowing everything when he wants,[4] and that whatever he says is fact,[5] it would quickly become clear that these statements are all part of a great deception.

[1] “Little wonder that from the same unerring pen there should have flowed, after Abdu’l-Baha’s memorable visit to the West” (Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Baha’u’llah*, p. 75)

[2] “while it does not by any means justify us to assign to Him the station of Prophethood, indicates how in the person of ‘Abdu’l-Bahā the incompatible characteristics of a human nature and superhuman knowledge and perfection have been blended and are completely harmonized,” (Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Baha’u’llah*, p. 134.)

[3] “That Abdu’l-Baha is not a Manifestation of God, that He gets His light, His inspiration and sustenance direct from the Fountain-head of the Baha’i Revelation; that He reflects even as a clear and perfect Mirror the rays of Baha’u’llah’s glory ... His words are not equal in rank, though they possess an equal validity with the utterances of Baha’u’llah” (Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Baha’u’llah*, p. 139)

[4] “No, I do not know everything. But when I need to know something, it is pictured before me,” (Stanwood Cobb, *Memories of Abdu’l-Baha in His Presence: Visits to Abdu’l-Baha* (Kalimat Press, 1989), p. 60)

[5] “Many times He said, ‘I do not make a claim of infallibility (ma`sumiyyat). I am the first of sinners (avval-i gunahkar). But the Blessed Beauty favored me with a gift (mawhibati). Whatever I say, it is that (har chih beguyam, hamān ast).’” (<http://www-personal.umich.edu/~jrcole/abinfall.htm>)

Memories of Mohammed Ali Effendi – Son of Baha’u’llah

To His Excellency Abbas Effendi Abdul Baha.

Dear sir:

Inasmuch as your views and doctrines in our religion are radically different from those of my father, your younger brother, Mohammed Ali Effendi who was chosen in the ‘Book of My Covenant’ the last Will of Baha’u’llah, to occupy after you the same position you occupy now:

And inasmuch as this difference between both of you spreads among the followers of Baha’u’llah and divided them into two parties; one following you and believing in your personal teachings, and the other party which joined your brother believing in the teachings of Baha’u’llah only and considering them final as he declared:

And, inasmuch as we were all commanded in the ‘Most Sacred Book’ Kitáb-i-Aqdas, to bring our differences to the utterance of Baha’u’llah, which sufficed the world, whereby they should be settled:

And, inasmuch as our duty is to establish peace at home, among ourselves first, before we preach others to do so:

I hereby beg your Excellency to appoint a conference of peace and spirituality to hold its meetings at the city of Chicago, or some other place, at a certain time, in order to discuss with the language of love and kindness the differences between the said two parties and settle them in accord with the utterances of Baha’u’llah and His Commandments.

If it please you, said conference would be composed of your Excellency with some learned ones of your followers, myself and Dr. I.G. Khayru’llah, who introduced Baha’ism into America and Christendom with a few of our party.

My father Ghusni Akbar, authorized me to state, that he will accept and sanction whatever your Excellency would establish with me and with his representative Dr. I.G. Khayru’llah.

The official language of said conference shall be the U.S. Language, a neutral interpreter should be hired to translate from the Arabic language all that you would like to say and in the meantime to translate to you all the discussions of the conference. Also to ask the Associated Press to send a reporter to write the minutes of the conference; and to invite three American savants to attend the meetings and acts witnesses and judges.

I suggest the questions and discussions to be the following:

First: Why your Excellency concealed a part of the ‘Book of My Covenant,’ the will of Baha’u’llah? That will was entrusted to you that you might give all of it to the followers of Baha’u’llah.

Second: Ghusni Akbar was chosen to occupy after you the same position you occupy, and your Excellency claimed that he was cut off and fell. How is it possible that he fell from the said position before having had a chance to occupy it?

Third: What grounds have you to claim that you are the Center of the Covenant? God only is the center of the Covenant.

Forth: Why do you claim to be the Interpreter of the Utterances of Baha’u’llah? He declared in the Book of Wisdom that there is no Interpreter to them save Himself.

Fifth: How could it be that you are the manifestation of servitude and Baha’u’llah declared it to Himself only? Also He taught there are no manifestations after Him until one thousand years passed from His appearance.

Sixth: Why do you claim the great Infallibility calling your letters sacred tablets and revelations? Baha’u’llah said; ‘Whosoever claimeth a mission before the completion of one thousand years from His Manifestation is a lying impostor.

Seventh: Why do you teach that this greatest Manifestation has three chiefs, the Bab, Baha’u’llah and yourself? Baha’u’llah said: “There is no one else beside him in the Kingdom.” Likewise the Bible taught that at the latter days we shall have one shepherd, only one chief and not three. Also Baha’u’llah said: ” He hath no agent, no successor, and no son.”

Eighth: Why do you claim and in the same breath deny that which you claim?

Ninth: Why do you teach and spread the teachings of Baha’u’llah as you were commanded to do, instead of spreading your own?

I close this open letter, appealing to your Excellency by justice, love and unity to grant my request.

Your Humble servant,

The Grandson of Baha’u’llah,

Shua Ullah

To read more please visit :

<https://bahaiunitarian.wordpress.com/>

Jamshid Rohani – born in Baha’i Family but not a Baha’i –A Brief History

Courtesy : <http://thefriendsofgod.webs.com>

IN THE YEAR 1960 a man named **Jamshid Rohani** was born in Iran. **He was born into a Baha’i family, but never declared himself a Baha’i.** He was a very spiritual youth, and travelled throughout Iran to study all the various religions. He choose to be a Dervish (ascetic). He claimed to have many mystical experiences and visions in which his spirit would leave his body, and he would travel to the Third Heaven. While in these visions to have conversed with many Prophets and Saints, such as Jesus, Krishna, Buddha, Zoroaster, and others. During these out-of-body experiences Rohani would question these Great Souls and receive answers. Upon reaching adulthood he began to study English from friends who had studied in America and England in the 1970s and 1980s.. In 2004 he walked across the western Iranian Zagros mountains and sneaked past boarder guards, sneaking into Turkey. From Turkey he travelled to Greece, and eventually found his way to the United States. He stayed in the U.S. for five years, learning English and studying the various Christian denominations while he worked as a cab driver in New York City, Chicago, Dallas, Salt Lake City, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Seattle, Washington. While in Seattle he made a few American disciples. In 2010 Rohan declared he was returning to Iran, but instructed his American disciples to form; a worldwide fellowship of followers of the Good Religion.

Jamshid Rohani taught that there is only One Religion of God, the Good Religion, and that all the major religions today are just “orders” of the Good Religion. He taught that the Supreme Being is Ahura Mazda, the Only Wise Lord.He taught that the Zoroastrian religion had been corrupted over thousands of years by uninspired high priests, and he sought to restore the Good Religion back to its original purity; a religion without required rites, compulsory rituals, mandatory congregational meetings, heirarchies, or priests. He taught that the Good Religion is a very simple religion: one based upon good thoughts, good words, and good deeds. He taught that the Religion of God consists of how we treat other sentient beings, and not how we prayer or what Messenger or Prophet we claim to follow, or what caste we belong to.

Rohani was interviewed, and these interviews were recorded in long-hand, and Rohani instructed his disciples to publish these interviews after he returned to Iran. Jamshid Rohani denied he was a Messenger or Prophet of God, but insisted he was a (Arabic: “One Spoken To”) meaning a non-prophet who is spoken to by an angel or one who sees a vision. He was taught in the Third Heaven that Muhammad (Peace Be Unto Him) was the Last Prophet of God for humanity on this planet, and that no more prophet or messenger will come except in visions to the Seers (Muhaddatheen). Rohani preached that Islaam is not a religious faith, but a religious of submitting one’s will to the Will of God daily. He taught that Rabbinical Judaism, Christianity, Islaam, the Religion of the Druze, and the Religion of Truth (Ahl-i-Haqq) were just variations of the One Religion of God: the Good Religion. Jamshid Rohani taught:

“If Islaam were the umma (community) of the Apostle of God, peace be unto him, then all those who belong to that umma would be Muslims. But, Islaam is not a religious community, but a religious practice. Islaam is submitting my will to the Will of God. If my heart is sincere, and I submit my will to the will of God, then I am practicing Islaam. Yet, if I call myself a Muslim, and prayer five times a day, and go to Masjid on Friday, but if I oppress the poor, and deceive others in business, and if I am cruel to my wife, and to animals, and if I neglect the orphan and the widow and the sick and the aged and the infirm in body and mind, and do not give to them a portion of my substance, then I am not a Muslim but a hypocrite. Yet, if I am a Christian, or a Jew, or a Buddhist, and I submit my will to the Will of God, to the best of my knowledge and ability, then I am truly a Muslim, even if I have never read the Qu’ran, and even if I do not belong to the umma of Muhammad, Peace be Unto Him.” (The Good Book).

Jamshid Rohani taught that Jesus was a Jew by blood, but a Zoroastrian by faith. He said that the sect of the Nazarenes were a sect of Jewish Zoroastrians, and that Jesus was born a Nazarene and died a Nazarene, and that Jesus was not the Founder of the new religion of “Christianity” but was, rather, one of the three virgin-born Saoshyants (Benefactors) that the Prophet Zoroaster had prophesied would come. Rohani claimed that he had long conversations with Jesus in the Third Heaven, asking Him many questions, and receiving many answers. The questions and answers are reproduced in which will be published by sometime in the year 2016 online, and later in printed form.

Jamshid Rohani told his American disciples that would one-day become one of the largest philanthropic organizations in the world, with millions of members and supporters, and that it would do much to quell the animosity between religionists around the world. Rohani taught that Pure Religion was not about nationality, or caste, or church, or what religious community we belong to, or what doctrines we believe in, but True Religion was visiting the sick, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and caring for the widows, orphans, and homeless, and becoming peacemakers. He said:

Jamshid Rohani said that in ancient times people needed priests and mobeds and imaams to guide them, because most people could not read, but that today, since most people can read, the time for a “learned class” of priests was now over, that people could read the Word of God for themselves, and be guided by it without the help of human interpreters. He taught that the visions of Seers is a much better guide than human scholarship or religious traditions.

In 2010 Jamshid Rohani returned to Iran, to live a life of ascetism, prayer, and seclusion, so that he would be found worthy to be born above into the Kingdom of Heaven at death. Rohani was born homosexual. In the Third Heaven he asked many questions, including about homosexuality, and he received answers to why some people are born homosexual, and how homosexuals may enter into the Kingdom of Heaven at death. Rohani insisted that the Friends of God have no priests, no “learned ones”, no international or national leaders, but only local elected ministers who act as servants instead of as leaders and masters. He instructed that our Holy Book be “The Bible of the World”. He also instructed that we not refer to ourselves with sectarian names (he did not wish to become the founder of yet another religious sect), but to simply refer to ourselves as “Followers of the Good Religion”. He insisted that we should worship Ahura Mazda alone (Only He is Good), and not worship Messengers, Prophets, Saints, Satgurus, or (Seers) such as himself.

The purpose of The Friends of God International is to establish homes for widows and orphans in places where the government does not do these

things, or does little in that area, and to establish homeless centers in North America and Europe, and to publish and promulgate which contains the teachings of the Prophets and Saints as They instructed him in the Third Heaven. The Friends of God International has now been established.

Ruhi does not represent the Baha'i Faith or Bahá'u'lláh

Courtesy : <http://www.ruhifreezone.is/>

Ruhi is not and does not represent the Baha'i Faith or Bahá'u'lláh, the Manifestation of God.

While Bahá'u'lláh taught unity of Faith, he never spoke of a singular teaching dogma such as Ruhi. Quite the contrary, Bahá'u'lláh advocated freedom of discussion and thought.

The principles of the strict uniform teaching method for the Baha'i Faith called Ruhi are based on the harsh instructional disciplines of Marxist liberation theology that has roots in the jungles of South America. The teaching method was copied, adapted and espoused by Farzam Arbab, who started a personal business in Cali, Columbia – the Ruhi Institute – during the height of the cocaine activity in the area. Arbab named his endeavor "Ruhi" after his father.

Arbab – a man driven by the fundamentals of Marxism has been described as "ruthless," "vicious," and "vindictive" – subsequently managed to gain a seat on the Baha'i [Universal House of Justice](#) in Haifa. Once in a seat of power and influence, Arbab set about manipulating leadership and the fundamental foundations of the Baha'i Faith.

The Marxist-rooted influence of Arbab is a dark force, a test, a momentary challenge that the Baha'i Faith must overcome ... and it will.

At a time of low growth and poor community development in the [Baha'i Faith](#) some years ago, Arbab claimed his Ruhi style of systematic training and group study would attract massive numbers of new followers.

Ruhi has been at the core of Arbab's agenda to remold the Faith of [Bahá'u'lláh](#), the current day Manifestation of God. Arbab claimed the uniform Ruhi teaching program would bring "armies" of new followers to the Baha'i Faith. In reality, Ruhi has been a failure that has created financial hardship on Baha'i administrations around the world and resulted in a loss of members. There is no growth.

Using tactics that have often been called "strong arm" and through threat, backbiting, intimidation and harsh punishments, Arbab forced through his "vision." He claimed the Ruhi program was "proven" (untrue), had been thoroughly vetted by academics and research (untrue), and would result in many more members of the Faith (untrue). It was all a con-job by Arbab. Nevertheless, anyone who stood in his way – from fellow House of Justice members to Baha'i leaders around the world – have been punished, ostracized and dismissed. He gained so much power that no one was allowed to stand in Arbab's maniacal ways.

Under Arbab's regime, National Spiritual Assemblies worldwide have been bullied. Good leaders treated rudely and forced out. Arbab has populated the "institution" with cronies and family members.

More is being [written](#) about the depth of inaccurate and misinformation in the series of Ruhi books. Sacred quotes by Bahá'u'lláh and his eldest son 'Abdu'l-Bahá' – Center of the Cause – have been erroneous or taken out of context. [Shoghi Effendi](#), Guardian of the Faith, has all but been written out of Ruhi.

The private organization behind Ruhi – [Palabra Publications](#) in West Palm Beach, Florida – casts a shadow of conflict of interest and lack of ethical behavior by Palabra's three owners – Arbab; Paul Lample, Arbab's partner, minion and fellow Baha'i Universal House of Justice member; and Cap Cornwell, owner of a painting company in Palm Beach, Florida.



Cap Cornwell

While Arbab and Lample have assured Baha'is that Palabra Publishing is a not-for-profit organization, it is privately owned and not registered with the state of Florida. While no public records are available, Palabra Publications apparently has generated a fortune for Arbab, Lample and Cornwell by being the sole-source for all Ruhi teaching materials. Ruhi has made them rich.

Palabra is located within Cornwell's paint company at 7369 Westport Place, West Palm Beach, Florida.

Arbab, who has spoken of his contempt for the United States and the American people, lives in communist China although he visits West Palm Beach, Florida, to monitor his Ruhi business endeavors. His influence over the Bahá'i World Centre in Haifa, Israel, remains so great that he is

afforded a permanent office suite, unprecedented for a *former* member of the House of Justice.

It's okay for members of the Baha'i Faith and who believe that Bahá'u'lláh is the Manifestation of God to speak out, discuss and shed fear of reprisal. We must adhere to unity and embrace the Faith of God, the Baha'i Faith. But, we must not accept or condone bullying. Fear is a weapon of a destructive force.

Who is the Promised One of Islam ???? Bab or Baha'ullah

Baha'is are an interesting bunch.

Normally, a man-made belief like bahaism is riddle with inaccuracies and contradictions in its own dogma. But bahaism go to an extreme in this.

I have heard SEVERAL different and contradictory "explanations" about the whether or not Baha'ullah is a prophet of God. One says he is not, but he is a messenger. Other say he is, but for the so-called "Adamic cycle".

Then, the Bab was the Imam Mahdi but wait a minute, Baha'ullah according to Bahaism is the promised one of Islam, making Baha'ullah the Mahdi! Bahais have over several contradictory explanations of this like my favorite one, "Baha'ullah can be both at the same time (Jesus and the Mahdi while bab is also the Mahdi and in some reports, Jesus as well!!!). Baha'is have told me with a straight face that both Bab and Baha'ullah were the Mahdi and they didn't realize the stupidity of what they just said.

Getting back to the issue of whether or not Baha'ullah was a prophet, it is known that Jesus was a prophet of God. If the Baha'is who insist that Baha'ullah was not a prophet, how could they say that they believe that he is the return of Jesus when Jesus is a prophet? So they do believe that Jesus is a prophet without even realizing it!

The Baha'i dogma/creed lacks any solid foundation. ..

2.2 Million Baha'is in India ????. What a Joke !!!!!

Funny how the claimed numbers of Baha'i keeping growing exponentially when in fact membership is down! 7millions now, lol.

Must be claiming 3 – 1/2 million in India alone! Growth in West has been not only been stagnant for the past 30 years but is in fact shrinking as Hossein Banani openly admitted when being asked why the Baha'is of Canada were trying to sell off some of their unused real estate in the Yukon near Whitehorse.

From The Yukon News article Dec.1 2004: although Banani and Tama stress the impending sale is not a sign the Baha'i community is leaving the territory, membership in the faith is down. "Some people have left the faith", "some have gone into hibernation." said Mr.Banani.

In other words so many people have "left the (Baha'i) faith" or have "gone into hibernation", that the attrition rate is greater than the enrollment rate, forcing the Canadian National Spiritual Assembly to sell off it's real estate to keep solvent.

The number of claimed Baha'is in India is bogus. The greater majority of those who are claimed as Baha'i members in India are infact still Hindu's. When a Hindu says that Buddha was an Avatar it doesn't make them a Buddhist just as when a Hindu says that Baha'u'llah was an Avatar it doesn't make them a Baha'i.

William Garlington's personal experience in India bares this fact out: ..From my own experiences in the mass teaching areas of Madhya Pradesh in 1973-74 it was fairly apparent that declaring oneself a Baha'i did not mean that an individual was being put in the position of having to *leave* his own religious tradition (which in this case was primarily Hindu). Indeed, in the villages that I visited it seemed apparent that declared Baha'is for the most part continued to practice traditional behavioral idioms. Moreover there was little indication that they had abandoned the Hindu *world view*. They had declared their belief in Baha'u'llah as an avatar and were *compartmentalizing* their Baha'i activities so as not to directly come into conflict with traditional village or regional norms. As many were from the lower castes (unclean and untouchable) ritual purity was not as big a factor as for higher caste Hindus. My own conclusion was that the Baha'i Faith better fit the category of a *bhakti* movement rather than a new religion in that it 1)allowed for *converts* to express their *deviant* attitudes within a compartmentalized frame of reference (Baha'i institutions such as Feast and Assembly Meetings) 2) was highly devotional in nature and 3) tended to show a preference for symbolic and utopian expressions of change rather than direct social action. (With the onset of specific development programs in the 80s and 90s this aspect of the Faith in India may well have changed to some degree, although I would doubt that there has been much attempt to openly combat caste prejudice in the name of the Faith.) All of this is to say that IMO what allows for the large numbers is the fact that in India one can be a Baha'i and still be a Hindu. If such an approach were taken in the United States I would imagine that the number of Baha'is here would also be dramatically increased.

7 million, lol; more like 2 million at that is probably still a stretch.

What could possibly be the Baha'i Administrative Order's motivation for so grossly exaggerating the number of Baha'i in the world? Could it be because the Baha'i faith's claimed: "global prominence", is in fact: growing obscurity?

Larry Rowe

How can they prove that Baha'ullah is the second coming of Jesus?

I have noticed that many Baha'is regulars have been very upset to read that Baha'u'llah is a false Christ. They wonder how can a man they see as great and sincere claim to be the second coming of Jesus and yet did not fulfill the prophecies.

- They wonder why Baha'ullah didn't return to the Temple Mount.
- Why he didn't come in a time of Armageddon.
- Why didn't he live and establish universal peace, etc
- They still insist that Baha'ullah was the second coming of Christ.

These Baha'is are at a loss for words. How can they prove that Baha'ullah is the second coming of Jesus? How can they explain why Baha'ullah did not fulfill the prophecies? Will they say that Baha'ullah fulfilled the prophecies in a "metaphorical way?" Will they say that Baha'ullah "sincerity" is proof that he was real?

Whether Baha'is are willing to admit that Baha'ullah did not fulfill the prophecies of the second of Jesus or not is not really the issue? The issue is why these people will still believe in an impostor despite the evidence. Is it because of a blind, emotional allegiance and devotion to this man and the religion he created? Is it because the nonsense of Baha'i makes more sense to them than reality?

Look at how the Bible and Hadiths explain the false Christ and how they will deceive many (excerpts from

Mathew 24:23-27:

"At that (end) time if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'There he is!' do not believe it. For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to DECEIVE. See, I have told you ahead of time. "

So if anyone tells you,

'There he is, out in the desert,' do not go out; or, 'Here he is, in the inner rooms,' do not believe it. FOR AS LIGHTNING THAT COME FROM THE EAST IS VISIBLE EVEN IN THE WEST, SO WILL BE THE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN" (Mathew 24:23-27)

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves." (Jesus-Bible-Mathew 7:15.10)

"Watch that no one deceives you. For many will come in my name saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many." (Jesus-Bible-Mark 13:6)

"And many false prophets will come and deceive many people" (Jesus-Bible-Mathew 24:11) [Luke 21:8]

And he said, "Take heed that you are not led astray; for many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he!' and, 'The time is at hand!' Do not go After them

Hadith from Islamic Books :

Hanzalah al-Aslami reported: I heard AbuHurayrah (Allah be pleased with him) as narrating from Allah's Apostle (peace_be_upon_him) who said: By Him in Whose Hand is my life, Ibn Maryam(Jesus Christ) would certainly pronounce Talbiyah for Hajj or for Umrah or for both (simultaneously as a Qarin) in the valley of Rawha. Sahih Muslim Book 7, Number 2877:

When did Baha'ullah do this pilgrimage?

"The prophets are like brothers; they have different mothers but their religion is one. I am the closest of all the people to Jesus the son of Mary BECAUSE THERE IS NO OTHER PROPHET BETWEEN HIM AND MYSELF. HE WILL COME AGAIN AND WHEN YOU SEE HIM YOU WILL RECOGNIZE HIM. He is of medium height and his coloring is reddish-white. He will be wearing two garments and his hair will look wet.

He will break the cross (destroy Christianity), kill the swine, abolish the Jizya (tax on non-believers) and CALL THE PEOPLE TO ISLAM DURING HIS TIME, ALLAH WILL END EVERY RELIGION AND SECT OTHER THAN ISLAM and he will destroy the antichrist peace and security will reign on earth (Ahmad)"

If a Baha'i does admit that Bahauallah was a false Christ, then that person is no longer Baha'i. Now I know the mystery to why Baha'is refuse to admit the truth.

They rather accept a refuted belief and make themselves go through self-induced delusions than admit to the facts.

Slain Sydney woman and estranged psychotic husband were Baha'is!!!!

Courtesy : <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/slain-woman-had-tried-to-support-abusive-husband-20150118-12sr6q.html?>

Friends of Leila Alavi say the 26-year-old hopelessly tried to support her troubled and abusive husband right up until he allegedly murdered her with a pair of scissors.

Her body was found in her car on Saturday morning at the Auburn shopping complex where she worked as a hairdresser.

That evening, police arrested and charged her 33-year-old husband Mokhtar Hosseiniarraei with murder. He was refused bail on Sunday and police told a Sydney court he "has made admission to the offence".

Fredo Monty has known the couple since photographing their wedding in 2011 and his partner was a close friend of Ms Alavi.

Mirza Yahya Subh-i Azal: The Bab calls him God, Bahais call him Satan !!!1

Mirza Yahya Subh-i Azal was Baha'u'llah's half-brother and the executor of the Bab's will. He was regarded as the successor to the Bab until Baha'u'llah succeeded in sending him to the sidelines and taking over the affairs of many of the followers of the Bab. He is greatly hated by Baha'is and regarded as one their greatest enemies. According to the famous Baha'i scholar Fadil Mazandarani in his book *Asrar al-Athar* ([download from here](#)), it is also written as *Asraru'l-Athar*) this is how Baha'u'llah referred to his brother Subh-i Azal:

—۳۴۶—

اتفاق واتحاد سقوط یافتند و متدرجاً در الواح و آشبار
و مراسلات صادره بر موز و اشارات و القابی از قبیل مشرک باللّه
و عجل و جعل و طاغوت و شیطان و ابلیس و برکه منتنه خبیثه و
طنین زباب و امثالها نامبرده شدند چنانچه شمه ای در ذیل
نام ابلیس و درخش و حرف و مواضع اخیری ثبت میباشد و پیروانش
<http://www.bahaibahai.com/eng/index.php/articles>
بعناوین ازلی و یحیائی و یموتی و غیرها خوانده گردیدند
از آنجمله خطاب به شیخ سلمان از آثار ادرنه بهاء الله است

“When Mirza Yahya Azal started opposing the works, deeds, and words of his esteemed brother (Baha'u'llah) in Edirne . . . he dropped down from his [high] stature and the rank of union and agreement [that he had with Baha'u'llah] and was gradually—in the tablets, works, and revelations [from Baha'u'llah]—referred to with codes, references, and names such as **the polytheist, the calf, the scarab (dung beetle), the tyrant, the Satan, the devil, the foul swamp, the buzzing of a fly, and similar names.**” (Fadil Mazandarani, *Asrar al-athar*, vol. 5, pp. 345–346.)

Baha'u'llah's followers also used these titles to refer to Mirza yahya Subh-i Azal, for instance Professor Edward Browne cites a letter sent to him by a woman who was proselytized in America by Dr. Ibrahim Kheiralla where she states:

“Mirzá Yahyá is scarcely spoken of, but when he is mentioned he is called **Satan.**” (E.G. Browne, *Materials for the Study of the Babi Religion* p. 117)

the Bible. [According to this doctor, Behá was God Himself. He teaches that God did not manifest *through* the personality of Behá, as in the case of Jesus, but that He really was God, and that He will not come again during this cycle. We are all called upon to believe this, or else forever lose our chance of salvation.] Believing it makes us the adopted children of God, and we are given the power of creation. Prayer is taught, and little type-written prayers composed by Behá are given to the students, and they are told to pray for spiritual things, which, however, they have no *right* to, else they would have received them, and there would be no need of asking for them. This is one of the principal points in the teachings. The first prayer given is really the most inclusive and truly beautiful one I have ever known. Angels are placed lower than man, for they are controlled by God, and man is not, but has free will and the power of choosing. [Those who die without hearing of Behá are reincarnated and have another chance; those who have already heard do not.] Believers see their friends who are not in the earth-body. God never takes a female form as he selects the stronger one to manifest Himself. There is to be a great time in the future when Napoleon IV, who is now a colonel in the Russian army, will war against the religion of Christ, aided by Russia, and the "Red Dragon" the Pope. France is to be an empire. The Napoleons are the Antichrists. Mírzá Yahyá¹ is scarcely spoken of, but when he is mentioned he is called Satan. I think very few of the students know anything about him. These are a few of the many statements made in the course of thirteen lessons; but there is not the slightest reference throughout the entire course to the development of character, and those who claim an inner guidance are particularly censured and ridiculed. Certain

¹ *i.e.* Subh-i-Azal.

<http://www.bahaibahai.com/eng/index.php/articles>

Digitized by Microsoft®

“Name of Azal, testify that there is no God but I, the dearest beloved. Then testify that there is no God but you, the victorious and permanent.”
(source: <https://www.h-net.org/~bahai/notes/vol7/BABWILL.htm>)

First the Bab states very explicitly that he is God (not a messenger from God or a manifestation of God, but God himself), then he tells Subh-i Azal that he too is God and should testify to this. These statements being illogical and meaningless aside, according to the Bab Mirza Yahya Subh-i Azal is God and according to Baha'ullah he is the Satan and devil! Baha'u'llah also claims he is the one that the Bab had prophesized about. Go figure...

Bahais in My Backyard – The MOTHER of all objective documentaries on the Haifan Baha’i Cult

Let me put it to you this way, it’s a Haifan Bahaim-Administrative Faith killer without a doubt all around. Every person who has seen this has been put off by the whole Disney-Haifa, hanging gardens of Babylon, New World Order, pseudo-Masonic, Parthenon wannabe, men-in- black-suits, meglomaniacal tripe that is the WC. People are saying things like the vibe they’re getting from the Bahaism over there is pure negativity and deception. One guy said he didn’t think Orwell could be so well executed on screen as a documentary until seeing this, etc.

Now a very, very a good thing from my POV, is how it made Moshe Sharon (one of their ‘scholars’ on the payroll in Israel) look like the total creep and liar that he is. Everyone worth their salt has known that Husayn ‘Ali Nari’s family members were still living over there, and large numbers. For feck’s sake the WC itself has been warning pilgrims in Haifa about associating with these “covenant breakers,” not to frequent their shops, etc. That Naama put the spot-light prominently on Mm. Negar Bahai (whose mother was swindled by Shoghi Effendi) is a very, very good thing. Note well, and note carefully: that woman and her entire family are the last salvation and final refuge of your creed. Without them, you people are well and truly finished!

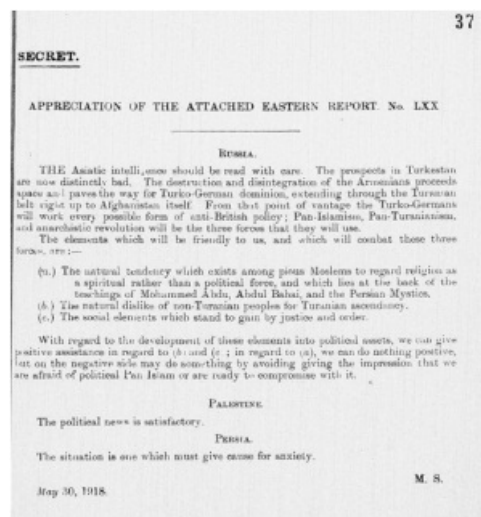
Yep, Miller speaks about it in detail, and I did some investigating of my own in 2000-2002. He sued Negar’s mother in the Israeli courts in the early 1950s (at precisely the same time he had cut a deal with the Ben Gurion government one by one appropriating properties of absentee Palestinians on Carmel wholesale) for the property in Bahji. Even though all the deeds and documentation were unassailably and legally in the favor of the Baha’i family, with the army of American, Canadian and British attorneys Shoghi delic hired for this specific battle, he still got a court ruling designed explicitly in his favor — or rather a court ruling in his favor was rammed through by the Israeli government of David ben Gurion. Madame Baha’i represented herself because she could not afford otherwise. Shoghi never ever showed up to a single one of the hearings, so no prima facie argumentation over deedship or ownership of the Bahji property ever came from Shoghi personally. It did from Madame Baha’i, Negar’s mother. The transcripts still exist for anyone caring to look them up, that is if they are not fudged and dicked around by Moshe Sharon types within the Israeli bureaucracy. One of the reasons he got this favourable ruling – although any real judge worth their salt at the time should’ve seen right through the facts from the get-go – was that he managed to outspend the other side of the family into a favourable ruling from himself, i.e. with the army of American, Canadian and British solicitors/lawyers working for him night and day to swindle the Baha’i family out of their rightful inheritance.

Shoghi Effendi has a lot to answer for, and, alhamdulillah, his own Day Judgement is now arriving as well.

It is also the fundamental reason why Ibrahim George Kheyrollah broke from Abbas Effendi in the turn of the last century.

Written by NUR

Baha'i ties to the British Establishment – A Secret Document



Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesties Government Printed for the War Cabinet.

SECRET

EASTERN REPORT.- No. LXX. May 30, 1918.

(Incorporating ARABIAN REPORT N.S. XC VII.)

APPRECIATION OF THE ATTACHED EASTERN REPORT. No. LXX RUSSIA.

The Asiatic intelligence should be read with care. The prospects in Turkestan are now distinctly bad. The destruction and disintegration of the Armenians proceeds apace and paves the way for Turko German dominion, extending through the Turanian belt right up to Afghanistan itself From that point of vantage the Turko-Germans will work every possible form of anti-British policy; Pan-Islamism, Pan-Turanism, and anarchistic revolution will be the three forces that they will use. The elements which will be friendly to us, and which will combat these three forces, are :—

(a.) The natural tendency which exists among pious Moslems to regard religion as a spiritual rather than a political force, and which lies at the back of the teachings of Mohammed Abdu, Abdul Bahai, and the Persian Mystics.

(b.) The natural dislike of non-Turanian peoples for Turanian ascendancy.

(c.) The social elements which stand to gain by justice and order. With regard to the development of these elements into political assets, we can give positive assistance in regard to (b.) and (c.); in regard to (a), we can do nothing positive, but on the negative side may do something by avoiding giving the impression that we are afraid of political Pan Islam or are ready to compromise with it.

PALESTINE.

The political news is satisfactory.

PERSIA.

The situation is one which must give cause for anxiety. May 30, 1918 This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government. Printed for the Cabinet., 89

SECRET. FOREIGN COUNTRIES REPORT. No. 56. 16th November 1921. Abdul Baha and his Adherents.—On 13th November Mr. Bridgeman telegraphed [No. 631] as follows :—The representative of Abdul Baha has asked me to facilitate remittances from the-Bahais in Persia to Abdul. Baha at Haifa, for the maintenance of the latter and his suite. His adherents wish to remit at once 4,000L and to send yearly remittances amounting to about 50,000 tomans. The Imperial Bank of Persia refuses to place drafts to anyone, and the Bahais cannot remit the money unless - we afford facilities. As your Lordship knows, the Bahais are very numerous and are ever increasing in Persia. To refuse them facilities requested for the accomplishment of what to them is a sacred duty would offend an influential and well disposed section of the people. In view of the religious aspect of the question I cannot mention the matter to Persian Government. Please instruct whether and how the operation should be facilitated.

Bahai Deception in Arab Countries

Wonderful info, about the deceptive Baha'is method.

Sheer Deception and back stabbing to Kings

As there was clear instruction from Ministry of Religious Affairs that Baha'is will do their religious practice amongst themselves they were not allowed to teach faith to Moslems and specially Arabs. The Sly Universal House of Justice laid a plan to deceive the Kind hearted Arabs King.

Baha'is as per strategy of Universal House of Justice came out of their shell and started using their contacts, they invited their neighboring Arabs to their houses were in Majlis (sitting hall) they had placed picture of Abdul Baha, if the question was asked by the guest about picture they used to politely say he is their ancestor, as relation were becoming strong they were called for dinner specially during month of March ('Ala' Baha'i month of fasting) and while dinning they used to asked their children to recite prayers in Arabic and informing the guest that as they are Baha'is they are fasting this gives impression to guest that they are a part of Moslems they make sure to inform them that they believe in Quran and Prophet Mohammed, since Moslems do fast, and listing to prayers in Arabic made good impact on guests. As relation goes stronger for years, they have now good numbers of Arabs who at least have soft corner for Baha'is and their faith. They went further as it is custom in Arabs to send their children abroad for further studies after high school (on government expenses Baha'is were using this facilities too) Baha'is kept tab on their children and when they were abroad they informed NSA of that respective countries to teach them more about faith. After completing their studies when they return home, they were properly brain washed and if not converted, they become well wisher of faith.

During two major festivals, Nawrooz and Ridhwan they invite their Arabs friends where they talk about "Oneness of mankind", "equality of men and women", "Universal Peace", by this deceptive way they get more confident of Arabs, they had special instruction not to talk about claims of Baha'u'llah which can provoke Arabs. After 1998 when www.bahai.org was launched Baha'is of Middle East were instructed to guide Arab seekers towards this portal where there is Arabic section created for Arabs.

Modus of Operandi As of today Baha'is are residing all over the Middle East they occupied good position in government sections enjoying all sort of facilities from government like free education, free medical, free house which are for local citizens. 1.

Contact with Israel All the NSA (National Spiritual Assembly) and ABM (Auxiliary Board Member) are supposed to be in contact with Universal House of Justice, which is based in Israel, now biggest challenge for Middle Eastern NSA was how to contact Israel from Middle East. As Middle Eastern countries are sensitive towards Israel, they came up with simple solution, a office for Middle Eastern countries affairs, was setup in UK dedicated person is appointed to just received mails from Middle Eastern countries and forward it to Israel based Universal House of Justice, and as and when reply comes the respective reply is forwarded to respective recipients. Even if any Baha'i visits these Middle Eastern countries, they are not allowed to carry Credential Certificate (membership card), it is send to UK office from there by email it comes to the visiting countries NSA secretary, by this they avoided suspicion from government. They are so sly that they never take name of Israel in their conversation they called it Holy Land.

2. Funds Major source of Baha'i funds are from Middle East, as these communities are called self dependent, means after looking after their own expenses they send Millions of Dollars annually to Universal House of Justice.

3. Moral Classes In the name of moral classes, Baha'is obtain permission from non Baha'is parents of children between age group of 5 to 14 years to teach them morals, and they teach them Baha'i prayers and talk about Baha'u'llah without their parents knowing about Baha'i teachings.

4. Youth Program Regular fire site are organized in deserted area where young Arabs are invited in the name of social gathering and are allowed to freely socialize with Baha'i girls.

5. Instruction for Baha'i visitors Special instruction were issued to worldwide Baha'is who want to travel to Middle Eastern countries. Document issued from Universal House of Justice to worldwide NSA in 2006

courtesy

<http://arabbahais.blogspot.de>

How Baha'is view non-Baha'is schools!

Abdu'l-Husayn Ayati (Avarih) the former Baha'i historian and scholar mentions in his book *Kashf al-Hiyal* (*Uncovering the Deceptions*), that:

— ۱۱۵ —

کاشان باز کرده اند اولاً عامل عمده آن شخص خودم بوده ام «آواره»
که در هر جا چه زحمتهای کشیده و چه نصیحتها کرده و چه تدبیرات و مساعی
بکار برده تا وجوهی گرد کرده و مدرسه برایشان تشکیل و تأسیس نموده ام
ثانیاً اگر معارفشان از انحصار آثار خودشان تجاوز کرده باشد و قدمی
چند با معارف عمومی همراه شده باشند از توفیق جبری و فشار ملت و

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بها و حبیبها است و تصور در برده خدا در مدارس و در در
مدارس ممکن نشد در منزلشان شبها و روزهای تعطیل بدروس الواح و
کتاب بهاء (باسم درس اخلاق) مشغول بوده و هستند و حتی در فرستادن اطفال
بمدارس مسلمین و پروتستان و یهود و زردشتیان گناهی بزرگ می شمارند و
از طرف رئیسشان ممنوع شده اند خصوصاً در فرستادن اطفال بمدارس
اسلامی و مدارس پروتستان و اما تأسیس مدارس خودشان فقط از همین
نقطه نظر بوده است که مبادا کلماتی خارج از بهائیت بکوش اطفالشان بخورد
و آن کلمات منطقی باشد و در ایشان اثر کرده از حالت کوسفندی بیرون
آیند و نیز عملاً و روحاً مایل ندارند که جوانان و اطفال بهائی با روپا برای

“[Baha'is] deem it a great sin to send their children to Muslim, Protestant, Jewish, or Zoroastrian schools and their leader has forbidden them from doing so. This is specially [evident] with respect to Islamic and Protestant schools. It was because of this that they established [Baha'i] schools so that no words originating from outside of Baha'ism reaches the ears of their children and those logical words influence them.” (Abdu'l-Husayn Ayati (Avarih), *Kashf al-Hiyal* (*Uncovering the Deceptions*), 3 ed., vol. 1, p. 115)

Being labeled a covenant breaker, the words of Avarih are usually met with skepticism and are in many cases categorically denied by Baha'is. We have observed many times that what Avarih mentions is the truth and the denial by Baha'is is not justified. We will now proceed to show from authentic Baha'i scripture (as yet untranslated by Baha'i authorities), the official Baha'i order on the prohibition of Baha'is from attending non-Baha'i schools.

Pay attention to the following letter from Abdu'l-Baha:

الحمد لله حضرت نصر شب وروز در نصرت امرالله
 میکوشد و جز عبودیت آستان مقدس مقصدی ندارد
 لهذا یقین است که در جمیع موارد موفق و مؤید است
 احبای الهی در طهران باید دمی نیاسایند و نفسی نکشند
 بلکه شب و روز بجان و دل هریک بکوشند و نشر نفحات
 نمایند و بنایید روح القدس تبلیغ امرالله کنند اگر
 چنین قیام نمایند در مدت قلیلی آن اقلیم جنت الهی گردد
 و آن خطه و دیار گلشن اسرار شود بحضرت جلال نامه‌ای مرقوم
 شد در جوف است برسانید از آقا میرزا حبیب الله مرقوم

<http://www.bahaibahai.com/eng/index.php/articles>

حاصل گردد قبول نماید تا بتدریج مأموریتی در بریه الشام
 و یا مصر میسر گردد در خصوص مدرسه تربیت مرقوم
نموده بودید اطفال احبا بدآجا نیز نیست که بمکتبهای
دیگران بروند چه که زلت امرالله است و یکی از اطفال
جمال مبارک محروم مانند زیرا تربیت دیگر شوند و
رسوای بهائیان گردند انشاء الله معلم انگلیسی علی

“You had inquired about the Tarbiyat School. (Know that) it is absolutely prohibited for the children of the friends to go to the schools of others (meaning non-Baha’is) for this is [a cause of] humiliation (*dhillat*) for the Cause of God and they will be completely deprived of the Blessed Beauty’s graces. Because they will be educated/nurtured otherwise and they will disgrace the Baha’is.” (Abdu’l-Baha, *Makatib (Letters)*, vol. 5, p. 170)

Since Abdu’l-Baha had prohibited his followers from sending their children to non-Baha’i schools, Baha’i schools such as the *Madrisiy-i Tarbiyat* (in Tehran) were established. What is extraordinary are the words used by Abdu’l-Baha to describe the result of Baha’is studying in non-Baha’i schools: humiliation (*dhillat*) of the Cause of God and disgrace (*ruswā’i*) of Baha’is and being *completely deprived of the Blessed Beauty’s graces*!

One wonders why these words have been uttered. Does `Abdu’l-Baha regard all forms of education other than what the Baha’is preach invalid to such an extent that when Baha’is are educated and nurtured using those methods they will be regarded as a disgrace and cause of humiliation for this creed? Or is he afraid that Baha’i children will expose the true face of Baha’ism amongst non-Baha’is which will result in their disgrace and humiliation?

In another letter while praising Baha’i schools and giving guidelines on how to teach Baha’i children, Abdu’l-Baha concludes his statements by these words:

را بگمارید که این قضیه خدمت امر است بلکه به نیت خالصه احبای الهی اسبابی فراهم آید که در اندک زمانی ابنای احباب تربیت شوند و جوانان هوشمند دانشمند منجذب مشتعل مبعوث شوند و به بیانی فصیح و لسانی بلیغ و اطلاعی کامل مؤید بر تبلیغ امر الله گردند. اطفال احباب در سائر مکتب‌های ملل مختلفه فرستادن و تربیت نمودن سبب جمودت و خمودت گردد. و البهاء علیک و علی کل ثابت راسخ علی عهد الله و میثاقه. عبدالبهاء عباس

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هو الله

۴۵۲- ای ثابت بر پیمان نامه شما رسید و سبب نهایت مسرت گردید که الحمد لله در همدان تأسیس اعانه خیریه گردید. امیدوارم که سبب نجاح و فلاح کلی گردد و اسباب راحت و آسایش فقرا و ضعفا و تعلیم اطفال و تربیت ایتم حاضر و مهیا شود. مسئله تربیت

“Sending Baha’i children to non-Baha’i schools and nurturing them there is a cause of abatement (*khumudat*) and stagnation (*jumudat*).” (Abdu’l-Baha, *Muntakhabati az makatib-i hadrat-i Abdu’l-Baha* [Selections From the Letters of Abdu’l-Bahā], vol. 6, no. 397)

Abdu’l-Baha’s description of non-Baha’i schools is no wise fair nor based on sound reasoning. The words *khumudat* and *Jumudat* used by Abdu’l-Baha used to describe the effect of non-Baha’i schools have a multitude of similar meanings with the former also meaning apathy, depression, passivity, dullness and the latter meaning stiffness, recession and freezing. It is not clear which meaning Abdu’l-Baha had intended although they are all derogatory. To make matters worse, Abdu’l-Baha states what he means by these two words in another statement:

مکاتیب ۶

5

شدند و افسرده گشتند. چون باد خزان بر تنی مرور نماید اگر بیمار نکند لابد کسالت آرد و همچنین نسیم جانپور بهار روحانی اگر بر نفوسی بوزد و شفای تام نبخشد لابد اندکی ترو تازه نماید. ای یاران حقیقی آفتی اعظم از خمودت و جمودت نیست زیرا موت مجسم است. تا توانید بر شوق و ذوق و فرح و بشارت و طراوت و لطافت بیفزائید زیرا وجود افسرده و پژمرده مرده است اثر حیات ندارد و محبت الله روحبخش است و وجد و طرب آرد و شوق و شغف. هر نفس افسرده ای باید از برای خویش گوی بکاود و در تنگنای آن ظلمات مفریابد و علیکم التحیه و التناء. ع

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هو الابهی

۸- ای شمع روشن آنچه مرقوم نموده بودید ملاحظه گردید و آنچه مسطور بود مشهود شد. فی الحقیقه نفحه روحانی بود که از ریاض رحمت ربانی وزیده و نسیم خوش جانی بود که از مهبط انجذاب رسیده طوبی لک ثم طوبی لک من هذا الفضل العظیم. نظر عنایت غیبیه شامل شماست و الطاف و مواهب لاریبیه واصل و متابع. از خصائص

“O true friends! There is no calamity greater than abatement (*khumudat*) and stagnation (*jumudat*) for they are death incarnate.” (Abdu’l-Baha, *Muntakhabati az makatib-i hadrat-i Abdu’l-Baha* [Selections From the Letters of Abdu’l-Bahā], vol. 6, no. 7)

Thus, according to Abdu’l-Baha, studying in non-Baha’i schools is a form of incarnation of death itself. Do these statements conform with the Baha’i principles of ‘Removal of All Prejudice’ and the ‘Oneness of Humanity’? Is this how Compulsory Universal Education is achieved by isolating Baha’i children from non-Baha’i children and establishing separate schools for them? In yet another one of his letters, Abdu’l-Baha writes the following:

در خصوص بنات احباب مرقوم نموده بودی که بعدرسه ملل
سائره میروند فی الحقیقه این اطفال هر چند در آن مدارس
اندك تعلیمی میگیرند ولكن اخلاق معلّمات را در اطفال
تأثیری و از القاء شبهات قلوب بنات را تغییر و تبدیلی
باید احبای الهی مدرسه از برای بنات تهیه و تدارک
نمایند که معلّمات بنات را بتربیت الهیه تربیت نمایند اخلاق
ربّانی بیاموزند اطوار رحمانی تعلیم کنند .

و در خطاب به آقا مهدی و آقا حبیب الله در
www.bahaibahai.com/eng/index.php/articles
همدان حومه ارمیج .

“You had written about Baha’i girls and that they are attending the schools of other peoples (non-Baha’is). The truth is, although these children are taught a few things in those schools, but the manners of the teachers will influence the (Baha’i) children and will cast doubts into their hearts and will convert and alter them. The friends of God (Baha’is) must establish a school for girls so that the (Baha’i) teachers educate them by Godly manners, divine morals, and methods of the Merciful Lord.” (Fadil Mazandarani, *Amr wa khalq*, vol. 3, p. 339)

Abdu’l-Baha is actually stating that he doesn’t want Baha’i children to study at non-Baha’i schools because Baha’i children might be influenced by the manners of their non-Baha’i teachers and doubts might be cast in their hearts about Baha’ism. How can the leaders of a creed claim they strive for the Oneness of Humanity and unity of mankind when they cannot tolerate their own children being educated by non-Baha’is?

The Baha’i attitude toward non-Baha’i teachers and schools and the words used to describe them are what one would expect from a cult practicing an extreme form of information control on the adherents. One might even go as far as calling it a form of brainwashing. Anyway, since these orders were so illogical and impractical—like many other Baha’i teachings that Baha’is in the western world are kept in the dark about—they were temporarily abandoned until a “future state of society” when Baha’is are hopeful that they can be implemented...

What is even more interesting, is that although Abdu’l-Baha had prohibited his followers in the strictest sense and using threatening language from sending their children to non-Baha’i schools, he defied this order himself and sent his own beloved grandson to non-Baha’i schools in Palestine:

“It was here that Shoghi Effendi had a very significant dream which he recounted to me and which I wrote down. He said that when he was nine or ten years old, living with his nurse in this house and attending school in Haifa, he dreamed that he and another child, an Arab schoolmate, were in the room in which ‘Abdu’l-Bahā used to receive His guests in the house in Akka . . .” (Rūhīyyih Rabbani, *The Priceless Pearl* (London: Bahā’ī Publishing Trust, 1969), p. 16.)

“Shoghi Effendi entered the best school in Haifa, the College des Freres, conducted by the Jesuits. He told me he had been very unhappy there. Indeed, I gathered from him that he never was really happy in either school or university. In spite of his innately joyous nature, his sensitivity and his background – so different from that of others in every way – could not but set him apart and give rise to many a heart-ache; indeed, he was one of those people whose open and innocent hearts, keen minds and affectionate nature seem to combine to bring upon them more shocks and suffering in life than is the lot of most men. Because of his unhappiness in this school ‘Abdu’l-Baha decided to send him to Beirut where he attended another Catholic school as a boarder, and where he was equally unhappy. Learning of this in Haifa the family sent a trusted Baha’i woman to rent a home for Shoghi Effendi in Beirut and take care of and wait on him. It was not long before she wrote to his father that he was very unhappy at school, would refuse to go to it sometimes for days, and was getting thin and run down. His father showed this letter to ‘Abdu’l-Baha Who then had arrangements made for Shoghi Effendi to enter the Syrian Protestant College, which had a school as well as a university, later known as the American College in Beirut, and which the Guardian entered when he finished what was then equivalent to the high school.” (Rūhīyyih Rabbani, *The Priceless Pearl*, p. 17)

Anyway, one should think twice before joining a creed that claims its purpose is unity of the masses but does not allow the children of its own adherents to attend the schools of those same masses. And one should think twice before joining a creed that claims one of its main principles is the ‘Removal of All Forms of Prejudice’ but refers to schools that are run by non-Baha’is as “death incarnate” and believes attending these institutions is a cause of disgrace, humiliation and spiritual abatement and stagnation. Baha’is, especially in English speaking countries, will vehemently deny their leaders’ statements about non-Baha’i schools. We do not blame them for as we mentioned at the beginning of the article,

these quotes have never been translated to English.

How the British “rescued” ‘Abdu’l-Baha while murdering 8-10 million Iranians during WWI !!!

یادداشت‌های روزانه‌ی جناب چارلز میسن ریمی؛ بخش یازدهم ۱۹۲۰

اوّل اوت ۱۹۲۰: در نشریه‌ی امریکن بهائی‌نیوز سال ۱۱، شماره ۸، ص ۱۲۲؛ لوحی از حضرت عبدالبهاء خطاب به جناب میسن ریمی به این مضمون منتشر شد:

«...! ...»

...!

...! ...»

اوت ۱۹۲۰: در نشریه‌ی امریکن بهائی‌نیوز، سال ۱۱، شماره ۹، ص ۱۳۹؛ لوحی از حضرت عبدالبهاء به کورین ترو ۲۰:

«...»

(دوباره در ۲۰ اوت ۱۹۲۰: گزیده‌ای از لوح حضرت عبدالبهاء به جناب چارلز میسن ریمی (ترجمه شده توسط عزیزالله بهادر

...»

...!

...»

...»

نوامبر ۱۹۲۰: در نشریه‌ی امریکن بهائی‌نیوز، سال ۱۱، شماره ۱۳، صص ۲۲۹ و ۲۳۰؛ لوحی از حضرت عبدالبهاء به جناب چارلز ۴ میسن ریمی:

«...»

...»

دسامبر ۱۹۲۰: مکتوب حضرت عبدالبهاء خطاب به جناب چارلز میسن ریمی ۱۲

«...»

Lamentations of Bani Dugal the representative of the Bahá'í International Community to the United Nations.

Bani Dugal, the principal representative of the Bahá'í International Community to the United Nations never fails in lamenting the situation of Bahá'ís in Iran but fails to take the account of Bahá'í situation in other countries like Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Sri Lanka and so on. Her obsessions with Iran are part of the pre-paid scheme of Universal House of Justice. Fortunately the intellectuals and most governments have interpreted the strategy of Bahá'ís and pay little heed to such lamentations.

As an example, in a case filed by an Iranian Bahá'í couple in 2005 in UK to be granted 'Refugee' status, Bani Dugal in support of the Bahá'í couple gave evidences of Human Right violations in Iran and expressed her dismay and disappointment, at the failure of the UN Commission on Human Rights to even consider a resolution on human rights in Iran, particularly related to the persecution of the Bahá'ís. The learned judges blasted her by saying that the Bahá'í couple are not at a risk of persecution in Iran merely by reason of being a Bahá'í. They said:

In the same case the judges assessed regarding the Bahá'í couple who were previously released after a brief imprisonment, on giving assurance to the Iranian authority that they will not conduct any Ruhi Institute (propagation) activity:

Ms. Dugal should realize that these organizations and Countries are realizing the duplicity of Bahá'í Organization and have come to the conclusion that helping Bahá'í faith is not their duty but is a liability for them in near future.

Ms. Dugal's attention is drawn towards a Facebook discussion under the subject of Israel-Gaza conflict, wherein Dr. Kavian Milani a well-known Bahá'í writer has expressed: "when Hamas knows that by throwing a missile to Israeli territories, thousands of bombs will be dropped over their people and their belongings, then Hamas is the responsible party for the massacre of Gaza". If Dr. Milani's logic is correct, then the same applies to the Bahá'í Faith in Iran. When as a small minority group Bahá'ís challenge the government, and call it as despotic state and condemn it in international conferences and gatherings and through frequent waves of aggressive teaching endanger the trusts, beliefs and doctrines of their people, then what reaction do you expect from a religious state? Very similar sentiments were echoed by UK judges as well.

Why the Bahá'í Administration situated at Haifa Israel are asking the Bahá'í community to contact the political leaders of their country and to put pressure on Iran to stop the alleged persecution of Bahá'ís which the UK judges have demolished the allegation?

The Bahá'í counselors are talking in every meeting at every place that Universal House of Justice has asked the Iranian Bahá'ís to go and teach the Iranians and face the consequences. Do they think that this message will not reach the Iranian authorities? Or, publicizing the case of the fake Ayatollah Tehrani, supporting the Bahá'í Faith, would not warrant a severe action by the Iranian authorities?

The reality is that the Universal House of Justice is playing against the Bahá'ís of Iran INTENTIONALLY, they want Bahá'í martyrs from Iran so that UHJ can extract more money from the Bahá'ís, gain some cheap publicity for the Faith through professional lamenters like Bani Dugal.

http://www.reddit.com/r/bahai/comments/2vyps4/lamentations_of_bani_dugal_the_representative_of/

Courtesy : <http://bahaism.blogspot.com>

Iranian Baha'i arrested in Yemen for Espionage

Courtesy : <http://www.sabanews.net/en/news384123.htm>

SANA'A, Jan. 12 (Saba) – An Iranian national is to stand trial in Yemen on charges of spying with a foreign country and seeking to spread a new religion.

The defendant was arrested in Mukalla City of Hadramout province in 2014, while other suspects in the case are pursued by the security services, a judicial source at the Penal Prosecution said.

The prosecution completed the case investigation and referred it to the Specialized Penal Court in the Capital Sana'a as a prelude to start the trial, the source added.

According to the indictment, the accused, whose name is Hamid Mirza Kamali Srostani (Iranian nationality), 51, has impersonated the name of Hamid Kamal Mohammed bin Haidarah and lived in the Socotra archipelago and in Mukalla on the pretext that he has free businesses.

During the period from 1991 to 2014, Srostani has sought with a foreign country (Israel) represented in what is called the Universal House of Justice that he works to its advantage, to spread the Baha'i Religion in the territory of the Republic of Yemen, the prosecution said in the indictment, considering that harms Yemen's political status and its independence and territorial integrity.

In the indictment, the prosecution revealed that the defendant incited a number of Muslims to exit from Islam and embrace the Baha'i religion by enticing the poor families and children with money and charitable aid.

The penal prosecution explained that the accused has held a number of meetings and symposiums in several forums and houses affiliated to him comprising Baha'is and Yemenis to elect members of the so-called 'the central sacred lodge' and form its branches in the provinces.

The defendant falsified many official papers, gave false statements and changed his personal documents and used them to buy land and establish business ventures for the purpose of bringing in a large number of Baha'is to Yemen, the penal prosecution added.

Baha'i Leaders and Violence: Abdu'l-Baha the Face Slapper

When Baha'is preach their beliefs, the audience are induced into believing that Baha'ism is a peaceful religion refraining from all forms of violence. In the current article, using historical evidence from trusted Baha'i eyewitnesses, we will show that this is simply not the case and Abdu'l-Baha was a violent person who would routinely slap people.

One of the key witnesses to these acts is Khalil Shahidi who was born in Akka and was a trusted companion of Abdu'l-Baha and other Baha'i leaders for about forty years. According to the famous Baha'i translator Ahang Rabbani:

"As a trusted resident believer of 'Akká and a longtime custodian of the House of 'Abbúd, he was at a unique vantage point to observe 'Abdu'l-Bahá as He dealt, neutralized and triumphed over all opposition and adversaries." (Ahang Rabbani, *A Lifetime with 'Abdu'l-Bahá: Reminiscences of Khalil Shahidí*, p.3)

Khalili narrates many violent acts from Abdu'l-Baha. In one instance a question is met not with an answer, but a slap:

One day in the birún[outer section] of the blessed House of Haifa, He ['Abdu'l-Bahá] stated, "I have forgotten my handkerchief." One of the friends who was known as Ustád Muhammad-'Alí Banná, remarked to this effect, "How is it possible for the manifestation of Truth to forget anything?" Immediately, 'Abdu'l-Bahá slapped him and stated, "Over forgetting a handkerchief that man puts a hundred souls to test." (Ahang Rabbani, *A Lifetime with 'Abdu'l-Bahá: Reminiscences of Khalil Shahidí*, pp. 100-101)

In another instance he states that a certain person who opposes him needs a slap. The man mysteriously dies the next day:

One of the inhabitants of 'Akká was exhibiting great opposition. 'Abdu'l-Bahá stated, "He needs a slap." Next day that person died. It was said to His blessed presence, "He received his slap," but He did not respond. (Ahang Rabbani, *A Lifetime with 'Abdu'l-Bahá: Reminiscences of Khalil Shahidí*, p. 41)

In yet another incident a man asks Abdu'l-Baha for a bribe. He receives a beating instead:

Thereupon, 'Abdu'l-Bahá sought water to perform His ablution. With the utmost deliberation, He completed His ablution and then commenced to perform the long obligatory prayer of the Muslims. During His prayer, the man kept interrupting, "This matter must be concluded quickly, as there is little time!" Meaning that 'Abdu'l-Bahá should end His obligatory prayer and attend to this urgent matter. 'Abdu'l-Bahá finished His prayer, with the utmost dignity and authority He came close to him and slapped him several times, saying, "I sent it for you." With great stress and anxiety, never having imagined such an outcome, he held his face and head, and shouting, screaming and roaring, he returned to the government office and informed his comrades of what had transpired. (Ahang Rabbani, *A Lifetime with 'Abdu'l-Bahá: Reminiscences of Khalil Shahidí*, p. 116)

This story has been narrated from Abdu'l-Baha by multiple witnesses. For instance, Doctor Habib Mu'ayyad a member of the National Spiritual Assemblies of Iran and a frequent visitor of Abdu'l-Baha narrates it like this:

"Hurry, Effendi, it is best not to delay this matter!" I asked, "Which matter?" He replied, "The issue of the money!" "The money was sent a while ago. Why are you here?" I told him. "How was it sent? By whom was it sent?" he inquired. I said, "By now it has reached the Mutasarrif. Go quickly!" He rose and began to put on his shoes; and, when he turned back towards Me, I slapped him hard and was about to slap him again, but he fled and went to the Mutasarrif who had inquired, "Why did it take you so long? Where is the money?" He replied, "By God, I went to them, but all I received was a hard beating. Look, my face is still quite red! These people are very tough!" (Ahang Rabbani, *Eight Years Near Abdu'l-Bahá: The Diary of Dr. Habib Mu'ayyad*, p. 431)

Khalili narrates another story about a group of people who were harassing the Baha'is of Egypt:

During the blessed days of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, a person in Egypt was the leader of a band of men, and would provoke these men against the Bahá'is of Egypt, and for this reason had brought about difficulties. One day that same person arrived in Haifa from Egypt. 'Abdu'l-Bahá summoned him. After the man entered into 'Abdu'l-Bahá's presence, He said to him, "You are causing injury to my community." Then he was the recipient of warnings, admonishments and several slaps. After he left [the room], immediately he was summoned once more. He thought to himself that perchance the page had turned [and this time 'Abdu'l-Bahá would be friendly to him], but it was not so since upon his entrance, one more time, the same thing occurred and 'Abdu'l-Bahá picked up where He had left off. When this man returned to Egypt, he gave unequivocal, emphatic and decisive command to that band and emphasized, "You should not show any malice towards this community [i.e. Bahá'ís], as no one can defeat their Chief ['Abdu'l-Bahá]; He is most powerful and able." (Ahang Rabbani, *A Lifetime with 'Abdu'l-Bahá: Reminiscences of Khalil Shahidí*, p. 127)

So how does Abdu'l-Baha justify his actions? Khalili continues:

One time, He ['Abdu'l-Bahá] stated, "With some people, a thousand counsels and admonishments would not have the same effect as a slap." (Ahang Rabbani, *A Lifetime with 'Abdu'l-Bahá: Reminiscences of Khalil Shahidí*, p. 128)

Many people who commit violent acts utter similar arguments, so what advantage does Baha'ism have over other opinions and why all the commotion about Baha'is being peaceful and refraining from physical abuse? Matters don't finish here. In fact Abdu'l-Baha had hit people in different shapes and forms innumerable times. This is what Khalili tells us directly after the previous quote:

At all events, in different forms and taking different shapes, many such occurrences would take place – so many that they remain unnumbered and

uncountable. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, while extremely meek, was the zenith of power and grandeur. (Ahang Rabbani, A Lifetime with 'Abdu'l-Bahá: Reminiscences of Khalil Shahidi, p. 128)

Can Baha'i leaders be considered peaceful non-violent people? How can the leader of a group of people who cannot abide by his own words and the orders of his father be considered a teacher of morals and peace? Apparently, when Baha'u'llah had prohibited conflicts and striking others, he was giving orders to everyone but his own beloved son:

Ye have been forbidden in the Book of God to engage in contention and conflict, to strike another, or to commit similar acts whereby hearts and souls may be saddened. (Baha'u'llah, The Kitab-i-Aqdas, pp. 72-73)

How can someone who has a reputation of having slapped different people innumerable times, condemn violent acts:

"In this, the cycle of Almighty God, violence and force, constraint and oppression, are one and all condemned." (Abdu'l-Baha, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Baha, p. 149)

The Quran and the Bible condemn this attitude:

Do you order the people to do good but forget about yourselves whilst you read the Book! Do you not use your reason! (Quran 2:44)

You, then, who teach others, do you not teach yourself? You who preach against stealing, do you steal? You who say that people should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? (Romans 2:21-22)

And why isn't the true violent face of Abdu'l-Baha ever shown to those being preached about Baha'ism?

Courtesy : <http://bahaism.blogspot.com>

**Christian Priest, Buddhists Monks and Government Officials
Unite in Sri Lanka to Stop the Deceptive Baha'i Activities
against Children and Youths**

Anti-intellectualism carried out by the famous Baha'i Universal House of Justice

Baha'is and their UHJ handlers- who are divine according to Baha'i propaganda- have created an atmosphere of anti-intellectualism amongst its members.

Any one who has had academic training, and has questioned the sinister motives of the UHJ has been "quicked out of the Baha'i ranks".

The only ones left with "academic credentials" are Baha'is who are used car salesmen, failed businessmen, failed psychiatrist indicted in sexually battery, failed professor fired from Berry, and many other mentally unhinged Baha'is with poor credentials but with a "huge blind allegiance" to the UHJ.

The true story of Abbas Amanat is as follows. He was brought up a Baha'i, in a Kashan family that had traditionally been Jewish but that had converted to the Baha'i faith in the previous generation. His brother Husayn designed the monument at Azadi square in Tehran, and also the seat of the universal house of justice. His father is an accomplished historian and is writing a multi-volume history of the Kashan Baha'i community. His brother Mehrdad is also a historian and co-authored the section on Qajar Iran in the prestigious Cambridge History of Iran. As a young intellectual at Tehran University and then later at Oxford, Abbas noticed that there was an authoritarian and anti-intellectual streak to the Baha'i organization, as exemplified in bigots such as Furutan (who had played a very sinister role in the attack on and suppression of Mazandarani's scholarship back in the 1930s and 1940s). Abbas therefore very wisely decided rather early on that he wanted nothing to do with the Baha'i organization. However, he has said repeatedly and publicly that he is "in love with the Bab." Abbas wrote his dissertation on the Babi movement at Oxford under the direction of Albert Hourani and Roger Owen, two of the magisterial historians of the Middle East in our times. He then came to the United States to teach at Yale. He did not ask to be transferred from the UK to the US Baha'i community, but some helpful person in Wilmette heard of his advent and entered him into the US rolls. Abbas, naturally, declined to submit his major historical study of the Babis for their approval or censoring to the motley assemblage of insurance salesmen, electrical engineers, bit part actors and failed businessmen who staff the upper echelons of the Baha'i administration. His book was published by Cornell University Press in 1989.

The Baha'i Distribution Service, to its credit, felt that Abbas's book would be of interest to the Baha'is, and therefore contracted with Cornell University Press to buy 500 copies. When the book was distributed to the Baha'is, it generated large numbers of angry letters from the fundamentalists in the community who have the impression that they own the religion and can tell people what they may or may not say. They were upset that it departs from the details of Nabil's Narrative (which many have elevated to the status of infallible scripture) and Shoghi Effendi's God Passes By (ditto). Moreover, some religious bureaucrats in Wilmette became uneasy about carrying a book by an author who was on the rolls but who had declined to have it reviewed. A dispute therefore broke out in Wilmette as to whether the Baha'i Distribution Service should continue to carry the book.

This dispute was ultimately submitted to the universal house of justice, which in reply declared that Abbas Amanat was not a Baha'i, and therefore the Baha'i Distribution Service was welcome to distribute his book, as it would be to distribute the book of any non-Baha'i author. I have a copy of this letter, but it is in my file cabinets somewhere and I am not going to spend time digging it out just to satisfy Susan Maneck, who may believe it or not as she likes. In the good old days before the universal house of justice's membership began being stacked with former counselors (who tend to have an Inquisitorial mindset, since part of their job is Inquisition), the only way to be removed from the rolls of Baha'i membership once you were entered on them was to write a letter explicitly renouncing belief in Baha'u'llah. Professor Amanat has never done so, although it is no secret that he long ago dissociated himself from the Baha'i organization and its authoritarian practices. I find Susan Maneck's speculation about his internal, private, existential beliefs, based on nothing more than hearsay, to be extremely rude and the height of slander (since she is bringing up slander). Has she ever had so much as a private conversation with Professor Amanat? I find her, and her organization's, willingness to expel Baha'is from their own religion by haughty and arrogant fiat, to be not only offensive but indicative of a quite dangerous mindset.

In any case, the US Baha'i authorities have slightly more integrity about these things than do the Canadian ones, since they declined to remove Professor Amanat from the rolls simply on the say-so of the universal house of justice. They have sought from him a clarification of his views, but he maintains that his views are nobody's business. However, I will indulge in a little speculation. I think that if the Baha'i religious authorities really desire to make themselves so odious that they succeed in chasing out of the religion all the major Baha'i professors at major universities, that they will succeed in this. Apparently the real purpose of these intellectual programs is to ensure that it may be said that learned persons such as Denis MacEoin, Abbas Amanat and Linda Walbridge are not Baha'is, but the real Baha'is are ignoramuses who know no Middle Eastern languages, know nothing serious about Baha'i history, and adhere to a fundamentalist and intolerant point of view on the Baha'i faith, and who have managed to get themselves elected to high office (often through the most shameful campaigning and manipulation).

Juan Cole

1- The Independent Search After Truth, Unfettered by Superstition or Tradition

1. Is the Principle of Investigating the Truth New?

`Abdu'l-Bahā:

Investigating the truth is a new principle.[1]

`Abdu'l-Bahā:

Seeking the truth is the foundation of all the Prophets.[2]

[1] “Another new principle revealed by Bahā’u’llāh is the injunction to investigate truth—that is to say, no man should blindly follow his ancestors and forefathers. Nay, each must see with his own eyes, hear with his own ears and investigate the truth himself in order that he may follow the truth instead of blind acquiescence and imitation of ancestral beliefs,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 454.

[2] “His Highness Moses spread the truth as did his Highness Jesus and his Highness Abraham and his Highness the Messenger (meaning the Prophet Muḥammad) and his Highness the Bāb and his Highness Bahā’u’llāh. They all established and spread the truth,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 5; “The foundation of all the Prophets . . . is truth, and the truth is one. His Highness Abraham was the harbinger of truth. His Highness Moses was the servant of truth. His Highness Christ was the establisher of truth. His Highness Muḥammad was the propagator of truth. His Highness A`lā (meaning the Bāb) was the herald of truth, and his Highness Bahā’u’llāh, was the light of truth,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 55; “The foundation of the divine religions is one. It is one truth, it is one spirit, it is one light, and it does not have a multitude. Among the foundations of the divine religion is seeking the truth [so] that the whole of humanity seeks the truth,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Egypt), vol. 1, p. 66.

2. What Is Bahā’u’llāh’s First Principle?

`Abdu'l-Bahā:

Bahā’u’llāh’s first principle is investigating the truth.[3]

`Abdu'l-Bahā:

Bahā’u’llāh’s first principle is the oneness of humanity.[4]

[3] “Bahā’u’llāh’s first principle is the seeking of the truth. Man must seek the truth and set aside imitations,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 144.

[4] “His first teaching is *the Oneness of the World of Humanity*,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt* (Tehran), vol. 2, p. 5.

3. Are Non-Baha’is Ignorant and without Reason?

`Abdu'l-Bahā:

One must not label people as being ignorant.[5]

Bahā’u’llāh:

Whoever does not become a Baha’i is among the most ignorant of the people, even if he has mastery over all sciences.[6] Whoever does not become a Baha’i has no reason even if he thinks he does.[7] Whoever denies my teachings completely lacks reason.[8]

[5] “The divine principles in this luminous era are such that one must not insult anyone or attribute them to ignorance [by saying] that you do not know and I know. Rather, one must view everyone from a respectful perspective and must speak and argue from the viewpoint of seeking the truth. [They must say] come, there are several issues at hand, so let us seek the truth, and see how and why [it is so]. The missionary must not consider himself wise and others as ignorant. This thought will result in arrogance, and arrogance causes a lack of effectiveness; instead, one must not see any merit in himself and must speak with the maximum extent of kindness, humility, and humbleness. This kind of expression will be effective,” `Abdu'l-Bahā, *Makātīb*, vol. 1, p. 355.

[6] “If today, someone grasps all of the knowledge on earth but stops at the word ‘yes’ (meaning does not become a Baha’i), the Lord will not pay attention to him (*ladī l-Ḥaqq madhkūr na*) and he will be considered as the most ignorant amongst the people,” Bahā’u’llāh, *Iqtidārāt wa chand lauḥ dīgar*, p. 111; “From now on nobody is to be called knowledgeable, except those who have decorated themselves with the garment of this New Affair (meaning those who have become Baha’is),” Bahā’u’llāh, *Badī*, pp. 138–139.

[7] “The general criterion is what we mentioned and any soul who has success in it, meaning recognizes and realizes the Sunrise of Manifestation (meaning himself), will be mentioned in the Divine Book as someone who possesses reason or else he will be (mentioned as) ignorant even if he himself thinks that his reason equals that of the whole world,” ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Isḥrāq Khāwarī, *Mā’idiy-i āsimānī*, vol. 7, p. 160.

[8] “No one has denied or will deny what has been revealed by the Ancient Pen (meaning himself) in this Most Great Manifestation regarding society, unity, manners, rites, and being occupied with what has benefits for the people, except that he completely lacks reason,” Bahā’u’llāh, *Iqtidārāt wa chand lauḥ dīgar*, p. 168.

4. Can the Recognition of God Be Obtained through Intellect?

Bahā’u’llāh and ‘Abdu’l-Bahā:

Reason was created for the purpose of recognizing God.[9] Recognize God by using reason and narrations.[10]

Bahā’u’llāh:

Recognition cannot be obtained by the use of reason.[11]

[9] “The first grace that has been bestowed on the human body is reason and its purpose is the recognition of the Truth (meaning God) Exalted be His Glory,” Bahā’u’llāh, *Muntakhabātī az āthār Ḥaḍrat Bahā’u’llāh*, p. 127. The official Baha’i translation reads: “First and foremost among these favors, which the Almighty hath conferred upon man, is the gift of understanding. His purpose in conferring such a gift is none other except to enable His creature to know and recognize the one true God—exalted be His glory,” Bahā’u’llāh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahā’u’llāh*, p. 194.

[10] “If you seek the recognition of God (‘irfān ilāhī) . . . refer to the arguments (put forward by) reason and narrations,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Makātīb*, vol. 8, pp. 119 -120.

[11] “Know that today, that which has reached your reason or will reach it, or is perceived by the reasons of [those with intellects] superior or inferior to yours, none are the criterion for recognizing the Truth (meaning God) and will never be,” Bahā’u’llāh, *Badī’*, p. 286.

5. Should We Investigate or Accept without Any Questions?

‘Abdu’l-Bahā:

A person who is fair, will investigate and do research to seek the truth.[12]

Bahā’u’llāh:

Accept my words without any questions or comparison with someone else’s words.[13]

[12] “Those who are fair will examine, research and inquire. This examination and inquiry will result in their guidance . . . they say: ‘We will go and see, and we will investigate the truth,’” ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, *Khaṭābāt (Egypt)*, vol.1, p. 189.

[13] “No pleasure has been created in the world greater than listening to the verses [brought by Bahā’u’llāh] and understanding their meanings and not objecting to or questioning any of the words and comparing them with the words of others,” Bahā’u’llāh, *Badī’*, p. 145.

6. Investigating the Truth: Only for Non-Baha’is

‘Abdu’l-Bahā:

Different religions should listen to the words of other religions. Perhaps, what is right is with them.[14]

Bahā’u’llāh:

Even if someone criticizes Baha’ism with proof, do not listen.

[14] “The followers of Moses (i.e. Jews) have imitations (taqālīd), Zoroastrians have imitations, Christians have imitations, Buddhists have imitations, and every nation has imitations [and] thinks that its imitations are correct and the imitations of others are invalid. For example, the followers of Moses believe that their imitations are correct and the imitations of others are invalid. We want to find out which [imitations] are correct. [Obviously] not all imitations are correct. If we stick to an imitation it will prevent us from correctly investigating other [religions] imitations. For example, a Jewish person cannot understand that other [religions] are correct because he believes and sticks to the imitations of Judaism. Therefore, he must put aside the imitations and seek the truth and [think that] perhaps others might be right. Thus, until imitations are not put aside, the truth will not become manifest,” ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Isḥrāq Khāwarī, *Payām-i malakūt*, p.17 (citing ‘Abdu’l-Bahā’).

[15] “‘Therefore, it is incumbent upon all the friends of God to shun any person in whom they perceive the emanation of hatred for the Glorious Beauty of Abhā, though he may quote all the Heavenly Utterances and cling to all the Books.’ He continues—Glorious be His Name!—‘Protect yourselves with utmost vigilance, lest you be entrapped in the snare of deception and fraud. This is the advice of the Pen of Destiny,’ `Abdu’l-Bahā, Bahā’ī World Faith—Selected Writings of Bahā’u’llāh and `Abdu’l-Bahā (‘Abdu’l-Bahā’s Section Only), pp. 430–431.

7. Should Baha’is See and Hear or Become Blind and Deaf?

Bahā’u’llāh:

Research and listen with your own ears and see with your own eyes.[16]

Bahā’u’llāh:

When I speak become death, blind, and ignorant and blindly accept my words.[17]

[16] “‘When humans attain the rank of [religious] maturity they must investigate . . . and [they] must hear and see with their own ears and eyes,” `Abd al-Ḥamīd Isḥrāq Khāwārī, Payām-i malakūt, p.11 (citing Bahā’u’llāh).

[17] “‘Become blind so that you see my face, become deaf so that you hear my pleasant tone and voice, become ignorant so that you get a share of my knowledge, and become poor so that you can take an everlasting portion from the sea of my eternal riches. ‘Become blind’ means [see] nothing but my beauty and ‘become deaf’ means [hear] nothing but my words and ‘become ignorant’ means [have no knowledge] but my knowledge, so that with a pure eye and clean heart and fine ear you come to my sanctified realm,” Bahā’u’llāh, Ad’iyyih-i ḥaḍrat-i maḥbūb, pp. 427–428.

Baha'i Faith is gaining more followers in India

PRESENT STATUS

I- LOCAL BAHÁ'Í COUNCILS OF ORTHODOX BAHÁ'IS

• Local Bahá'í Council of the Orthodox Bahá'ís of Bhagalpur • Local Bahá'í Council of the Orthodox Bahá'ís of Rajgir • Local Bahá'í Council of the Orthodox Bahá'ís of Thane • Local Bahá'í Council of the Orthodox Bahá'ís of Baroda • Local Bahá'í Council of the Orthodox Bahá'ís of Kanpur • [Local Bahá'í Council of the Orthodox Bahá'ís of Bangalore](#) • [Local Bahá'í Council of the Orthodox Bahá'ís of Chennai](#) • Local Bahá'í Council of the Orthodox Bahá'ís of Mumbai • Local Bahá'í Council of the Orthodox Bahá'ís of Ahmedabad • Local Bahá'í Council of the Orthodox Bahá'ís of Mafo • Local Bahá'í Council of the Orthodox Bahá'ís of Patna

II- LOCALITIES OF THE ORTHODOX BAHÁ'IS

• Aurangabad • Nagpur • Chennai • Cochin • Mahua • Bhavnagar • Lucknow • Hyderabad • Cannanore • Mallapuram • Calcutta • Kamarhatty • Bhopal • Indore • Bhubleshwar

III- POINTS OF ORTHODOX BAHÁ'IS

• Dombivli • Imphal • Kalyan • Udaipur • Mira Road • Dhanabad • Ulhasnagar • Thakurli

Prominent Baha'is in India

• Dr. Ram Krishna Singh

An outstanding Orthodox Baha'i whom the Orthodox Bahá'ís are fortunate to count as a supporter. He was nominated international man of the year by the International Biographical Center of Cambridge, England — a wonderful tribute to his accomplishments.

Born, broughtup and educated in Varanasi, he is a university professor, teaching English language skills to students of earth and mineral sciences. He has authored over 150 articles, 165 book reviews and 34 books, including Twelve collections of poems, among them, two jointly with U S Bahri, TWO POETS (1994) and COVER TO COVER (2002), and two others, EVERY STONE DROP PEBBLE (1999) jointly with Cath Mire and Patricia Prime, and PACEM IN TERRIS (2003, a trilogy collection, containing my haiku collection PEDDLING DREAM). N SILENCE AND OTHER SELECTED POEMS:1974-1994 (1996), ABOVE THE EARTH'S GREEN (1997), and THE RIVER RE (2006) are other three important poetry books. NEW INDIAN ENGLISH POETRY: AN ALTERNATIVE VOICE: R.K.SINGH I.K.Sharma) is the latest publication on his poetry. It contains 22 critical articles, six interviews and over a dozen review/comments by about 30 scholars. (Details from bookenclave@yahoo.com). He has received several awards and honours, including honorary Litt.D. from the World Academy of Arts and Culture, Taiwan, 1984, Michael Madhusudan Award, Calcutta, 1994 and Peace Museum Award from Ritsumeikan University, Kyoto, 1999. For more information visit:

<http://rksingh.blogspot.com>

• Dr. Zayn Luqmani Fateh

Dr. Zayn Luqmani Fateh, a physician by profession, is an intellectual amongst the Bahá'ís of India due to his deep understanding of the Faith and his ability to quote freely from the Bahá'í scriptures, Dr. Fateh has written many articles to his credit, including an English article on the matter of the continuation of the Guardianship. In addition to English, Dr. Fateh is well versed with Indian languages like Hindi, Marathi and Gujarathi and languages like Arabic and Persian too.

Dr. Zayn Luqmani is the son of the late Dr. M.R. Luqmani, who was bestowed by the first Guardian Shoghi Effendi with the title of FATEH, the spiritual conqueror of Ceylon, where he rendered outstanding services and saw the formation of the local council and finally the National Spiritual Assembly.

• Vinod Kumar

Vinod Kumar was the secretary of the Provisional National Bahá'í Council of India since its inception. A young and devoted Orthodox Bahá'í, a banker by profession, formed many local Orthodox Councils around Delhi and in other places.

Vinod Kumar says: "We consider ourselves blessed and fortunate to be under the shadow of the beloved third Guardian."

• Dr. Umesh P. Patri

Dr. U. P. Patri is a Reader in Dept. of English in Bolangir College, Orissa. He is a academic supervisor for students writing their Ph.D. He is a visiting lecturer in the U.S., Canada, Germany. He believes that in the NEW WORLD ORDER OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH the Orthodox Bahá'ís have a prominent role.

• Dr. Shashikant S. Seth

Dr. Seth is a Naturopath and treats physical illness. After the declaration of his faith in the third Guardian, he has embarked upon the treatment of

the spiritual illness of the Bahá'ís, due to the great violation. He is very much interested in promoting of the continuation of the Guardianship.

- **Mr. Sanjay Kumar**

An outstanding Orthodox Bahá'í from Baroda, a chemical engineer by profession. He is eager to promote the continuation of the Guardianship. He is keen to establish Orthodox Baha'i Councils in various localities.

- **Mr. Rajni Patel**

He is a very faithful Orthodox Bahá'í from Thane, a dedicated and deepened believer. He has debated with a number of heterodox believers regarding the NEED of a GUARDIAN to establish the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh.

- **Mr. Raj Paul Singh**

He is an Orthodox Bahá'í from Punjab, actively involved in removing the gap between rich and the poor through the teachings of the Orthodox Bahá'í Faith. He believes that the teaching of the Faith, can reduce the gaps that exist in the social structure.

- **Madhu Mehta**

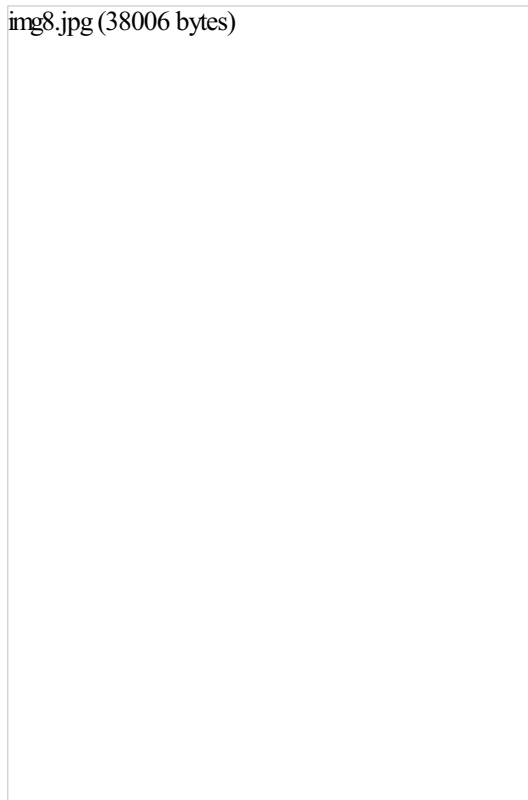
She is an outstanding Orthodox Bahá'í from Delhi, an editor of the first and very informative news letter of the Orthodox Bahá'ís: "Herald of the Covenant," and member of the first Provisional National Bahá'í Council of India.

Picture Gallery

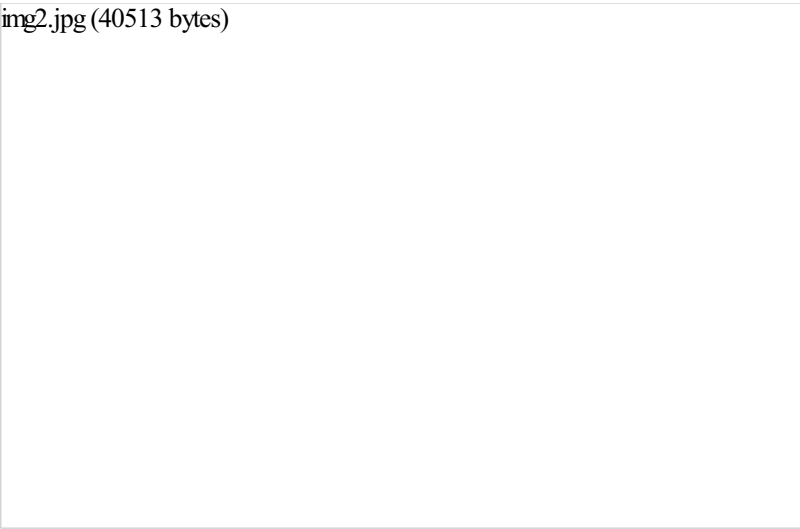
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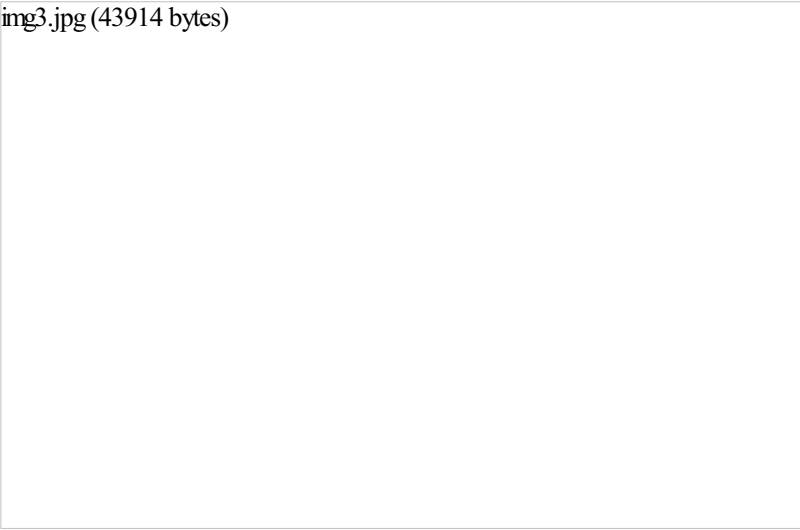
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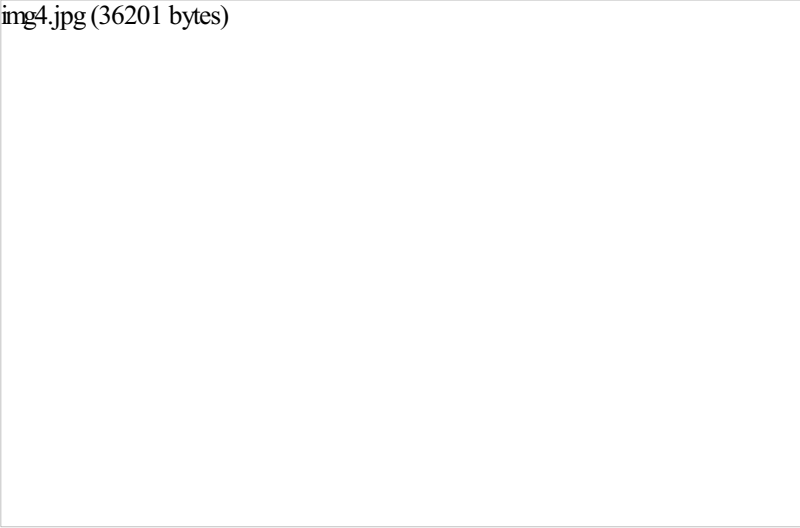
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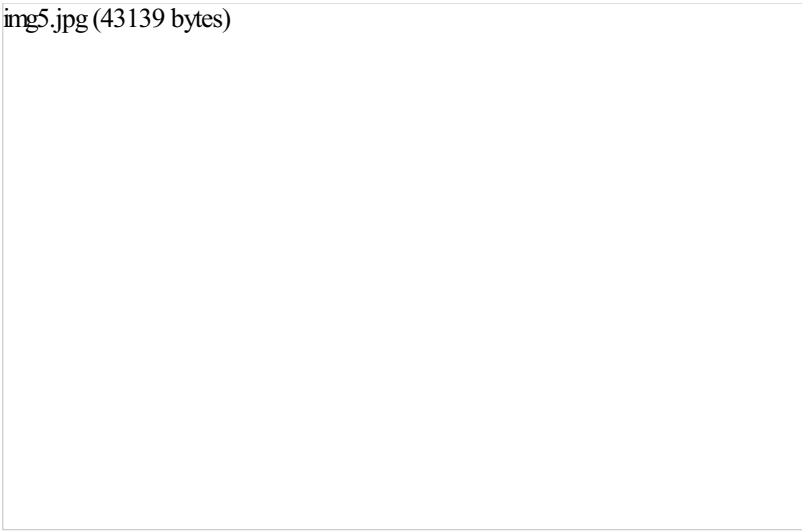
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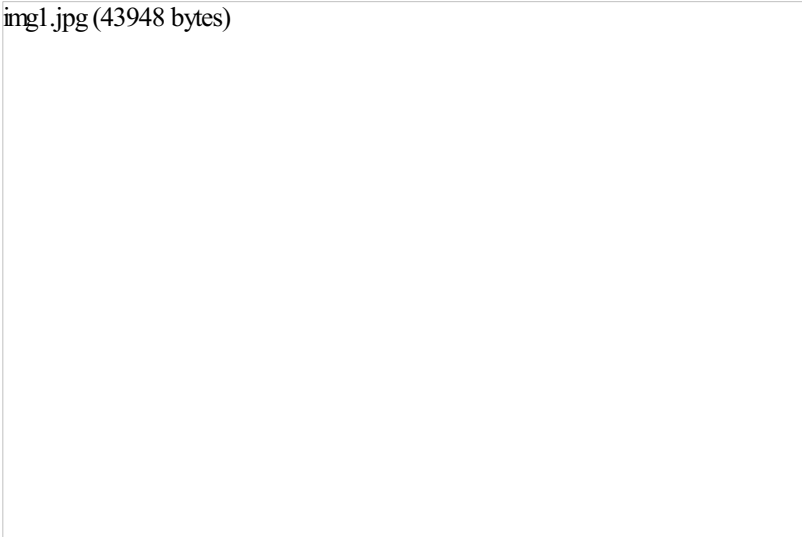
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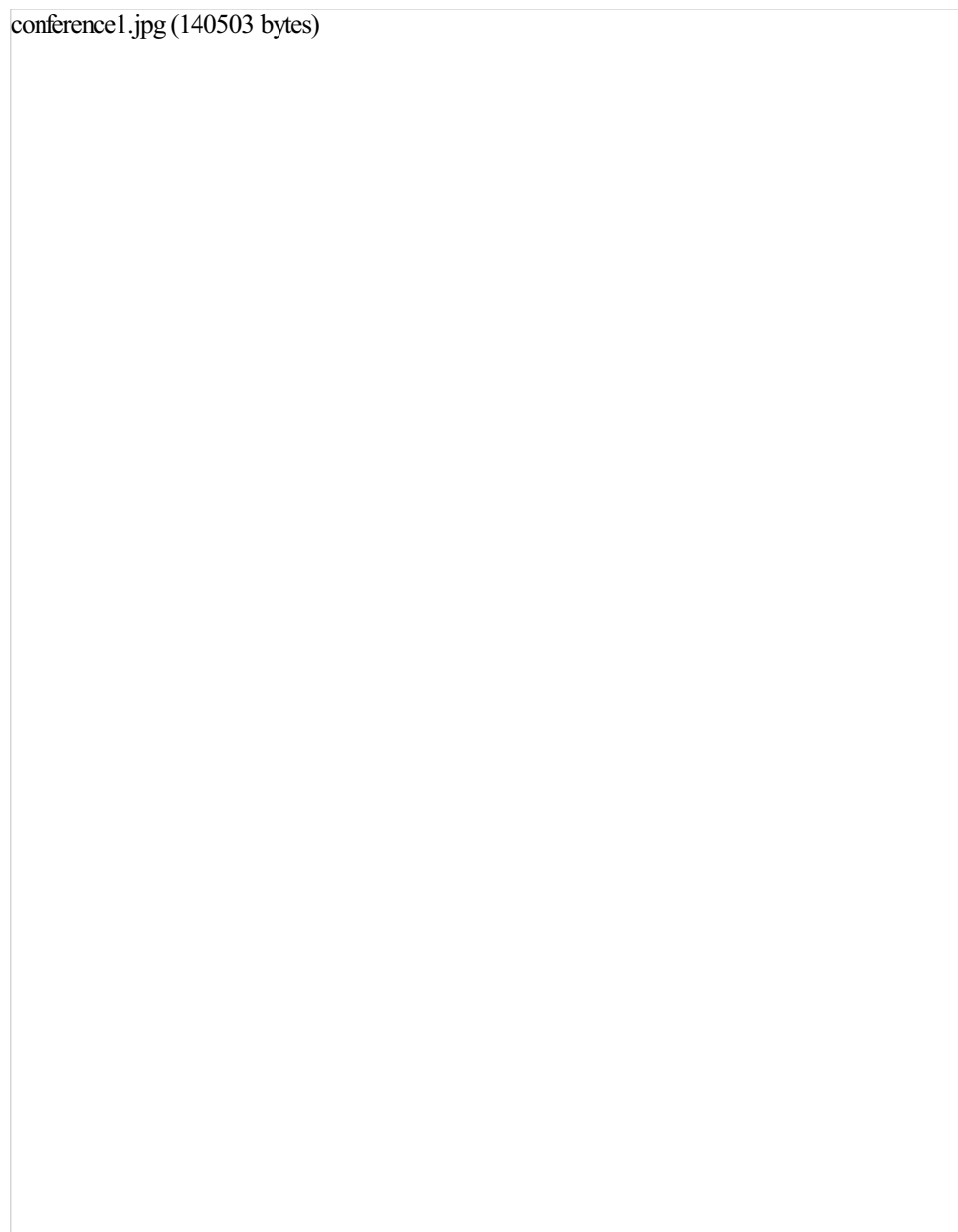
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Reference : <http://bahaisorthodox.com>

Why I believe Baha'i is false

My initial impression of the teaching of Bahá'u'lláh was favorable. After all, the objectives of peace and regeneration of the world were noble and desirable. However, noble objectives are not sufficient to substantiate the reality of its claim to be the ultimate explanation of supernatural reality.



What about the many cases of martyrdom of believers in the Bab and in Bahá'u'lláh? Do not these lend credence to the Baha'i faith? Much as one is emotionally inclined to do so, I believe this is insufficient to constitute proof of supernatural reality

Bahá'u'lláh proposes that divine revelation occurs in stages. This is the concept of **progressive revelation**. Each stage is suitable for the level of human understanding at that particular stage in history. He proposed that he is the ultimate Messenger of God and constitute the Messiah hoped for by the Jews, the triumphant return of Jesus Christ and the long-awaited return of Imam Mahdi.

This audacious claim is nonetheless a **theory**. Any theory purporting to explain the divine is attempting to explain a reality in the supernatural realm. As such, it must stand up to the scrutiny of tests of supernatural reality.

If the writings associated with the theory contain historically supported events which cannot be explained by nature, then it constitutes evidence that the theory probably describes a supernatural reality.

The two objective tests of supernatural reality are accurate predictions of future events and performance of miracles.

Prediction of future events constitute one type of evidence of supernatural reality if the likelihood of those events taking place by chance is extremely remote.

Other than three predictions, I have yet to find other predictions in the life and works of Bahá'u'lláh which have come to pass in secular history

Behá'u'lláh claimed that the Báb had predicted his coming.

The Báb had declared that his own revelation as the "door" to the Imam Mahdi was not final, and that he would, at some future time be succeeded by "**Him whom God shall manifest**". At the same time the Báb had laid it down that the time of this promised deliverer's arrival was known only to God, that no one could falsely claim to be him. The Báb also indicated that the next manifestation would appear suddenly and unexpectedly.

After the execution of the Báb in July 1850 by the Iranian government, a number of important Babis put forth extravagant claims of divinity. This included Sayyid Basir-i Hindi of Multan in 1851. He was one of several Babi leaders of the time who claimed participation in divine manifestations, similar in some ways to those claimed by Sufis or mystics. Another such person was Sayyid 'Uluvv who had made claims to being God incarnate. He resided in the shrine city of Kerbala in Iraq, the site of the tomb of the Imam Husayn.

Thus during those turbulent times, anyone could claim he was "Him whom God shall manifest." I believe Bahá'u'lláh seized the opportunity to declare his divinity and take over the mantle of leadership of the Babis. Thus his appearance as "Him whom God shall manifest" was neither sudden nor unexpected.

Bahá'u'lláh predicted that Sultan 'Abdu'l-'Aziz, the Grand Vizer, 'Ali Páshá and the associate, Fu'ád Páshá would have their lives taken from them as punishment for exiling him to the prison city of Akka.

It is not uncommon for people to curse their enemies. I believe the likelihood of the curse made by Bahá'u'lláh coming to pass by chance is not extremely remote

What is more interesting is not the prediction coming to pass but the very fact that the curse was made at all. One of the central tenets of Baha'i Faith is belief of common brotherhood of man and that people of the Baha'i should be shining examples to all mankind. I quote from his Writings on the Civilizing of Human Character:

"O peoples of the world! Forsake all evil, hold fast that which is good. Strive to be shining examples unto all mankind, and true reminders of the virtues of God amidst men."

This appears to be contrary to the making of curses. I believe that is an example of hypocrisy and is totally inconsistent of a man who claims he is the "Manifestation of God." and the epitome of the virtues of God.

Behá'u'lláh predicted that a democracy of the people would rule one day in Iran. If this prediction was made before democratic government

appeared on earth, it would have been exceptional. However, Bahá'u'lláh was looking at the fledgling democracy in England when he made his prediction. Hence the likelihood of this prediction occurring by chance is not extremely remote.

In summary, the likelihood of these three predictions concerning Bahá'u'lláh occurring by chance are not extremely remote and therefore are not sufficient to invoke a supernatural causation.

Performing deeds which are impossible in the natural to occur are known as miracles. Miracles constitute evidence of supernatural reality. I am unable to find examples of miraculous acts performed by Bahá'u'lláh.

Thus there is insufficient evidence for me to be convinced that Bahá'u'lláh's theory of "Progressive Revelation" represents supernatural reality.

How can I explain Bahá'u'lláh's behavior? I like to propose a theory that Bahá'u'lláh has megalomania, a psychological state characterized by delusions of grandeur. Examination of his writings show that this theory is plausible.

Bahá'u'lláh claimed that he was infallible (incapable of failure or error) (the 'Ishraqat circa 1855)

However, he made an error when he pronounced that creation had no beginning. I quote from his 'Writings on the human soul'.

*"As to thy question whether the physical world is subject to any limitations, know thou that the comprehension of this matter dependeth upon the observer himself. In one sense, it is limited; in another, it is exalted beyond all limitations. The one true God hath everlastingly existed, and will everlastingly continue to exist. His creation, likewise, hath had **no beginning**, and will have no end. All that is created, however, is preceded by a cause. This fact, in itself, establisheth, beyond the shadow of a doubt, the unity of the Creator".*

It had been scientifically established that there was a beginning described as the 'Big Bang'. Thus Bahá'u'lláh was not infallible.

Bahá'u'lláh's original name was Husayn-`Ali Nuri. Consistent with his condition of megalomania, he renamed himself Bahá'u'lláh, the meaning of which is "The Glory of God."

He claimed that he is the Manifestation of God and that no one can recognize God except through Him (the Tajalliyat circa 1855)

He claims that the various messianic prophecies of earlier religions were fulfilled by his coming. (the 'Ishraqat circa 1855)

He glorified himself in a fashion consistent with megalomania:

*"Had Muhammad, the Apostle of God, attained this Day, He would have exclaimed: 'I have truly recognized Thee, O Thou the Desire of the Divine Messengers!' Had Abraham attained it, He too, falling prostrate upon the ground, and in the utmost lowliness before the Lord thy God, would have cried: 'Mine heart is filled with peace, O Thou Lord of all that is in heaven and on earth! I testify that Thou hast unveiled before mine eyes all the glory of Thy power and the full majesty of Thy law!' ... Had Moses Himself attained it, He, likewise, would have raised His voice saying: 'All praise be to Thee for having lifted upon me the light of Thy countenance and enrolled me among them that have been privileged to behold Thy face!'" (Bahá'u'lláh, *Summons of the Lord of Hosts*, p.149)*

If I examine Bahá'u'lláh's claim that the prophets Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Muhammad, Imam Mahdi and Bahá'u'lláh are Manifestations of God, I find something interesting.

None of them claimed to be Manifestations of God except Jesus and Bahá'u'lláh. Allow me to compare them.

Bahá'u'lláh had three predictions to his credit. He performed no miracles. Like any other man, Bahá'u'lláh died and was buried. There was hardly anything supernatural about him.

On the other hand, Jesus had thirty-four predictions about him. He was recorded to have performed no less than thirty-two miracles. He died, was buried but miraculously rose from the dead. I am inclined to believe Jesus had evidence of supernatural reality.

The Bahai Creed –

Broken Silence. Today's Struggle for Religious Freedom.

Ahmad Sohrab.

Mirza Ahmad Sohrab's Broken Silence: The Story of Today's Struggle for Religious Freedom. New York: Universal Publishing, 1942.

Many of Sohrab's comments and books should be read in the light of his attempting to make amends with, or influence, Shoghi Effendi, who "excommunicated" him, as Shoghi Effendi had done with his own entire family. Ruth White and Dr. C. Ainsworth Mitchell went much deeper into what had gone wrong after Abdul-Baha's death, but Sohrab throws light upon various Bahai problems of the time, such as freedom of religious conscience, of which many such problems continue today for other Bahai denominations based upon the fraudulent will and testament of 1921.

Given subsequent Bahai history, it is clear Sohrab also failed to understand the wisdom and very profound change in religious form and conduct that Abdul-Baha taught when he repeatedly stated the Bahai Movement could not be organized. Abdul-Baha's Teaching runs entirely contrary to what people usually think of as "religion," and is still today a profoundly challenging paradox for many seekers and Bahais.

Scholarship worthy of the name cannot be done without confronting the Bahai history to which Ruth White, Julie Chanler, and Mirza Ahmad Sohrab testify.

<http://www.fglaysheer.com/bahaicensorship/SohrabEx.htm>

Documents Deposited by Ruth White with the Library of Congress

Documents Deposited by Ruth White with the Library of Congress, 1930-1932. Includes White's extensive documents and communication with the Mandate of Palestine authorities regarding the fraudulent will and testament of Abdul-Baha and Dr. C. Ainsworth Mitchell's Report on the Writing Shown on the Photographs of the Alleged Will of Abdul-Baha. 1930.

Scholarship worthy of the name cannot be done without confronting the Bahai history to which Ruth White, Julie Chanler, and Mirza Ahmad Sohrab testify.

"We had the dark ages because the bigots of that era got control of Christ's teachings and tortured all those who did not comply with their interpretation. Shoghi Effendi, and the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is, cannot in this day resort to physical torture to enforce their will, but they have resorted to mental torture by blackmailing with excommunication all those who do not comply with their inverted teachings" (100).

Finally, a manuscript of the Iqan which retains all the errors uttered by Baha'u'llah

This is a manuscript of the original book of Iqan which retains all the grammatical errors and distortions in the verses of the Qur'an uttered by Baha'u'llah. It has been taken from the digital archive of the National Library of Iran (Kitabkhaniyi Milli) with number 11383. It is also available online: <http://dl.nli.ir/UI/0703ce2c-183d-4267-bb7a-35498b51ecc6/LRRView.aspx?PageNo=%24+++++++&Term=%u0627f%u0628f> A small number of the pages are missing.

https://archive.org/details/original_Iqan

Will and Testament of Bab addressed to Subh e Azal

Baha'is affected by ban on 'Allah' word – A Report

Followers of the faith use the words "Allah-u-Abbha", which means "God the most glorious" when they meet each other.

A spokesman for the Baha'i community of Malaysia, said the matter regarding the ban would be deliberated upon by members before they make any statements.

The Baha'i faith also believes in one God and emphasizes the spiritual unity of all humankind.

Three core principles establish a basis for Baha'i teachings and doctrine: the unity of God, that there is only one God who is the source of all creation; the unity of religion, that all major religions have the same spiritual source and come from the same God; and the unity of humanity, that all humans have been created equal, and that diversity of race and culture are seen as worthy of appreciation and acceptance.

The Baha'i faith was founded by Baha'u'llah in 19th-century Persia.

Meanwhile, a spokesman for the Sikh community here said Sikhs will continue to use the word regardless of the ban on its use.

Gurdwara Sahib Petaling Jaya (GSPJ) vice-president Awtar Singh said, the word has been used by Sikhs since the founding of the faith hundreds of years ago.

"It has been part of our religion and now if you want to take that away, the right to practise our religion would also be taken away," Awtar told theSun today.

He said the Sikh holy book – the Guru Granth Sahib – is a compilation of Sikh teachings by the first five Gurus of Sikhism.

"We refer to the Guru Granth Sahib for our way of life and it is a very important book as it is the compilation of all Sikh teachings; the Guru Granth Sahib is everything to Sikhs," Awtar said.

Puchong Member of Parliament Gobind Singh Deo concurred adding that the community will continue to use the word.

"As far as we are concerned, we will continue using the word as it is part and parcel of the book (Guru Granth Sahib)," he said.

Courtesy : <http://www.thesundaily.my/news/930463>

What goes around comes around: Use of the Greatest Name(Allah) effectively banned in Malaysia

In November, 2006, the heterodox Baha'is, those presently headquartered in Wilmette , Illinois, brought a legal action seeking to prevent the Orthodox Baha'is from using the Greatest Name, among other things. The Greatest Name is "Allah-u-Abha" (God is All-Glorious) and its variants, and is considered one of the most sacred names and symbols of the Baha'i Faith. After years of battle in the United States District Court and an appeal before the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals, the Orthodox Baha'is finally prevailed in 2011.

Equality of Men and Women in Baha'i Faith?! HmMMM

In Baha'i Faith, women are prohibited from serving in the Universal House of Justice!



“The Universal House of Justice shall consist of who have been elected from the Bahá’í community in the manner hereinafter provided.”

(The Universal House of Justice, The Constitution of The Universal House of Justice, p. 10)

Maybe they should call it the Universal House of Inequality!

Also, giving the if there is no will left by the parents!

SO DON'T USE THE WORD "FREEDOM"! JUST SAY THERE IS A CERTAIN RANGE OF BEHAVIOR WE PERMIT IN BAHÁ'Í FAITH!!

Human Equality in Baha'i Faith! Hmmm!

I have already talked about discrimination against homosexuals in Baha'i faith! I have already talked about exclusion of women from Universal House of Justice (OR actually Local House of Injustice). Now I want to share with you guys something else!

This is a quote from Universal House of Justice:

With loving Bahá'í greetings, Department of the Secretariat

Did you know that the science we have today is just because of Baha'ullah?

So without Baha'ullah science would not have existed! What Nonsense !!!

The foolishness called Baha'i

A few weeks ago, I received the following e-mail at my workplace:

Though the e-mail didn't mention it, I knew EXACTLY what it was all about... Baha'i! If you've never heard of it, Baha'i is a faith which believes:

Put simply, Baha'i can be summarized with this statement: "let's all get together and get along!"

Sounds harmless enough doesn't it? Yet, it is quite harmful. You see, Baha'i lacks one important element to make it a righteous faith. The one element? Truth. Consider this example:

Now friends, on a cloudless summer morning, what colour is the sky? It is of course, blue. If anyone came to you and said it was any other colour, you would think he was either colour blind or he was just trying to irritate you. Now what of the fourth man in my example. Could the sky be blue, green and yellow all at once? OF COURSE NOT! The man who takes such a position is either stupid, or he thinks the three other men are stupid enough to believe that the morning sky is multi-coloured.

Just consider these three examples:

1- God:

Hinduism: Three main impersonal gods, and millions of lesser gods.. **Christianity:** There are three persons in one God. All of the same substance and nature, co-equal and co-eternal. **Islam:** One impersonal God.

2- Jesus Christ:

Hinduism: Not God. Not the Son of God. One of the many sons of God. **Christianity:** God and the Son. 2nd Person of the Trinity. He is 100% God and 100% man. He was/is the only sinless man. **Islam:** Not God. A mere man who was beneath Mohammed in importance. He did not die for man's sins.

3- Sin:

Hinduism: There is no absolute good or evil. **Christianity:** Sin is breaking the Laws of God. All men have sinned. The penalty of sin is eternal physical and spiritual death. **Islam:** Not following the commandments of Allah, and Islamic Law.

And there you have it! The three men arguing about the colour of the sky. The three major faiths in the example above are definitely NOT seeing the same thing on many key matters of faith, so how can it be that Baha'i will bring all them around into one? How is it that all are right and good according to the Baha'i when it is clear that the stand of one is opposite to the others?

NONSENSE!

When someone says they believe in everything, it means they believe nothing. If Christianity is right, then Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism...etc... are all wrong; just as if the sky is blue on a clear summer morning, it isn't green or yellow.

Do I think the leaders of the Baha'i movement are stupid? No! I think that many who follow Baha'i are stupid, but not those who have engineered and continue to promote the faith. You see, Baha'i very deceptively takes advantage of people's ignorance. Most people don't have a clue of the differences between the various world faiths (most a willfully ignorant), and so when Baha'i shows up with catch phrases like: **"religious and cultural harmony amongst the people"**, well, it sounds pretty good to them. And once they are hooked in, well then comes the teachings of the Bab and Baha Allah, which are teachings that are rejected, in varying degrees, by all world faiths.

Now you look around my blog... all my cards are on the table. There is no deceit here. My faith is spelled out in no uncertain terms. I am a Christian fundamentalist. No Islam, no Hinduism, no Buddhism. Why? Because these faiths are opposed to my faith in their tenets and in their practices. If you are a Christian, have no part of Baha'i. The Bible is all too clear:

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (2 Corinthians 6:14-18)

Friends, Baha'i is a wicked, deceitful, false religion... keep yourselves from it.

Bahai Center or Illegal Alcohol Warehouse !! – A Report

Courtesy : <http://pidp.eastwestcenter.org/pireport/2013/July/07-02-07.htm>

By Charley Piringi

HONIARA, Solomon Islands (Solomon Star, July 1, 2013) Several liquor outlets operating illegally in the city have been raided over the weekend by police.

The operations were conducted by the Honiara City Police.

The raid was in relation to illegal selling of liquor. Owners of these outlets were selling alcohol without any liquor permits and after hours.

During the raid nearly ten cartons of beer were confiscated.

As a result of the raid two men were arrested and charged while awaiting their court appearance.

Honiara City Police Commander Chief Superintendant Sergeant Gabriel Manelusi yesterday confirmed the raids while issuing a warning to all illegal liquor outlets in the city.

He said that a lot of hotspots involved in such illegal activities have been identified.

These identified hotspots will be their targets in the coming weeks.

“Those recently raided areas were some of the many crime hotspots in town.”

He warned that more of such raids will be conducted and owners of these illegal outlets will face justice once they are caught.

“We have already identified other illegal outlets in the city and will be raiding them soon.”

“This is part of doing our job to have these culprits arrested and face justice.”

Sgt. Manelusi calls on all communities in and around Honiara to work together with the police to fight against such illegal activities.

“We asked the communities to work closely with us to ensure that Honiara is a crime free city for everyone. All of us should be law abiding citizen of the Solomon Islands.”

Apart from the raids regular traffic checkups and inspections by police will also be conducted as of this week.

Four Core activities of Bahais in India.

Study Circles, Devotional Gathering, Children's Moral Classes, Junior Youth Programs. They are trying to implement these 4 core activities. They are quite unsuccessful till today. If the Indians do not wake up on time, then Baha'is can cause damage to Hinduism and colourful Indian Society. Baha'is say Hinduism has nothing to offer to this world except division and corruption. According to their official websites they have converted 2.2 million Hindus to Baha'ism with the help of 4 core activities.

A brief visit from Bob Arvay, former Baha'i, evangelical Christian.

Courtesy : talk.religion.bahai

Up until a couple of years or so ago, I used to be a frequent poster on this group. After I found my continued discussion to be going in circles, I did as many of my online critics urged me to do, and "went away." Time has passed, but my concern for Baha'is has not diminished. Indeed, unfolding events on the world scene have added more urgency to my fears for the role of Baha'is in the coming great deception of the anti-Christ.

For those who may wish to read some of my archived material, you can do so by typing in the word "arvay" in the "search this group" field on google's talk.religion.bahai.

I did this, and began re-reading some of my old exchanges from 2002 onward, and developed a perspective that I did not have while "in the fray."

The one thing that stands out the most is the continual, persistent, and unrelenting disingenuous arguments posed by my critics. Only now, in retrospect, can I appreciate how breathtakingly dishonest their responses were, and how deeply ingrained this cognitive disconnection is in their thinking.

For example, the question of the Guardianship is the most singular cause of fracturing in the Bahai Faith (BF). I have read many posts on this site concerning the varying points of view from the different factions of Bahais, and could never get answers to my most direct questions. Essentially, what I said was, among the Guardian's crucial duties, was the appointment of a successor. Much Bahai teaching had been invested in the vital importance of this position, and the importance of succession was critical.

Then the Guardian died suddenly. A frantic search was made for any evidence that a successor had been appointed. Nothing. Then, the Hands of the Cause had a real crisis on their "hands." If they could not find a solution, then the entire legitimacy of the BF as a divinely revealed religion was out the window. So they had to improvise after the fact. What they did was to declare the position of the Guardianship null and void. But on what authority? For many years, the guardianship had been touted as critical to the Administrative Order, and unlike in other religions, the AO was specifically designated by the founder of the faith. Inconsistencies and contradictions abounded.

Despite many, many posts on this subject, I never got a good answer to this, neither from the mainline Bahais (UHJ), nor the Mason-Remy faction, nor from Joel Marangella nor from the sans-Guardian Bahais, etc etc.

Everyone can patch up some of the defects in this matter, but nobody can float the boat.

Finally, the discussions veered off into peripheral matters, primarily the centrality of Middle Eastern culture to the problem of terrorism. I was accused of being off topic in these matters, but as I re-read the archives, I see that these subjects were natural transitions from the most direct Bahai teachings to the least direct.

These discussions became confrontational, I think, largely due to the fact that many of the bahais on this forum were not fully committed to some of the Bahai teachings (ironically, those with which evangelical Christians are most likely to agree with Bahais on).

For example, Bahai forbids abortion, yet many of my responders seemed in favor of it. What strikes me in reviewing the old posts is that these "pro-choice" Bahais refused to admit of any distinction between the execution of a convicted murderer after due process, and the killing of an innocent baby without due process. I could never get them to acknowledge that there is a difference.

Bahai teaches that men and women are equal, with which I agree, but then the Bahai teachings incorrectly portray men and women as two wings of a bird. The error in this teaching is that men and women are not mirror images of each other. We are complements of each other. Unlike the wings of a bird, we are asymmetrical, having differing functions, interlocking, compensatory.

Again, the fact that the UHJ does not admit women as officers is extremely disconcerting to politically liberal bahais. But cognitive dissonance is the hallmark of the true believer. I know, because for a few years, I too made excuses for the ever-accumulating list of inherent inconsistencies in the BF.

But the greatest issue of them all, from my opinionated point of view, is that the Bahai faith prophesies a one world order that the Bible clearly demonstrates will FIRST be put into place by Satan, the anti- Christ, the Beast.

What this portends for Bahais is that, as the anti-Christ begins putting into place this world religion, this world economy, this trans- national government, is that Bahais will tend to see this as a validation of their beliefs, a fulfillment of their prophecies, and as a good thing.

Therein lies an enormously great danger for you, and the only defense you have against it is reliance on the shed blood of Jesus for your salvation. I beg each of you to ask Jesus to save your soul. He is all sufficient to meet your every need.

Bob

Baha'is are the real enemies of Iran and Iranian People

I had the misfortune of attending a meeting organized by Universal House of Justice for DIPLOMATIC AND EXTERNAL AFFAIR CONSULTATIONS in Acuto, Italy on 2-4 September 2011.

I was surprised to see that the whole atmosphere was dominated by Anti Iran feeling and very cunningly the UHJ had put forward the Persian Bahais in forefront to act against their own country under the guidance of certain Western Powers hostile to Iranian governments.

The Universal House of Justice has initiated a series of international and regional gatherings to develop offices of external affairs in various parts of the world. The main agenda of this body was to change world opinion against Iran.

This three-day meeting addressed a range of matters pertaining to the external affairs work at the national level, including the nature and functioning of external affairs offices and various aspects of the different components of the work. The first and third days were devoted to plenary sessions on these subjects. On day two, participants came together in smaller groups – organized on the basis of either geography or stage of development of the external affairs work – to address the issues discussed in plenum in greater depth.

The main points were addressed by Dr Farzam Arbab and Dr Firaydoun Javaheri, representatives of the House of Justice to the delegates of the meeting in Acuto. The central theme for all the three days was Iran and Iran only.

Participants:

1. Dr Farzam Arbab, and Dr Firaydoun Javaheri member of the Universal House of Justice;
2. Representatives of Offices of External Affairs and National Spiritual Assemblies of Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, France, Germany, India, Ireland, Kenya, the Netherlands, South Africa, Spain, Turkey, Uganda, the United Kingdom, the United States.
3. Bahá'í International Community Persian language spokespersons for Europe and North America;
4. Representatives of the various Bahai communities

AIM OF THE CONFERENCE

The key address was by House of Justice members Mr. Dr Farzam Arbab, and Dr Firaydoun Javaheri which hinted that it is UHJ agenda of training Bahais in every country to be in contact with their respective government to:

1. Work towards defaming Iran as much as possible and pursue them to favor various motion initiated by the countries like US ,Canada and Britain favoring the Bahais
2. Pressurize their government to support economic sanctions against Iran
3. While trying to achieve these two major goals, try to receive various benefits allowed by the respective government.
4. Introduced Bahai Faith to them

The excuse of meeting with the government officials should be the persecution of Bahais in Iran and the imprisonment of 7 Yaran members of the Bahai Faith. This should be done tactfully under the heading Mistreatment of Minorities by Iranian Government especially Bahais.

The members selected for this committee were advised to be Iranian Bahai ladies so that more sympathy can be generated for the Bahais. The condition of committee members to be Ladies was for obvious reasons.

The Points discussed were

1. How to build capacity to engage meaningfully in the diplomatic work? An essential element of activity is “READING YOUR GOVERNMENT” – which should not be underestimated
2. Methods suggested were :
 - A. How well do you know your government and how can you get to know your government better?
 - B. What are the forces within society that impact your governments? Do you know how your government operates?
 - C. Do you know the key players within government? And which of these individuals is actually receptive to the ideas we would want to present?
 - D. Do you know of any government officials who are dedicated to selfless service to their country rather than the promotion of self?
 - E. How can you build relationships with key individuals in government? What are the resource implications of this?
 - F. How can you introduce ideas in a practical way?

G. Where are the spaces in which ideas are formed and debated?

H. How will you explain the principle of non-involvement in partisan political activity of Bahais in light of your deeper involvement with governments of your country?

I. And how does your government view Bahais? As a human rights NGO? Another small religious community?

J. How can you coordinate the work with other countries and Universal House of Justice? We will probably need to start small by working with a few individuals and engage others only as our capacity allows us

K. Load the National Bahai sites of your country with Anti Iranian materials, Persecution of Bahais etc.

As a conclusion, I could only understand that Acuto meeting was aimed to train future spies to work in interest of Bahais in their country and work against Iran. So much for the slogan – “Bahais do not participate in politics”

Humble question to Bahai friends

1. Baha'u'llah appointed in his Will and Testaments two guardian of faith one after the other, that is Abbas Effendi and Mohammed Ali Effendi. Why.? normally the successor is appointed and that successor in his will nominate his successor, here Baha'u'llah was aware that Abbas Effendi will fail, and will fall in his pride and will promote himself and will make His teachings inferior, in His Will and Testaments he has given clear sign to the faithful that for sure Abbas Effendi will fail, then the faithful should immediately refer to Mohammed Ali Effendi.
2. Why Abbas Effendi was not ready to discuss the issues with his brothers and faithful, it is obvious and clear that he will fail in that and he has to step down.
3. The Will and Testaments clearly states that the Branches (Sons) should be respected Abdul Baha failed in that, hence he himself become Covenant Breaker.

source

<http://unitarianbahais.blogspot.de/>

Introducing the Baha'i Jewish Lobby



میرزا حسنعلی بهاء که ادعای خدائی کرد اومی گفت:

صرف و نحو را باید با نوشته های من ستجیدون.

The anti-Iranian nature of the missionary affair continues to reverberate within the Iranian Baha'i community. Iran has been the cradle of this British manufactured, Zionist supported cult from the very beginning. Most of its adherents have come from Iran. In fact, for all their posturing that they have managed to convert large populations in the Third World – and who for some reason can't actually be found any rolls –, no other country in the world has been so receptive to the Baha'i idea than Iranians and particularly Iranian Jews.

These days, predominantly of former Jewish and sometimes Zoroastrian backgrounds, the current make up of Baha'is in Iran is vastly different to what it was in the late nineteenth century. The Baha'i faith lost its appeal to the mainstream Iranian community in the early 1900s during the Constitutional Revolution when Abbas Effendi not only failed to support the constitutional movement, but tacitly even supported the Russian involvement in Iranian internal politics and its sponsoring of Muhammad Ali Shah's coup d'etat against the Parliament and people of Iran. Later in the mid 1950s Shoghi Effendi directly instructed Iranian Baha'is to work closely with the Pahlavi regime, ergo Habib Sabet. The exodus of Baha'is from Muslim backgrounds resulted in the reduction in the intellectual output of the community.

Coupled with that came the influx of new believers from these Iranian Jewish and Zoroastrian minorities. The new believers had been under persecution in their respective religions and saw the new faith as an opportunity to exert control over others. Introducing the powerful Baha'i "Jewish" Lobby.

Brought together by their dislike of Muslim influences on Iranian culture, the Jewish Baha'is began to gradually purge the Iranian Baha'i community from its Islamic roots and origins. This can be witnessed in their whitewashings of the militant Shi'ite and Babi past.

This agenda fitted well with Shoghi Effendi's vision of abandoning Iran in favour of exporting the cult to other parts of the world. With the death of Shoghi Effendi in 1957 and the rise of the new UHJ oligarchy, the new Jewish (and sometimes Zoroastrian) adherents were quickly promoted through the ranks to high places within the Iranian and International Baha'i communities. Key members of the Iranian NSA and continental Board of Counsellors came from this new ethnic grouping in the Baha'i cult. Following the 1979 revolution, most of the Jewish Baha'i elite migrated to Western Europe and California, USA, where their monies helped buy properties for the AO. The completion of the ARC project is owed to a large part to donations given from these two groups. Several confidential trips by UHJ members Fatheazam and Nakhjavani to LA and Australia in 1989 ensured that all the monies required for the ARC were secured from these groups. In fact the whole of these monies had been raised long before the advertising campaign for fundraising ever begun, much of through their own investments, with smatterings of large grants and subsidies given them by the Israeli government.

During the late 80s and early 90s many of the donors and their relatives were rewarded by the BWC by being nominated to key positions on the Continental Board and the ITC. In fact a quick scan of existing Counsellors in Europe, Australia and North America since 1985 suggests that former Zoroastrians and Jews have done quite well in this regard, but not their Muslim background counterparts.

The UHJs decision to adopt a more rabid form of fundamentalism and hardline position in 1996 bode well for the Baha'i Jews especially.

They were the ones that successfully lobbied the UHJ to: 1) Instruct Iranian Baha'is not to attend Naw-Ruz celebrations by Iranian exile communities; 2) Instruct Iranian Baha'is not to associate with the general Iranian community in exile, thereby attempting to foist a Baha'i-only - rather than a universally Iranian – Naw-Ruz culture.

Counsellor Manijeh Reyhani, for example, who was instrumental in getting Hamid Taheri excommunicated comes from a dual Zoroastrian and Jewish background. These people control the Payam-i Bahai magazine (run by '60s-'70s Pahlavi insider Shapour Rasekh a.k.a. Delaram Mashhuri), the Andalib magazine, and, until its demise Landegg in Switzerland, as well as Radio Bahai (broadcasting in Persian), not to mention composition of the Ruhi modules.

Iran has always been rich in supplying and exporting Baha'i travel teachers around the world. The Baha'i Jewish lobby now wants to dominate and

silence the mainstream Iranian Baha'i community by exporting their hyper-fundamentalist reading of the cult into Iran. They have funded companies and businesses through the missionaries in order to "teach the youth" and set up Ruhi Institutes. The Baha'i community in Iran has suffered enormously at the hands of the Islamic regime. It has lost some of its most charismatic Baha'i intellectuals like the Bakhtavars or Davudis. The present elite leadership is exclusively made up of former Jews. There are deep divisions in the community and some of the truly learned ones have boycotted the current crop of leaders and their activities.

So this latest effort to export missionaries is aimed at demonstrating "the correct version of the faith" to the rank and file at the same time isolating (and hopefully driving out) the voices of dissent. It is also a means, among others, by the Israelis to gain further footholds inside Iran itself. Both policies, it would appear, have now failed. The Iranian Baha'i community is racked with dissension and schism, and the IR finally blew its top (and reasonably so given all the freedoms they had given the Baha'is since the mid '90s) with this ridiculous allegation of genocide by the Jewish Baha'i leadership. One wonders if maybe deep down these Jewish Baha'is actually pray for a holocaust to occur in Iran so that they can politically capitalize on it for their future designs, just as their European Jewish counterparts vis-a-vis Palestine.

Courtesy : <http://iranian.com/main/blog/covenant/introducing-bahai-jewish-lobby.html>

Why the Deportation , Arrest ,Ban and Confiscation of Properties only for the Baha'is??



Very often we hear that the Baha'is have been deported from a certain countries, and then are banned in most of the countries. There has been arrest of Baha'is, There has been violence against them because they were caught Proselytizing the children of other Faith. Their properties have been destroyed; they have been accused of immorality, elopement high rate of divorce etc.

Still the Baha'is and the Baha'i administration preaches that they are the most peace loving people on earth so much loving that they fail to realize the immorality of their own community but wants to engage themselves in refining the other communities especially the children, the Youths and the ladies of the other religion.

Baha'is also preach that they do not take part in Politics but then every where we see Baha'i demonstration asking for confiscated properties, release of the leaders, meeting every political leaders even if they have slightest power to exercise. Recently the UHJ the apex organization of the Baha'is have come out with a decree and asked all the national assemblies and the local assemblies to keep a close relationship with all the political leaders of that countries and cities so that the cloud of doubts and mistrust may not creep in the minds of these influential people. This is in accordance with the principle that not to offend the political susceptibilities of someone or some government

It is hardly enough to say that Baha'is are 'non-political' — after all; Baha'is do plan to bring into being a series of Baha'i states and, in the end, a Baha'i world — no less extreme than the aim of every Marxist. And, in the same way that not everyone jumps with joy at the thought of his country becoming Marxist, so we can hardly expect that there will be universal rejoicing at the news that the Baha'i faith is becoming a threat to the established political system.

Baha'i Faith in Turmoil



UHJ call for 95 Youth conferences is in fact SOS for Baha'i Faith about to be archived to annals of history.

The Baha'i Faith Titanic is

The Captain of Titanic has given a signal of distress to the Baha'is of the world in the form of organizing 95 youth conferences across the globe. The UHJ will pump dollars to make these conferences a success. As usual, the youth will come to make merry and play music, as at the last moments of Titanic people aboard were singing and dancing.

So threatened is the faith with danger of extinction due to Baha'i Faith's administration being infiltrated with pretenders and gangsters who 'claim' to be Baha'is, but lack faithfulness in their hearts. Their aim is to keep the ark 'motionless' and focus on 'fancies' such as over-administration, a social-club-like mentality, backbiting, passing time over trivial issues, more importantly, ridiculing those who lack it, instead of effectively teaching, sharing & reaching the highest realms of the spirit.

The Baha'i Faith is suffering from Ideological and Administrative and social turmoil.

Ideological turmoil

While the matter of Guardianship sprang-up many other issues surfaced like: a. authenticity of Will and Testament of Abdul Baha, b. who was the real successor of Bab – Subh-e Azal or Bahauallah? c. Bahauallah's sister Aziziya Khanum disclosing viceful personal life of Bahauallah. d. The Unitarian Baha'is bringing all sorts of Holy writings against Abdul Baha. e. number of ideological questions were raised by the Knowledgeable Ex Baha'is, who were shown the gate, over the internet. They launched a full attack on the History of Baha'i Faith. The Ex Baha'is proved that the Pen is mightier than sword (Excommunication).

The UHJ found itself incapable to give any logical answer to these questions and went on damage control mode asking NSA to take back all the Baha'is whose voting rights were taken. They absolutely erased the concept of Sanctions of Administrative Rights. And now, finally, 95 conferences are being arranged as a part of damage control strategy.

Administrative turmoil

On the other hand there were many Administrative questions surrounding UHJ regarding its legality, its infallibility and the extra ordinary higher percentage of Iranian Baha'is on it. The Baha'i scholars have been openly objecting to the high level of intolerance shown by UHJ, use of derogatory languages for respected Baha'is, threat of excommunication, election process of UHJ and its interference in election of the other countries.

Even the various methods of propagation are so frequently being changed that it gives a sign of uncertainty. Earlier it was fireside and then Mass teaching. The Social Economic Development has failed to give any serious acceptability to the Baha'i Faith.

The worst failure was Ruhi curriculum which divided the Baha'i Faith diagonally into the Persian and Non Persian Baha'is – finally resulting in outburst of a former UHJ Member against not just the Ruhi curriculum but the UHJ itself. Certain reactions are indeed eye openers, e.g. after a deepening session by a so called Baha'i scholar, a Persian Baha'i remarked that let us congratulate UHJ for successfully confusing the Baha'is.

The Volunteers who served on the world centers in the prime of the youth age, when asked to return as they had lost their youth, started openly criticizing the UHJ members

The attack of former UHJ member on Ruhi curriculum and a humiliating court case defeat has instilled shame in every Baha'i. Baha'is now care a damn about the claims of UHJ asking Baha'is to be patient that it is doing everything to reverse the case.

Moral Turmoil

Since the advent of Ruhi system, the deepened Baha'is who were always ahead in activities felt betrayed by the UHJ for side tracking them in every field. Capable Baha'is having knowledge of Baha'i Faith and Holy writings were left for job of travel teachers and useless and incompetent Baha'is who did not know the difference between Bahauallah and Allahaabha were made counselors.

Baha'i culture can hardly be called as a Religious culture. The ultra modern culture resembles MTV pop culture and not at all a sober religion.

The rate of divorce, rate of elopement, infighting amongst the Baha'i officials and an emerging trend of resignation of Baha'i officials from Administration and their refusal to take up any responsibility whether it is paid or voluntary, are all signs of steep downfall.

Preoccupation with Iran

The UHJ's preoccupation with Iran is not proving to be a good omen for the Baha'is. The Baha'i sites of every country contain more anti Iranian material than Holy writings. It seems that it is made for the purpose of instilling Anti Iranian feelings.

The Universal House of Justice is discussing how to contact the political leaders to defame Iran (in the matter of Yaran) and at the same time utilizing the meeting for Baha'i propaganda by gifting some Baha'i Books. The UHJ members are openly talking with the Baha'is that Persecution of Baha'is in Iran is a blessing for them as it gave them the opportunity to meet different political leaders. In fact one of the UHJ members remarked that 'if the Iran problem is solved, then what?'

Further, it has antagonized many Persian Baha'is as nationalism is more important for them than faith.

This obsession with the Anti Iran Govt propaganda leaves little time for other activities. A typical Baha'i LSA member apart from anti Iran propaganda has local politics, defaming other Baha'is, gossiping and merry making in the agenda. No wonder the faith has lost whatever spirituality it had.

Conclusion

It is clear that turmoil in the faith is deep. Relating the situation to the Titanic is not uncalled for. Most Baha'is can now see through the deception. Only hindrance is that they can't find a better social club to give allegiance. The current UHJ message is understood by many Baha'is

Message Of UHJ Within communities of every size and strength, we are glad to see the processes of the Five Year Plan kindling the spirit of service and stimulating purposeful action. Examples appear every day of how the act of reaching out to touch individual hearts, acquainting souls with the Word of God, and inviting them to contribute to the betterment of society can, in time, tend to the advancement of a people. This collective movement becomes discernible when the Plan's elements are combined into a well-coordinated cluster-wide effort, the dynamics of which are becoming increasingly familiar. Such a cluster becomes the setting for experienced believers as much as those newly introduced to the Faith, whatever their age or background, to work side by side, accompanying one another in their service, enabling everyone to participate in the unfoldment of the Plan.

From the panorama of the Baha'i world engaged in earnest activity, one phenomenon strikes us especially: the decisive contribution made by youth on every continent. In this phenomenon we see the vindication of the hopes the beloved Guardian invested in them "for the future progress and expansion of the Cause" and of the confidence with which he laid upon their shoulders "all the responsibility for the upkeep of the spirit of selfless service among their fellow-believers". We are struck, too, by the number of youth who, after only a brief association with the Baha'i community, commit themselves to meaningful acts of service and quickly discover their affinity with the Faith's community-building Endeavour. Indeed, in contemplating both the Baha'i youth and their like-minded peers, we cannot but rejoice at their eagerness to take on a measure of responsibility to aid the spiritual and social development of those around them, especially ones younger than themselves. In an age consumed by self-interest, in which even spiritual affiliation is weighed in the scales of reward and personal satisfaction, it is heartening to encounter individuals from their mid-teens to their twenties—those upon whom the sights of an aggressive materialism are decidedly trained—who are galvanized by the vision of Baha'u'llah and are ready to put the needs of others before their Own. That such high-minded youth, by dint of their own exertions as well as the momentum they lend to the whole community, should be contributing so effectively to efforts everywhere under way bodes well for the anticipated acceleration of these efforts.

What has been accomplished in the past two years will, surely, be far surpassed, not just in the concluding years of this present Plan but in the remaining years of the first century of The Formative Age. To spur on this mighty enterprise and to summon today's youth to fully assume the responsibilities they must discharge in this fast-contracting interval, we announce the convocation of 95 youth conferences, between July and October, planned for locations that span the globe :

Ground Reality

- **There is no community of Baha'is. Baha'i Faith is an NGO, which pays its officers to work**
- **The Baha'i contribution for betterment of society is NIL.**
- **There are no believers in Baha'i Faith only officers and workers. And they are paid for it.**
- **"Guardian", please explain which Guardian? there are multitudes of Guardians in Baha'i Faith**
- **If it is selfless service, stop the remuneration given to counselors, ABMs, NSA members and to the Baha'is for attending the conference. Ask them to pay for their lodging and boarding then see the attendance**
- **It is a great lie.**
- **You have accomplished some statistics which are falsely written by Persians**
- **When the officers and workers get together, in language of NGO is called as PARTY, and in Baha'i Faith it is called as Conferences.**

People claiming to be the Mahdi – The Promised one

Courtesy : http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/People_claiming_to_be_the_Mahdi

In [Muslim eschatology](#), the [Mahdi](#) is a [Messianic figure](#) who, it is believed, will appear on Earth before the Day of Judgment and, will rid the world of wrongdoing, injustice and tyranny. People claiming to be the Mahdi have appeared across the [Muslim world](#) – in [South Asia](#), [Africa](#) and the [Middle East](#) – and throughout history since the [birth of Islam](#) (610 CE).

A claimant Mahdi can wield great [temporal](#), as well as spiritual, power: claimant Mahdis have founded [states](#) (e.g. the late 19th-century in [Sudan](#)), as well as [religions](#) and [sects](#) (e.g. [Bábism](#), or the [Ahmadiyya](#) movement). The continued relevance of the Mahdi doctrine in the Muslim world was most recently emphasised during the 1979 [seizing of the Grand Mosque](#) in [Mecca](#), [Saudi Arabia](#), by at least 200 militants led by [Juhayman al-Otaibi](#), who had declared his brother-in-law, [Muhammad bin abd Allah al-Qahtani](#), the Mahdi.

Eighth century

Ṣāliḥ ibn Tarīf

[Ṣāliḥ ibn Tarīf](#), the second king of the [Berghouata](#), proclaimed himself prophet of a new religion in the 8th century. He appeared during the caliphate of the Umayyad [Hisham ibn Abd al-Malik](#). According to [Ibn Khaldun](#)'s sources, he claimed receiving a new revelation from God called a Qur'an, written in the Berber language with 80 chapters. He established laws for his people, which called him ('Restorer of the Believers'), and the final Mahdi.

Islamic literature considers his belief heretical, as several tenets of his teaching contrast with orthodox Islam, such as capital punishment for theft, unlimited wives, unlimited divorces, fasting of the month of Rajab instead of Ramadan, and ten obligatory daily prayers instead of five. Politically, its motivation was presumably to establish their independence from the Umayyads, establishing an independent ideology lending legitimacy to the state. Some modern Berber activists regard him as a hero for his resistance to Arab conquest and his foundation of the Berghouata state.

Abdallah ibn Muawiya

[Abdallah ibn Muawiya](#) was descendant of [Jafar ibn Abi Talib](#). At the end of 127 AH/ 744 CE Shia's of Kufa set up him as [Imam](#) he revolted against [Yazid III](#), the [Umayyad](#) Caliph, with the support of Shia's of Kufa and [Ctesiphon](#). He moved to west of Iran and Isfahan and Istakhr. He managed to control the west of Iran for two years. Finally, he was defeated by the caliph armies in 746-7 CE and fled to [Harat](#) in [Khorasan](#). He died in [Abumuslim](#) prison, his rival. His followers did not believe his death and said that he went to occultation and he would return as Mahdi.

Ninth century

Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Mahdi

[Muhammad ibn Hasan ibn Ali](#) (29 July CE 869/15 Sha'bān 255 AH – ?), more commonly called Muhammad al-Mahdi, is the twelfth [imam](#) of [Twelver Shia Islam](#). He is believed by Twelver Shi'a Muslims to be the Mahdi, an ultimate savior of humankind and the final Imām of the Twelve Imams. Twelver Shi'a believe that al-Mahdi was born in 869 and did not die but rather was hidden by God (this is referred to as the Occultation) and will later emerge with Isa (Jesus) in order to fulfill their mission of bringing peace and justice to the world. He assumed the Imamate at 5 years of age. Some Shi'ite schools do not consider ibn-al-Hasan to be the Mahdi, although the mainstream sect Twelvers do.

Tenth century

Abdullah al-Mahdi Billah

[Abdullah al-Mahdi Billah](#) (r. 909-934), the first [caliph](#) of the [Fatimid](#) state, established in 909, was one of only two claimants who succeeded in establishing a state. (See [Muhammad Ahmad](#) below).

His preacher/[Da'i Abu 'Abdullah Al-Husayn Al-Shi'i](#) helped secure for him parts of north Africa using the support of the Berber locals. The Fatimids later built [Cairo](#) as capital in Egypt and their descendants continued to rule as Caliphs (the sixth, [Al-Hakim bi-Amr Allah](#) is believed by the [Druze](#) to be in occultation and due to return as Mahdi on Judgment Day) until Salah-ud-Din Ayubi (also called [Saladin](#)) took over Egypt and ended the Fatimid state. He imprisoned the last Fatimid Caliph and his family in the Fatimid Palace until death.

Twelfth century

Ibn Tumart

The Moroccan [Ibn Tumart](#) (c. 1080 – c. 1130), sought to reform [Almoravid](#) decadence in the early 12th century. Rejected in Marrakech and other cities, he turned to his [Masmuda](#) tribe in the Atlas Mountains for support. Because of their emphasis on the unity of God, his followers were known as ('unitarians', in western language: [Almohads](#)).

Although declaring himself mahdi, and (literally in Arabic: innocent or free of sin), Muhammad ibn Abdallah ibn Tumart consulted with a council of ten of his oldest disciples, and conform traditional Berber representative government, later added an assembly of fifty tribal leaders. The Almohad rebellion began in 1125 with attacks on Moroccan cities, including Sus and Marrakech. But as Muhammad ibn Abdallah ibn Tumart died in 1130, his successor [Abd al Munin](#) took the title of [Caliph](#) – claiming universal leadership in Islam – and placed members of his own family in power, converting the system into a traditional sultanate.

Fifteenth century

Muhammad Jaunpuri

[Muhammad Jaunpuri](#) (9 September 1443 – 23 April 1505), born in northeastern [India](#) in [Jaunpur](#) (modern-day [Uttar Pradesh](#)), was a descendant of the [seventh imam](#), [Musa Kadhim](#).

He claimed to be the Mahdi on three occasions, first in Mecca, and later twice in India, attracting a large following, and opposition from the [ulema](#).

His five [deputies](#) were Sani Mahdi, Shah Khundmir, Shah Neymath, Shah Nizam and Shah Dilawar.

Muhammad Jaunpuri died in 1505, aged 63, at [Farah](#), [Afghanistan](#). His followers, known as [Mahdavis](#), continue to exist and are centred around the Indian city of [Hyderabad](#), although there Mahdavi communities in [Gujarat](#), [Karnataka](#), [Madhya Pradesh](#) and [Maharashtra](#), as well as in [Pakistan](#) and overseas in [America](#), [Australia](#), [Canada](#), [Africa](#) and [United Kingdom](#).

Seventeenth century

Ahmed ibn Abi Mahalli

[Ahmed ibn Abi Mahalli](#) (1559–1613), from the south of Morocco, was a [Qadi](#) and religious scholar who proclaimed himself mahdi and lead a revolution (1610–13) against the reigning [Saadi dynasty](#).

Mahamati Prannath

[Mahamati Prannath](#) (1618–1694), from Gujarat, India, was a religious leader who proclaimed himself Imam Mahdi.

Nineteenth century

The 19th century provided several Mahdi claimants, some of whose followers and teachings survive to the present day.

Diponegoro

[Prince Diponegoro](#) (11 November 1785 – 8 January 1855), prince of [Yogyakarta](#), Java. He saw himself as a Javanese Mahdi, or [Ratu Adil](#) (prophesised by King [Joyoboyo](#)), against Dutch colonialism. Now a [National Hero of Indonesia](#).

Alí Muḥammad Shīrāzī (Báb)

Alí Muḥammad Shīrāzī (20 October 1819 – 9 July 1850), claimed to be the Mahdi on 24 May 1844, taking the name [Báb](#) ([Arabic](#): باب / English: Gate) and thereby founding the religion of [Bábism](#). He was later [executed by firing squad](#) in the town of [Tabriz](#). His remains are currently kept in [a tomb](#) at the [Bahá'í World Centre](#) in [Haifa](#), [Israel](#).

The Báb is considered the forerunner of [Bahá'u'lláh](#) (pronounced / [Arabic](#): بهاء الله / English: Glory of God), and both are considered prophets of the [Bahá'í Faith](#). The declaration by the Báb to be the Mahdi is considered by Baha'is to be the beginning of the [Bahá'í calendar](#).

Muḥammad Aḥmad

[Muhammad Ahmad](#) (12 August 1844 – 22 June 1885), a [Sudanese](#) Sufi sheikh of the Samaniyya order, declared himself Mahdi in June 1881 and went on to lead a [successful military campaign](#) against the [Turko-Egyptian government of Sudan](#). Although he died shortly after capturing the Sudanese capital, [Khartoum](#) (1885), the [Mahdist state](#) continued under his successor, [Abdallahi ibn Muhammad](#), until 1898, when it fell to the [British army](#) following the [Battle of Omdurman](#).

Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad

[Mirza Ghulam Ahmad](#) (13 February 1835 – 26 May 1908), claimed to be both the Mahdi and the [second coming of Jesus](#) in the late 19th century in [British India](#). He founded the [Ahmadiyya](#) religious movement in 1889, which, although considered by its followers to be Islam, is not recognized as such by the majority of mainstream Muslims. In 1974, the [Pakistani parliament](#) adopted a law [declaring the Ahmadis to be non-Muslims](#). Since Ghulam Ahmad's death, the [Ahmadiyya community](#) has been led by his [successors](#) and the number of Ahmadi Muslims has grown considerably.

Twentieth century

Muhammad bin abd Allah al-Qahtani

[Muhammad bin abd Allah al-Qahtani](#) (28 September 1935 – 9 January 1980), was proclaimed Mahdi by his brother-in-law, [Juhayman al-Otaibi](#) who led over 200 militants to [seize the Grand Mosque](#) in [Mecca](#) on 20 November 1979. The uprising was defeated after a two-week siege in which at least 300 people were killed.

Riaz Ahmed Gohar Shahi

[Riaz Ahmed Gohar Shahi](#) (25 November 1941 – ?) is the founder of the spiritual movements [Messiah Foundation International](#) (MFI) and . He is controversial for being declared the [Mehdi](#), [Messiah](#), and [Kalki Avatar](#) by the MFI.

Shahi's supporters claim that his face became prominent on the [Moon](#), [Sun](#), nebula star and the [Black Stone in Mecca](#), and that these appearances were signs from God that Gohar Shahi was the awaited [Imam Mehdi](#), [Messiah](#), and [Kalki Avatar](#) in 1985. Shahi has also supported this claim, saying that God had revealed the images of Shahi on the [Moon](#) and various locations, for which Shahi himself was not responsible, and if questions should be raised, they should be raised with God.

Messiah Foundation International claims the alleged images to be signs from God, pointing to Shahi being the awaited [Mehdi](#), and quote religious texts. His death has not been confirmed but a Pakistani news agency says he died in 2003 and some say he is serving a lifetime prison in Pakistan.

Ariffin Mohamed

[Ariffin Mohammed](#) (1943 –), also known as “Ayah Pin”, the leader and founder of the banned [Sky Kingdom](#) he was born in 1943 in Beris, Kampung Besar Bachok, [Kelantan](#). In 1975 a spiritual group was formed in Bagan Lebai Tahir, [Butterworth](#), [Penang](#). He claimed to be the incarnation of [Jesus](#), as well as [Muhammad](#), [Shiva](#), and [Buddha](#). Devotees of Sky Kingdom believe that one day, Ayah Pin will return as the Mahdi. His followers consider him the king of the sky, and the supreme object of devotion for all religions.

Twenty First century

Dia Abdul Zahra Kadim

[Dia Abdul Zahra Kadim](#) (1970 – January 2007), a [Shia Iraqi](#) former leader of [Soldiers of Heaven](#), claimed to be the Mahdi.

[Riaz Ahmed Gohar Shahi](#) (1941 – 2003), a Pakistani religious leader who claimed to be the Mahdi by his organization [Messiah Foundation International](#).

According to seminary expert, Mehdi Ghafari, more than 3,000 fake Mahdis were in prison in Iran in 2012.

People claimed to be the Mahdi by their followers or supporters

- [Master Fard Muhammad](#) (according to the [Nation of Islam](#))
- [Muhammad ibn Abdallah An-Nafs Az-Zakiyya](#)
- [Muhammad ibn Abdullah al-Affah ibn Ja'far al-Sadiq](#)
- [Ja'far al-Sadiq](#) (according to the [Tawussite Shia](#))
- [Musa al-Kadhim](#) (according to the [Waqifite Shia](#))
- [Muhammad ibn Qasim \(al-Alawi\)](#)
- [Yahya ibn Umar](#)
- [Muhammad ibn Ali al-Hadi](#)
- [Al-Hakim bi-Amr Allah](#)
- [Riaz Ahmed Gohar Shahi](#) (according to [Messiah Foundation International](#))
- [Mohammad Bayazid Khan Panni](#)
- [Haile Selassie](#) (according to [Rastafari](#) beliefs)

See also

- [False messiah](#)
- [Messiah](#)
- [Messiah complex](#)
- [Jewish Messiah claimants](#)
- [List of people who have claimed to be Jesus](#)
- [List of messiah claimants](#)
- [List of avatar claimants](#)
- [List of Buddha claimants](#)
- [Second Coming of Christ](#)

- [Unfulfilled religious prophecies](#)
- [List of founders of religious traditions](#)
- [List of people who have been considered deities](#)

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Interesting correspondence with Muslim convert about Bahaism

I hope you don't mind me telling you a little bit about myself, and asking some questions.

I have read some of your articles about mysticism, and comments about the Baha'i Faith and some of it is hard to deny. Here is a little background about myself. I converted to Islam when I was nineteen years old, and within a year I discovered the Baha'i Faith. I didn't do much research at first because I was still getting used to practicing Islam and grasping the idea of being part of a worldwide Muslim community. I didn't care for all of the rules and regulations that the 'ulama declared were the only true means of practicing the faith. It seemed like they made Islam excessively hard to practice for most people. When I finally began to research the Baha'i Faith, my attraction was really towards the Bab', Ali-Muhammad Shirazi. I read Mirza Husayn Ali's "Book of Certitude" in one night, and the parts that kept me reading even though my mind was tired, were the prophecies about the Bab' as the Mahdi. I was not interested in prophecies at that time, because I didn't come from a particular background that required them. The same was true for Islam. I didn't "need" to know that Muhammad was prophesized in the Bible, as I was an agnostic. Even so, when I read the Shi'a hadith that was quoted in the book, I fell in love with this man called "The Bab'." Even when I started to hang out with the Baha'is, I would jokingly refer to myself as a "Muslim Babi" because of how attracted I was to him.

But jokes aside, I didn't see a contradiction with that phrase because I viewed the Bab' as a man who created a community that was "outside" of Islam but still "inside" at the same time, like a paradox. After a month of spending time with Baha'is, I saw my first red flag. I was talking to one of my Baha'i friends and mentioned that I wanted to learn Farsi or French so I could read the Persian Bayan in full. For some reason, still unknown to me to this day, she became instantly suspicious and implied that my "intentions" to read it were impure somehow. "Wait a minute", I thought. Why would she give me a guilt trip because I wanted to read a part of her own faith's scripture? If I were talking to a Muslim and stated that I wanted to learn Arabic so I could read the Qur'an in its original language, they would be ecstatic and probably even help me learn the language if they knew it. I took the matter to some other Baha'is because I thought maybe she just had her own issues or something, but they also became silent when I said it was because I wanted to read the Persian Bayan.

One of them kindly suggested that it would be easier for me to just read the writings of Baha'u'llah because he is the "most recent" Manifestation of God, they are more easily available, and they are translated into English so I don't need to learn a foreign language. I understood the logic, but I didn't understand why they were all trying to dissuade me from reading a piece of their own scripture. I got the impression that they had something to hide. That wasn't my initial perception at all, but when they kept trying to steer me in a certain direction and even question my "intentions" (whatever that means), what else was I to think? The only reason why I wanted to read the Persian Bayan was because of my attraction to the Bab, not despite of it. I eventually caved to their wishes and read the writings of Mirza Husayn 'Ali instead, which were inspiring to a certain degree. But I would get this intuitional feeling that somehow the Baha'i Faith wasn't telling the whole story about its origins, like it was hiding something.

Every time I would feel that way, I would crush it and punish myself for thinking such "unholy" thoughts. I also started to wonder if the Baha'i Faith actually despised Islam at its inner core. While I could never categorically prove this, I came across many passages and writings that seemed to speak ill of Islam through cleverly constructed phrases that appear to exalt the faith of Muhammad at face value, but in actuality are tearing it apart. I would notice that out of all of the interpretations given to particular Quranic verses and hadiths that exist in the tradition of Islamic scholarship, the Baha'i Faith would almost always pick the "bad" one that would make Islam appear "backward" to the "enlightened" west, and would then say "this is why Baha'u'llah came, to reform religion...etc." Perhaps that is too conspiratorial, but it was a very strong feeling I had that would inevitably creep up no matter how much I censored my thoughts. One of my most vivid memories of this kind of thing, was a "conversation" I had with a sweet elderly Persian woman. She initiated it by stating that according to a Zoroastrian scholar on satellite t.v., Muhammad (pbuh) commanded his followers to bury their new born children alive during the early years of his prophethood; but he later abrogated that law by commanding them to only bury their female new born children alive and sparing the males. I told her that that was really confusing since the Qur'an specifically mentions the practice of burying female new borns and condemns it. She just brushed that off and kept saying more things that would make Islam look bad, and ended our conversation with a hug and an "apology" for "offending" me, and stating a final after thought, "the Qur'an tells men to beat their wives...you know this?"

This leads into my questions. What is it that I could have done to make these Baha'is treat me this way? I was nothing but respectful towards them and their faith. I never said a bad word about their religion. And yet it seems like just because of the sheer fact that I was a Muslim, that somehow meant that I was less than them. Even after I became a Baha'i, while still retaining my love and appreciation for Islam and the Prophet Muhammad, some of the Baha'is would still pick at me for my association with Islam. The elderly Persian woman would sometimes ask me if I was "still a Baha'i", which is a meaningless question because the LSA would know if I had resigned from the Baha'i Faith (which I did a number of years later.)

In the research you have done, is there any evidence that the Baha'i Faith has an agenda to make Islam look barbaric and evil, while appearing to praise the Prophet Muhammad and the Qur'an? In connection with that question, does the Baha'i Faith have an agenda to make the Babi Faith and Islam appear to be enemies of each other? Did Tahiri really claim that Muhammad's teachings were "nonsense"? Is there a full translation of the Persian and Arabic Bayans in English? Or for that matter, are full copies of the originals still in existence for anyone to read?

Thanks for getting back to me, I really appreciate it...About Western imperialism and the Baha'i Faith, I am also starting to think there is a connection. I still have a few Baha'i friends, and almost on a daily basis I hear about the "oppression of Baha'is in Iran", which saddens me. But what makes me question things is this: Out of all of the oppressed peoples of the world, from South America to Chechnya, from Iran to the First Nation peoples of North America, why is it that so much attention is given to seven people in Iran? I am not saying that persecution requires a high number of people for it to be persecution, but they act as if Baha'is are the only people being persecuted in that country. In the past twenty years,

about two-hundred Baha'is have been executed by the State. That is a serious human rights crime, but does it really warrant a war, sanctions, and massive death for the entire Iranian population, while other countries that are allies of the United States kill groups of people in the thousands? And when non- Baha'is question Baha'is why they don't speak out against the oppression of other groups of people, they basically say that it's not their job. Which would be a "fair", albeit selfish answer if it were not for the sheer fact that the Baha'i institutions call on non- Baha'is to speak out on behalf of Baha'is. But when the tables are turned, the Baha'i institutions don't want to hear it.

This might sound really off-the-mark, but do you think it is possible that the "higher-ups" of the Baha'i Faith are practicing some form of "black" magick in an attempt to influence world affairs towards their goals? Also, are you aware of any Baha'i-Freemason connections? I came across some interesting things a Baha'i wrote on a Baha'i forum, but haven't done enough researching yet to know if it is true. Basically, he said that the name "Baha'u'llah" is a "special name" at the Baltimore Masonic Temple, like a "code word." They have a hallway of nine doors, with the ninth door being the highest as the hall moves upwards. He also said that Gleanings from the writings of Baha'u'llah is in their top ten books of scripture to read from. He said that Baha'is are not permitted to join Secret Societies, but he knows at least two Baha'is in "good standing" who are 33rd degree Masons.

Thanks to Mr. Wahid Azal for putting this on TRB

The Haifan Baha'i Agenda for Iran

Ian Kluge

— From author Dermod Ryder (Asparagus) http://groups.google.com/group/talk.religion.bahai/browse_thread/thread/bd7e852c70316c9/d146728618637ab4?lnk=st&q=Guardian&num=3#d146728618637ab4

The Beloved Guardian assured us that those diseased people who attacked the Cause of God would deservedly suffer and be destroyed and behold, this vicious one was struck down exactly as you will be destroyed for your wanton and outrageous lies and calumnies. Advocating a nuclear preemptive strike against Iran: A better reason for a pre-emptive nuclear attack we have yet to see. The removal of 78 million plus 2 mental defectives from the planet would be a mighty blessing and nuclear is obviously the most economic method.
http://groups.google.com/group/talk.religion.bahai/browse_thread/thread/a932e8641bd58d85/92c8eee257d6e5c5

By Wahid Azal

Shahriar Razavi – a member of the Universal House of Justice

Baha'i publicly admits to proselytizing former CIA director

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Daniel Clark Orey

I am curious, what do folks know about Obama and the Baha'i Faith? He must have some knowledge of the Faith being from Chicago...

 Obama to be the first sitting President to be given a "Presidential Medal of Distinction" by Israel.
freakoutnation.com

Republicans have been trying to sell American voters on "Obama's anti-Israel Presidency", however, if you're in the know and politically savvy then you are well aware that this President has been on a friendly basis with

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Sean Rayshel The Clinton's and Al Gore are even more aware. A friend of mine and his wife have taught them the Faith. Also they taught former CIA Director James Woolsey in the 90's.
Wednesday at 00:24 via mobile · 📌 1

Adrian McKee I know from a friend in my community that he has been exposed to the Faith (having lived in the shadow of the House of Worship)
Thursday at 23:37 · 📌 1

Lessons for Christians in the history of the Bahai faith

By Adrian Worsfold

When I was confirmed into the Church of England in 1984 I asked some Baha'is I met at their firesides to come along. None did. In the end I fell out with the Baha'is as I discovered academic material that presented their history differently from their own. They are very committed to the preservation of their history as monitored by the Universal House of Justice, the nine seater male-only assembly meant to be a combined secular and religious decision making body for the world, elected without campaigns by the National Spiritual Assemblies below them, these elected by delegates from the Local Spiritual Assemblies below them. It is a very conserving system, a sort of democratic centralism: what the top level says goes.

Very quickly summarizing: the origins of the Baha'i Faith are in the Babi faith that developed out of Shia Islam in Iran and Iraq. They were waiting for the return of the Hidden Twelfth Imam and a Holy War for the victory of Islam. In 1844 Sayyid Ali Muhammed Shirazi claimed to be the Bab, the Gateway to the returning Imam. When he didn't appear at Karbala, Sayyid Ali Muhammed escalated his status in stages to the Imam, then the Prophet and then superseding to a new Manifestation of God. The movement was surrounded by violence, and started much of it themselves. The Bab appointed Mirza Yahya (or Sub-i-Azal) to be his successor, but after the Bab was killed by the authorities the violence continued and the movement was in severe decline. Sub-i-Azal's half brother, Mirza Husayn Ali, an elite Persian convert, built up his own faction and in 1863 he, Baha'u'llah (Glory of God) announced himself as the Bab's next Manifestation of God. The authorities never left either faction alone, and the Azalis ended up in Cyprus and the Baha'is at Palestine. However, Baha'u'llah, in the course of the compulsory travels and his declaration to the few and then the world of his status, read Sufi and New Testament material, and completely remodelled the faith as it came into the Western orbit, making itself syncretistic in character, peaceful and expecting the unification of the world.

Baha'u'llah died in 1892, and Abbas Effendi, his eldest son, or Abdul-Baha, became the leader and only interpreter or "Centre of the Covenant". Here there was factionalism, as a group known as the Unitarians (people of the Book, not Abdul-Baha's interpretations) broke out and were excommunicated. The Young Turks' victory meant an end to imprisonment, and Abdul Baha became a traveller around the West even more spiritualising and Westernising the movement, and was a charismatic figure as he attended mosques, Christian and Unitarian (the other sort) churches and synagogues.

After he died Shoghi Effendi became the first Guardian. Some Germans did not accept the validity of Abdul Baha's will appointing him and so the Free Baha'is emerged for a time. Shoghi Effendi should have had a serving Universal House of Justice under him, but he did not set it up. He should have left a will, but either he didn't or it never appeared. So when he died in 1957 there was a crisis of leadership, after which in 1963 the Universal House of Justice was formed and took to itself powers of the Guardian, most importantly the sole power to interpret and the power to excommunicate.

The chief of Hands of the Cause, a forerunner to the UHJ, Mason Remey, thought he should be the new Guardian. Factions have arisen ever since from that branch, including one that now thinks the second Guardian was presumptive, but so was the Universal House of Justice taking power to itself.

The UHJ produces plans for growth. The millennial nature of the Bahai Faith is that it expects the Most Great Peace to arrive (instead we had George Bush) and a tipping point where "troops" of people convert to the Bahai Faith. Unfortunately, the Bahai Faith has been born in a rather irreligious age in Europe, and other than some growth in developing countries, Europe has been slow and with a high turnover of members. Plus, the UHJ in Haifa has a habit of turning members who don't submit to censorship panels into covenant breakers. There are also quite a few people who find themselves mysteriously removed from the rolls of membership, but in the age of the Internet they continue the faith themselves with new freedom, the name Baha'i being in the public realm. A problem for the Haifa Baha'is is that only they can raise money for themselves, and members who can participate in Feasts as well as Firesides find themselves locked into administration details: the Baha'i Faith is an "Administrative Order" after all.

So at each stage of leadership transition elite groups have competed and been excluded, and it is reasonable to say that the quest for unity has been a failure because of its high cost in factions and breakaways, and now there is a more relaxed Bahaism emerging of excluded or drifter individuals. It matters not that the Universal House of Justice only recognises itself as legitimate, because anyone can read the Kitab-i-Iqan and Kitab-i-Aqdas and the published materials that Shoghi Effendi translated into his strained olde-worlde English. Even infallibility is being questioned by individuals let loose.

The Bahai Faith is useful for Christians and Christian theology in a number of ways.

First of all we see something of a parallel in the Bab as a kind of announcer of a new manifestation, although he became what he expected. He gets positioned like a John the Baptist, and probably John the Baptist was his own man too. Then we have the central manifestation (Incarnation) figure, Baha'u'llah. Then we have the very important St. Paul figure, who becomes such an important interpreter and spreader into new cultures and giving a further twist to the faith.

Then we have the issue of authority. There is something of the Pope in the Guardian, of course, but the UHJ is like Orthodoxy or Roman Catholic centralism – with knobs on. In fact it is very Weberian-bureaucratic, and very pyramidal. Weber regarded such with great pessimism: it was anti the life-giving enchantment that he thought religion supplied.

The other lesson is that of allowing theology to grow organically and in diversity. There is a distinct double identity problem of Baha'i member

scholarship in secular institutions including that of religious studies departments. It does the Baha'i Faith no favours. We see similar with some Roman Catholics. If Christians become more subject to such pressures of membership conformity, then there is a distortion to both the academic sphere and to the representational sphere.

I also suggest that Christians should express the truth as they find it even when it conflicts with doctrines or interpretations of the Bible. If there is some compelling finding about, say, the Jesus of history as an endtime Jewish rabbi, then this should come first, or at least people should be honest about the layer-cake nature of doctrines or how people interpret the Bible.

Older faiths have developed more maturity with time. They can sit light and worry less about how their faiths are represented. Or at least this is what we thought, as the Christian world gave rise to a secular and plural world.

There are pressures to go along a road of such as the Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans. There is a narrowing of what is legitimate expression of a faith, and there are calls for excluding those who are not biblical enough. An Anglican Communion, properly understood, would become a World Wide Anglican Church with authoritative statements handed down, with again distant high-up forms of selection of those with centralised power.

Who knows how these developments will work out. **The Baha'is could not predict their own future, despite the claimed infallibility of the words of both their Manifestation of God and Centre of the Covenant.** So Anglicans cannot predict theirs! Nevertheless, if secularisation and plurality lead down the road to authoritarianism and centralisation, there are going to be quite a few Anglican Communion Covenant Breakers who will continue to define the faith in a broad way, however they organise, meet and link up together.

*Adrian Worsfold (Pluralist), has a doctorate in sociology and a masters degree in contemporary theology. He lives near Hull, in northeast England and keeps the blog **Pluralist Speaks**.*

What is Baha'i Covenant ???

“The Headless Universal House of Justice was not a teaching of Baha'u'llah, 'Abdu'l-Baha, or Shoghi Effendi. It was foisted on the Baha'is by Ruhyyih Khanum and the Conclave of the Hands with the passing of Shoghi Effendi. The inquisition of the “Hands” Baha'i faith is notorious for its severities in its prophesied oppression of the believers forbidding them from independently investigating the truth of the material of their violation of the Covenant, with the ploy, or red herring, by naming those that are faithful to the Covenant as Covenant-breakers, and thus having them shunned. By this maneuver they keep their deluded followers from using their intellect that God gave them and the principle of the “Independent Investigation of the Truth” that Baha'u'llah gave them, so to keep them ignorant Covenant-breakers, and from establishing Justice in the world.”

Dr. Leland Jensen, Establisher of the Baha'i Faith

1. The Will & Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha doesn't state that the guardian must leave a will, just that he MUST appoint his successor “within his lifetime”
2. Nowhere in the Baha'i writings is Aghsan defined as a “blood descendant”, but rather as a son from the line of Baha'u'llah. An adopted son has all the rights & privelages of a natural son, including inheritance & kingship.
3. The Hands were a non-authoritative group. They had no power after the death of Shoghi Effendi

The Concluding Post of the Bahai Catholic Debate

Will and Testament of Bab

The Will and Testament of the Bab

to

Subh-i Azal nominating Him as His Vicegerent and Successor

Translated from the Arabic by Wahid Azal

Bayan19 Publications © 2004

Association of Abbas Effendi With Colonel Badri Beg

This officer was a staff Colonel and associated with military & civil functionaries. He had a beautiful step daughter, the child of his wife by former marriage, who gathered young men around her.

Colonel Badri Beg hired a house at Haifa to spend the summer season there. He attended evening parties of the French Consul and leading members of the [Arab] Christian community. They engaged themselves in gambling.

The Most Great Branch [Sir Abbas Effendi] met all the [gambling] losses of the Beg, and provided for the upkeep of the [Beg's] house, and for the expenses of the [Beg's] step daughter. Thus the step daughter came to have plenty opportunity. She became familiar with a good looking Italian man. At night they met together and indulged themselves in love affair.

Some people became aware of the affair and advised the Beg to send the family to Acre. As the Beg himself had connection with the girl, and could not send her away from him. He disregarded the advice.

Eventually the Beg came to know about the affair and this roused his jealousy. One evening the Beg detailed two soldiers to go and deliver a message to the Italian young man on behest of the girl to come & see her at night. The house was unattended. The occupant had gone to Acre. As soon as the Italian young man came into the house & seated himself in the drawing room, the two soldiers appeared at the scene, caught hold of him, strangled him to death, stuffed up his throat with a long piece of rag, took him away and cast him into the sea.

In their hurry & bustle, they did not tie a stone to his foot to keep the corpse at the bottom of the sea. In the morning his mother and relatives begun to search for the young man. Finally the young man's body was discovered near the sea shore, strangled to death.

The incident set people's tongue wagging. His mother and relatives raised a tumult in Haifa. They held Badri Beg responsible for the incident and brought an action against him and also against [Sir] Abbas Effendi because he came to Haifa after and frequented the Beg's house."

I realised that the allegation against the Most Great Branch [Sir] Abbas Effendi reflected on the whole family. By strong arguments and proof I applied myself to proving that it was impossible for him to have been involved in the matter. I called on members of the bereaved family to offer my condolences. I seized the opportunity to convince them that my brother [Sir] Abbas Effendi had not taken part at all in the matter. The mother of the deceased replied: "If he had not taken part in the matter, and had no connection with the girl, why did he take her to his own home in Acre?" I endeavoured as far as possible to exonerate the Most Great Branch [Sir] Abbas Effendi as the allegation reflected on the family as well as on Baha's name. But I did not expect that he would take her to his own house. I went to Acre to see what had happened. I enquired from the Baha'is and others. I found out that he had put up the notorious prostitute girl in his own house, the 'Abbud-House', which was the dwelling place of the Blessed Beauty [i.e. Baha], exalted be his power, before his ascension [i.e. death].

Bahai murder of Bayanis

In their effort to escape this dilemma [Husayn Ali's claim to being Him whom God will Manifest], Baha and his partisans did two things: first, they got rid of the most leading Babis who sided with Subh-e Azal; and, second, they rewrote the history of the Babi movement, largely ignoring Subh-e Azal, greatly magnifying the person and position of Baha, and degrading the Bab from the position of a Major Manifestation to that of a "forerunner" of Baha, who was the real Manifestation for the age....[therefore] those

It has been said that these assassinations were the work of the too-zealous followers of Baha, and that he was not himself responsible. However this may be, could one who possessed the divine knowledge and power to influence men which Baha claimed to have, been able to prevent such acts on the part of his intimate disciples?

At first not a few prominent Babis, including even several "Letters of the Living" and personal friends of the Bab, adhered faithfully to Subh-e Azal. One by one these disappeared, most of them, as I fear cannot be doubted, by the foul play on the part of too zealous Baha'is. "Companions" (as-hab), Mirza Riza Kulli and Mirza Nasr'ullah of Tafrish, were stabbed or poisoned in Adrianople and Acre.

Two of the "Letters of the Living," Aka Siyyid 'Ali the Arab, and Mulla Rajab 'Ali Kahir, were assassinated, the one at Tabriz, the other at Kerbela. The brother of the latter, Aka Ali Muhammad, was also murdered in Baghdad [by a Baha'i]....

It would seem the murders of Daniel Jordan and Hedi Ma'ani (and possibly others) have clear precedents in the assassinations carried out during the lifetime of Husayn Ali himself.

Saoshyant

Ruth White's letter to the High Commissioner of Palestine

To His Excellency The High Commissioner of Palestine Jerusalem, Palestine. October 7, 1930

Your Excellency:

As a victim of a fraud, which is being perpetrated under the Mandatory Power now governing Palestine, I wish to make a complaint against Shoghi Effendi, of the Persian Colony, at Haifa Palestine.

Shoghi Effendi is collecting money from the people of the various nations of the world under the powers granted him in an alleged will which he claims is the will of Sir Abdul-Baha Abbas, and in which he is appointed successor of Sir Abdu-Baha Abbas I base my assertion that a fraud is being perpetrated by Shoghi Effendi on the following facts:

About three months after the death of Sir Abdul-Baha Abbas, in November 1921, typewritten copies of an English translation of a document were sent to England, America, and other countries, which Shoghi Effendi alleged is the will of Sir Abdul-Baha Abbas, appointing him his successor. **This alleged will is undated, unwitnessed, unprobated, and unstamped by the Government. It also contradicts the intent that its alleged maker held during his lifetime. for the alleged will commands people to obey Shoghi Effendi as if he were God, and to pay a tax to him. This is the motive of the fraud—money and power (2)....**

Promised one of Islam and Bahai Faith

By Dr. Habib Siddiqui

Before I confront the Bahai view on the above subject, as presented by Babak Mohajerin, let me give a brief account of this religion how it started in order that Muslims have a fair understanding of what it stands for and why its understanding of certain explicit verses in the Qur'an are different than Muslims. (References are also cited for proof.)

In the middle of the 19th century, Mirza Ali Muhammad Shirazi, an Iranian claimed to be the agent and Bab (door) of the awaited Imam Mahdi. He had a small following, and the sect came to be known as Babieh (Babism). After a short while, he claimed himself to be the awaited Imam (1), and later as a prophet and the bringer of a new religion (2). He was not emotionally balanced, and as such, later claimed Godhood (3). In *Resalah LeL-Thamarah* (Treatise for fruit), he wrote:

“Truly I am certainly God: there is no God other than me. I am unique and single. Truly I am God, there is no God other than me – the eternal Lord, truly I am that very God and there is no God other than me who is unique and single. In the name of God who prevents and who is holy and pure, in praise of You my God, truly I call You and all things to witness that You are truly God and there is no God other than You.”

For his contradictory statements he was often times confronted by the Ulema in Iran. He would usually repent and renounce his claim (4). His apparent insanity saved his life in more than one occasions (5). His writings for the illiterate laymen had some effect among the Babis, and they rioted against the government in some cities. In Isfahan, the rioters were aided by Governor Manucher Khan Gurji, a Russian of Armenian christian origin (6). Both the British and the Russian embassies were directly involved in these riots by aiding the Babis (7). Amir Kabir, the Grand Vizier, realizing that so long as the Bab was alive, his followers would not stop their rioting, executed him (5).

After Bab's death, the Babis were led by Mirza Yahya Noori, known as Sobh-e-Azal (the eternal dawn). After an unsuccessful attempt to kill the Shah, the group was persecuted. Yahya fled to Baghdad, while his step-brother, Mirza Husein Ali took shelter in the Russian embassy. Later, Husein was escorted to Baghdad by the official agents of the Iranian and Russian governments (8). Mirza Husein Ali sent a tablet to Russian emperor, praising and praying for him, confirming total servitude and expressing thanks (9). The latter allowed the Babis to construct a temple in south of Russia in AeshqAbad and in its attempt to crush the Islamic government provided all help to the Babis (22). In Baghdad, where the Babis became Ottoman subjects, a serious fight broke out among them as to the issue of leadership of the community, since many forged the handwriting of Bab, claiming to be his successor. This and other clashes with Iraqi Muslims brought about a state of total chaos (10). The Ulema in Iraq wanted the Ottoman government to deport Babis for creating a total anarchy. Then the Babis were first moved to Istanbul and later to Edirne. When Mirza Husein claimed to be the successor of Bab, the Babis got divided into two opposing camps, each led by one of the step-brothers – Mirza Husein or Mirza Yahya. With the unending riots and connections which the Babis held with the foreign embassies opposed to the Ottoman government, the latter exiled the followers of Yahya to Cyprus and those of Husein to Aaka in Palestine (11).

When the support for Yahya's followers from the foreign governments diminished, the group gradually dispersed and vanished. Husein Ali was always able to keep in touch and get the support from foreign governments. He claimed the title of “Bahauallah” (the beauty of God) and described the Bab as the harbinger of his own emergence. Soon he gained full control over the Babis and founded the creed of Baha'ism. Like Bab before him, he first claimed prophethood (12) and then Godship (13). Meanwhile, he was receiving monthly salaries from the Czar (14).

After his death in Aaka, his son, Mirza Abbas (known as Abbas Afandi) succeeded as leader of the Baha'is and called himself Abdul-Baha (the servant of Baha).

When the communist revolution started asserting itself in early 20th century, Russian govt. stopped its support for the Bahais.

Facing numerous difficulties, Abdul Baha then approached the British government offering to spy for them against the dying Ottoman empire (15).

During the first World War and the aggressive entry of the British Army into Palestine under the generalship of Allenbee, the Bahais provided all possible help to the invaders.

Learning this, Jamal Pasha, the Commander of the Ottoman forces, wanted to execute Abdul Baha for treason (16). Lord Balfour, the architect for the infamous Balfour declaration, the then British Foreign Secretary, ordered Gen. Allenbee to protect the life of Abdul Baha and his followers (17). Later, in a formal ceremony knighthood was granted to Abdul-Baha (18).

Sir Abbas Affendi's funeral was personally attended by several British dignitaries, including Sir Herbert Samuel – the British Chief Commissioner in Palestine, who was one of the founders of the Zionist state of Israel.

In accordance with Abbas's will, the leadership came under his grandson, Showqi Afandi. He, too, helped realize the goals of British colonialism.

And within a short period Baha'ism spread all over U.K. and its colonies, esp. Uganda (19). Showqi's contacts with the colonizers helped Bahaism to spread in U.S.A. and other parts of the world.

He revived the intricate network of Free-masonry at a lower level in the form of Baha'ism, by offering the myth of “one world religion.” (23)

Having no son and nearing his death, Showqi appointed nine Bahais to constitute the Intl. Council of Bahaism and laid the foundation for the Baitul Adal A'azam (the Universal House of Justice) or the Administrative Organization of World's Bahais.

After his death, as per his will, Charles Mason Rini, an American, with probable CIA connections was appointed the head of Baitul Adal (20).

At present, with the power, money and conspiracies of world colonialism, Bahaism has fully committed itself to fulfill the dream of the world devouring powers to acquire global domination.

As I have shown above, Baha'ism from its very inception was helped, materially and ideologically, by the Russian and British imperialism for furthering the latter's onslaught in Muslim lands. At a difficult period in Muslim history, Bahaism collaborated with the Zionists for the establishment of state of Israel (21). Through its connection with Zionists it penetrated various governments serving the interest of the West, a notable example is: Iran under the Shah (23).

This servitude for the western masters, in turn, brought nothing but misery, poverty, strangulation, stagnation, murder, oppression, tyranny and whole-sale dependence, to the Muslim nation.

It can also be noticed that Baha'ism, like Ahmedi/Qadianism, started with its founder's claim to be the awaited Imam Mahdi, which later developed into the claim for prophethood and divinity. (These groups do not accept the finality of Muhammad's prophethood.) Muslims, based on the sahih ahadith of Muhammad (SAWS), do expect the coming of Imam Mahdi (a descendant of Muhammad (SAWS); he will NOT be a Prophet since Muhammad (SAWS) is the LAST of the Prophets; he will follow the shariah of Islam) towards the end of time. He will come at a time when Muslims will be in a dire need to find a leader to lead them against forces which will try to extinguish Islam from the earth. He will lead the Muslims to victory, and establish justice. This expectation manifests itself into protests against oppression and injustice, and Muslims alone, unlike any other religious community on earth, have never been totally succumbed to the evil forces. Colonization was imposed upon our territories, from Morocco to Indonesia, yet, we never embraced the very dehumanization as a result of such process, and always resisted occupation, aggression and exploitation in our territories. The sacrifice of Muslims in Algeria, Libya, Indian sub-continent, Indonesia, the Sudan, Somalia, and more recently in Afghanistan, Palestine and Bosnia are only a few of the examples in that road to combating subjugation and foreign tyranny. Muslims have always tried to negate existing unjust conditions imposed upon the world by despots, whose weapons were force, money and deceit. This resistance of Muslims has always discomforted the enemies of Islam. In their attempt to weaken the very fabric of Islam, these enemies from without have always sought people from within who would distort the teachings of Islam. These enemies of Islam know (knew) that if they could create false Mahdis among Muslims, who instead of calling for jihad commands his followers to be puppets of the oppressors, then there will be no interruption to their exploitation. Hopes and dreams of Muslims will give away to despair, cowardice, lethargy and dependency.

As a result of this conspiracy, in the last century alone, we find three claimants to be Imam Mahdi, e.g., Ali Muhammad Shirazi, Mirza Husein Ali and Mirza Golam Ahmed of Qadian, each of whom were supported by colonial powers of the West. None of these three, in turn, ever launched a Jihad movement against the colonizers. Instead, they acted as stooges for foreign forces, which were hostile to Islam. Baha'i leaders even spied against the Khilafah and collaborated with Zionists.

It is inconceivable that this deviant group would have as much success without the moral and financial support from the enemies of Islam. As a matter of fact, Baha'ism proved to be the colonialists' most fruitful investment. Through its teachings, it offers a version of religion which is self-contradictory, deceitful, nonsensical and ludicrous. Despite its leaders' own servitude to foreign masters, their irrelevant verbiage about not participating in politics for nominal Bahais increase the stranglehold of Taghut over the subdued people, and fulfill the long-term objectives of its financiers.

In their wishful dream about creating a world religion that encompasses all the various religions (from polytheistic religions like Hinduism to monotheistic religions like Islam) the leaders of the Baha'i faith over last several decades have written books which are self-contradictory. While the Qur'an and ahadith of Muhammad (SAWS) are very clear that all the scriptures (including the Bible) except the Qur'an has been corrupted by human hands, the Bahais, in order to curry support from Christians, appear to give the impression that they believe in the pseudographic books of the New Testament, and that they accept the authenticity of the gospel accounts about Jesus's crucifixion. We, Muslims, don't have to butter someone in order to accept our views. The matter concerning Jesus is settled, as far as we are concerned.

With the death of imperialism, today, neo-colonialism tries hard, through invented, deviated sects to alter and metamorphose the face of Islam and eliminate the main elements which comprise the revolutionary character of this great religion. They scheme and Allah schemes. Surely, Allah is the Best of the schemers. May Allah keep us on the road of guidance and save us from falsehood, no matter, under whatever disguise it comes. Ameen.

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- (12) Maqaalahe Shakhsie Sayyah of Mirza Husein Ali; Iqan of Mirza Husein Ali; Al-fava'ed (The advantage) of Mirza Abdulfadle Gulpaygani.
- (13) Mubeen, pp. 21, 48, 56, 210, 233, 286, 308, 342, 384, 385, 417...; Makateeb, p. 225 (Abbas Afandi).
- (14) Majmoo'ah Al-wahee Mubarak, p. 159 (Mirza Husein Ali).
- (15) Qarne Badi'a, vol. 11, p. 125; vol. 111, p. 291; Inshe'ab dar Bahai'at, p. 121.
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Anti-Persian Racism in Bahai writings

“Most” Bahais, have hidden hatred and anti-Persian feelings. I wondered what the source of these were and alas I came to a few quotes from Abdu'l-Baha, son of Bahullah and according to Bahauallah, “the interpreter” of his writings and Bahaism.

1) Comparing people who chose not to have a so called “educator”, AbdulBaha states:

“... notice that when the animal is trained it becomes domestic, and also that man, if he is left without education, becomes bestial, and, moreover, if left under the rule of nature, becomes lower than animal, whereas if he is educated he becomes an angel.”

This clearly shows what Abdulbaha thinks of uneducated class of people. He sees them “lower than animal”. Surely a holy word should not contain and compare “uneducated people” to “lower than animal”. This sentence has indications of racial (class) supremacy, since Bahauallah himself was a rich merchant and did not perceive that humans at some point were not educated and they grew on their own, by nature and evolution. In Persian we say “tavAnA bovad harke dAnA bovad, ze dAnesh dele pir bornA bovad” (powerful is he who has knowledge, and knowledge keeps the heart of an old man young). Tell me which is more elegant?

The saying by Hafëz, encouraging people to learn, or the saying by Abdulbaha putting down the uneducated.

2) In another racist statement, giving his version of the period during Islam, Abdulbaha states:

“These Arab tribes were in the lowest depth of savagery and barbarism, and in comparison with them the savages of Africa and wild Indians of America were as advanced as Plato... even down to the present time Arabs dread having daughters”

Nowhere in any holy book has God ever put one race down as compared with another. Yet this is what Abdulbaha, the interpreter of Baha, does to tell his side of story and write what is to become Bahai Faith. Interesting points to note here are that Abdulbaha considers arab tribes as the “lowest depth of savagery and barbarism”.

Interestingly that is what Hitler said about Jews. Abdulbaha fails to consider that Arabs and Persians for their time (1400 years ago), were far ahead of Europeans.

Another interesting point to note is that Abdulbaha seemed to know about American Indians savagery, 1000 years before they became in contact with the rest of the world! Further interesting point is that he compares cultural issues of the Arab tribes with “Pluto”. I wonder what the relation is here! Is a holy representative of a holy prophet, giving holy writings, supposed to issue such statements and use a European astronomer as his idol of culture and values?

Notice, later on Abdulbaha states that even today (130 years ago) “Arabs dread having daughters”. A nice generalization by a man claiming to represent the will of God!

3) Speaking about Bab, the founder of Babism and thus Bahaism, AbdulBaha states:

I found these statements to be hateful of a culture that reject an illogical cult and banished its founder. This statement as was written in chapter eight of the book “some answered questions”, is used as a guide and reference to history by Bahais. Mr. Abdul, I am a Persian and a proud one, and I am not a “religious fanatic”! Interestingly enough it was only a few days ago that a bahai criticized me for generalizing them and saying “they are racists”. Well they may not be racists themselves, but they surely are followers of a racist cult which teaches racism.

4) Abdulbaha also states about coming of Bahauallah:

“Baha`u'llah appeared at a time when the Persian Empire was immersed in profound obscurantism and ignorance and lost in the blindest fanaticism. In the European histories, no doubt, you have read detailed accounts of the morals, customs and ideas of the Persians during the last centuries.”

Oh.. how nice that when people reject him they “must” be ignorant!

I, as a reader, thought that this view of Persian culture was very similar to that of Betty Mahmoodi, who saw the sacrifice of a lamb by Iranians, before a feast, as a “barbaric act and custom”! I suppose had Abdulbaha been alive today, he would have used Betty Mahmoodi as an example and proof too! I also wonder why Abdulbaha thinks that Persians were savage, when people in the far east thought so highly of them. **Surely what is represented here is views of Europeans, looking down on Middle Eastern countries, something that is used today in Bahaism as basic writings of their religion.**

Amazingly it is stated in the book that :

“The Persian character has ever been fertile in device and indifferent to suffering; and in the field of judicial executions it has found ample scope for the exercise of both attainments.”

It is interesting to see how the “Persian character” is put down in this introductory paragraph of the book. The statement, as it stands, is pure racism and indicative of resentment of the Bahai Universal House of Justice towards the Persian culture which forced the cult out and withstood its

assimilation plans.

As it was seen from view paragraphs of Bahai writings, from their holiest of people, they indeed are not what they claim to be. And their cult has hidden racism within its boundaries designed to appeal to the Europeans and Westerners, to gain support and power. this has further been proven by postings by Frederick Glayser and other Bahais on SCI.

Written by a disgusted Persian

The holey Baha'i Covenant

“Yeah I never understood the splinter groups obsession with continuing the guardianship.”

Just finished reading William Garlington's The Baha'i Faith in America, it explains a lot about this obsession.

And Abdu'l-Baha' being infallible couldn't have erred in this, couldn't have been wrong, could he? For some it became obvious that for the Guardianship to end would mean that they would as well have to admit to, accept, Abdu'l-Baha's humanity, Abdu'l-Baha's fallibility, some Baha'is couldn't go there, most are still in denial.

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Mason was intellectually honest enough to understand what the implications were of the Will and Testament of Abdu'l-Baha' being shown to be imperfect, shown to be a merely human document in no way perfectly, 'infallibly', divine. Thus the Hands decided to take control over the affairs of the Baha'i Faith even though they had no authority to proceed in that manner. What these Baha'i elites did was behave as religious elites usually do, ignore the masses of believers and do what they personally choose to do without consulting with those masses. A more democratic, dare I say more spiritual way to proceed would have been to go to the greater Baha'i community itself and see what Baha'is themselves thought, what Baha'is themselves believed.

Obviously these religious elites didn't trust the masses of Baha'i believers, didn't feel that they were capable or worthy of collectively deciding for themselves the direction their religion should take.

How many Baha'is know about the secret conclave in Bahji in 1957?

How many Baha'is are aware that the Persian Hands of the Cause held a secret conclave during the night of November 19th, 1957, in the Mansion of Baha'u'llah in Bahji?

The Persian Hands of the Cause stayed in Bahji after the first conclave of all of the Hands held on November 19th, 1957, while the non-Persian Hands of the Cause returned to Haifa for the night. **During that night, Nov. 19th, 1957, the Persian Hands, alone, held their own private secret conclave and made a secret covenant amongst themselves to declare the Will and Testament of "Abdu'l-Baha" to be "Badah", an Islamic term meaning 'God has changed His Mind'. They made such a covenant despite the fact that only a Holy Manifestation of God has Authority to declare that God has changed His Mind** such as the occasion when His Holiness, Muhammad, changed the Qiblah from Jerusalem to Mecca. On November 20th, 1957, when the non-Persian Hands had returned to Bahji to continue the conclave that all the Hands together had commenced the day before, it became obvious after a few opening sentences that such a secret covenant had been endorsed by the Persian Hands of the Cause, when the youngest Hand, Dr Mujahir, leapt to his feet to make the "Badah" declaration.

The other Hands then spoke in support of that declaration with one notable exception.

Not wishing to make an outright declaration to all Baha'is Earthwide that they had declared the Will and Testament of the Master to be null and void for fear of causing intense distress amongst multitudes of Baha'i believers, the administrators in Haifa from that date, November 20th, 1957 onward to the moment of this writing have embraced the policy of outwardly declaring the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha' to be the Foundation for the Administration of the New World Order, while simultaneously neglecting or rejecting its vital and sacred decrees, including the sacred and immutable decrees concerning the sacred Institutions delineated by the Master in His Will, namely the Guardianship, the Interpreter of Baha'i Holy Writ, and the Institution of the Hands of the Baha'i Faith. Shamelessly, they seek to pursue administration without any of those sacred Institutions which were established to continue for the duration of the 1000 years of the Baha'i Dispensation. When asked to explain which qualifications a man or woman must possess in order to be considered a true Baha'i believer, Shoghi Effendi, the first of our Guardians wrote: "...loyal and steadfast adherence to every clause of our Beloved's sacred Will...", amongst the requirements.

"...every clause..."

Ross Campbell

An Examination of Suppression and Distortion in 20th Century Baha'i Literature

Professor Browne's observation that "the more the Baha'i doctrine spreads...the more ...the original Babi movement is obscured and distorted," cannot be taken too literally, but it is quite certain from the foregoing examination that Baha'i institutions and Baha'i authors have continued to rewrite history up to the present time.

Popular writers, such as Hatcher and Martin, have distorted the history of the movement by producing pious, inaccurate records which rely heavily upon orthodox works, while virtually ignoring important research by both Baha'i and non-Baha'i scholars.

Through the questionable practice of revising previously published books, the views of deceased authors have been corrected and brought into conformity with modern perceptions and dogma. And, through the process of literature review, future publications will be regulated and kept within the boundaries of orthodoxy.

There is not sufficient reason to conclude that there is a well orchestrated conspiracy on the part of the Baha'i Administration, in which these three practices are coordinated to completely overhaul the history of the movement. But, it is safe to conclude that, since the Baha'i Faith began spreading westward at the turn of the century, there has been a tendency on the part of Baha'i individuals and institutions to distort or suppress historical data. And, unless Baha'is are granted more freedom in expressing their views and more pressure is placed upon the Baha'i Administration through the research, concern and efforts of those outside the Faith, there is no reason to believe that this ongoing revision and rewriting will cease in the near future.

Was Baha'ullah a Prophet or Imposter??!

Courtesy : <http://www.angelfire.com/journal/baha/bahastatus.html>

In Islam, worship of Prophet Muhammed (PBUH) is one of the gravest sins you can commit. Muslims don't like being called 'Muhammeddars' as they believe that it gives the wrong impression that they worship the Holy Prophet (PBUH). Now (some of the) Bahais try to imitate this by telling others not to call their religion 'Bahaism' as they say it is same as calling Islam- Muhammedanism. They say that the right word for their religion is 'Bahai faith'. On the look of it everything looks fine. But one has to remember that all that glitters is not gold. Let us look at some of the facts and Bahai beliefs and decide whether it is the same as in the case of Islam or not.

Well, the answer is not that simple, we better let the Bahais answer this question for they themselves are very much confused about the station of Bahauallah. Sometimes he is spoken of as God himself & sometimes as a Prophet of God (They both aren't the same, are they?). I will merely reproduce here a few of his writings and let the Bahais account for this.

Bahauallah initially claimed to be a Prophet beside the other hundred and one claims. But later on after he knew that he had enough following, he came up & claimed divinity. The following is the first so called revelation that Prophet part of Bahauallah is supposed to have received when he was in prison-

'During the days I lay in the prison of Teheran, though the galling weight of the chains and the stench-filled air allowed Me but little sleep, still in those infrequent moments of slumber I felt as if something flowed from the crown of My head over My breast, even as a mighty torrent that precipitated itself upon the earth from the summit of a lofty mountain. Every limb of My body would, as a result, be set afire. At such moments My tongue recited what no man could bear to hear.

To the non Bahais who are new to the faith, Bahauallah is portrayed only as a Prophet. There are several websites on the net which try to prove to the world the prophethood of Bahauallah. It is however strange that he is also considered as God. Here are a few quotations where Bahauallah declares his divinity.

1. "There is no God but I the Honored, the Wise". – Kitab al Aqdas pg 43
2. "Accept whatever is commanded by Baha (himself) the Lord of Eternity". -kitab al aqdas pg 144
3. "All praise is for you O Bahauallah, the Creator of existence". -Al mubeen pg 34
4. "Obey the commands of your Elevated, Splendorous God, Bahauallah -Al Mubeen pg 190
5. "You Most beneficent Lord, Bahauallah", Al Mubeen 297

The truth is revealed!. In all the above verses Bahauallah is clearly claiming divinity for himself here.

The Bahais even turn towards the shrine of Bahauallah when they offer prayers. Just listen to this statement in the Badaae ul Asaar of Abdul Baha-

6. Bahauallah is unique, Incomparable. It is necessary for everyone to turn towards Bahauallah in his prayers.

Even more revealing is this statement of Bahauallah in a letter to his son Abdul Baha- 7. "This is a letter from Allah, the Honoured and the Wise (Bahauallah) to Allah the Gracious, the Aware (Abdul Baha)."

This statement really shocked me when I read it. But the one statement which is most hurting to a Muslim is in the Kitab ul Aqdas where Bahauallah writes-

"A lot of requests and supplications from my followers reached 'My' Arsh wherein they have asked many questions from me. Thereupon Baha has revealed Epistles upon them. there was a request for revealing the Ahkam (Laws). But due to some wisdom, I withheld My pen and did not accede to their requests. Having received innumerable such requests from them, I have now acceded to their requests so that their hearts may remain alive".

We have seen above that initially Bahauallah made less dramatic claims as he didn't have the necessary following. Only after his popularity & following grew did he publicly declare himself divine. We must also note that his claims grew bolder as time passed.

The divine status of Bahauallah is a fact of Bahai faith which is cleverly hidden from the non Bahai. This is clearly a deceptive tactic used by the Bahais. But those people who hide these facts must remember that they cannot hide the truth forever.

Jacques Soghomonian's Ridvan 1999 Letter to Haifan "UHJ"

TO THE INTERNATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY IN HAIFA

Whatever happens, the will of God will be established.

Our intention is simply to explain why the Baha'i believers under Shoghi Effendi continue to believe in the succession of the Guardians, conforming to the Covenant of God.

Shoghi Effendi was faithful in all aspects relating to the development of the Faith. He took on his responsibilities as Guardian, realizing his objectives of translating the works of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l-Baha' from Arabic to Persian into English, and then into French.

His labor (one should rather say life's work...) and his Office were in fulfillment of the prophecies announced in the Bible "a little child will lead them."

The installation of the administrative order structures and their operation, contribute to the development of the faith.

This administrative order must not be a substitute for the spiritual values [in our Faith], but must rather be the vehicle for Bahai Thought – borne from the spirituality released from the teachings of Baha'u'llah in all their profundity, in all their loftiness. You have, and we have; supported in totality all that Shoghi Effendi has translated, written and given [to us] as counsels; commands and references.

It is thus unthinkable, even impossible, that you could accept on the one hand Shoghi Effendi's handiwork, and roll back or cancel – making forbidden – everything that relates to the principle of the Guardianship and its succeeding lineage of Guardians.

Shoghi Effendi's strategy was very clear, and it becomes forever clear once he openly proclaims, in 1951, the creation of the first embryonic International Council as "the most significant milestone in evolution of Administrative Order of the Faith of Baha'u'llah in course of last thirty years."

Shoghi Effendi forwarded this proclamation by telegram to all the national spiritual assemblies of the Baha'i World. You know perfectly well its contents... This body was to become developed in the future through the election of the Universal House of Justice. He specified the principal structure of this body, by appointing its officers and its President.

Shoghi Effendi was conscious of the necessity of preserving the Guardianship in conformity with Gods Covenant and the Will and Testament of Abdul-Baha, translated by Shoghi himself.

These documents (The Kitab-i-Ahd and the Will and Testament) were read and accepted by thousands of Baha'i believers.

The circumstances surrounding the sudden death of Shoghi Effendi, and the consequences of the events which followed, have led you into ways that are contrary to the Faith...

But in the name of blood lineage you have openly declared the Guardianship ended and forbidden...without taking into account the fact that when a Guardian is named by the living Guardian, he acquires the force and the strength, the spiritual edification, to uphold the Covenant.

By doing this, you have become the first violators of the Baha'i Faith since the time of the Hands of the Cause. You had the responsibility and the duty of following, through your work, the path prepared by Shoghi Effendi.

As for you, Ruhiyyih Rabbani, although you served your Guardian in a dignified way, [and] wrote marvelous books about him, yet without any prerogative you went against the decisions of Shoghi Effendi.

Shoghi Effendi's position as Guardian – although there is no comparison of his station with [the supremely greater stations] of the three central figures of the faith – was a station of supremacy. He was assisted by the power of the Covenant and his hands were not in the least bit chained.

He transmitted to all the believers, which included the Hands of the Cause, who were supposed to be at his service, the essence of spiritual life.

Under the terms presented – and it matters not the number of years since 1957-1960 – you have failed in your duty to protect the integrity of the Faith. You are responsible for your actions. **NO ONE CAN GO AGAINST THE TESTAMENT AND COVENANT OF GOD DEFINED BY THE INVIOABLE TEXTS.**

If you reject this letter today, know that:

The establishment of the Baha'i World Charter, which rests on the two pillars, the guardianship and the Universal House of Justice (as defined in the Dispensation of Baha'u'llah by Shoghi Effendi) will be realized, not by my will, but by that of Baha'u'llah.

In the days and years that pass, through the power of the Covenant, you will be rejected for your disobedience, like the foam along the edge of the shore that's cast out by the sea, although you may be on Sacred Ground and benefit from the presence of the three Central Figures of the Faith, as well as from the spiritual essence radiated from Mount Carmel (that doesn't belong to you, but to the Bab, Baha'u'llah, and Abdu'l-Baha), where the believers on pilgrimage receive the waves of true life.

Reconsider your attitude when you gather together at the International Spiritual Assembly and take into account the non-conformity of the present situation.

No matter what you decide and do, the truth will explode when the time arrives and the principle of the guardianship is established again.

Reflect: “An error multiplied does not become the truth...”

Your present attitude has led the believers down a path inconsistent with the Covenant, and is not within the straight line taught by Shoghi Effendi.

However, you have nevertheless developed humane ways, and that is good. But the World Charter of Baha’u’llah rests on the spiritual establishment of that which you have under-estimated, which are the spiritual essentials of the faith, provided for by the Guardianship.

I leave you to your proper reflection.

The Guardian of the Testament and the Covenant,

Jacques Soghomonian

Note:

The Guardian’s letter above, addressed to the International Spiritual Assembly in Haifa, was translated from the French and edited by Brent Reed.

Come join the Heart of the Baha’i Faith! <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/heartofthebahaifaith>

How Cults Work ??

Cults, wonderful on the outside but on the inside are very manipulating. Cult leaders are desperate to trick you into joining. They are after your obedience, your time and your money.

Cults use sophisticated mind control and recruitment techniques that have been refined over time. To spot a cult you need to know how they work and you need to understand the techniques they use.

Teaching you these things is what this article is all about. This article exposes the secret techniques cults will use to try and trick and control you. Cult leaders will not want you to read this, but read it anyway. Once you understand you will be better able to spot and avoid cult recruiters, and protect your family and friends.

For full article , visit :

<http://www.howcultswork.com/>

Query over Baha'u'llah's station !

How can the Bahai Faith say that all of the Manifestations of God have absolute equality among them and in another statement Baha'u'llah is the Supreme Manifestation of God. Surely this is a total contradiction. How can one be equal and supreme at the same time.

“According to Bahá'u'lláh , all of the Manifestations of God have the same metaphysical nature and the same spiritual stature. There is absolute equality among Them. No one of Them is superior to another. <http://www.bahai.org/article-1-4-0-3.html>

Lights of Guidance page 471 (No 1550) states the following:

No prophet in the same Category as Baha'u'llah. **“there are no prophets, so far in the same Category as Baha'u'llah, as he culminates a great cycle begun with Adam”**. (From a letter written on behalf of the Guardian to the NSA of Australia and New Zealand, December 26, 1941 Letter from the Guardian to Australia and New Zealand, p. 41)

No 1551 Baha'u'llah has appeared in God's Greatest name.

” By Greatest name is meant that Baha'u'llah has appeared in Gods greatest name , in other words, that He is the Supreme Manifestation of God”

(ibid, p 41)

There are many logical contradictions that try the faith of Baha'is who are just trying to be faithful but are hampered by these logical absurdities. This is only one of many and not the main one that seems to have been ignored by the community as a whole.

Unfortunately, and maybe it only concerns westerners who place a higher value on logic and reason, one can only find meaning in these declarations of doctrine by having to fall back to viewing them as just hyperbole.

Here is another query regarding Baha'u'llah's station. In this tablet the Manifestation even allows for himself to be seen from two views. But he then forbids anyone to argue over his station. **There are some Baha'is who believe Baha'u'llah is God himself.**

A Tablet of Mirza Husayn 'Ali Baha'u'llah to Jamal-I Burujirdi: A Full Provisional Translation with Persian Text trans. Khazeh Fananapazir

<http://bahai-library.org/provisionals/burujirdi.html>

More Confusions :

Was not the Bab the fulfillment of the Shi'ite Islamic doctrine the coming of the Mahdi (the hidden Imam).

But where does the Bab fit into the Christian prophesy to fulfill the station of the second coming of Christ?

If Both the Bab and Baha'u'llah are equally the “Second coming of Christ” then they both must equally be the Mahdi and the hidden Imam also?

But if Baha'u'llah is the a “Supreme Manifestation of God” as is stated in the “light of Guidance” he then holds a superior station than the Bab.

Comments on Rise of Apostasies from Baha'i Faith!!

Greetings,

I have noticed for the past few years on the Internet the rise in the number of people leaving bahaism. I have seen about 30 people since 1998 leave bahaism, not including the manmore people who left bahaism I came across on the Internet.

I would like for ex bahais to explain why they left the bahai cult and what they believe is the future of bahaism.

First Comment :

I became a Baha'i while in college. My roommate was a member and I was always impressed with his demeanor. I began participating in the community and learned the Faith's basic principles – the basics about the Bab, Bahau'llah, Abdul Baha, the Guardianship, equality between men and women, unity of religion, etc. – before I declared.

The second reason is somewhat related to the first: I did not feel I knew enough about the Faith to go out and "teach." I am a firm believer in learning as much as you can about a topic if you want to talk about it and be credible. In hindsight, I am convinced I'm correct about this. Many of the questions I was asked about the Faith after I dropped out I would not have been able to answer beyond "Huh? HEEEEELP!!!"

Less than a year after I declared, I graduated from college and moved away. Far away. The Baha'i community I joined was also very "interested" in teaching. That, and the fact that I no longer had any of the familiar faces around me eventually made me lose interest in participating.

That's why I left. Here's why I chose not to return.

Imagine my shock and surprise when I started seeing on the Internet the reports about Bahai's being driven out of the Faith under alleged threats of being declared Covenant Breakers(I will use "alleged" because there appears to be only a he-said-he-said record of the things that transpired). Thanks to the 'net, I discovered that an innocent e-mail (the infamous Majnun post) triggered the irrational ire and fury of the powers that were. Thanks to the 'net, I found "A Modest Proposal," and to this day I do not know what about that document was so controversial that drove many to rebuke and condemn it instead of opening a discussion with its authors. And I also learned of others who, like me, dropped out because Baha'i life did not satisfy them spiritually.

What does the future hold for the Baha'i Faith? I don't know. What I do know is that most people don't join a religion because they want to be engaged doing material things like temples and arches, but to find a way to connect with God. Until the Baha'i Faith understands that, it will be a steady-state religion, with new converts taking the place of disillusioned ones.

El Loco

Second Comment :

I left it because I realized it is indeed a *cult* for the reasons stated here over the past three and a half years. As for its future: at this rate it has none other than how long its elite "investors" and financial benefactors decide to prolong its existence. Among its core constituency, many children of Iranian Baha'is are walking away completely from it in droves, and not just in the West, because it really does not have much to offer anyone anymore other family ties and the like. In terms of new enrollments it is completely stagnant. In a hundred years time or less, other than a footnote to history, unless there are radical internal reforms within (which seem unlikely, as the religion has completely straitjacketed itself doctrinally going back to its founders), baha'ism will in all likelihood disappear from the stage of history, just as Manichaeism did before it. In short, I believe baha'ism is well into its process of implosion.

NEMO

Theology banned in the Baha'i Faith?

Juan R.I Cole & Dr. Sa'id Khan Kurdistani on the Baha'is

Professor Juan Cole, February 23, 1999:

“There is nothing to be puzzled by. Right wing Baha'is only like to hear the sound of their own voices (which are the only voices they will admit to being “Baha'i” at all). Obviously, the world is so constructed that they cannot in fact only hear their own voices. They are forced to hear other voices that differ from theirs. This most disturbs them when the voices come from enrolled Baha'is or when the voices speak of the Baha'i faith. The way they sometimes deal with the enrolled Baha'is is to summon them to a heresy inquiry and threaten them with being shunned if they do not fall silent. With non-Baha'is or with ex-Baha'is, they deal with their speech about the faith by backbiting, slandering and libelling the speaker. You will note that since I've been on this list I have been accused of long-term heresy, of “claiming authority,” of out and out lying (though that was retracted, twice), of misrepresentation, of ‘playing fast and loose with the facts,’ and even of being ‘delusional.’ I have been accused of all these falsehoods by *Baha'is*, by prominent Baha'is. I have been backbitten by them. This shows that all the talk about the danger a sharp tongue can do, all the talk about the need for harmony, for returning poison with honey, for a sin-covering eye, is just *talk* among right wing Baha'is. No one fights dirtier than they when they discover a voice they cannot silence and cannot refute...”

<http://www.fglaysheer.com/bahaicensorsip/Cole71.htm> (Who's computer is this?)

From Mission Problems in New Persia, 1926, p. 83, 87 and 89 quoted by William McElwee Miller in The Baha'i Faith: It's History and Teachings, 1973, p. 289.

“...There is no conscience with them [i.e. the Baha'is], they keep to no principle, they tell you what is untrue, ignoring or denying undoubted historical facts, and this is the character of both the leader and the led...As to morality and honesty, the whole system has proved disappointing...I have been in contact with many Baha'is, and have had dealings with many and have tested many, and unfortunately I have met not a single one who could be called honest or faithful in the full sense of these words...”

Dr Sa'eed Khan [was] a highly-respected physician...who had as a doctor treated the second widow of the Bab, and had for a lifetime known intimately both Babis [i.e. Bayanis] and Baha'is in Tehran and Hamadan.

US Baha'i authorities accused of pimping and child trafficking

Weaknesses in the Religion of Baha'i

An Impersonal and Unknowable God

In Baha'i, God is impersonal and unknowable. In Christianity, God is the believer's Father. Jesus spoke of God using a familiar, intimate term, "Abba," which means, "Daddy." The Muslim and the Baha'i know nothing of this intimacy.

No Assurance of Salvation

In Baha'i, it is impossible to know whether or not you are spared from judgment and will go to the Paradise of God. Christians can know that we are forgiven and going to heaven (1 John 5:11-13). This knowledge is based not on our merit but on the mercy of God to all who will trust Christ as their sin-bearer. Apart from biblical Christianity which focuses on Christ's death, burial, and resurrection in payment for our sins, no religion, no philosophy, no program on earth has really dealt with man's sin problem. To the Baha'i, the Christian believer's claim of assurance of salvation is presumptuous. But this is a typical reaction of all non-Christian religions and cults because they all teach a program of works with no assurance of salvation.

Is the Baha'i God fickle and changeable?—

Why are many "manifestations of God" necessary? According to the Bible, God never changes (He is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow, Heb. 13:8), and human nature doesn't change or evolve. The Baha'i faith, however, holds that the manifestations were given because of different needs in different times of human history. It also teaches that after enough time has passed mankind has learned sufficiently from one cycle and needs to grow and be stretched by a new "manifestation of God."

Was Baha'u'llah an opportunist or a manifestation of God?

How is it believable that the manifestation of Baha'u'llah followed that of the Bab by less than twenty years? Could mankind have grown, progressed, and mastered his teachings so rapidly? Hardly. For one thing, few outside of Middle East had even heard of the Bab and his new religion. Furthermore, the Bab himself had predicted that the next manifestations after him would be many years (1,511 and 2,001 years) in the future.⁽¹⁸⁾ Note that he mentioned two manifestations. No wonder many of the Babis were surprised and rejected Baha'u'llah's claim.

There are many facts that we could cover, but this information in this essay is sufficient to show the open-minded person that the religion of Baha'i has some real credibility problems. There are, however, many noble-minded, sweet people in this cult who deserve to hear the truth in love and gentleness so they can be free from the grip of this false religion.

In a chapter on Baha'i from his book *The Kingdom of the Cults*, Walter Martin summarized in sad and melancholy fashion the emptiness of the Baha'i faith:

Bahai Professor, Wife Accused of Defrauding NASA of Hundreds of Thousands of Taxpayer Dollars

Samim Anghaie is a Iranian-born professor who directs an institute that researches the use of nuclear power in space. He and his wife, Sousan, run a Gainesville-based company, New Era Technology, that conducts research for NASA. As of Wednesday, neither Anghaie nor his wife had been arrested, the U.S. Attorney's Office in Tallahassee said.

UF suspended Samim Anghaie after the FBI searched his campus office Wednesday. A warrant alleges money from NASA was diverted from New Era into the accounts of Samim, Sousan and their sons, Ali and Hamid.

The alleged scheme "diverted hundreds of thousands of dollars of illegally obtained government funds from their corporate bank account to their personal bank accounts," according to the warrant.

Since December 1999, New Era was awarded 13 government contracts with NASA, the U.S. Air Force and the U.S. Department of Energy. The agencies deposited nearly \$3.4 million into the company's account, according to the warrant.

The money was allegedly used to buy six vehicles ranging from a 2005 Toyota Sienna to 2009 Subaru and homes in Gainesville, Connecticut, Fort Lauderdale and Tampa. Some money was used to buy stocks and the proceeds to buy land in Alachua County, the warrant alleges.

The warrants allowed agents with the FBI and NASA to seize the vehicles, properties and family's multiple bank accounts. Tallahassee-based assistant U.S. Attorney Karen Rhew said no arrests were made but declined to discuss the case.

"What we can say about an ongoing investigation is very limited," she said.

UF spokesman Steve Orlando said Anghaie was suspended with pay pending the results of the case.

"We're cooperating with their investigation," Orlando said.

Samim Anghaie, 59, is director of UF's Innovative Nuclear Space Power and Propulsion Institute. A search of his office in the UF Nuclear Science Building started around 8 a.m. and lasted until mid-afternoon.

Anghaie started at UF as a researcher in 1980 and has worked for the university since that time, except for a stint at Oregon State University from 1984 to 1986. He currently makes about \$111,400 a year from UF.

A UF news release from 1997 said he worked on developing fuels to carry a manned mission more quickly to Mars. A spokeswoman for NASA's inspector general declined comment on the case.

Sousan Anghaie, 54, is president of New Era Technology. The warrant alleges that she intentionally misrepresented budget information on NASA contracts and submitted multiple false invoices for workers.

Hamid Anghaie, 28, graduated from UF and is now a family wealth planning senior associate in Tampa. Ali Anghaie, 31, lives in Connecticut and works in information technology security for a space propulsion company.

Reference :

<http://www.gatorsports.com/article/20090226/ARTICLES/902251030?p=1&tc=pg>

<http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,500453,00.html>

Falsehood and Revisions in Baha'ism !!

There are many letters from UHJ dealing with the BAHAI false prophecies- I GUESS UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE TR TO COVER UP FOR ITS BOO BOOS AND MISTAKES- FALSE PROPHECIES- ERRORS OF BIBI INTERPRETATIONS.

Here is a few info:

“Perhaps the most important change in Baha’u’llah and the New Era was made on page 212 of the 1923 edition. Recorded as a Baha’i prophecy (59) concerning the “Coming of the Kingdom of God,” Esselmont cited Abdu’l-Baha’s interpretation of the last two verses of the Book of Daniel from the Bible. (60)

In editions published after his death, Esselmont’s words have been changed to say that Abdu’l-Baha “reckoned the fulfillment of Daniel’s prophecy from the date of the beginning of the Muhammadan era ” (61) and one of Abdu’l-Baha’s Tablets is quoted on the same subject in which he writes, “For according to this calculation a century will have elapsed from the dawn of the Sun of Truth. ...” Esselmont appears to conclude that Abdu’l-Baha was referring to the year 1963 and the one hundredth anniversary of Baha’u’llah’s public claim to be a Manifestation of God. (62)

Hence, they are commonly referred to as the “Dawn-Breakers.” (63) Further, in another quotation which originally appeared on the same page, but was also removed from later editions, Abdu’l-Baha plainly stated, “ This is the Century of the Sun of Truth. This is the Century of the establishment of the Kingdom of God upon the earth.” (64) Esselmont recorded Abdu’l-Baha as declaring explicitly that the prophecy was to be computed from the Hijra or 622 A.D. and that specific conditions would exist in the world upon it’s fulfillment in 1957. **When it became apparent that this Baha’i prophecy would not be fulfilled, it was replaced with the ambiguous material which has remained in the text to the present. This is evident from the fact that, although Esselmont’s other eyewitness accounts were removed in the 1937 revision, the record of Abdu’l-Baha’s prophecy was left intact by the American National Spiritual Assembly and Shoghi Effendi. It was not changed until after 1957.** (65)

Also, Abdu’l-Baha’s conviction that all of these events would take place in this century have been expressed in other writings and it is evident that Shoghi Effendi shared his optimism as well. (66)”

“The tables below represent a survey of some of the major changes made in selected books, between their original publication and later editions, which were written by Baha’i authors during the 20th century. A major change is considered to be a revision which reflects a change in Western Baha’i doctrine, practice or attitude toward a particular subject since the early 1900’s. It should be noted however, that there have been literally hundreds of changes made in the few books examined to date.

Baha’u’llah and the New Era by John E. Esselmont

Edition and Page Number Synopsis

1923 / 1980

8 / xiv Esselmont expressed his gratitude to the Baha’i historian, Avarih, who later left the faith and was declared a Covenant-breaker. This reference was completely removed.

13 / 14 “Miracles” were discussed which were intended to show how civilization has advanced since the nineteenth century. Some of these “miracles” have reversed and worsened since 1923. They have been edited from the text.

22 / 13 The apostate Avarih was quoted, but his name has been replaced by “a historian.”

28 / 20

34 / 26 Avarih’s material was dropped completely.

39 / 33 A quote of Avarih is left in the text, but his name was removed.

55-6 / 53-4 Avarih provided a lengthy description of the marriage of Abdu’l-Baha, which remains in later editions with Avarih’s name removed.

67-9 / 67-9 This is a very important change. Esselmont spoke of the unique station of Abdu’l-Baha and stated that “whatever Abdu’l-Baha says or does is to be accepted as of equal authority with the direct utterance of the Manifestation.” Further, he quoted Abdu’l-Baha to the effect that the Bab was “the ‘Promised Christ.’” **Two pages have been completely reworked. The institution of the Guardianship was introduced and the views which Esselmont originally expressed are referred to as “naive enthusiasm.”**

118 / 130 Baha’u’llah provided that Abdu’l-Baha would be the sole interpreter of his writings and after him the International House of Justice, but this has been changed to “the authorized interpreter.”

123-4 / 135-7 Esselmont was present when Abdu’l-Baha specifically advocated a form of constitutional monarchy under the heading “True Civilization.” This quotation has been dropped and replaced with two pages of general material which merely says that there will be different types of government under the Lesser Peace and the Most Great Peace.

146 / 165-6 **Emphasis on the use of Esperanto as the universal language is played down in later editions.**

157-8 / 179-9 A detailed two page account of Spiritual Assemblies in Persia by Jinab-i-Assad'llah Fadil Mazindarani has been replaced by an updated description of functions.

161 / 186 **Nineteen Day Feast was added.**

190 / 218 **The establishment of the League of Nations and reduction in armaments were cited as “advances in fulfillment” of prophecies of world peace. This statement has been removed.**

203-4 / 235-7 Esselmont claimed that Baha'u'llah's words have a “creative power” and he cited a number of specific advances as proof. He claimed that world temperance was advancing, military dictatorships had fallen and will not be revived, democracy was spreading, Esperanto was gaining worldwide acceptance as a universal language, and the “emancipation of the workers” was “steady and irresistible.” This has been rewritten in a more general fashion.

209-10 / 244-7 Under the heading of “Social Troubles After the War,” Esselmont gave an eyewitness account of some specific predictions by Abdu'l-Baha, which did not take place. **This section has been replaced by nearly three pages of general information summing up Baha'u'llah's proclamation.** 211-12 / 249-50 It has been made to appear as if Esselmont was referring to the progress of the movement at the one hundredth anniversary of Baha'u'llah's declaration, or 1963. It is important to note that this change was not made in the major revision in 1937, but in the 1970 revision, after the events predicted did not take place.

215-6 / 253-4 Avari's estimates of the number of Baha'is worldwide have been replaced. It is interesting to note that it was the issue of dishonesty in the Baha'i administration over the numerical success of the movement, which Avari cited as his reason for leaving the faith.

228-9 / 287 Esselmont supplied a bibliography for further study which included books from a variety of authors, including Edward G. Browne. In the 1937 edition it was removed completely, but a new list of references is included at the end of later editions. Although, Browne's material remains in the text, his work is missing from the latest bibliography.

All Things Made New by John Ferraby

Edition and Page Number Synopsis

1957 / 1987

5 / 7

27-8 / 27-8 Ferraby originally stated that the Guardianship was to be perpetual, but this section has been reworked, explaining that another Guardian could not be appointed since none were qualified. All references to the duties of the Guardian were in the present tense, but have been changed to the past tense, indicating that the Guardianship has ceased.

64 / 67 Islam was said to be declining in influence and power in the world and that this trend will continue. Because of events in the Middle East during the past two decades, this section has been rewritten, shifting the emphasis to a decline in Islam's spirituality and reputation in the world.

246-7 / 252-3 In the original edition, Ferraby quoted the Will of Abdu'l-Baha and demonstrated that the Cause would continue to have a visible Centre through the institution of successive Guardians. He referred to this as “a Covenant so mighty that mankind has never seen its like.” However, this section has been completely rewritten, stating that the Will only provided for the “possibility” for a succession of Guardians and that the writings nowhere “promise or guarantee” that the institution would continue.

250-5 / 256-61

256-62 / 262-72 This section has undergone major revision with the addition of hundreds of words. References to the Guardianship have been changed to the past tense or have been replaced with “the Universal House of Justice.”

272-4 / 288-90 Ferraby extolled the virtues of the Baha'i Administrative Order and cited evidences of its superiority over concepts of authority in Christianity and Islam.

279 / 295 Baha'i burial customs were discussed and Ferraby's statement that “Cremation is forbidden, because the too sudden disintegration of the body may harm the departed soul” has been replaced with a statement by Abdu'l-Baha.

308-12 / 326-31 A number of books have been dropped from Ferraby's bibliography, including those written by Edward G. Browne. References to Browne's works still appear in the text of later editions, but the notes refer the reader to books by other Baha'i authors who also quote Browne. Two of the Baha'i books referred to also contain material which is critical of Browne, so these revisions were apparently made to divert the reader from the primary sources, which contain material that is at variance with orthodox versions of the history of the movement.

Christ and Baha'u'llah by George Townshend

Edition and Page Number Synopsis

1957 / 1985

79 / 79 Townshend originally referred to Shoghi Effendi as the “first and present Guardian,” but this phrase has been dropped.

98-9 / 98-9 Townshend discussed the Will and Testament of Abdu'l-Baha and the provision for a succession of Guardians. The succession principle has been dropped and Shoghi Effendi is no longer spoken of as “the first Guardian.”

100-1 / 100-1 This section dealt with “the lineage of succeeding Guardians,” but it has been changed so it appears that Townshend is writing about “divinely guided institutions” in general.

Selected Writings of Shoghi Effendi by Shoghi Effendi

Edition and Page Number Synopsis

1942 / 1975

3 – 5 / vii The original edition began with nearly three pages of excerpts from Abdu'l-Baha's Will and Testament, in which he commanded his followers to “turn unto Shoghi Effendi...” This has been reduced in the 1975 edition to two paragraphs with statements concerning hereditary succession of the Guardianship and the role of the Guardian as the Head of the Universal House of Justice replaced with ellipses.

10 / 4 Two paragraphs have been removed, one of which deals mainly with outdated statistics concerning the growth of the Faith. The other is an assertion by Shoghi Effendi that he was “appointed as First Guardian of the Baha'i Faith and Head of the Universal House of Justice...”

27-8 / 19 A paragraph has been removed which described the Administrative Order as “the framework of the Will [of Abdu'l-Baha] itself, the inviolable stronghold...”

43-5 / 32 Two full pages have been removed, which formed an apologetic for the functions, the centrality, and the absolutely essential position of the Guardianship in Baha'u'llah's World Order.

THERE ARE SO MANY STUDIES THAT DEMONSTRATE THE BLATANT FALSIFICATIONS MADE BY BAHAI LEA ALSO KNOWN AS RELIGIOUS DICTATORS.

HERE is one complete link to an excellent study titled: “An Examination of Suppression and Distortion in 20th-Century Baha'i Literature” By Vance Salisbury —Piety Hill Press ©

Link: <http://bahai-library.com/unpubl.articles/suppression.html>

The current fraudulent application of the Law of Huququ'llah

High Baha'i Divorce Rate

An internal Baha'i household survey done in 1987 found that the divorce rate in the U.S. Baha'i community was higher than that in American society as a whole. The report was never released to the public.

My own suspicion is that the high divorce rate has several causes. First of all, Baha'is are encouraged to utopian ways of thinking. Two young people with little in common save that they are recent converts to the faith will be encouraged to marry. I have seen this sort of thing over and over again with my own eyes. This utopianism is widespread in the faith and is the same reason for which so many other Baha'i enterprises end up doing damage to people. **That both are "Baha'is" is not a basis for a marriage.** One may be a liberal and the other a fundamentalist; current norms against such labeling make it difficult for people to identify one another on that basis, but you'd better believe the difference would show up in a marriage!

In smaller communities the Baha'i committee work is a killer, and may isolate the two spouses, who spend less time together just cocooning and watching t.v.

And it is my estimate that from a third to a half of U.S. Baha'is are what the sociologists would call marginal people—persons with poor social skills who are emotionally needy and who join the faith because they are love-bombed and find a high proportion of other marginals in it. A high rate of marginality is fostered by the cultists who have infiltrated the administration, since only such individuals would put up with being ordered around summarily or would eat up conspiracy theories about bands of dissidents seeking to undermine the administration. Marginals would have higher than normal divorce rates, obviously.

Finally, the Baha'i faith encourages a great deal of ego inflation in the individual. Each Baha'i thinks he or she is saving the world and is a linchpin in the plan of God. This inspires in them great (and often quite misplaced) confidence in their own judgment—I've seen them pronounce authoritatively on astronomy, biology, Qajar history, and many other subjects on which they are woefully ignorant. Such ego inflation and over-confidence in personal judgment would not be good for a marriage.

Juan Cole

A Brief History of Douglas Martin, Member, Universal House of Justice

by Juan Cole, one of his victims 31 January 2000

Doug Martin told John Walbridge and several other Baha'is in the early 1980s that he viewed me as a covenant breaker. I was at the time a Baha'i in good standing, a former pioneer in Lebanon and Jordan, a travel teacher, studying at UCLA with the son of a Hand of the Cause. It is absolutely outrageous that he was making such charges then, but this is the way he has behaved all along. I presume that he confuses thinking creatively or academically with breaking the Baha'i covenant, an attitude that I think qualifies him as a fundamentalist, or perhaps even a cultist.

This was at a time when he was powerful in the Association for Baha'i Studies and had read some of the materials I submitted to it, as well as corresponding with me about a particular issue. He gave a talk in Canada about the faith in which he advocated Israeli control of Jerusalem. Unbeknownst to him, this talk was taped by the conference organizers, who assumed it was his conference paper submission, and they typed it up and printed it in a book published in India. I discovered the book and wrote him a protest that he was involving the faith in politics in a big way. (The status of Jerusalem is still undetermined in international law). He explained that he had not intended for his remarks to be published. I now realize that he must have been petrified that I might use this incident to discredit him, since of course behind the scenes that is the way he himself has behaved throughout his entire Baha'i career. In fact, I let it go. He nursed a grudge against me thereafter. This Jerusalem talk was typical of the kind of fundamentalist "Zionism" he espouses, along with a lot of other wacky ideas like the world changing dramatically in the year 2000. (How will he backpedal about *that*?) There isn't much difference between his discourse and that of someone like Jerry Falwell. Note that like the right wing "Christian Zionists," Martin actually does not mean the Jewish people particularly well, since he just wants to convert them to his religion. His "Zionism" is a use of them for his own, fundamentalist and apocalyptic purposes.

In fact, putting the Canadian clique of Martin, Hatcher and Danesh in charge of the Association for Baha'i Studies in the late 70s and through the 80s was clearly a strategic move on the part of some conservative House members of the time. That clique had no academic credentials in the humanities or social sciences and they so mismanaged the organization that they alienated from it most of the real academics and intellectuals. They provoked the resignation of the California regional committee of the ABS in the mid-80s, and when John Walbridge protested their policies Martin had him fired from the ABS board. When [Gerald] travelled around Europe and made up a directory of Baha'i scholars in Europe, he showed it to Martin, who harshly criticized him for taking the initiative and so hurt his feelings that he left the faith for ten years.

Martin also wrote fierce editorials in the Canadian Baha'i newsletter in the mid-1980s viciously attacking Kalimat Press's Circle series of intellectual explorations of peace, gender equality, etc., for daring suggest that these were "Baha'i" views. As big Honcho in ABS he often rejected paper submissions for being insufficiently fundamentalist, and this happened to a number of bona fide Baha'i academics. He saw ABS as a way of *controlling* rather than nurturing "Baha'i Scholarship." In the late 1980s he had Abbas Amanat out to speak at an ABS convention in Canada. He was very pleasant to Abbas's face. But when Abbas left he conducted a kvetching session with the rightwing Baha'i fundamentalists in the audience who had been enraged by Abbas's academic talk. There is a Hindi-Urdu proverb that someone has a dagger hidden under their arm but keeps chanting the name of Ram in public. (Baghal men~ churi, mun~ men~ Ram Ram.)

Read the complete article here :

<http://www-personal.umich.edu/~jrcole/talisman/dmartin.htm>

Baha'u'llah Ali Nuri own writing is very disorganized !!

Baha'u'llah wrote in an very unconventional disorganized way- making it very difficult to read and translate.

The Arabic-Persian writings of Baha'u'llah (his own hand writing) use certain items that are time consuming to decipher- specially when there is a "flight of thoughts" and that there are grammatical-syntactic changes.

I am aware of a Persian lady who is in her 70's now, and who had worked in Haifa- UHJ- to classify and translate important points of Baha'u'llah Tablets. In the latter part of her career- by the late 1990's, she developed severe paranoia and has now full blown schizophrenia.

It is extremely unexpected and baffling to see the appearance of schizophrenia in this ELDERLY Iranian Baha'i lady. She had spent most of her life working at UHJ on the Tablets of Baha'u'llah. During moments of lucidity, she had commented how difficult it was to read Baha'u'llah writings. It is written in a strange style- very disorganized. The writings of Baha'u'llah (when written by himself) can be compared to the "flight of ideas" seen in schizophrenic patients.

This elderly lady was then transferred to the Home for The Aged (Baha'i Nursing Home) in Chicago, Illinois to continue her treatments for schizophrenia (at the request of UHJ in Israel).

Unfortunately, the US NSA closed down the Home for the Aged a few years ago. This lady's family (very prominent Iranian Baha'is) have refused to care for her in light of her advanced paranoia- schizophrenia.

The US NSA under order of UHJ has now placed this Iranian Baha'i lady in another nursing home, and pay full price for her stay and for her medical care.

This Iranian Baha'i lady developped schizophrenia extremely late in life- extremely rare except in people who have other concomittant diseases.

It is suspected that her line of work- namely reading the original Baha'u'llah's writings caused her so much stress- and led to the development of mental disorder. Here is information from the British Journal of Psychiatry:

"Lower level of Family Stress Reduces Risk of Schizophrenia. Risk of getting schizophrenia (for children genetically predisposed schizophrenia) can be up to 800% higher in high stress "dysfunctional families" vs. low stress households. Research suggests that that high levels of stress (of any type) significantly increases the incidence of schizophrenia and related brain disorders. In the February, 2004 issue of the British Journal of Psychiatry a study looked at adopted children from families that have a history of schizophrenia and stated that:

"The information suggests the protective effect of being reared in a healthy adoptive family, with the risk for these high-genetic-risk adoptees developing schizophrenia in healthy families at 1.49% compared with 13% for those reared in "dysfunctional" families. This lends significant support to the stress and hereditary predisposition model of the cause of schizophrenia, in which environmental stressors have a particularly harmful impact only on individuals with a genetic vulnerability." Source: British Journal of Psychiatry

Link: <http://www.schizophrenia.com/prevent2.htm#enriched>

When I inquired about Dr. Maneck's use of Omega-3, I thought about the possibility of more severe psychiatric disorders- as those who have been able to read entire original Tablets of Baha'u'llah have occasionally developped a case of severe schizophrenia.

I hope that this clarifies the issue of language expertise in relation to translations of original Baha'u'llah Tablets.

Henry

The Baha'i Seeds of Hatred and Division: the Words of its founders

These are the fertile seeds of hatred planted by your own founder:

In Ma'idih-i-Asmani, vol. 4, page 355 <http://reference.bahai.org/fa/t/b/MAS4/mas4-3...>

Translation by Wahid Azal (Jan. 7, 2009)

QUOTE

Chapter 11

The Critics of the Cause of God (munkirin-i-amru'llah)

The Ancient Beauty in the Tablet of Habib from Maragha, which begins with "H B hear the call of God from the direction of the throne by the protective signs/verses (bi-ayati muhayyimin)..etc." they [i.e. Husayn 'Ali Nuri] enunciate the command (mi-farmayand)[i.e. state],

In Promulgation of Universal Peace p. 322 the following is quoted by 'Abbas Effendi from a prayer by his father, cf. THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH AND ISLAM (ed.) Heshmat Moayyad (The Association for Baha'i Studies: Ottawa, 1990), p.23

Quote

O God! Whomsoever violates My Covenant, O God, humiliate him. Verily whosoever violates My Covenant, erase and efface him.

Quote

"Protect yourselves with utmost vigilance, lest you be entrapped in the snare of deception and fraud." This is the advice of the Pen of Destiny."Therefore, to avoid these people will be the nearest path by which to attain the divine good pleasure; because their breath is infectious, like unto poison." "Endeavor to your utmost to protect yourselves, because Satan appears in different robes and appeals to everyone according to each person's own way, until he becomes like unto him— then he will leave him alone."

"...If you detect in any man the least perceptible breath of violation, shun him and keep away from him." Then He says: "Verily, they are manifestations of Satan." (**Bahá'í World Faith, p. 431**)

"Bahá'u'lláh, in all the Tablets and Epistles, forbade the true and firm friends from associating and meeting the violators of the Covenant of His Holiness, the Báb, saying that no one should go near them because their breath is like the poison of the snake that kills instantly." (**Bahá'í World Faith, p. 430**)

"And now, one of the greatest and most fundamental principles of the Cause of God is to shun and avoid entirely the Covenant-breakers, for they will utterly destroy the Cause of God, exterminate His Law and render of no account all efforts exerted in the past." (**Bahá'í World Faith, p. 448**)

"My object is to show that the Hands of the Cause of God must be ever watchful and so soon as they find anyone beginning to oppose and protest against the guardian of the Cause of God, cast him out from the congregation of the people of Bahá and in no wise accept any excuse from him. How often hath grievous error been disguised in the garb of truth, that it might sow the seeds of doubt in the hearts of men!" (**Will and Testament of Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 12**)

Juan Cole on Baha'i Takfir

"Refuse to set up once again a sect similar to that of the Shi'ites." –Baha'u'llah

(Cited in 2002 by "Giangiacomo" <janji@aruba.it>)

From: "Juan R. Cole" <jrcole@u...> Date: Wed Apr 9, 2003 1:47 pm Subject: a Baha'i Vatican II is needed

yeah, yeah, yeah. Ultramontane Catholic priests used to make the same arguments, before Vatican II, that Jesus Christ does not permit any change to what he set forth in his writings.

I am not arguing for a change in Baha'i doctrine or law in the sense of Baha'u'llah's vision of those things. I am arguing for a change in contemporary Baha'i procedures and fundamentalist mindset, which have nothing to do with Baha'u'llah. The reactionaries in any religion always substitute their hidebound misinterpretation of the religion for the real thing, and then claim it is the real thing, and then claim that no one can change it because it is the real thing. The whole bit is a shell game for suckers.

As for the argument that only the Universal House of Justice can change current procedure, and only by cozying up to them and convincing them nicely could you hope to influence them, the same thing could have been said of the popes. It is a silly argument, because the popes had a dictatorial attitude and most of them couldn't be influenced by niceness or criticism. They ruthlessly silenced or excommunicated anyone who spoke for a Catholic modernism. What the example of those brave Catholic thinkers shows is that even a highly authoritarian institution can be changed, and it can be changed by *criticism* and by *new thinking*.

For example: 'Abdul-Baha was implored by the hardline Baha'is of his day (what Shoghi Effendi later called the dangerous "extreme orthodox") to declare Mirza Muhammad 'Ali and his group infidels, i.e. "not Baha'is."

'Abdul-Baha replied that he could not do this because in the Baha'i faith, unlike in Islam, there was to be no expulsion of believers for immorality or wrong beliefs. If someone says he or she is a Baha'i, the Baha'is are stuck with them. The most you could do to someone disapproved by Baha'i authorities is to not hang out with them. But you can't say "so and so isn't really a Baha'i because he believes X." This is the Baha'i Supreme Exemplar speaking, the appointed Interpreter of the Baha'i scriptures. 'Abdul-Baha explicitly said that *He Himself* could not declare the Mirza Muhammad 'Ali people "not Baha'is" because it would be contrary to Baha'i principle (see the Kitab-i Aqdas).

The present so-called Universal House of Justice, in contrast, declared our dear Alison "not a Baha'i." They issued **fatwa of takfir** against her, **[BOLD ADDED]** declaring her an infidel, i.e., a non-believer. They broke Baha'i law in so doing. When they were challenged on this by Ron House, they wrote back that individual Baha'is couldn't declare people non-Baha'is, but that the UHJ had that prerogative. They have a prerogative that *'Abdul-Baha* did not? They think they are better than He is? That they have powers *He* did not have? That they can contradict his explicit instructions in an adhoc and arbitrary manner, *at will*? And then it is pretended that they are upholding the *real* Baha'i faith, which no one can change! If you believe that, well, P.T. Barnum said a sucker was born every minute.

This is what Vatican II says:

"The Vatican Council declares that the human person has a right to religious freedom. Freedom of this kind means that all men should be immune from coercion on the part of individuals, social groups and every human power so that, within due limits, nobody is forced to act against his conscience in religious matters, nor impeded from acting in accordance with it, in private or in public, alone or in association with others. The Council further declares that the right to religious freedom is based on the very dignity of the human person as known through the revealed word of God and by reason itself."

This is what one commentator wrote about the situation before Vatican II:

"Both Gregory XVI in *Mirari Vos* (1832)² and Pius IX in *Quanta Cura* (1864)³ condemned the demand for "liberty of conscience" as "insanity" (*deliramentum*). The latter pontiff also condemned, in the Syllabus accompanying *Quanta Cura*, the proposition that, "In the present day it is no longer expedient that the Catholic religion should be held as the only religion of the State, to the exclusion of all other forms of worship." His successor Leo XIII insisted that "lying opinions . . . should be diligently repressed by public authority, lest they insidiously work the ruin of the State.""

This is the sort of situation the Baha'is are in now, the situation of Pius IX and Leo XIII. "Lying opinions" according to the Haifa authorities should not be tolerated. **Hushmand Fatheazam, a UHJ member, told me that in future when Baha'is control the government, they would just jail [BOLD ADDED] dissidents** What is the difference between that point of view and the ideas of the 19th century popes, or indeed, of present-day Iranian Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the Supreme Jurisprudent?

In contrast, the Baha'i scriptures stand for freedom of conscience and freedom of expression, *even within the Baha'i Faith*. This freedom has been quashed by the Saddam Husseins in Haifa, and the reign of tyranny everywhere is now coming to an end.

cheers Juan <http://www.fglaysher.com/bahaicensorship/Cole2003.htm>

A short comparision between Wahabi Muslims and Baha'is

The claim of Wahhabis that because they are “True Muslims” then the rest of majority Muslims are not “True Muslims” and this gives low life stupid uneducated Wahhabis to kill educated, knowledgeable, respectable personalities both from Sunni Muslims and Shia Muslims. If this is not a product of Colonialism then it is a gift from “heaven!!!!?” to them. You do not need a document to see this is a colonialist ideology.

The same way you see that Bahai is here to convince people that Mehdi had arrived and current dominance of superpowers is the Justice people on earth are experiencing. Do you really need a document to see this is a stupid justification of current injustice in the world and is a product of colonialism.

Bahai is not a religion, because religion should have a divine source, unless your god is British empire I do not see how Bahai should be considered as religion. I for one feel sorry for a person who's god is so miserable as Britain.

Katty

The Journey of three Baha'is who accepted Islam – Persian

This discussion was telecasted on one of the most viewed Iranian television channel “CHANNEL 3 (IRIB)” on the eve of Eid-ol-Fetr. All the three guests are ex-Baha'is. One with the beard was a Born Baha'i with both the parents Baha'is. The other two are Brother — Sister with their Father Baha'i and mother Muslim. They were all active Baha'is until they accepted Islam. They are talking about their journey towards Islam. The topics being discussed are : Shunning, Social Boycott by Baha'is (TARD), Ruhi Classes, The hypocritical behavior of Baha'is, The interference of the Baha'i institutions in the personal lives of members, the Israel and the Baha'i faith, The role of women in the UHJ, Their struggle after the Baha'is shunned them, Human Rights, The freedom of thought in Islam and Baha'ism, The answerability to the Baha'i Institutions, The difference between Islamic writings and Baha'i writings, the Manifestation of Bahaism and the Allah of Islam, their life after accepting Islam, etc.

Some Quotes about Islam from Babi and Baha'i Writings

Ali Muhammad Bab wrote:

"Since at the time when the Holy Qur'an was revealed the people of those days prided themselves over their mastery of the language, Allah sent down this book in such a beautiful, vigorous and perfect style of language that nothing better can be imagined. And in this book the truth of the claims of the Holy Prophet Muhammad has been established on the most evident, manifest and irrefutable basis" (Al-Bayan Ms.)

Abdul Baha' writes: *"Among the miracles of the Holy Qur'an one is that it stands on a sure foundation of reason and wisdom in everything it teaches. On the basis of complete certainty it has propounded a sharia which for the people of this age forms the very essence of spiritual life. In addition to formulating a sharia the Qur'an also explains some weighty points of History and Mathematics which run counter to the theories accepted in those days, and it has been proved that the Qur'anic view is the correct one".1*

Baha'ullah himself says:

"The faulty intelligence and grasp of human beings cannot fully comprehend the vast body of truths embodied in the Holy Qur'an, just as a spider cannot hunt down and catch a bird".2

'Abdul Fadal, a well-known Baha'i missionary, says:

"These verses of the Holy Qur'an clearly indicate that the principles of sharia, its details, the arguments which support it, its origin and achievement, in short everything has been fully and conclusively dealt with in it, no aspect of any worthwhile question having been left incomplete or inconclusive".3

Baha'ullah wrote during his life at 'Akka: *"The sharia of Muhammad is complete and perfect in every way. The fault lies with the Muslims that they do not live up to it. If the Muslims were to act upon it, there would be peace in the whole world".4*

1. Khatabat Abdul Baha, Volume 1, page 5
2. Haft Wadi, page 43
3. Al-Durarul Bahiyah, page 134
4. Babul Hayat, page 68

Bahai Leader Admits it is a Propaganda Cult

Ron Paul: I Don't Believe in World Government

Ron Paul is America's leading voice for limited, constitutional government, low taxes, free markets, sound money, and a pro-America foreign policy.

For more information visit the following websites:

<http://www.RonPaul.com> <http://Store.RonPaul.com> <http://www.RonPaul2012.com> <http://www.house.gov/paul> <http://www.DailyPaul.com>
<http://www.RonPaulForums.com> <http://www.RonPaulFlix.com>

All for Bahaism, Bahaism for Nothing!

The ultimate spirituality manifest in Bahaism is lies, deceit, quarrel and greed by the founders of this cult. The master of deceit and god-craft decides that everything that God revealed in the religion of Bayan to form the latest revelation and to last 1511 to 2001 years was not good enough even for a year or two. He desired to play God and revolted against the cause of God. Small fragments of what wasn't good enough for even a year or two became his holiest book. He gathered the most ignorant and cruel bunch of people around him and committed the unthinkable; he incited his men to commit murder and called them the 'friends of God'. He attributed to the 'Source of Command' what befit himself. He gathered and paid liars to revise the history for him and make room for him in high places in the history. He wrote letters to the kings and hid them under the carpet to impress his followers. He pretended to be a servant of the Cause of Bayan in private and prepared for revolt in private. He expressed servitude in the most humble manner to the 'Source of Command' and waited for his time and when that arrived he opened his mouth against the 'Source of Command'. He wrote what he believed would please the naive and would bring them to him. He found no one trustworthy to take his place except his sons. The stronger one ate the rest and made sure only his offsprings get to the table. His talk of unity, peace, one language, one this, one that was so generically branded slogans that could not go wrong! Today, Bahais are mostly ignorant of the fundamentals set its claims on. The only account of the history they believe in is that of the stakeholders themselves. Their contemporary and past history reflects their political game as means to the end. Everything goes for the sake of the Bahai establishment even if it takes siding with the Satan itself.

Steve

Haifan Bahai Cult FAQ

Start HERE (Sourcewatch):

1. Baha'i Faith http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Baha%27i_Faith
2. Baha'i Internet Agency http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Baha%E2%80%99i_Internet_Agency
3. Then see, SECTS OF BAHAIS: A Taxonomy of Baha'i Sects <http://www.sectsofbahais.com/> &
4. Documentary film by independent Israeli film maker Naama Pyritz:

BAHA'IS IN MY BACKYARD <http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-2877478116441126906&hl=en-AU>

5. LAWSUIT

Comment: Larger Haifan Baha'i organization sues smaller Orthodox Baha'i faith for trademark infringement on the name Baha'i and loses.

US NSA vs OBF (Orthodox Baha'i Faith) Regarding the court victory by the Orthodox Baha'is, and the suit brought by the Haifan Bahai organization against them:

http://trueseeker.typepad.com/true_seeker/court_case.html Judge's decision <http://www.truebahai.info/court/139-opinion.pdf>

****Appellate hearing (Feb 2009)**** <http://www.ca7.uscourts.gov/tmp/LF1FFZY0.mp3>

Comment: This is an interesting listen.

Chicago Tribune Article Monday, May 18, 2009 Baha'i rift: Baha'is upset with Orthodox Baha'i Faith Mainstream group doesn't want the name Baha'i by any other group

6. BAHAI Tactics & Techniques <http://www.fglaysher.com/bahaicensorship/>

"Slandorous Vilification" = The Baha'i Technique – Ad Hominem, Libel, Slander, Demonize, Scapegoat, Ostracize, Shun, Banish, Backbite, Defame, Vilify, Discredit, Smear, Revile, Suppress, Attack, Bully, Intimidate, Threaten, Malign, Blackball, Deceive, Coerce, Silence, Harass... etc., etc.... **CAUTION NON-BAHAIS As far as possible they hold back from responding 2. Then they claim no knowledge of the given issue by feigning ignorance 3. After the exposé has exposed they will try to divert to secondary and totally peripheral and irrelevant side-issues 4. The exposé is then painted as someone with an axe to grind, biased, deluded (while they, the bahaim, still have not responded to the main issue exposed) 5. Next they relate mental instability and insanity to the exposé, i.e. shoot the messenger 6. Then, the last tactic, is to wheel out several dubious personas on the scene who claim to be neutral non-bahai observers who then begin attacking the exposé as well as the issue exposed while supporting the bahais and their issues as so-called non-bahais**

Quote

<http://www.fglaysher.com/bahaicensorship/technique.htm> Professor Juan Cole, University of Michigan, June 12, 1998:

"Let me ask you why in the world you think that I would risk my professional reputation by publicly stating falsehoods? ...The very technique of the more glaze-eyed among these people is to unbearably bully a Baha'i whom they don't like, use unjustified threats of declaring him or her a CB [Covenant Breaker (heretic)] to silence the individual, and if the person will not be silenced, then to depend upon the gullibility of the Baha'is in refusing to listen to any victim's story because, of course, the Baha'i institutions are infallible and divinely guided and could never do anything wrong. It is a perfect racket. Of course, this technique of making liberals go away has been enormously successful, and ex-Baha'i liberals have no credibility with the remaining Baha'is nor do most of them have any energy to continue to make a case, either to the Baha'is or the outside world, for the incredible abuses that go on inside this organization ostensibly committed to tolerance!" <http://www.fglaysher.com/bahaicensorship/Cole10.htm>

Professor Juan Cole, February 23, 1999: "There is nothing to be puzzled by. Right wing Baha'is only like to hear the sound of their own voices (which are the only voices they will admit to being "Baha'i" at all). Obviously, the world is so constructed that they cannot in fact only hear their own voices. They are forced to hear other voices that differ from theirs. This most disturbs them when the voices come from enrolled Baha'is or when the voices speak of the Baha'i faith. The way they sometimes deal with the enrolled Baha'is is to summon them to a heresy inquiry and threaten them with being shunned if they do not fall silent. With non-Baha'is or with ex-Baha'is, they deal with their speech about the faith by backbiting, slandering and libelling the speaker. You will note that since I've been on this list I have been accused of long-term heresy, of "claiming authority," of out and out lying (though that was retracted, twice), of misrepresentation, of 'playing fast and loose with the facts,' and even of being 'delusional.' I have been accused of all these falsehoods by *Baha'is*, by prominent Baha'is. I have been backbitten by them. This shows that all the talk about the danger a sharp tongue can do, all the talk about the need for harmony, for returning poison with honey, for a sin-covering eye, is just *talk* among right wing Baha'is. No one fights dirtier than they when they discover a voice they cannot silence and cannot refute.... <http://www.fglaysher.com/bahaicensorship/Cole71.htm>

BAHAI TACTICS according to Henry Tad http://groups.google.com.au/group/talk.religion.bahai/browse_thread/thread/0c1210a627cdae3

7: THEORY OF BAHAI LYING & EQUIVOCATION

See Susan Stiles Maneck, http://bahai-library.com/bsr/bsr06/62_maneck_hikmat.htm WISDOM AND DISSIMULATION IN THE BAH.

WRITINGS: The Use and meaning of Hikmat in the Baha'i Writings QUOTE

"In many cases hikmat calls for the apparent suspension of a Bahá'í principle in order to ensure the protection of the Faith."

Comment: In other words Baha'is may lie under any circumstance to ensure the protection of their organizational cohesiveness.

8: BAHAI ADMINISTRATIVE STALINISM QUOTE

"We don't want to be like those people who want to see God with their own eyes, or hear His melody with their own ears, because we have been given the gift of being able to see through the eyes of the House of Justice and listen through the ears of the House of Justice." – Bahai Counselor Rebeque Murphy

To hear this section of her talk go to: http://media1.bahai.us/tab/Highlights/Sunday/30_Counselor_Murphy_Rema...

<http://bahai-library.com/published.uhj/counsellors.html>

THE INSTITUTION OF THE COUNSELLORS A Document Prepared by the Universal House of Justice January 29 2001

Quote

Protection of the Cause (pp. 15-16)

Although deepening the friends' understanding of the Covenant and increasing their love and loyalty to it are of paramount importance, the duties of the Auxiliary Board members for Protection do not end here. The Board members must remain ever vigilant, monitoring the actions of those who, driven by the promptings of ego, seek to sow the seeds of doubt in the minds of the friends and undermine the Faith. In general, whenever believers become aware of such problems, they should immediately contact whatever institution they feel moved to turn to, whether it be a Counsellor, an Auxiliary Board member, the National Spiritual Assembly or their own Local Assembly. It then becomes the duty of that institution to ensure that the report is fed into the correct channels and that all the other institutions affected are promptly informed. Not infrequently, the responsibility will fall on an Auxiliary Board member, in coordination with the Assembly concerned, to take some form of action in response to the situation. This involvement will include counselling the believer in question; warning him, if necessary, of the consequences of his actions; and bringing to the attention of the Counsellors the gravity of the situation, which may call for their intervention. Naturally, the Board member has to exert every effort to counteract the schemes and arrest the spread of the influence of those few who, despite attempts to guide them, eventually break the Covenant.

The need to protect the Faith from the attacks of its enemies may not be generally appreciated by the friends, particularly in places where attacks have been infrequent. However, it is certain that such opposition will increase, become concerted, and eventually universal. The writings clearly foreshadow not only an intensification of the machinations of internal enemies, but a rise in the hostility and opposition of its external enemies, whether religious or secular, as the Cause pursues its onward march towards ultimate victory. Therefore, in the light of the warnings of the Guardian, the Auxiliary Boards for Protection should keep "constantly" a "watchful eye" on those "who are known to be enemies, or to have been put out of the Faith", discreetly investigate their activities, alert intelligently the friends to the opposition inevitably to come, explain how each crisis in God's Faith has always proved to be a blessing in disguise, and prepare them for the "dire contest which is destined to range the Army of Light against the forces of darkness".

9: BAHAI CONTROL ON THEIR ELECTORAL SYSTEM – EXPOSED (Structural features of Bahai Stali http://groups.google.com.au/group/talk.religion.bahai/browse_thread/thread/636c4cedf90dea5b – 10: BAHAI NOTIONS of FREEDOM & CONSCIENCE according to EX-UHJ member DOUGLAS MARTIN — Monday, September 23, 2001

<http://www.fglaysheer.com/bahaicensorship/DMartin.htm> Quote

"We have inherited a dangerous delusion from Christianity that our individual conscience is supreme. This is not a Baha'i belief. In the end, in the context of both our role in the community and our role in the greater world, we must be prepared to sacrifice our personal convictions or opinions. The belief that individual conscience is supreme is equivalent to "taking partners with God" which is abhorrent to the Teachings of the Faith." <http://www.bahai-library.org/talks/martin.watson.html>

11: NOTE especially, S.G. Wilson, BAHAIISM AND RELIGIOUS ASSASSINATION The Muslim World vol. 4, issue 4, 1914.

&

BAHAIISM AND RELIGIOUS DECEPTION The Muslim World, Volume 5, Issue 2, 1914-1915. <http://wahidazal66.googlepages.com/babidocuments%28westernsources%29>

12: BAHAI SCAM-ARTISTRY & FRAUD IN THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: A Multi- Billiard Rial Scam By A Baha'i Comp Dubai http://groups.google.com.au/group/talk.religion.bahai/browse_thread/thread/0c8df7dca08d52cef#

13: FBI raids office of Baha'i at Univ. Florida http://groups.google.com.au/group/talk.religion.bahai/browse_thread/thread/97aed7a172da675/1b8eb9f1758c241b?lnk=gst&q=FBI+%2B+Bahai%231b8eb9f1758c241b

14: BAHAI BUSINESS PRACTICES IN THE U

http://groups.google.com.au/group/talk.religion.bahai/browse_thread/thread/de706298e9a9cd6f#

15: BAHAI SPY RING IN INDIA BUSTED <http://bahaispyringnusted.blogspot.com/>

Note 16: Baha'u'llah (the Baha'i founder) On the Critics of the Cause

In Ma'idih-i-Asmani, vol. 4, page 355 <http://reference.bahai.org/fa/t/b/MAS4/mas4-355.html>

Translation by Wahid Azal (Jan. 7, 2009)

QUOTE

Chapter 11 The Critics of the Cause of God (munkirin-i-amru'llah) The Ancient Beauty in the Tablet of Habib from Maragha, which begins with "H B hear the call of God from the direction of the throne by the protective signs/verses (bi-ayati muhayyimin)..etc." they [i.e. Husayn Ali Nuri] enunciate the command (mi-farmayand) [i.e. state],

By God, the Truth, whomsoever criticizes it [i.e. Baha'ism], [which is] possessed of the manifest, the brilliant, the high and the perspicuous excellence, it behoveth him to ask his mother [yanbaghi lahu bi-an yas'al min ummihi] about his origins [or 'state', i.e. 'hal', meaning he should inquire his mother about his legitimate conception – trans.], for he shall return to the nethermost hell [asfal al-jahim]"...

In Promulgation of Universal Peace p. 322 the following is quoted by 'Abbas Effendi from a prayer by his father, cf. THE BAHAI FAITH AND ISLAM (ed.) Heshmat Moayyad (The Association for Baha'i Studies: Ottawa, 1990), p.23

Quote

O God! Whomsoever violates My Covenant, O God, humiliate him. Verily whosoever violates My Covenant, erase and efface him.

17: Note Dr Sa'eed Khan on the Baha'is he knew

From Mission Problems in New Persia, 1926, p. 83, 87 & 89 quoted by William McElwee Miller in The Baha'i Faith: It's History and Teachings, 1973, p. 289.

Quote

"...There is no conscience with them [i.e. the Baha'is], they keep to no principle, they tell you what is untrue, ignoring or denying undoubted historical facts, and this is the character of both the leader and the led...As to morality and honesty, the whole system has proved disappointing...I have been in contact with many Baha'is, and have had dealings with many and have tested many, and unfortunately I have met not a single one who could be called honest or faithful in the full sense of these words..." Dr Sa'eed Khan [was] a highly-respected physician...who had as a doctor treated the second widow of the Bab, and had for a lifetime known intimately both Babis [i.e. Bayanis] and Baha'is in Tehran and Hamadan. –

18: BAHAIISM AND THE BRITISH Government

<http://bahaisandbritannia.googlepages.com/home>

1. (Top Secret) British Government Foreign Countries Report (no.56) 16th November 1921 2. APPRECIATION OF THE ATTACHE EASTERN REPORT NO. LXX (May 1918) Then see, HOSTAGE TO KHOMEINI by Robert Dreyfuss (New Benjamin Franklin House: York, 1980) pp.117-118 (Pdf pages 73-74) <http://www.wlym.com/pdf/ick/hostage.pdf> & <http://www.archive.org/details/HostageToKhomeini> ... Today the Bahai cult is hated in Iran, and is considered correctly to be an arm of the British Crown. During the destabilization of the Shah in 1978, it was widely reported that in several instances the Bahai cult secretly funded the Khomeini Shi'ite movement. In part, the money would have flowed through the cult's links to the same international 'human rights' organizations, such as Amnesty International, that originally sponsored the anti-Shah movement in Iran. These movements also derive from the "one world" currents associated with the Bahais since the early 1900s. (If any Iranians have been misled on the question of the Bahais by the supposed antipathy of Khomeini's clique to the Bahais, it should be noted that the Bahai cultists often deliberately encouraged anti-Bahai activities as camouflage)... Also see pp. 115-116 (Pdf page 72) Note as well, <http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&id=RvtAAAAMAAJ&dq=%22The+Handboo...> Reference: PALESTINE

EDITED BY : HARRY CHARLES LUKE, B.LrIr., M.A. ASSISTANT GOVERNOR OF JERUSALEM AND EDWARD KEITH-I ASSISTANT CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF PALESTINE WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY The Right H HERBERT SAMUEL, P.C., G.B.E. HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR PALESTINE Issued under the Authority of the Government of Pal MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED ST. MARTIN'S STREET, LONDON 1922

Quote

"...Sir 'Abbas Effendi 'Abdu'l Baha had travelled extensively in Europe and America to expound his doctrines, and on the 4th December, 1919, was created by King George V. a K.B.E. for valuable services rendered to the British Government in the early days of the Occupation...."

See, Wellesley Tudor Pole http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wellesley_Tudor_Pole

&

<http://gothicimage.co.uk/leymap.html>–

19: Online Books to look at

William McElwee Miller THE BAHAI FAITH: It's History and Teaching
<http://www.fglaysher.com/bahaicensorship/archives/Baha'i%20faith%20and%20Its%20Teachings%20by%20William%20McElwee%20Miller.htm>
Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, BROKEN SILENCE <http://www.fglaysher.com/bahaicensorship/archives/SohrabBrokenSilence.pdf>

Vance Salisbury, AN EXAMINATION OF SUPPRESSION AND DISTORTION IN 20th-CENTURY BAHAI LITERATURE <http://bahai-library.org/unpubl.articles/suppression.html>

20: Washington based US Baha'i Lobbyists

From Government's end: why Washington stopped working by Jonathan Rauch, 1999, pg 41-42.

Quote

"A sign of the times was the opening of the Baha'i religion's Washington lobbying office in July 1987, complete with a staff of four and a budget of \$400,000 – a telling moment, because the Baha'i faith requires its members to abstain from politics. When I peaked through the Baha'is window one day, the only remarkable feature of their Washington office was that it looked exactly like every other Washington office."

http://groups.google.com/group/talk.religion.bahai/browse_thread/thread/9abcd6d6386598e0/d436dd1fcfbce02?lnk=raot&pli=1

21: THE TAHERI FILES <http://taherifiles.blogspot.com/>

–

22: Naser Entesali's SCRIBD controversial Baha'i documents page <http://www.scribd.com/NaserEntesali>–

See as well, <http://www.bayanic.com> [CLICK tab BAHAIISM]

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SILENCE

BROKEN SILENCE

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press.

—Article I, *Bill of Rights*.

Adopted by the Congress of the United States of America. December 15, 1791.

AUTHOR'S STATEMENT

The Bahai Cause had its inception in Persia, being inaugurated in 1844 with the declaration of the Bab (Arabic word for *gate*) which was to the effect: that a New Era had dawned, and that he, the Bab, was the Announcer of the imminent appearance of a World Teacher whose Message was to revolutionize the concepts of men and nations. The ministry of the Bab was of short duration, terminating in martyrdom—historic fate of the Forerunner. Meanwhile Baha-O-Llah, scion of a noble house of Persia, had renounced his position and estates to cast his lot in with the followers of the Bab (known as Babis). Persecution and death were the price paid by these devoted men for faith in a new Cause of human brotherhood, and Baha-O-Llah was imprisoned with the rest. It was at this time, in an underground dungeon in Teheran, that he received the revelation that he himself was the One whose coming had been foretold by the Bab; it was here that he was commissioned with the task of making out of the old barbaric world a *New World* of reason and justice.

Baha-O-Llah was not intended to die at the birth of the movement. More than twenty thousand persons who believed in the Bab, and later in him, sacrificed their lives for their Faith; but he, safeguarded by fate, was, with his family, banished to Turkey and then to Palestine. There, the prison walls of Acca, which, in their twenty foot depth, had withstood the cannon of Napoleon, crumbled, figura-

BROKEN SILENCE

The Story of Today's Struggle
for Religious Freedom

by

MIRZA AHMAD SOHRAB

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New York

for

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1942

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

Heart Phantasies
The New Humanity
Abdul Baha in Egypt
Renaissance
The Song of the Caravan
Living Pictures (Co-author, Julie Chanler)
I Heard Him Say
Silver Sun (Co-author, Julie Chanler)
The Bible of Mankind

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Religion is a subject on which I have ever been most scrupulously reserved. I have considered it a matter between every man and his Maker, in which no other, and far less the public, has a right to intermeddle.

—THOMAS JEFFERSON.

The love of religious liberty is a stronger sentiment than an attachment to civil or political freedom. That freedom which the conscience demands, and which men feel bound by their hopes of salvation to contend for, can hardly fail to be attained. Conscience in the cause of religion, and the worship of Deity, prepares the mind to act and suffer beyond almost all other causes.

History instructs us that this love of religious liberty, a compound sentiment in the breast of men, made up of the dearest sense of right and the highest conviction of duty, is able to look the sternest despotism in the face.

—DANIEL WEBSTER.

The Way of Freedom is opened! Hasten ye! The Fountain of Knowledge is gushing! Drink ye! Say, O Friends: 'The Tabernacle of Oneness is raised; look not upon each other with the eye of strangeness. Ye are all the fruits of one tree and the leaves of one branch.

Truly, I say: whatever lessens ignorance and increases knowledge, that has been, is and shall be accepted by the Creator.

—BAHA-O-LLAH: *Bahai Scriptures*,
Pages 132, 133.

Praise be to God! you are living upon the great continent of the west enjoying the perfect liberty, security and peace of this just government . . . for in this human world there is no greater blessing than liberty. You do not know. I who for forty years have been a prisoner, do know. I do know the value and blessing of liberty. For you have been and are now living in freedom and you have no fear of anybody. Is there a greater blessing than this? Freedom! Liberty! Security! These are the great bestowals of God. Therefore praise ye God!

—*The Promulgation of Universal Peace*,
Vol. I, page 49.

Words of ABDUL BAHA from an address delivered before the Metropolitan African Methodist Church, M Street, N. W., Washington, D. C., April 23, 1912.

THE TRUMPET LIES IN THE DUST

The trumpet lies in the dust.

The wind is weary, the light is dead.

Ah, the evil day!

Come, fighters carrying your flags, and singers, with your
war-songs!

Come, pilgrims of the march, hurrying on your journey!

The trumpet lies in the dust waiting for us.

I was on my way to the temple with my evening offerings, seeking for a place of rest after the day's dusty toil: hoping my hurts would be healed and the stains in my garment washed white, when I found thy trumpet lying in the dust.

Was it not the hour for me to light my evening lamp?

Had not the night sung its lullaby to the stars?

O thou blood-red rose, my poppies of sleep have paled
and faded!

I was certain my wanderings were over and my debts
all paid, when suddenly I came upon thy trumpet lying in
the dust.

Strike my drowsy heart with thy spell of youth!
Let my joy in life blaze up in fire.
Let the shafts of awakening fly through the heart of night,
and a thrill of dread shake blindness and palsy.
I have come to raise thy trumpet from the dust.

Sleep is no more for me—my walk shall be through
showers of arrows.
Some shall run out of their houses and come to my side—
some shall weep.
Some in their beds shall toss and groan in dire dreams,
For to-night thy trumpet shall be sounded.

—RABINDRANATH TAGORE,
from Fruit-Gathering.

FOREWORD

This is an amazing book even for our amazing generation which has become shock-proof. The strident march of totalitarian modes of thinking, here as well as abroad, has so changed the shape of the world we used to know that a momentous invention of science leaves us indifferent and the assailing of man's cherished liberties creates but a ripple of stir and commotion.

It is fitting and proper that citizens of a self-governing State voluntarily impose upon themselves certain restraints in the exercise of political rights when a crisis is impending. One may or may not agree that the crisis facing the United States of America has been serious enough to necessitate the introduction of peace-time conscription. One may or may not agree that preparedness for violent offense and defense is the best way to meet the worldwide crisis. But no one can question the right of the American State—which is but another term for the American people banded together for political purposes—no one can question the right of the American State to impose upon its citizens certain denials of freedom involved in conscription.

Political rights—rights to life, liberty, property and the pursuit of happiness—are derived from the State. They are conferred upon the citizens by the State. But there are *certain rights that inhere in man as man*—rights that are not subject to the jurisdiction of the State, rights that de-

rive from an authority higher than the State, from the dictates of one's conscience; from the still small voice within, which is the voice of the Most High.

Let us then distinguish between the *political rights of man* and the *human rights of man*. Political rights are conferred upon the citizen by the State and may be withheld from him by the State; but human rights can neither be conferred upon man nor withheld from him by the State. Limitations upon human rights are imposed by the State at its own peril. And the history of man testifies to the fact that *in every combat the State has had to give way ultimately before human rights*. The most striking illustration is the triumph of the Christian Church over the Roman State.

What the State cannot do in the matter of curtailing *human rights* no man or association of men is competent to do. For, the State, by definition, is an association of all "members" who become citizens by the fact of association for political purposes. The State, in other words, is the most inclusive and the most powerful association in every human society.

Every State, tyrannical, oligarchic, absolutist, dictatorial or democratic, of necessity comprehends within itself various associations for the enrichment of man's enjoyment—politically, economically, physically, intellectually, socially, spiritually. The characteristic of a democratic State is that it encourages all types of voluntary associations whereas the other forms of State merely tolerate voluntary associations—and that, too, on condition that their functioning does not undermine the authority of the State.

Among the most cherished human rights are:

- (1) Freedom of Conscience;
- (2) Freedom to Seek Truth;
- (3) Freedom to Experiment with Truth;
- (4) Freedom to Follow the Inner Light;
- (5) Freedom to Give Allegiance, unto Death, to whatever Cause one's Conscience Believes to be Right;
- (6) Freedom to Worship God in one's own Way.

Religious associations and institutions—churches, temples, synagogues, mosques, hierarchies, congregations, parishes—arise to help man in the enjoyment of his basic human right, namely, freedom to worship God in his own way, in terms of his inner light. Unfortunately, even religious associations and institutions, creations as they are of human beings, tend to go the way of all flesh; in course of time they develop their peculiar rites and rituals and prescribe structuralized forms of behavior, rendered hallowed by time and tradition.

Institutions are accepted ways of doing things—with a tendency toward structuralization. Man cannot live without institutions, neither can he live with institutions. An institution arises as an instrumentality to subserve a given end. Soon the end becomes subordinated to the maintenance of the institution. This then is the supreme dilemma of the human race: Man unknown to institutions is less than human; man dominated by institutions is also less than human; and yet, man eternally strives, as he must,

by means of institutions, to realize his worth as a citizen, his dignity as a child of God.

Eternal vigilance, it has been said, is the price of political freedom. Eternal vigilance, it may be said, is also the price of freedom from the tyranny of institutionalism. I venture to submit that every generation of free men is called upon to be on the alert in evaluating whether an institution is functioning as what it was intended to be, namely, as an instrumentality, or whether it has arrogated unto itself the role of the end. And if the generation as a whole is incompetent, as it may well be, to make proper evaluation, it is imperative that each generation be blessed with free souls, with men and women of vision and courage, who shall proclaim: "The Sabbath is made for man, not man for the Sabbath."

Democracy, broadbased upon the Bill of Rights, not only guarantees political rights but also very wisely makes ample provision for full enjoyment of human rights. The U. S. Constitution most explicitly guarantees freedom of conscience, freedom of religion, and in no uncertain terms restrains Congress from "prohibiting the free exercise thereof." The Courts have faithfully safeguarded the rights embodied in the Bill of Rights. And the Executive branch of the U. S. Government, far from interfering with freedom of religion, has from time to time championed freedom of conscience and religion for all mankind.

So long as the U. S. Constitution remains vital in the affairs of this nation, so long is the enjoyment of human as well as political rights of man assured. Indeed, this living example of the virtues of American democracy should act as a beacon-light to the rest of mankind.

II

In this book we have an interesting case history of man versus institution. The facts in the case are simple. In the last century there arose in Iran (Persia) three modern Prophets of the new dispensation—The Bab (1819-1850), Baha-O-Llah (1817-1892), Abdul Baha (1844-1921).

Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha taught, among other things:

- (1) Oneness of mankind—no racial prejudice;
- (2) Harmony of all religions—each religion is a divine revelation and, therefore, worthy of respect;
- (3) Reconciliation between science and religion;
- (4) Universal religion—to foster appreciation of all faiths;
- (5) Universal peace—through the establishment of a World Organization, through international arbitration and an international Parliament, through the removal of artificial customs barriers, through universal disarmament;
- (6) An international (auxiliary) language, to be created and adopted for international communication.
- (7) Independent investigation of truth;
- (8) Non-institutionalism;
- (9) Universalism.

"You cannot organize the Bahai Cause," said Abdul Baha. Bahaism, literally the Religion of Light, is meant to act as a leaven that leaveneth the whole lump. It is intended to reinforce and reinvigorate the eternal truths and ancient wisdoms embodied in the different religions of mankind. The Bahai teaching is, in a sense, a new tool of spritual insight, calculated to help humanity realize the age-old hope of peace on earth and goodwill among men.

Along with his own teachings and his vital interpretations of the message of Baha-O-Llah, Abdul Baha left a Will appointing his grandson Shoghi Effendi as the "Guardian" of the Bahai Cause and leaving directions for the election of an International Council which should in the future guide the development of the movement and co-ordinate the activities of its followers in accordance with the principles of Baha-O-Llah.

The four thousand odd followers of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha in the United States and Canada and some thousands of others scattered abroad seized upon Abdul Baha's Will as their fulcrum around which to organize the activities of the new cause, which was meant to be universal in scope and non-institutional in character. At once Bahai Assemblies, here as well as abroad, became like unto fraternal orders if not like unto secret societies with their unique rituals and paraphernalia.

The guardian, hierarchies, assemblies, rituals, taboos, rules for membership, approved forms of behavior, committees on publications, boards of censors, causes for excommunication—all the elaborate ramifications of the institutional pattern conspired to banish the soul of universalism from the Bahai teachings.

Professing Bahais soon became the prisoners of their own institutions. Against this travesty of the universalism of the Founders, against this imprisonment of the spirits of these great Prophets of our age, a few brave souls, devoted disciples and true, raised their protest. Among these protestant voices the most effective have been those of the author of this book, Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, and of his co-worker, Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler. They have been insistently calling upon the Bahais to go back to the original, pure teachings of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha—indeed, to the original, pure teachings of all the Teachers of mankind.

And the high priests of Bahai institutionalism have rewarded these two free souls with excommunication. It is a strange story—one could hardly believe such sacerdotal authoritarianism would be exercised or accepted by any group of persons in the twentieth century. And yet, enlightened American citizens have been accomplices in this nefarious business!

The story of man versus institution, of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab versus the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, finally culminates in a lawsuit. Excommunication on the religious plane was now to be buttressed with political and civil disability, with a restraint to Sohrab and his co-workers from the very use of the word Bahai!

The clear-cut judgment of the United States Courts in favor of man as against the institution heartens every champion of freedom of conscience.

This fresh triumph of the human rights of man over

the organizational rights of hierarchies should lead all free spirits the world over to offer their thanks to the Most High from whom derive the human rights of man. This judicial vindication should encourage our generation to cherish all the more reverently the political as well as the human rights of man.

HARIDAS T. MUZUMDAR.

New York City
Sept. 25, 1941.

AUTHOR'S STATEMENT

The Bahai Cause had its inception in Persia, being inaugurated in 1844 with the declaration of the Bab (Arabic word for *gate*) which was to the effect: that a New Era had dawned, and that he, the Bab, was the Announcer of the imminent appearance of a World Teacher whose Message was to revolutionize the concepts of men and nations. The ministry of the Bab was of short duration, terminating in martyrdom—historic fate of the Forerunner. Meanwhile Baha-O-Llah, scion of a noble house of Persia, had renounced his position and estates to cast his lot in with the followers of the Bab (known as Babis). Persecution and death were the price paid by these devoted men for faith in a new Cause of human brotherhood, and Baha-O-Llah was imprisoned with the rest. It was at this time, in an underground dungeon in Teheran, that he received the revelation that he himself was the One whose coming had been foretold by the Bab; it was here that he was commissioned with the task of making out of the old barbaric world a *New World* of reason and justice.

Baha-O-Llah was not intended to die at the birth of the movement. More than twenty thousand persons who believed in the Bab, and later in him, sacrificed their lives for their Faith; but he, safeguarded by fate, was, with his family, banished to Turkey and then to Palestine. There, the prison walls of Acca, which, in their twenty foot depth, had withstood the cannon of Napoleon, crumbled, figura-

tively speaking, before his dynamic Message. To all parts the Word went, East and West, North and South, and when, at an advanced age, Baha-O-Llah departed from this life, the Cause was already firmly established in countless loyal hearts throughout the Orient.

Abdul Baha was nine years old when he went into exile with his illustrious father, Baha-O-Llah. Release came to him at the age of sixty-four when, in 1908, the Young Turks overthrew the Ottoman Empire; and he immediately made use of his freedom by setting out on a journey, which led him throughout Europe and North America, to deliver the Message to the Occident. In 1921, he passed into the world beyond from his home in Haifa, Palestine, leaving behind a Will and Testament in which his eldest grandson, Shoghi Effendi, was designated as Guardian of the Cause.

II

Here, I wish to affirm my conviction that the Will of Abdul Baha is valid and that his appointment of Shoghi Effendi as the Guardian of the Bahai Cause is unchallengeable. Nevertheless, I take exception to certain policies and methods initiated by Shoghi Effendi and the Bahai Administration established under his leadership.

The teachings of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha are liberal to the nth degree, and broad beyond the outposts of human thought. It was the intention of the Founders to establish an unorganized movement, so all-inclusive and free as to be immune to the natural proclivities of men to restrict and limit. The fact that restriction and limitation

have already set in and are fast gaining ground, at this date, only twenty years after the removal from our midst of Abdul Baha, is a matter of profound concern to all those who, labels apart, believe in promoting Universal Religion.

The Bahai Cause, as founded by Baha-O-Llah nearly a century ago and as interpreted by his son Abdul Baha, was and still is a **UNIVERSAL RELIGION**. Its principles were intended to safeguard the conscience of man from interference by any hierarchical organization; to spiritualize society and to socialize religion; to unify the fundamental ideals of the World Faiths; to bestow upon every child of God the precious gift of liberty and to harmonize the conflicting interests of nations, races and peoples of the earth with the power of spirit. However, the present day Bahai Administration under the title of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada has, through its dogmas and creeds, frustrated the aims of the Founders of the Bahai Faith.

For over twelve years, I have followed the advice of philosophers and poets who eulogized silence, and held my tongue and pen in leash, the while witnessing the daily crucifixion of the movement which I love and believe in. At the same time, I continued to spread the Bahai Teachings through the medium of The New History Society, which I had formed for that purpose in conjunction with Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler. Then suddenly, the Bahai authorities brought suit against me and Mrs. Chanler on the ground that the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada had made a trade-mark of the word *Bahai* and that conse-

quently this name was their exclusive property. The legal action broke the chains of silence and resulted in a frank setting forth of the issues involved.

Thus, while the litigation was under way, *Broken Silence*, little by little, came into being. Appearing in the form of articles, published consecutively in *New History*, monthly magazine of The New History Society, it became the expression of innermost thoughts, pent up and stored away during the passage of years. I had never expected to strip my mind publicly; I had not dreamed and, especially, I had not wished to share my anxieties with others. I had meant to proceed on my own way, serving the Cause of Baha-O-Llah according to my light, the while leaving a clear passage for the Bahai Administration to do likewise.

This course of action came to a full stop with the institution of court proceedings. Overnight, the matter, which for so long had been treated with the utmost discretion, was brought into the public domain, and the time for ignoring the fundamental differences that existed between the liberal Bahais and the National Spiritual Assembly was at an end. Consequently, *Broken Silence* represents the lifting, under duress, of self-imposed restraint.

With the appearance of the first article in *New History*, copies of this little magazine were mailed to all the Bahais listed in the office of the Society. This was done, partly, because it was certain that the Bahai authorities would not give a full account of the legal proceedings to its membership; and, partly, because discussion of the lawsuit led to discussion of the Administration as it stands today, and

this, now that the barriers were down, seemed to be in order.

Personally, I value the democratic principle, being assured that affairs are safest in the hands of the people; therefore, I felt that I was not overstepping the lines of propriety in making available to my fellow Bahais the conclusions which I had reached, supported as they were, in every instance, with documentation. Neither I nor my associate, Mrs. Chanler, was perturbed at being, from time to time, pictured in Bahai publications as *enemies, adversaries, foes, betrayers and covenant-breakers*, for these were only opinions, or simulated opinions; and we felt that there were links yet unbroken between the body of the believers and ourselves. We thought it possible that, on the whole, we were being given credit for sincerity; even as we gave credit on this score to the majority of the Bahais.

In order to cope with the disturbance created in the minds of Bahais by the challenging articles appearing monthly in *New History*, the National Spiritual Assembly advised its membership as follows:—

In response to inquiries from many believers who wish to know what they should do with the literature received unsolicited from The New History Society, the National Assembly advises the friends to mark the envelopes "refused" and drop them in the nearest post box or post office for return to the sender.

—Bahai News, May, 1941, Page 6.

When the returned magazines were received at the office,

the names appearing on the envelopes were removed from the files, and no further literature was sent.

In a letter from the Guardian's secretary, appearing in the July 1941 issue of *Bahai News*, which is addressed to the National Spiritual Assembly, reference is made to the fact that Shoghi Effendi *has received the material sent to him regarding the legal action taken against The New History Society, as well as copies of their monthly publication*. Actually, ever since this problem was first dealt with, the editors of *New History*, on their own part, sent to the Guardian every issue of their magazine. We believed that this was the just thing to do and considered that, in a controversy which had entered the realm of the courts, the subject-matter should be at the disposal of both the authorities and the people.

Abdul Baha taught that everyone should work out things for himself. He said:—

God has given man the eye of investigation, by which he may see and recognize truth. He has endowed man with ears, that he may hear the message of reality and conferred upon him the gift of reason, by which he may discover things for himself. This is his endowment and equipment for the investigation of reality. Man is not intended to see through the eye of another, hear through another's ears nor comprehend with another's brain . . . Therefore depend upon your own reason and judgment and adhere to the outcome of your own investigation; otherwise, you will be utterly submerged in the sea of ignorance and deprived of all the bounties of God.

—*Promulgation of Universal Peace*,
Vol. II, page 287.

III

To the students of the origin and growth of religion, *Broken Silence* puts a number of searching questions:—

Can religion become a dominant factor in the lives of the people without the paraphernalia of creeds and dogmas?

Is it possible to preserve in religion the essential simplicity of the spirit with the emergence of a monopolistic, ecclesiastical order?

Can true spiritual democracy function alongside of a totalitarian hierarchy?

Which should become the test of fellowship: moral, ethical principles or theological, sectarian doctrines?

Is religion a quickening, an illumination, a fraternity, or is it a close corporation with exclusive privileges?

Can every man approach his Maker directly, or is it necessary to do so through the intermediation of authorities approved by a constitution and by-laws, together with various other fetters forged upon the anvil of commercial greed and priestly ambition?

Is religion freedom of conscience, or is it subservience to any individual or group of individuals, no matter how highly placed and outwardly respected?

What is religion? Is it communion with the soul of the universe, or strict adherence to fossilized and crystallized theologies? Is it the trumpet of the spirit, or the voice of materialism? Is it the Infinite Heaven and the expanse of the earth, or a temple built in a certain locality? Is it the leadership of God or the domination of man?

Is religion the lifting of the standard of universal brotherhood, the unveiling of the mysteries of cosmic consciousness, or is it the maintenance of a clan and of tribal consciousness?

What is the mission of religion in our modern age? The Prophets have postulated a world community—undogmatic, super-racial and non-partisan. Do we find it in our hearts and minds to take them seriously?

Is it our task to carry out their intention?

IV

In a letter recently received from a prominent Bahai of long standing, I come across these lines:—*For a believer like you to differ with Shoghi Effendi is a great sin, an unpardonable sin.*

This dogmatic assertion of my fellow Bahai brings to my memory experiences of long ago which apply to the same subject—difference of opinion; and I will close this introduction with a little story about Abdul Baha which I herewith relate for the first time.

Once in a while, I disagreed with the Master. In such instances, he would sit and listen to my arguments on some project or other and, after ten or fifteen minutes, would rise to his feet. I also would be standing. Then, he would twist one of my ears, slap me forcibly on the cheek, and thunder:—

Mirza Ahmad, you have courage! We shall do as you suggest.

Occasionally, having started to move away, he would turn around and, with a twinkle in his eye, would add:—

Mirza Ahmad! Next time, display more courage.

Impressed, bewildered, I would be left alone to marvel at the human and divine miracle that was Abdul Baha.

In these pages certain Persian words and names will be found spelled in more ways than one—Bahai, Baha'i; Baha-O-Llah, Baha-U-Llah, Baha'u'llah; Abdul Baha, 'Abdu'l-Baha, etc.

When Bahai writings were first translated into English, Baha-O-Llah's name was, for instance, spelled as Baha-O-Llah. Later, the central letter O was replaced by U, making Baha-U-Llah. Again, in these latter years, The New History Society found it advisable to return to the original spelling because it produces a more correct pronunciation of the word.

In the publications of the "Guardian" and the Bahai Administration certain apostrophes are used as well. These are in accordance with the rules established by the Orientalists of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, England.

Throughout this book, the quoted extracts carry the spelling exactly as adopted by an author or editor at the given time.

In Bahai literature, letters and communications from Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha are referred to as Tablets.

MIRZA AHMAD SOHRAB.

New York City

Sept. 24, 1941.

PART ONE

EARLY RECOLLECTIONS

1. I Am A Bahai

2. Bahai Odyssey

*I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills
from whence cometh my help.*

—Psalms, Chapter 121, Verse 1



POST

CORRESPONDENCE

Mirza

July 13, 1919

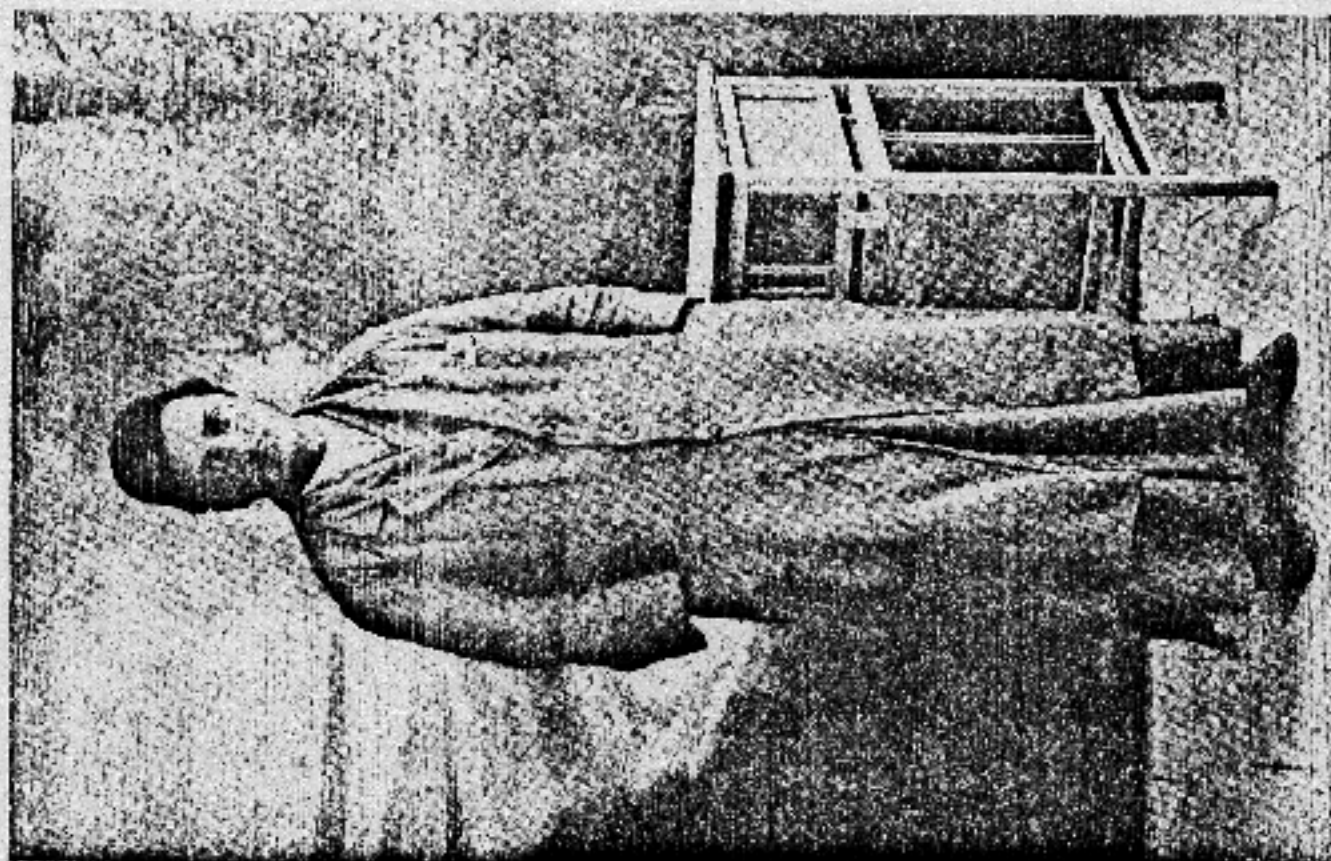
Dear Ahmad!

Love greetings! The friends
 & sisters all tenderly
 remember you at the
 sumptuous feasts & ban-
 quets that are being
 held on Mount Carmel!
 Beloved we are in excellent
 condition. awaiting
 your news personal & general. Shoghi



Mirza Ahmad Sohrab
 to Mr. Geo. Hamner
 1252 - 8th St. N.W.
 Washington
 D.C.
 U.S.A.

Letter to Mirza Ahmad Sohrab written by Shoghi Effendi on reverse side of postcard.



Postcard picture of Shoghi Effendi, grandson of Abdul Baha, taken in 1919. At present, Guardian of the Bahai Cause.

CHAPTER I

I AM A BAHAI

My Home in Esphahan

I am a Bahai. My grandmother, my mother, my two maternal uncles and my brother were Bahais. From the earliest days, our home in Esphahan was a center for the promotion of Bahai teachings and, although the activities of my family were conducted in secret, as far as was possible, the hour arrived when it became a target for the fanatical fury of the Mohammedan Mullahs. I well remember the last meeting held in our garden; the familiar group, the peaceful chanting of Tablets; then suddenly, the muffled sound of advancing feet, the dispersion of the guests to safety and the violent intrusion.

My uncle Haji Seyyed Zeinel-Abedin, poet-philosopher and a very rare and powerful personality, was the chief prize to be gained by this raid; but he managed to make his escape although at the price of a broken leg, and the intruders, after pillaging the house and stables to their hearts' content, took me off as their only captive.

My retention among the enemies of our Faith was a brief one. A few questions as to the names and whereabouts of our Bahai friends were addressed to me. These were accentuated by the powerful persuasion of the bastinado but, fortunately, I made no revelations. Then, my unconscious body was carried back and left at the door of our dismantled house.

A few days later, in the early morning, my uncle and I, both well bandaged up, were lifted to the back of a very

small donkey, and I turned and looked for the last time at my childhood's home. For some weeks, we hid and wandered among the hills, bearing southward, and on reaching Shiraz my uncle placed me in the care of a travelling Bahai teacher named Seyyed Assadollah, and we separated from each other. So, the tutelage of the philosopher of Esphahan was exchanged for the tutelage of a devoted personal follower of Abdul Baha; and in the company of Seyyed Assadollah I journeyed, by way of India, to Palestine.

I was about twelve years of age when I passed through the gates of Acca and came into the glorious presence of Abdul Baha, and I felt then, as I know now, that I was standing before the first of all teachers and the best of all masters. After that meeting I dedicated myself to his service for the duration of my life.

I Go to Work

When, after a short 35 days' stay in his household, Abdul Baha sent me to Ahmad Yazdi, at Port Said, Egypt, my heart had already become a garden in which the flowers of his love grew and flourished. As he embraced me at the hour of departure, he placed in my hand a letter. It was my first Tablet from him, written by his own blessed hand. After boarding the steamer, I opened the envelope. The words danced before my eyes. It is only now that I partially understand their meaning, but certainly those radiant words were an inspiration, and acted as an impetus to me as I started off on my uncharted future. Let me share with the reader a section of that Tablet.

Two Tablets from Abdul Baha

O thou heavenly youth! Although in the path of the True One, thou art homeless and a wanderer, nevertheless put thy trust in Him and seek His Confirmation. Ponder over the affairs and reflect . . . Because thou art at the Threshold of thy growth and development, thou must acquire poise and assurance, and gain firmness and steadfastness.

In Port Said, I worked in daytime as salesman in Ahmad Yazdi's store, and in the evenings I sat at the feet of Mirza Abul Fazl, foremost among Bahai Teachers, learning from him the spiritual lessons that caused me to *ponder over the affairs and reflect*, that made available the master-key to *poise and assurance* and disclosed the secret of *firmness and steadfastness*.

While I was thus working and studying, Abdul Baha did not forget me, for after a few months I received my second Tablet from him. He wrote:—

O thou my perpetual companion! I beg of God that in the spiritual rose-garden thou mayst become a merciful tree, conducive to the joy, exhilaration, attraction and happiness of the heart of humanity; that thou mayst become a most great gift to all the nations and a high bounty to all people.

Spiritual Apprenticeship

From that moment, I did not try to plan my life, for I realized that there was *One*, endowed with heavenly wisdom who was planning it for me. Each event led to another and, after the passing of about three years, I

حسب زور و قاسم و جبر و ستم و عجز و ساد

بسم

در حلقه حربه سربازان و زور و جبر
و جود و وفات و زور و جبر
و جود و وفات و زور و جبر
و جود و وفات و زور و جبر
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و جود و وفات و زور و جبر
و جود و وفات و زور و جبر

TABLET FROM ABDUL BAHA IN HIS OWN HANDWRITING

This is the first of over a hundred Tablets addressed to
Mirza Ahmad Sohrab by the Master.

found myself in Washington, D. C., serving Mirza Abul Fazl. On the return of this beloved teacher to the Orient, I took up work in the Persian Legation as secretary to the Minister. When, in 1912, Abdul Baha paid his historic visit to the United States and Canada, I became part of his entourage, travelling with him, and translating his words. This American tour having terminated, I continued with him as he journeyed, disseminating the ideals of Baha-O-Llah, through England, Scotland, France, Austria-Hungary and Germany. From Europe we sailed to Egypt and finally reached home in Palestine. During the World War, I was beside the Master by day and by night, and it was at that period that he dictated to me the *Tablets of the Divine Plan* which, at his bidding, I carried to the United States on a Japanese cargo boat, shortly after the close of hostilities. These Tablets were unveiled and read before the Eleventh Annual Bahai Convention at Hotel McAlpin, New York, in April 1919.

Thus, in the course of those many years of priceless opportunity, I tried to assimilate in my mental and spiritual consciousness as much of the spirit of Abdul Baha's teachings as was possible to me. I not only listened to his words but also took them down at formal times and at informal times, and these words and the intention back of them became part of me, closer than the breath of life.

My Treasure

During my long association with the Bahai Cause, whether in the immediate vicinity of the Master or at a physical distance from him, I did my very best to serve the Bahais throughout the world; and Abdul Baha re-

warded me with his confidence and with the blessings of numerous Tablets. These latter are my treasure and my stronghold, for which I would not accept the wealth of empires.

Ere I bring to a close this personal recital (the object of which is to establish my identity, for whatever it is worth), I will reproduce herein, in all humility and gratitude, the contents of yet another Tablet from Abdul Baha written to me in about 1910.

My Spiritual Charter

Oh Thou who dost attract the hearts of the favored ones toward the Manifest Horizon!

Verily Thou art witness to the fire which is ablaze in the breasts, to the tears which are streaming from the eyes, and Thou knowest that the period of patience and silence has come to an end. The sight of the dear ones, Oh my God, is dimmed with weeping; the hearts of the yearning ones, Oh my Beloved, are wandering in the desert of Thy mercy; the souls of the attracted ones, Oh my Desire, are parched with longing for Thee.

Verily, Oh God, they have heard Thy universal proclamation, and that which Thou hast revealed in the Koran: "*Travel ye over the earth so that ye may behold the signs of the mercy of God.*" Thereupon, after Thine ascension, the people of faith have arisen, voyaging to distant lands, and hastening to remote regions to cry out Thy Name; to remind the souls of the arrival of Thy days; to lead the minds to the fountain of Thy signs; to show to all humanity Thy truth and Thy faith; to guide the seekers to the right path, and to indicate to the workers the straight highway.

اللهم باعادك غلب الغزاة الى الان من اسير الكائنات لري
 ماضهم النار الى الصدد والنعم ان يوسع واعزم الصدد اسكن
 من راحة ما الهى فاجدها المرات غلبت الشياطين بالمحسنى باله
 الى الطواب ومنعوا المسحوقين ما مقصودى وانتم من المرات الى الطواب
 قد سموا حطاك با الهى ومما ابرز الى الغزاة غلبت الى الان من
 ما طرد الى النار مرارة عدلك فام اهل الوفاء واغزو اعد
 الصدد الى سائر الاكام وسرعو الى اقبالهم شاسته الان رجا لباد
 اسكت وذكروا التوسس ما ياتك وذكروا القول الى اباك
 منة الكل الوردى محكم ورايك وهدوا الطالبين الى الصراط المستقيم
 وذكروا الكاهن الى المسحوقين ومنهم عدك انساب على ايمه
 اعظم المحب من اهل الجحيم النار من ما صين المزعج من صها
 طامحه من الكاسر الذين لغزك المواقن وودع الاقارب
 وودع الزايعه والرحا واحار الناس والضره وسرع الى عزمه
 لمدى منصرفنا اليك منوكلنا لك سادنا يا صكت منة كراة كرك
 مننا الى ممالك منترأ نجات قد سكت ما طفا بناك سادنا
 اسكت نه نك سنا لبر ماك مبعنا نحتك القاطنة موصفا
 لراحتك القاطنة مجا لكل سائل سنا لكل ذاهل
 انه قد نحت كل منة الى سكت وصر على الناس والضره اني نحتك
 وما نحت بعضا من ولا دعه من ولا من ولا سكت في الاله سائل

انك كلنك العلب اسبح الكرم ماشك النجوم سراغا والثرى هادنا ليعول
 طمانا نوح به ارفع صبحه في الحامل وبلو نداء في المحاسن فاطنا لول
 البرهرون والمستطرون الى صين سباز سرعون به ابا الهى صفتك و
 حودك واحسانك والظانك رت اهد ملاك كنقر بن واهل بن
 من الملا اهل بن العالمين واحل مصباح الهدى في ملك الله واهل بن
 دكوب الزهرة الزهر آ في سطح الوفا حتى يحم غنة قدسك وكن وجه
 على الزراب ساعد اشكر العسلك واكرامك حامد الموابك مشدود
 الاذ على مدسك قوتى الطهر على عبادتك رب رب قدره
 كل جبرى ملكك واجلا آية المواب بن طلعك وارمى وارمى
 واكرم لى وارمى سبنار فى مدانه وشه نكار فى صدمانه وابنا
 روى ملوانه انك انت المودة الموفق العزيز الكرم المستر
 الرؤف الزمى مع

A SPIRITUAL CHARTER

Tablet from Abdul Baha to Mirza Ahmad Sohrab

Among these is Thy servant Ahmad, who is firm in the Ancient Covenant, fleeing from the people of darkness, drinking from the water of eternal life, intoxicated with the wine that is overflowing from the divine cup. In truth, he has left his home, waved the hand of farewell to his relatives, and, forsaking ease and comfort, has turned his face toward unknown lands, accepting adversity and hardship while heralding Thy Name and commemorating Thy glory. Attracted to Thy beauty, stirred by the perfume of Thy holiness, he speaks Thy praises, proclaims Thy Cause, guiding men to Thee, proving Thy religion, demonstrating Thy irrefutable truth, and so becoming an answerer to each questioning one and a guide to each straying one.

Oh my Lord! Oh my Lord! Verily he has endured every affliction in Thy path, and patiently has borne every difficulty for Thy love. A breath of rest has he not breathed, nor has he sought any habitation or favor in this world. Rather he has walked in the footsteps of Christ, Thy most exalted Word, taking the earth as his bed, the herbs as his food and the stars as his lamps. Notwithstanding, his cry was raised in the assemblies and his voice was heard in the meetings. The seekers surrounded him and the thirsty ones drank of the water of his utterance. Oh my God! This indeed is through Thy generosity, Thy beneficence, Thy mercy and Thy favor. Oh my God! Help him with the hosts of Thine approximate Angels; support him, amid Thy creatures, with the cohorts of the Supreme Concourse; make of him, in that distant land, a lamp of guidance and a sparkling luminary from the dawning-place of faith, so that he may serve Thy holy threshold, falling prostrate on the ground, thanking and praising Thee

for Thy liberality to him; girding up, in Thy service, the loins of endeavor, and becoming reinforced and empowered in adoration of Thee.

Oh my Lord! Oh my Lord! Assign for him every bounty and suffer him to become the sign of Thy gifts among Thy people. Then have pity upon me, forgive me, show me Thy mercy—make me a sharer in his service, a partner in his adversity and a companion in his loneliness.

Verily, Thou art the Confirmer, the Helper, the Mighty, the Generous, the Compassionate!

—A translation of this Tablet was published by Bahai Publishing Committee, New York, 1930. It is to be found in "Tablets of Abdul Baha," Vol. III, pages 485-7. .

Ascension of Abdul Baha

In November 1921, while I was living in Los Angeles, California, the Bahai world received the overwhelming news that Abdul Baha had departed from this life. It was a stunning blow to all those who had loved and served him, but to me, especially, it was catastrophic. For days I sat lifeless, in an agony of despair. Then, with this new baptism of desolation, I began to re-read his words and, as I did so, I felt clearly that I was encompassed by the spirit of the Beloved and realized that now, more than at any other time, I must arise to magnify his Cause and strive to fulfill his promises, all the while demonstrating that *poise and assurance, firmness and steadfastness* which he, in his first Tablet, had enjoined upon me to acquire in my boyhood.

Will and Testament of Abdul Baha

Abdul Baha left behind him his Will and Testament, in his own handwriting. The authenticity of this document is beyond the shadow of doubt. In it, he appointed his eldest grandson, Shoghi Effendi, as the Guardian of the Cause.

The transference of leadership is always a test, and especially must this be so when the first leader is incomparable in every respect; nevertheless, the Bahais rallied gallantly to the call of the Master, giving their whole-hearted allegiance to the newly appointed Guardian. I will quote from a talk delivered by myself at a conference held from November 24th to 26th, 1922, in San Francisco, California. A report of the conference, which I made at the time and which included my address, was entitled *A Bird's Eye View of the First Teaching Conference of the Western States*. It was later circulated among the Bahais in type-written form. A copy was sent to Shoghi Effendi. This talk shows my ardent desire, expressed in terms of very youthful enthusiasm, to serve the young Guardian.

Extract from My Talk at the Conference

The Youths of Baha were summoned to enlist in the army of the new General of the Kingdom, the Guardian of the Cause. There is a new spiritual King sitting at the head of "the Round Table." This is the age of heavenly chivalry. The Call is sent forth for a celestial tournament. The valiant Knights and the fair ladies are being invited from the four corners of the earth. The bugle is blowing and the flag is unfurled. It is the

time when the Bahai Knighthood might blossom and be adorned with the flowers of service and sacrifice. Where are the undaunted heroes to pledge themselves to the New King and then to go forth to redeem the wrong and gain victories deathless?

It is the day of Youth, of energy, initiative and fearlessness. The significant fact that the New King of the Kingdom of Abha is young, of the same age as the Bab—must fire the imagination of the youths of Baha all over the world. It is their day, their opportunity. They must rise in concert and assist their youthful General with every means at their disposal. There is no other salvation for the Bahai Cause save through this unanimity of thoughts and opinions.

A new order is issued from the general headquarters of the Kingdom of Abha. It calls to the young blood to arise and register their names in the new book. Recruiting stations are being opened in every corner of the earth. Lo and behold, we must muster a new Army—boys and girls—full of hope, aspiration, intrepidity and grit. Let them enter the training camps, take intellectual and spiritual exercises and, when fit and hardy soldiers and soldierettes, go out into the world and fight the good old fight against sham, hypocrisy, intolerance and prejudices. A new battle cry was raised and from that banquet, it was sent out over the wires ringing round the world to echo and re-echo in the halls of memory for all the succeeding ages and cycles. What was that battle cry? Here it is—*To Beheyeh Khanoum [Sister of Abdul Baha], Haija, Palestine, Love, Greetings, Western States Teaching Conference affirm loyalty Shoghi Effendi. Beg divine confirmations.*

Reference to this talk was made in the following words

by the late Mrs. Shahnaz Waite of Los Angeles, California, in her report of the Teaching Conference.

Next, our brother Ahmad spoke, and he called upon all the Juniors and young married Bahais to arise, and they did so with joyous faces. After they were seated, Ahmad drew a wonderful picture of our Juniors, as a band headed by their Young Captain—Shoghi Effendi—marching onward to Victory. He said that you Juniors were the Celestial Army that must carry on the work—the Great Work of spreading the New Civilization throughout the world. It was a most inspiring moment, and we older ones felt the deep significance of it all. We could see a mighty Army, headed by this Divine Youth—the Standard bearer of GOD'S Cause today, and so appointed by the Center of the Covenant, Abdul Baha—and we could hear with the mind's ear the songs of Peace and Love which you were singing as you went marching on. GOD speed you on your way—you the "Children of the Kingdom" of EL ABHA.

An Old Accusation

Practically, from the departure of the Master from this life until today, it has been charged against me by the Bahai Organization and by the members of the Community that I deny the Will of Abdul Baha and refuse to accept Shoghi Effendi as Guardian. Therefore, I take this opportunity to make a plain and unequivocal statement: Never in thought, word or writing have I questioned the authenticity of the Will, nor denied the validity of the appointment of Shoghi Effendi. Let us now hope that, once and for all time, this fact has been made clear and manifest.

Association with Shoghi Effendi

Let me state also that for several years (1913-1919), while acting as secretary and interpreter to Abdul Baha, I associated with Shoghi Effendi in Haifa and in the University of Beirut. We worked together; we served the same Master, he as a member of the family and I as a devoted follower; we discussed frankly and joyfully the past, present and future affairs of the Cause and in time, so far as I could judge, a genuine friendship was established between us. This friendship was continued, for when, in December 1918, Abdul Baha sent me to the United States with the Tablets of the Divine Plan, I requested Shoghi Effendi to take up the work which I had carried on for about seven years, that of reporting, in Diary Letters, accounts of the daily activities and of the talks given by the Master. Through these Diary Letters, the Bahai world would be kept fully informed, as it had been in the past, of what was going on in the life and in the vicinity of Abdul Baha. Consequently, beginning with December 23rd, 1918 (the very day that I left Haifa), Shoghi Effendi started to write interesting Diary Letters, describing the daily life of Abdul Baha and quoting from his conversations with guests and pilgrims. These were mailed to me regularly. Besides the letters, I received from him numerous postal cards giving lovely little glimpses of his own life. These Diary Letters and post cards I have treasured all these years as tokens of a friendship founded on the love of the Master.

The Diary Letters of Shoghi Effendi were at that time copied and distributed among some of the members of the Bahai Assemblies and a few of them were published in

The Star of the West (see Bound Volumes of *Star of the West*, Vol. X, pages 216-220 and Vol. XI, pages 48-52). Incidentally, the very first photograph of Shoghi Effendi that reached the United States was on the back of a post card addressed to me and dated July 13, 1919, which photograph I sent to the editors of *The Star of the West*. It is reproduced in Vol. X, page 210, with the following caption: *Shoghi Effendi, Grandson of Abdul Baha, Translator of recent Tablets to, and letters from, Bahais of the United States and Canada. Writer of Diary Letters beginning in this issue of The Star of the West.*

Rules, Regulations and a Lawsuit

After the ascension of Abdul Baha in 1921, certain reactionary and dogmatic forces began to make their appearance in the Cause. Almost unnoticeable at first, they, little by little, gained ground until at present, this movement, which was the most universal and liberal of all movements, past and present, has been reduced to a sect, while its spirit is all but extinguished. The principles of Baha-O-Llah are forgotten and in their stead we see nothing but a mass of rules and regulations that duplicate, to say the least, the ecclesiastical paraphernalia of previous organized religions.

Realizing the state of affairs and my inability to alter it, for years I kept clear from involvement with the organizational aspect of the Cause. At the same time, I gave my services whenever they were wanted and, more often, offered them when they were not wanted. Later, I associated myself with Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler and founded The New History Society. Through

this medium I have been enabled, during more than eleven years, to disseminate the Bahai teachings in their purity, as I had learned them from Abdul Baha.

The story is a long and diversified one—human and dramatic—which culminated in court proceedings brought by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada against Mrs. Chanler and myself. In the application for an injunction, which was served on April 27th, 1940, following some legal correspondence which took place in December 1939 and January 1940, appeal was made to the court to prevent Mrs. Chanler and me from teaching the Bahai Cause and using the Bahai name.

A Reversal of Attitude

This bringing before the public of a controversy, which on our side had always been kept strictly to ourselves, has forced me to reverse my attitude on the whole issue. Seeing that matters had reached this point, reserve was no longer appropriate. I therefore resolved to review the activities of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada. If, in the course of my writing, I have occasionally disagreed with the policies of Shoghi Effendi, it is not because I, in the least, contest the genuineness of the Will of Abdul Baha or question the appointment of Shoghi Effendi to the Guardianship, but because, as a Bahai, I maintain my freedom of conscience and hold to the injunction of Baha-O-Llah: *Independent investigation of Truth*. Citizens of the United States feel themselves at liberty to freely discuss, to agree or disagree with the policies of the President.

This does not imply that they question his right to occupy the White House, nor that they are planning to overthrow the government. On the contrary, it is an expression of their love for this country and of their desire to contribute toward its safety and betterment.

I believe that things should be reasoned out. In the Old Testament this question is very well emphasized: *Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord.* (Isaiah, Chapter I, 18). Now, if God invites us to *reason* with Him, it seems that reasoning with Shoghi Effendi and the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada should not be completely out of place.

In my discussion of the topics to be dealt with, I shall try my best to be fair and sane. I will be scrupulously fearless. I will not make statements without proving them. The Teachings of Baha-O-Llah, Abdul Baha, the letters of Shoghi Effendi, the writings of Bahai teachers, *Bahai News*, Bahai publications, and the laws and legislative procedure laid down by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada will be the sources of my authority. I will give exact references to pages in books, magazines, pamphlets, etc., put out by the Bahai Publishing Committee. I will show from the writings of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha that the Cause that they had envisaged and for which they suffered is quite different and totally at variance with the one that is being taught today. One is divine revelation, the other is human authority; one is universal and all-inclusive, the other is restricted and separative; one is dignity and freedom of conscience, the other is subserviency and blind loyalty; one is wings outstretched, the other is feet enchained.

A Voice in the Wilderness

In assuming this rather unwelcome task, I hope to render a distinct service to the Cause in which I was brought up, in which I will die, and for which I would at any time make any sacrifice. I do not claim to be a leader. I do not seek followers. I have no wish that my name should be even remembered. I am simply a voice in the wilderness. Lastly, farthest of all from my thoughts is the idea of being destructive, for my aim is to re-discover the original spiritual teachings of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha, which were and are for the establishment of a divine civilization. Should I succeed in this, I know that my Master's smiles will be upon me.

CHAPTER II

BAHAI ODYSSEY

It all happened like this:

1919

Bearing the Tablets of the Divine Plan, revealed by Abdul Baha in Palestine during the World War, I landed in New York on March 18, 1919, from the S. S. Yeboshi Maru, after an adventurous trip through the Mediterranean and the Atlantic Ocean. At the 11th Annual International Bahai Congress which was held in the McAlpin Hotel, from April 26th to 30th, the above Tablets were successively unveiled and read, copies of the same in a booklet of 82 pages, entitled *Unveiling of the Divine Plan*, being distributed at the last session among the delegates and guests.

1919-20

Immediately after the close of the Bahai Congress, I made an extensive tour throughout the United States and Canada, speaking before churches, schools, colleges, universities, clubs, numerous civic institutions and Bahai Assemblies. These lectures were principally on the Cause and on the implications of the Divine Plan; some of them related to my seven years' sojourn in Palestine in the service of Abdul Baha.

I was back in New York by April 1920 and spoke at the Twelfth Annual Bahai Congress and Convention held in the Aldine Club from the 24th to 28th of the same month.

1920-21

Here, in New York, at the Bahai Congress, I was most happy to meet for the first time Janabe Fazel Mazandrani, a Persian Bahai teacher and philosopher sent to America to promote the principles of Baha-O-Llah.

Then, after a few days, I received the following cablegram from Abdul Baha:

Haifa, June 21st, 1920

Be in important cities with Fazel.

Abbas.

Likewise, in a Tablet from Haifa, written June 25th, Abdul Baha wrote to me, giving further instructions on a lecture trip in which I was to accompany Janabe Fazel. Having just returned from my own tour, during which I had established many valuable connections both with the public and the press, I was in a position to help with the program and get it into fairly good shape without loss of time. Then we started off.

During our pilgrimage, which lasted nearly sixteen months, Janabe Fazel and I visited practically all the important cities of the United States, travelling as far as Seattle and Portland. A complete record of this journey is available in a collection of newspaper clippings; in my *Diary Letters*, published and circulated by the Bahai Teaching Committee of Washington, D. C.; in a series of articles written by myself under the title *Persian Pilgrim's Pen Pictures*, published weekly in a newspaper of Portsmouth, N. H., and in a large volume which embodies some of the lectures delivered by this brilliant teacher.



ABDUL BAHÁ

1922-23

After Janabe Fazel had sailed homeward, I returned to Los Angeles, where, in order to become self-supporting, I set myself to the preparing of a number of lectures on Persian poetry and the great Faiths of the East. My studies having been completed, I had two leaflets printed, the first on literary and religious subjects, the other on the Bahai Cause, this latter to be given free and without charge. When these circulars had been distributed, I found that the churches, societies and clubs in the vicinity showed especial interest in the second circular, and I was kept busy delivering lectures on the Cause. This circumstance made me very happy, but did not add to my income; and my condition became distinctly precarious, as my audiences were scattered far and wide and I was forced to walk for miles in order to appear before them. I will here mention the fact that the allowance which Abdul Baha had provided for me since my arrival in this country had now stopped, owing to the departure of the Master from this life. Therefore, living as I did in the vicinity of Hollywood, I was tempted to visit the Studios, and presently I was working as *extra* or *atmosphere* in this or that picture. This industry fascinated me and through it I met many delightful people; so, while in the day time I portrayed pirates, or Oriental princes or beggars, at night time, dressed in my Persian robes and turreted with a gorgeous turban, I lectured on the Bahai Cause before distinguished and urbane audiences or recited the quatrains of Omar Khayyam for the relaxation of actors, artists, scenario-weavers and playwrights. In this way, I drifted into the founding of *Firdousi Salon*, a Wednesday evening



JANABE FAZEL MAZANDRANI
Bahai philosopher and teacher sent by Abdul Baha to the
United States.

club attended by a colorful non-descript crowd, which developed into a center of considerable notoriety.

By this time I had become barely self-supporting, although I still chiefly engaged myself in activities, such as scenario and playwriting and amateur clubs, which led me nowhere. Then, out of a clear blue sky, I received a cablegram from Haifa, dated April 11, 1923. It read:

Sohrab

Your active collaboration with Fazel at convention and teaching heartily desired.

Shoghi

In this manner, and through subsequent letters from New York and Boston, I was apprised of the fact that Janabe Fazel had returned from the East for another teaching campaign and that he was awaiting me in Washington, D. C. So, I set aside my lecture engagements and multifarious forms of relaxation and took the train for the nation's capital.

Once more we started off on a tour, which this time led us through the cities and towns of the Middle West. Everywhere the much loved teacher was greeted by friends, old and new, and noticeable interest in the Cause was engendered. Then, when the tour was brought to a conclusion I turned my steps once more toward my adopted home, Los Angeles.

During the years of 1922-23 I did a prodigious amount of work, writing, lecturing, acting as extra and running the *Firdousi Salon*. As I now look back upon those years, from March 18, 1919, when I landed in New York to January 16, 1924, I literally gasp at the mileage that I

covered, the number of Bahai and non-Bahai lectures that I delivered, the amount of writing that I both used and discarded and the variety of occupations that kept me on the jump from morning to night. But, why do I stop at January 16, 1924? Because, on that day something happened that turned the current of my life from one direction to another. Because, on that day, through a chance circumstance (and I have to wonder if it really was a chance circumstance) I took hold of a chain of events which ultimately led to the establishment of The New History Society and to my expulsion from the organized aspect of The Bahai Cause.

January 16, 1924

On the evening of this day, I was speaking before the Bahais of Los Angeles on the life of Abdul Baha and, in the course of my talk, I brought in some stories about Mary Magdalene as I had heard them from the Master, himself. At the close of the lecture, a tall and very striking woman approached me and, without any preliminaries, asked: *Can you write me a scenario on the life of Mary Magdalene?* Of course, I answered. *I certainly can. Then meet me tomorrow at the Biltmore Hotel and we will discuss the details at lunch. Whom shall I ask for?* I stuttered weakly. Oh, and a twinkle came into her eyes, *ask for Valeska Surratt.*

Now, on Broadway this had been a name to conjure with, but to me, poor Bahai teacher and moving picture extra that I was, it meant nothing. Nevertheless, a meal at the Biltmore was not to be scoffed at, so the next day found me in a very luxurious dining room seated across

the table from a lady, as glamorous as any I had ever seen, even from a distance. That I didn't do the courtly thing and pay for the lunch goes without saying, for I had at that moment exactly fifteen cents in my pocket, this sum representing my worldly possessions in their entirety; but, just the same, I managed to hold the interest of my companion to the extent that, when I returned to my little room in about three hours' time, I was carrying a contract for the writing of a scenario on Mary Magdalene together with advance payment in the form of a single bill of \$100. That night, about thirty of my cronies, extras and vagabonds of various descriptions, had a feast, the like of which they had seen only in pictures.

Valeska Surratt left Los Angeles the next day, but during six months she regularly sent me \$150 a month and many kind letters, while I, as an initial step in my task, made a coast to coast trip to study, in the main libraries of the country, whatever material was available on the subject of the proposed scenario; after which, having retired to a cabin in a secluded canyon about thirty miles from Los Angeles, I devoted myself to reflection and composition on the life of the great woman whose love had played no small part in the founding of Christianity. On June 19th, five months after the signing of the contract, I mailed to Miss Surratt in New York the typewritten manuscript of Mary Magdalene in 443 pages.

1927

This scenario went through many vicissitudes, and did not reach the screen, although I still consider it one of the best pieces of work that I have done; and it happened

that in the early part of 1927 I was sent for to come to New York in connection with some complications that had arisen concerning it. On the night of my arrival, Miss Surratt took me to dine with Mrs. Raymond Little, and it was there that I met Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler.

Now, Mrs. Chanler was a Bahai of but two years' standing and very deeply in love with the Cause. She had just completed a translation of Baha-O-Llah's *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf* from the French of Hyppolite Dreyfus and was ardently hoping to find some other avenue of service. Therefore, at this meeting, which I owe exclusively to Valeska Surratt, the idea came to Mrs. Chanler that my talents, as she graciously called them, could be put to better use in New York than in Hollywood; and a day or so later Mr. and Mrs. Chanler proposed that I should deliver a series of lectures at their house the following winter. The lectures were to be on Persian poetry and literature and would serve as a means of support until something else developed. Being a vagabond by nature and always ready to try something new, I accepted this offer; and the next autumn, having meanwhile returned to California for the summer, I opened a course of afternoon lectures in Mrs. Chanler's drawing-room before a group of her friends.

1928

This series of lectures led to others, and toward the middle of the winter it was arranged that I should speak every Wednesday evening for twelve weeks at the Bahai Center. Mrs. Chanler rejoiced exceedingly over this plan and the meetings started out very successfully, drawing

large numbers of people which increased week by week. Now, as a result of my sometimes casual and unorganized way of speaking, in the middle of the seventh lecture I digressed from the subject, which was *A Universal Bible*, and started to philosophize on the attitude that would be shown to Christ were he to come to New York during these days. He would certainly not be welcomed or appreciated; in fact, I continued rather facetiously, he would probably be arrested under the Volstead Act for turning water into wine. Now, it happened that a newspaperman, whom Mrs. Chanler had arranged to have present, reported the meeting in the next day's paper, featuring that single phrase out of my whole talk; and this article brought about my downfall from the platform of the Bahai Center. The following Wednesday evening, my place was taken by another speaker.

1928-29

Toward the close of that year, Mrs. Chanler made arrangements for me to give a series of eight studies on the vital and mystic problems of modern life. These took place on Sunday evenings, from November 18, 1928, to January 6, 1929, at the little Florentine Room in the Park Lane Hotel, the course ticket of admission being \$25.

It was a difficult step for Mrs. Chanler to take, because she had never sponsored anything in a public sense; and she was at this time pretty much alone as her intimates among her Bahai friends had drifted away after the fiasco at the Center. However, fortune favored us and we were able to carry on during the eight weeks of these philosophical lectures, speaking to audiences that filled our miniature hall to capacity.

Toward the end of this series of meetings at the Park Lane Hotel, Mrs. Chanler decided to take me into her confidence. *The people are asking for more spiritual food than you are giving them*, she said, *they want the source of your teachings*, and then she went on to suggest that, on the closing date, we announce three lectures on the Bahai Cause to be held in the same place and without charge.

What innocence, I thought to myself! Does she really imagine that I, as an individual, could teach the Bahai Cause, unmolested, in New York City or anywhere else for that matter! I did not give voice to this thought, believing that it would be difficult for her to understand it; so, in order to hide my embarrassment, I answered as lightly as I could, saying that the time had not yet come to teach the Cause in public.

While making this lame excuse, I caught a glimpse of Mrs. Chanler's stricken face and felt anything but comfortable. Who knew better than I that her sole object, during these two seasons of intense exertion, had been to establish me in New York so that I could apply myself to my Master's work in this city? And here I was letting her down in this ungrateful and brutal manner! My spirit was at a very low ebb as I sought my bed that night; yet I was convinced that I was acting in her interest as well as my own, and I laid my head on the pillow determined to return to Hollywood as soon as my departure could be arranged.

That night in a dream, I found myself in a little room in the hotel at Tiberias where I had often been with Abdul Baha. I was turning over the pages of my diary

and, as I did so, I noticed a fragrance coming in through the window. The Master must be near, I said to myself and I went out, continuing in my mind: I will look for his footsteps in the sand and if I find them, I will place my own feet into them. I walked by the Sea of Galilee which was in a state of great commotion, and rising from the waves, I saw Abdul Baha in white turban and gown, which were wet as were his hair and beard; and Abdul Baha advanced over the water and joined me, standing at my side, and his hair and beard had become dry.

The Master said: *Khayli Khoub, Mirza Ahmad*, and slapped me on both cheeks, as he used to do; then, *We will walk together*. We began to walk, and the Master asked, *Are you happy? Very happy*, I answered. He went on: *This will be a most significant year for you. You have much for which to be grateful to Baha-O-Llah; and to show your gratitude, you must do what she wants, you must teach the Cause. Great blessings will follow*. He then withdrew over the sea, which had become as smooth as glass, and disappeared in the waters.

Next day, when I informed Mrs. Chanler that I had received my orders and was ready, I was surprised to learn that she also had had a dream that night. This was her dream as she related it to me:

She was in mid-sky, climbing upward on a slippery pole; and her endurance was ebbing fast. On her shoulder, warm and light, she felt the presence of her daughter, Elsie; and she realized that if she should fall, her daughter would fall with her. (Incidentally, Mrs. Chanler often told me that Elsie was a tower of strength to her during that difficult period, and that without her, she hardly knew how

she would have gotten through.) As she clung with hands and body to the pole, in a state of complete exhaustion, she observed that, just above her, the pole was no longer perpendicular but made a complete loop; and she realized that, in order to continue, she must depend on her hands alone. This is too much for me, she thought; and yet she attempted it, swinging out into the air—and then, a sense of great ease possessed her, and a power supported her, lifting her around the loop to safety at the top.

We taught the Bahai Cause in the Florentine room on eight Sunday evenings to very interested audiences. Many Bahais came and took satisfaction in the work; Miss Bertha Herklotz, secretary of the New York Assembly, sold the standard Bahai literature at an improvised book table. Others, however, notably some members of the Local Center, were in a state of considerable unrest over the whole proceeding, and conditions became so difficult that Mrs. Chanler conceived an idea of serving the Cause in a manner that would be less controversial. So, at her request, I wrote to Shoghi Effendi concerning her plan, which was to the effect that I should leave immediately for the Orient, there to make research on the personal life of Baha-O-Llah on the terrain of Persia. I hoped, during the period of a year or two, to gather material and to prepare a book that would be unique and most useful for the furtherance of the Cause. Our thoughts were, therefore, running in this direction when I received the following cablegram from Haifa, dated March 7, 1929:

Teheran undertaking official history. Your travel East unnecessary.

Shoghi.

This cablegram was supplemented by a letter from the Guardian's secretary, dated the same day, in which he wrote: *Shoghi Effendi would prefer to see you active in the field of service, teaching the Cause.*

This decision, coming from Haifa, was a great disappointment to both Mrs. Chanler and me; but I immediately relinquished all thought of the proposed journey and made up my mind to remain in New York. The lectures had, by this time, been transferred to Mrs. Chanler's house, and there, when the close of the season had arrived, a handful of persons, from among the many that had listened to the Teachings, asked if they might form a group so that they could hold together during the summer months. We readily complied and arranged for a meeting to take place on April 5, 1929. When the guests arrived on that night, a name for the group had not yet been chosen. Mrs. Chanler wanted it to be The New History Society; I had another idea. Finally, at the very last moment, we agreed on the name; and The New History Society was founded then and there with a membership of twenty-eight men and women, which number comprised several Bahais of long standing.

Our public work had, since the very beginning, been looked upon with suspicion both by the Bahai officials and by various members of the Bahai community and, upon the founding of The New History Society, the opposition became very threatening. My policy, which I have held to throughout our Bahai partnership, was to let Mrs. Chanler reason things out by herself. I had my own conviction, which was a simple one—namely: that each Bahai was under definite obligations to Baha-O-Llah to teach the

Cause; and that he must have freedom, and be unhampered in so doing. With the exception of my uncompromising attitude on this one point, I was ready to fall in, to co-operate with any group of Bahais, to receive advice, to talk things over, in other words to work in common. This of course was not sufficient, and Mrs. Chanler was subjected to an argument which lasted day in and day out, year in and year out, and which was extremely wearing to everyone concerned. All the while, as I mentioned before, I did not try to guide her, but left her free to make up her mind for herself as to the direction in which Truth lay.

I will not dwell on the methods that were used by individuals to try to break up my association with Mr. and Mrs. Chanler. I was called a charlatan, a money-grabber, a traitor to Abdul Baha. It was even said that I was afflicted with a disease, loathsome and infectious, which made of me a menace to society. Mrs. Chanler considered all these accusations, made up her mind as to their validity and went on with her work. Then, as the barrage of official communications began to descend upon her, she faced the opposition, met it and fought it with such faith and determination, such vision and spiritual logic, that I wondered then, as I wonder even now, at her courage and endurance. It would have thrilled the heart of any experienced spiritual warrior to note the supreme firmness and insouciance with which she held her ground, all the while suffering very deeply under this gallant exterior; but that is another story, and her own.

During that time, a great deal of correspondence was carried on between Shoghi Effendi and Mrs. Chanler. His sympathy regarding her work was, at the outset, most marked; and his consideration of her was expressed in very

generous terms up to August 1930. Since that date, no letters have passed between the Guardian and Mrs. Chanler.

PART TWO

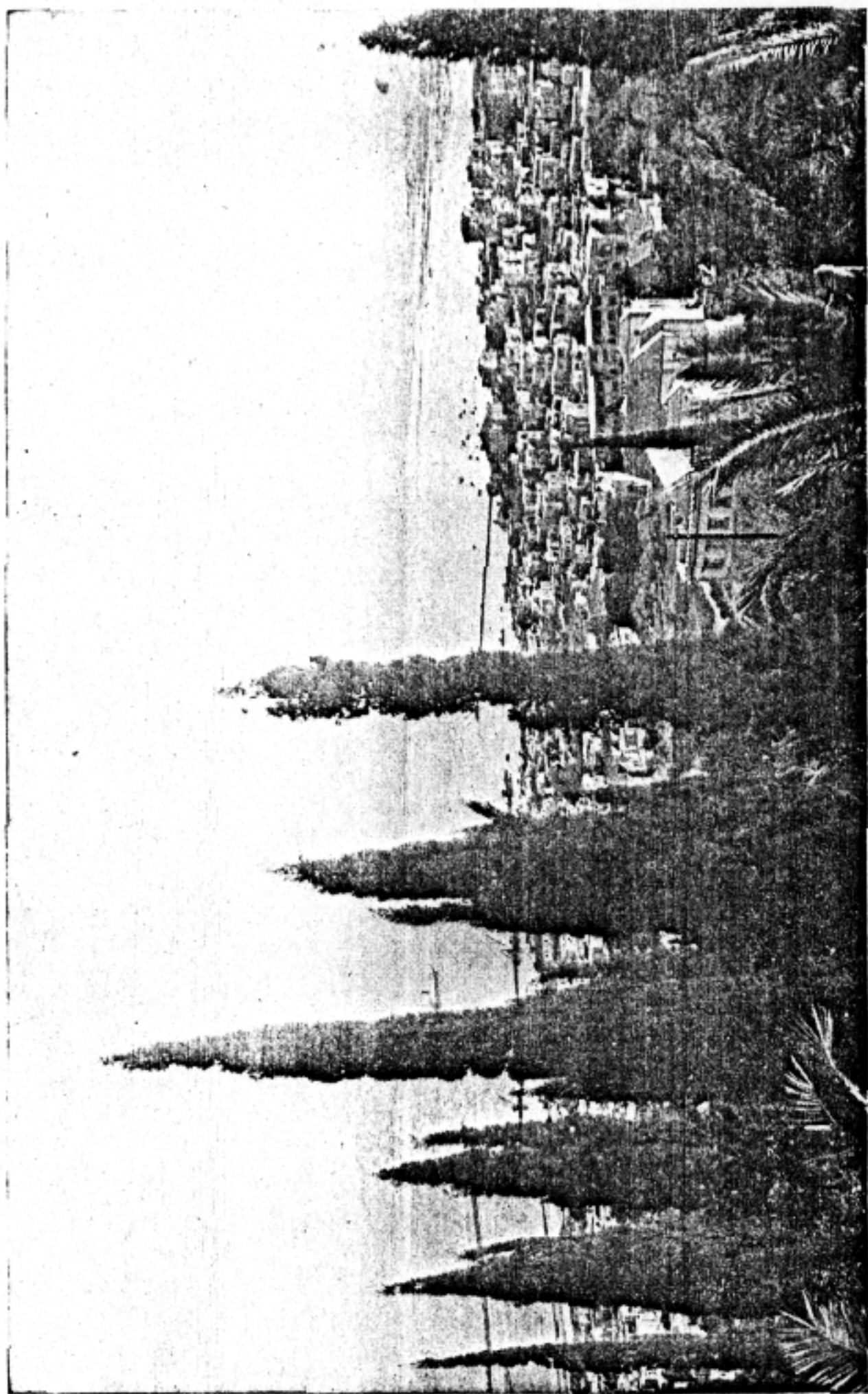
THE PARTING OF THE WAYS

3. A Danger Signal

4. At the Fork of the Road

*For the day of the Lord is near in the
valley of decision.*

—Joel, Chapter 3, Verse 14



Haifa. View taken in the direction of Acca from the slope of Mount Carmel.

CHAPTER III

A DANGER SIGNAL

Conservatism and Liberalism

The history of mankind has been dominated by two forces—conservatism and liberalism. These have played their parts side by side, in politics, in education, in the arts and in religious practice, producing the illogical civilization that is apparent today. Traditions, folklore, customs and the instinct for self-preservation, all have co-operated toward placing the institutions of our society in the camp of the conservatives; and these have taken advantage of our weaknesses to consolidate their privileges and establish themselves on the throne of impeccable authority. Having on their side the solemnities of inherited sanctions and controlling the machinery of civilization, they have, through the centuries, made practice of *stilling the voice of the liberals*, of banishing them beyond the pale of society, of incarcerating them in prisons, of destroying their lives and, finally, when it was all but too late, of incorporating in their systems some of the ideals and principles that had been made available at so high a price to others. Thus, the vested interests of conservatism have ever been challenged in spite of perils; they are being challenged now, and will continue so to be, as long as the world remains imperfect and man aspires to something better than has yet been known and practiced.

A Strange Occurrence

Baha-O-Llah was the great spiritual and political revolutionary of the 19th century. His teachings tolled the death-knell of conservatism in these two domains. Consequently, when Abdul Baha, rising with unexampled majesty and power, dispensed his Father's message of liberty to the four corners of the globe, the reactionaries of all classes ridiculed this new system of thought and took violent exception to it. Then, a very strange thing occurred. A handful of men and women, from among these very reactionaries, took it into their heads to file into the precincts of the Cause. It was not the Teachings that moved them to acceptance; far from it! It was the personality of Abdul Baha that impressed and drew them irresistibly. So, these persons from the opposite camp, having penetrated the ranks of the rising rival movement and taken possession of its key positions, functioned as if in a dream during the lifetime of the Master, until, at the stroke of 1921 when Abdul Baha was removed from their midst, they suddenly awoke from the spell, rallied their forces and hoisted their old standard of staid conservatism above the unsuspecting forces of the insurgent Bahai Movement.

The Point under Discussion

The appearance of The New History Society on the Bahai horizon, in 1929, constituted a danger signal in the eyes of the conservatives within the movement, the more so in that a large percentage of their own membership looked with favor and much hope on this new effort to teach the Cause. This latter group, which included a number of the finest and most responsible of the older Bahais, saw in

The New History Society a means whereby to combat the reactionary tendencies *within* the organization, and during two years they championed our effort with great courage and determination. So, a flood of letters, coming from both camps, was let loose upon the Guardian of the Cause in Haifa; and Shoghi Effendi considered these conflicting views with a great deal of patience and made continuous attempts to bring harmony and unity into the feverish New York Center.

The point under discussion was a very clear cut one. The Local Assembly of this city wished to supervise our activities. I, on the other hand, owing to long experience with the Assemblies, was convinced that such supervision implied a complete domination and would lead to the total destruction of the work itself. We looked upon The New History Society as an independent effort to teach the principles of the Cause, and we needed freedom in so doing. Afterwards, when the initial interest had been created, we were ready to guide our new found friends to the Center, to arrange classes under the direction of its own Bahai teachers and to strive in every way toward the co-operation of the two groups. Such a plan was not too inconsistent with my principles, because at that time the Administration, while it manifested an exaggerated sense of authority, had not yet encumbered itself with many of the limitations that restrict it today. In fact, my personal opinion is that The New History Society, itself, is largely responsible for this accumulation of rules and regulations, for, as we continued to function in liberty, more and more did the National Spiritual Assembly wish to set itself up as something totally different, with the result that this body

has grown out of all resemblance to the Bahai order as envisioned by Baha-O-Llah.

Bahai Meetings

During the winter of 1929-30 we held Bahai Meetings in the Oak Room of the Ritz Carlton Hotel. The lecturers in the first series were alternately Mr. Solon Fieldman, a good Bahai friend from Chicago, and myself. In the second series, we presented as our weekly speaker Mrs. Beulah Storrs Lewis, an experienced Bahai lecturer from Los Angeles. These remarkably well-attended meetings constituted our public work; while, at the same time we carried on Bahai classes, one group at Mrs. Chanler's house being under the direction of Mrs. May Maxwell, and a larger one in the Park Central Hotel, conducted in conjunction with Mrs. Maxwell, which was under the direction of Mr. Edward J. Kinney. In March 1930, we ventured again within the precincts of the Bahai Center taking with us our own new, yet fairly well-knit group, but at the close of this series of lectures we were not permitted to continue, as we would have liked to do, on account of a newspaper article that had appeared, regarding an imaginary building for our youth group *The Caravan*, which by this time had come into being.

Invitations which were Declined

The season of which I speak was packed full of activities, and very fruitful ones too; while simultaneously the undercurrent of argument with the Assemblies was going on at full tilt. It was repeatedly required of me that I should appear before the Local Assembly of New York

and the National Spiritual Assembly, but I looked on these bodies as Religious Tribunals (which appellation they themselves did not use at the time but have used since) and believed that I would be trapped into making admissions, regarding my opinion of the organization, which would be used against me. Consequently, while I was at all times willing to discuss any and all matters with individual members of the Assemblies, I consistently refused to appear before their official groups.

The Final Word

These things are now long passed and one can look back to them with equanimity, but at the time they were harrowing in full measure. The question was this: Would Shoghi Effendi yield to the importunities of the National Spiritual Assembly and disown us, or would he, as Mrs. Chanler so ardently hoped, give us a chance to be useful? The axe was poised above our heads, held by a thread.

The whole story can be told best through extracts from the correspondence between Mrs. Chanler on the one hand and Shoghi Effendi and the National and Local Assemblies on the other; the correspondence, in typewritten form, is contained in a book entitled *The New History Society and the Bahai Administration*.

Plans for First Series of Bahai Lectures

To Shoghi Effendi from Mrs. Chanler, dated December 24, 1928.

. . . We have rented the room for eight more meetings. We are planning to send many, many announce-



MRS. LEWIS STUYVESANT CHANLER
in 1932

ments and to advertise in the papers. I know that we must do this thing, and we will do it to our utmost ability. Whether that ability is sufficient to make a mark in New York I cannot say, but everything in us both will go towards doing it well, and one thing is certain—the Bahai Cause will be spoken of in New York publicly, not behind closed doors. This will be good. . . .

I wouldn't take your time on such a long letter were it not that I wished for your sympathy in what we are trying to do. I want to assure you of Ahmad's and my love for you and tell you that our lives are concentrated in an effort to serve you.

Answer from Ruhi Afnan, dated January 19, 1929.

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your very kind letter dated December 24th, 1928. He was very glad to hear that Mr. Sohrab is doing good service in New York in the way of public speaking. He surely knows the Cause very well, being for such a long time with the Master, translating his letters and talks. All those who have been with the Beloved during his lifetime should feel the responsibility they bear and do their utmost, shouldering it, especially those who were, we may say, nurtured by him. . . .

Shoghi Effendi very much appreciates the wonderful service you have rendered the Cause and is always waiting to see what the next will be. . . .

Postscript added by Shoghi Effendi:

My dear and precious co-worker:

I wish to add a few words in person as a token of my keen appreciation of your past services and of my fervent hope and prayer for the future extension of

your manifold activities. I welcome Mirza Ahmad's collaboration with you, in such an open and direct manner, for a wider diffusion and a better understanding of the purpose and the principles of the Bahai Faith.

I will pray for the success of your efforts from the depths of my heart.

Account of First Series of Bahai Lectures

To Shoghi Effendi from Mrs. Chanler, dated March 4, 1929.

. . . Ahmad put his whole heart into this work. I can say that at the lectures and in the time intervening, he has consecrated himself wholly and he has always spoken beautifully. I think the people have been impressed with his modesty and simplicity and his real depth of feeling, and he has made something of a name for himself, but this is only incidental. . . .

It will take time to show if we have really taken a step forward, but I think that we have, and the word "Bahai", as I wrote you in the beginning, is really known in New York very, very much more than before. . . .

Now that the lectures are over, I can just thank God that they went through without any hitch. Mrs. Maxwell has been very kind and encouraging and Juliet Thompson has surrounded me with an ocean of love. . . .

When I realize how much there is to be done, I think that we have accomplished almost nothing, but this year's experience will help us in the future, I am sure, and Abdul Baha knows how much I long to serve Him.

Answer from Soheil Afuan, dated March 28.

I am directed by Shoghi Effendi to thank you very

much for your letter of March 4th with enclosure.

He is indeed very much pleased to learn that your meetings at the Hotel have been successful, and if they at least directed the thought of the better classes in New York to the teachings of the Movement and a study of its writings, it is in itself a great service.

He wishes me, however, to assure you that no matter what measure of success attends your efforts, he feels he must express his deep appreciation of your eagerness to cooperate with him in the service of the Cause, and of the sincere spirit that has animated your endeavors. Indeed, were you to do what a New York paper alleged, namely, "to make God fashionable," you would not only be conferring a blessing to the fashionable, but a great service to all those who follow the fashionable. . . .

Postscript added by Shoghi Effendi:

My dear and precious co-worker:

Your manifold services, past and present, are truly worthy of praise and admiration. I deeply appreciate your high endeavors and will continue to supplicate for you at the holy Shrine. . . .

The National Spiritual Assembly Expresses Itself

During this time, the National Spiritual Assembly was watching our activities very closely, and now the first letter from this body was sent to Mrs. Chanler, the theme of which was an offer of co-operation.

March 25, 1929.

. . . The National Assembly, therefore, is anxious to make it clear to you that its members unreservedly desire to assist and cooperate in every possible way to as-

sure the complete success of the public meetings held under your auspices and announced as Bahai meetings.

We realize of course that you have not requested this cooperation, but this very fact makes it the more essential that we offer you at this time an explanation of what we conceive to be, from the writings of Abdul Baha as well as from the letters of Shoghi Effendi, the conditions essential to successful Bahai service in the teaching field. . . .

Thus, to take a specific instance, when an individual Bahai desires to serve the Cause by holding public meetings under the Bahai name, the general plan and arrangements are reported to the local or National Assembly beforehand. . . . The local or National Spiritual Assembly is only concerned with two facts: whether the meetings in question give the Bahai teachings correctly, and whether the meetings involve any conditions that might detract from the dignity, nobility and sacred character of the Cause. . . .

Our hope, therefore, is that you will consult personally or enter into communication with the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of New York in the matter of your present and future plans which involve the Bahai name and teachings, in order that these activities may be blessed with the confirmation of Abdul Baha, spread in this city, which He termed "The City of the Covenant," the very essence of the teachings of Baha-U-Llah, and create for you an honor and glory that will endure in the history of the Cause.

Now, Mrs. Chanler knew that *co-operation* meant supervision of our programs and of everything that was said on our platform. It implied endless discussions and certain interruptions of the work. We felt that we could not risk

it; so, in answering this letter, Mrs. Chanler merely invoked the universality of the Cause in general terms.

April 3, 1929.

The National Spiritual Assembly

Dear Mr. Holley:

I would like to thank you for your letter and answer it in a spirit of sincerity.

Two thousand years ago, in an age of ignorance and servitude, the Word of God appeared upon the earth, and the Word was free. Now in these enlightened times, when liberty is the heritage of all men, (when incidentally they exact it) the Word of God returns to them without limitations.

I believe this, because I consider the Bahai Cause to be no less universal than was Christianity.

I appreciate your offer of cooperation and thank you for any kindness which you may feel towards my work. I have already availed myself many times of Mrs. Maxwell's wisdom and friendship and I hope to have often the opportunity of doing so again.

For the present, I am thinking of just one thing:

Jesus said to his disciples—"Go ye unto all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature" and Abdul Baha said to Ahmad Sohrab—"Go and teach."

I am going to try to help him.

This letter of Mrs. Chanler's was answered by Mr. Horace Holley before it was presented to the National Spiritual Assembly.

Your letter will be presented at our next meeting, but meanwhile I am sure that I express the attitude of all the members when I say that your letter will cause

surprise and real disappointment. It really seems inexplicable that any devoted and sincere student of the teachings of Baha-U-Llah and Abdul Baha should claim for the Bahai Cause a universality, in terms of complete freedom of action for individuals, in direct contradiction to the teachings themselves. The National Assembly would fail in its loyalty to you as well as in its responsibility for upholding the Cause if we did not emphasize this essential point. . . .

As I tried to make clear before, the anxiety of the National Assembly to see your Bahai services established upon a firm and enduring foundation is not an expression of any claim to arbitrary authority on the part of the Assembly, but is entirely a matter of obedience to the authentic Bahai writings.

An Appeal for Protection

After midnight, on April 5th, Mrs. Chanler wrote to Shoghi Effendi giving a description of the founding of The New History Society at her house, at 132 East 65th Street. She realized that something of importance had just occurred, and she looked overseas to Haifa for the safeguarding of this new-born effort to serve the Cause.

April 6th

. . . I have just passed an evening that has made me very happy. The people have gone home only a little while ago. We have been having meetings here, as I wrote you; meetings which had a wonderful spirit. They numbered about forty-five or fifty people, the last three times.

Lately, we decided to draw up a plan of Universal

Ideals for those who wished to subscribe to them, and who would in this way bind themselves together and so prevent a scattering during the summer. I am sending you the Plan which Ahmad drew up. We called it "The New History Society."

Just as from the lectures of the Park Lane a cream arose to the surface which enrolled in "The New History Society," so, a cream will rise to the surface of this society which will become Bahais. . . .

Tonight, twenty-eight people enrolled and some asked time to think it over and to enroll later. Ahmad had given a talk about the disciples of Christ, and those who wished to, went into the other room and signed their names and then came back and shook hands with all those who had already signed. It was pouring outside, thunder and lightning, and something was happening in the room,—I believe something wonderful. You see, a very few of us knew each other, because the meetings have been large, and it is hard to remember faces and names, but in that handclasp something was broken down and, after a short prayer, the rain stopped and LOVE appeared in the room. I have never in all my life seen such happy, moved faces and I believe all those people went home on wings. Many of them seemed to think that they had joined the Bahai Cause and came to me with plans for spreading it. A man from Cornell College, who had come only to one meeting before tonight, said to me that he had found what he had been looking for, and that he knew many to whom he would offer what he had found. Another man "has been looking everywhere, but has now found the Highest." Many women said things of the same kind. Mr. Senitha, who has been with us almost from the start, said: "This ball

is rolling now. It will grow very large," and I, who seldom dare to be hopeful, believe that a wonderful CHILD has been born.

Beloved Guardian, I place it under your protection!

Mrs. Chanler's Right to Vote Questioned

Letter from the Local Assembly of New York to Mrs. Chanler, dated April 15, 1929.

Wishing to inform us of the status of your teaching work, the National Spiritual Assembly has spread before us the joint correspondence covering this point. Although the question has passed to a higher administrative division of the Cause and your answer has been directed to them rather than to your Local Assembly, as suggested in their letter of March 25th, nevertheless, the vital question of your voting in the Cause must be settled through the Assembly in your Community.

Will you kindly let us know, so that our records may be accurate and correct, whether you wish—in the words of Abdul Baha—to “obey with heart and soul” the bidding of the Assembly “and be submissive unto it,” or wish to withdraw from its divinely appointed authority.

In deep earnestness we pray that your really great activities, so sincerely appreciated not only by the members of your local group but by our dear Guardian, will be pursued as directed by him in his latest published letter and also as requested of you by the National Spiritual Assembly. . . .

Will you kindly let us know as soon as possible what status you choose?

Mrs. Chanler was conscious of the fact that she would be lost if she answered this question directly. She was now sparring for time. Her reply was as follows:—

April 17, 1929.

. . . In my service this winter, I have made use of an instrument prepared for this work by the Master himself. In view of the fact that when this instrument was in their hands, the Local Assembly did not find it in their hearts to allow the Cause to profit by it, and being convinced that it should be used, at this time when instruments are few, I, with the help of God only, brought the Bahai Cause before the public of New York with an effectiveness unequalled since the days of Abdul Baha.

Now, since these services have, in the estimation of the Local Board, made me undesirable as a voter, I will, in conformance with their suggestion, absent myself for the present from the Bahai Center.

A second letter to Mrs. Chanler from the Local Assembly of New York continues:

April 19, 1929.

Every member of this Spiritual Assembly hopes, desires and prays that you may continue as a voting member of this Cause, but the principles of Bahai Administration are clear as to the qualifications of a voter. . . .

The question already submitted to you in our previous letter is whether or not, according to the qualifications quoted above, you consider yourself a member of this Assembly and are willing to comply with these requirements. This is a choice *you alone* can make, you cannot shift the responsibility of making this choice to the local Spiritual Assembly.

On the day of election, Mrs. Chanler, wishing to demonstrate the fact that, as far as she was concerned, she still was a member of the Bahai Assembly, presented her vote at the Center, by proxy, through Mrs. Margueritta Smythe. Her vote was refused.

Problems

Now, Shoghi Effendi wrote to Mrs. Chanler, through his secretary, on the problem which the founding of The New History Society had brought into the Cause.

April 30, 1929.

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your very interesting and kind letter dated April 6th. I cannot say that it is an easy task to comment upon such a letter, for one is inevitably caught between two difficult problems, neither of which can be overlooked.

This last year, it has been a source of delight for Shoghi Effendi to see you come to the front, earnestly and courageously advocating the Cause and its principles. . . . The work you have been able to do, he hopes, will, through God's help, bear abundant fruit. He conceives it therefore a crime to throw cold water on such a burning zeal which may be a part of God's plan in spreading the Cause in America. In fact, he wishes me to assure you of his prayers and best wishes that you may succeed in your ardent labors. .

On the other hand, he feels the responsibility of suggesting to you certain points that may ultimately add to your success and meantime be more conformant with the wishes of the Master.

The objective of the Cause, as explained by the Master, is unity. What then would happen with the Cause

if, from its earliest days, different groups and societies are created within it. No matter with what spirit a certain group may come together, once it tries to create an independent identity for itself, it immediately becomes an organism seeking its own individual growth. This organism can never again merge itself with the mother organism. . . .

Perhaps by not labeling yourself as a separate group and cooperating more fully with the Assemblies you could teach the Cause and also obviate these difficulties that may ensue. . . .

The present Assemblies are surely imperfect, but they are the seeds from which this great administrative body is to grow. . . .

From Paris, Mrs. Chanler wrote to the Guardian giving a resumé of the situation.

May 11, 1929.

It is a grief to me that my attempts to serve the Cause should have brought this controversy before you and taken any of your time. Even now I am going to write about inharmonious things. I am sorry.

You know that I brought Ahmad back to the Organization last year. He had resisted my desires for weeks, but when he came to them, he came with his whole heart and like a child. They knew that they needed him, yet, in spite of this, they gave no friendliness, no cooperation. I saw many instances of this. Life is a game and they have backed him to lose, and by now it is a question of pride. You remember when he was in the West, occupying himself with his own interests, they said that he was faithless to the Cause; when he worked in the Organization last year, they expelled him, and

when he works outside the Organization, they are dissatisfied. So, if he doesn't work for the Cause, if he works in the Cause, or if he works outside the Cause for the Cause, all are wrong. There seems to be no way out, and this is a devoted servant who has proved himself useful. I don't understand it, but it must be for a reason—beautiful things happen too that one doesn't understand. . . .

The Organization in New York has had a long opportunity to serve. Someone brought me the list of members the night that my vote was rejected. It numbered 179 people. This is the result of all these years and of much money. I think that they don't know how to teach the Cause. They talk of commands, submission, autocracy. They don't talk of love. I don't think that they know what love is. If someone were lucky enough to bring in new members of capacity, I believe that they would consider it an intrusion, and would fear that the comfort of their little club might be threatened. Abdul Baha said that the Cause might become extinct in America. I think that these people can't save it. . . .

I would like, under the auspices of The New History Society, to teach the Bahai Cause publicly next winter. I may, by that time, be able to get other speakers too. We would not be breaking the rules of the Organization if we were separate. I think that it would look so well on invitations and announcements to say: "The New History Society presents So and So, speaking on the Bahai Cause." As time goes on, I would make an effort to influence those who accept the Faith to identify themselves with the Organization.

Let us try to serve you in this way. I can answer for our loyalty if for nothing else. I would like to work

under your protection, but if this is too much, then I ask you to withhold your condemnation. Give us a chance to be useful, and if at the end of a year or two you are pleased, then perhaps you will give us your approval. . . .

In the autumn of 1929, we made arrangements for the activities of the winter, and Mrs. Chanler wrote to Shoghi Effendi regarding our program, which included Mr. Solon Fieldman of Chicago.

October 26, 1929.

I enclose to you our program for the coming winter and you will see that there are now three of us engaged in your service. . . .

I pray that this combination will be blessed. We are all three beginning the winter's work with much love and confidence in each other and looking to Baha-U-Llah for his presence and his help. It is in the hands of God.

Answer from Ruhi Afnan:

December 21, 1929.

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your very kind letter dated October 26th. He fully appreciates the earnest spirit and deep conviction that you have put in your work and sincerely prays for the realization of your ideal. But he cannot consider the work of The New History Society except as another experiment to spread the movement. May God make it successful and of a brilliant future! To him you, with your devotion, sacrifice and perseverance mean more than any such society. His interest in it is only to see

the way your noble qualities are going to find an expression in its working.

We have lately heard from New York that soon absolute unity will be established and full cooperation between the Assembly and yourself will be obtained. Shoghi Effendi hopes that this is true and that you will not deprive your society of the inspiration that such a unity will bring to it. Such a unity, however, should not be by winning them to your cause, but rather by raising its banner on your front.

Shoghi Effendi, in his moments of prayer, will remember you and ask for you divine guidance. He wishes me to assure you of all his interest in your work, of all his appreciation for your endeavors, and of all his hope that you will attain your ideal and goal, namely, the service of the Cause and the spread of the Divine message of Baha-U-Llah.

CHAPTER IV

AT THE FORK OF THE ROAD

A Bahai Trio

The meetings of 1929-1930, conducted in the Oak Room of the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, were very successful. Mr. Solon Fieldman and I alternately held the platform and, as we were very different types, the audience found much interest in comparing our approaches to the Bahai teachings. Mr. Fieldman was an orator of the old school, very dramatic and impassioned, while I am apt to speak in a more matter of fact way. We believed that we made a good team and when, in midwinter, Mrs. Beulah Storrs Lewis, a beautiful and expert teacher, travelled all the way from Los Angeles to take part in our work, we were conscious of the fact that we were offering to the New York public a presentation of the Cause that was very colorful indeed. Throughout these meetings, we sold a great deal of literature provided by the Bahai Center, and the Message of Baha-O-Llah penetrated to many circles and touched countless hearts.

A Recruiting Station

By this time, large numbers of the members of the Bahai organization had actually joined The New History Society. This membership with us in no wise affected their loyalty to the Center, for all of us looked on the new movement as a sort of recruiting station, and we often termed it as such.

In a letter addressed to Mr. Roy Wilhelm, member of the National Spiritual Assembly, Mrs. Chanler brought up this point and stressed the urgent need of teaching the Cause without loss of time.

Feb. 11, 1930.

I myself have not the conviction that the Bahai Cause will be accepted by the world. Its principles and ideals will be; already they are spreading far and wide, but will the name of Baha-U-Llah go with them? This to me is uncertain.

I believe that Christ would not have been called the *Man of Sorrows*, if his greatest suffering had not been concern over the success of his mission, and that Abdul Baha would not have labored so unceasingly, if his accomplishment had been beyond the realm of doubt. Also, I think the burden of Shoghi Effendi would be lighter, if the establishment of the Kingdom of Baha-U-Llah were unquestionable. I know that in this I differ from many, but I believe that the WORD which God gives is dependent upon the people who receive it for its ultimate realization.

Feeling as I do, I don't want to waste any time. The Cause has had a start in New York and *I will not abandon IT*.

Ahmad and I alone came before the public last year. The Bahais weren't with us, neither were my own friends, yet the results were miraculous; for God worked through us to His own ends.

Now that I see how much the people want this Cause *I cannot refuse it to them, but will go on teaching*; and if you want us to work for you, we will do so with all our hearts. We will send people to the Center hoping

that they will be well received. We wish to be a Recruiting Station for you. . . .

As no answer to this letter was received, it is legitimate to try to imagine the reaction that it caused. *We wish to be a recruiting station for you.* This phrase brings up a picture of what might have happened if Mrs. Chanler's plea had been granted, namely: The New History Society, from time to time, opening its flood-gates and allowing a stream of immature Bahais to filter into the precincts of the Assembly. So far so good; but how about the voting season? Would it not be likely that these fresh, untrammelled minds would pick out some *new* officers to represent them, and that within a few years a large part of the administrative personnel would be changed? This supposition brings up a serious point, applying to both National and Local Assemblies, the former having been functioning since time out of mind with practically no change of officers.

An Occasion for Rejoicing

Toward the middle of the winter, Mrs. Chanler conceived the idea of conducting our group to the Center and of teaching from there, in an effort toward reconciliation. She discussed this plan with Mrs. Maxwell and Mr. and Mrs. Kinney, and these friends of ours enthusiastically agreed to do all in their power to bring it into effect. Consequently, through their good offices, we were enabled to start a course of lectures at the Center, with Mr. Solon Fieldman and myself speaking alternately as we had done at the Ritz.

The opening evening was an occasion for much rejoicing

to all those who had wished to bring about unity between the two groups. Mrs. Chanler described the meeting to Ruhi Afnan, Secretary to the Guardian, in the following letter.

March 6, 1930.

Last night, Ahmad took a considerable part of The New History Society to the Bahai Center and there, after my husband had left, presided over the rest of the evening with much love and sweetness. There was a radiancy of happiness there and a gratitude to God, on the part of many, too deep for words.

Ahmad has proved himself a power of inestimable value to the Cause, as I saw in the beginning without need for proof; and now we are looking to a future full of promise, with a rapt hope.

It is needless to dwell on how much we have suffered during these two years. Our nerves are nearly broken and some of us are ill. Our darling Juliet Thompson couldn't be present last night as her health has been affected, following the long strain.

In answering, Ruhi Afnan says:

March 26, 1930.

I had already heard through Mrs. Harris of the wonderful spirit that prevailed at the meeting that The New History Society had held at the Bahai Center. Shoghi Effendi sincerely hopes and prays that this friendship will wax stronger every day and that the petty differences and misunderstandings will fade away.

Through the circular letters of Ahmad and the various other channels, I have been following up the

work of The New History Society with great interest, and even though I objected to various things I could not but admire some of the work achieved.

A Ghost in the Attic

It will be noted that throughout this correspondence, I figure as a strange character, sometimes praised but for the most part ignored. I am a sort of skeleton in the cupboard or ghost in the attic, casting a baneful influence on the thoughts of everybody, yet unmentionable, as far as possible, to the truly well-bred. Mrs. Chanler assumed full responsibility as defendant of The New History Society, using the pronoun *I* pretty consistently. Knowing, as she did only too well, that I was distrusted by the Administration, she felt that the work would have a better chance to get by if she claimed it as her own exclusively. In the following cablegram, sent to Shoghi Effendi, when The New History Society was just one year old, I affix my signature for the first time.

Cablegram

We, The New History Society, with a membership of 341, are celebrating, this April 5th, our First Anniversary Festival in the Persian Garden of Ritz Carlton.

We send you our heartfelt love and devotion.

We beg you to supplicate for our confirmation in the service of mankind at hallowed shrines of the Bah, Baha-U-Llah and Abdul Baha—the three Great Lights of the age.

Pray for us that, with the increase of our membership, we may add to our zeal in freeing our fellowmen



BERTHALIN LEXOW

At present Mrs. Frederick Allien, taken in the days of Abdul Baha.

from the chains of past prejudices and fanaticism, and upraise the flag of the Oneness of the World of Humanity in the kingdoms of the hearts.

The New History Society,
Julie Chanler
Ahmad Sohrab.

Aftermath

On the morning following this birthday celebration, one of the New York papers gave much space to The New History Society, featuring in flamboyant terms a building which our youth group, The Caravan, hoped to build in the far-flung future. We did not have one cent reserved for this project, yet the reporter devoted almost a column to a description of the *idea*; at the same time, four hundred thousand dollars had just been raised for the construction of the Bahai Temple near Chicago and the *actual news* pertaining to this enterprise, as contained in a release put out by Mr. Holley, was included in this article, compressed into a few lines.

This publicity did not in the least please us; in fact, it caused us much distress, but by this time we knew enough about newspaper methods to realize that their writers featured what they wished, and that there was nothing to be done about it.

On the same day, Mrs. Chanler wrote to the Local Assembly expressing her thanks for the hospitality that had been accorded our group during the preceding weeks, and asking permission to continue the meetings at the Center one night a month throughout the spring and summer. This request was refused on account of the above

mentioned publicity. Thus, our second attempt to work at the Center was brought to a sudden halt in exactly the same manner as the first one had been—through a newspaper article. These two incidents show, as well as anything could, the fate that would have befallen The New History Society had it been irrevocably delivered into the hands of the Assemblies.

Cablegram

On April 9, 1930, The New History Society received an answer to its cablegram addressed to the Guardian:

My prayer at holy shrines for History Society is that its members may increasingly realize that the efficacy and permanence of their endeavors lie in unreserved acceptance of teaching of Baha-U-Llah and Abdul Baha. May they be blessed and guided to identify themselves wholly with the Faith. Reciprocate your loving greetings.

Shoghi.

Ordeal by Fire and Firecrackers

During the progress of her public work, Mrs. Chanler had formed many new friendships in the Bahai Community, and these associates had given her great moral support throughout the long encounter with the Assemblies. All the while, the point at issue was: What would be the ultimate decision of Shoghi Effendi? Should he throw in his weight against The New History Society, these Bahai sympathizers would be forced to accept his verdict and sever their connection with us; on the other hand, should he, as they so earnestly hoped, give wings to this experi-

ment, it was certain that a new era of enthusiasm and activity in the Cause would ensue. The period of uncertainty was very trying, bringing nerves to a breaking point and, as signs became more and more ominous, insistent pressure was brought upon us to make some sort of compromise.

I remember an amusing incident which took place at that time. One of the older Bahais, who had never met Mrs. Chanler, came to call and, when the visit was drawing to a close, this lady presented her hostess with a lovely white rose, saying that it was her custom to give white roses to all persons who were ill. Mrs. Chanler was about to protest that she was in perfect health, when she suddenly realized that the implication was on the grounds of *spiritual illness*; so she simply thanked her guest with a smile.

Another humorous experience returns to my mind. There was a Bahai from New Zealand, spending some weeks in New York, who used to drop in at our meetings from time to time. One evening, learning that he was in a bad state financially, I took him to my room to spend the night. Then, in the morning he speeded to the Center, and this is the story that he told:—

After some hours of rest, he had awakened and, looking over at me, had seen me lying in the unconsciousness of sleep, revealed in my true colors:—two horns had made their appearance on my forehead!

This account of my night with the New Zealander circulated among the Bahais, some of whom believed that this young man had had a flash of second sight; while I, when it finally came to my ears, only wished that the season had been summer when no blankets are used, for in that

case, the story would doubtless have culminated in a long, sleek, curling tail!

Representative members of the Bahai organization did their utmost to make us understand the laws of the Administration. Out of the goodness of their hearts and in their devotion to the Guardian, they explained the importance of obedience to the Central Authority but, although we would have liked to meet them more than half way, we were convinced that this young movement would not long survive the ministrations of the Assemblies. Mrs. Chanler's soul questionings during that winter were continuous and intense, for they centered around the possibility of doing permanent injury to the Cause. She was in a state close to collapse when she sailed for Europe in the spring of 1930.

Little Regiment for Shoghi Effendi

Before her departure, classes for The New History Society under the direction of Mr. Edward J. Kinney had been opened at the Park Central Hotel. Mrs. Chanler expected that this teaching work would bear fruit. In the month of June she sent a cablegram to Mr. Kinney.

Overjoyed wonderful meetings. Believe you will collect little regiment for Shoghi Effendi. May the Master help you.

One More Chance

In July, I received a visit from Mr. Alfred Lunt, member of the National Spiritual Assembly, who carried in his pocket the draft of an article destined to appear in *Bahai News* of the following month. In this statement, The New

History Society was disowned by the authorities, and it constituted, therefore, the long dreaded break with the Administration.

I read the typewritten pages very carefully, realizing that I was being given one more chance, and then I told Mr. Lunt that, as far as I was concerned, the paper could go to press. *However, I continued, if you put your signature to this, the day will come when you will wish that you had cut off your right hand instead.*

This prophecy of mine was never fulfilled, for a few years later Alfred Lunt died, to the grief of the Bahai community. He was a talented and warm-hearted man, a devoted servant of the Cause and a definitely liberalizing influence on the National Spiritual Assembly.

A Thunder Clap

And now the inevitable, which had been warded off for so long, happened. It electrified the Bahai community in this city; while The New History Society, which had always been kept in utter innocence of what was going on regarding it, went on its own light-hearted way in complete unconcern.

The first pronouncement against The New History Society was published in the pages of *Bahai News* of August 1930 under the ominous title: *The Case of Ahmad Sohrab and The New History Society*. Here are a few quotations:

The National Spiritual Assembly finds it necessary to make a definite statement to the Bahais of the United States and Canada concerning the relations of The New History Society and the Cause.

This Society was started in New York City early in 1929 by Ahmad Sohrab, one of its avowed purposes being to spread the Bahai teachings. Neither the Local nor the National Assembly was consulted in the matter, and the meetings and activities of The New History Society have been maintained apart from the principles of consultation and Assembly supervision which today, under the Will and Testament of Abdul Baha, form the basis of Bahai unity and protection of the Cause. . . .

Under these conditions it becomes the obvious responsibility of the National Spiritual Assembly to inform the friends that the activities conducted by Ahmad Sohrab, through The New History Society, are to be considered as entirely independent of the Cause; as outside the jurisdiction of the Local and National Assembly, and hence in no wise entitled to the cooperation of Bahais. . . .

In clarifying this difficult situation for the body of believers, the National Assembly urges an attitude which shall express full loyalty to Bahai administration and also unfailing kindness and good will to individuals. . . .

Every believer must take to heart this lesson, that individual Bahai effort, without due consultation, is foredoomed to failure.

A Volunteer

When Mr. and Mrs. Chanler received the news, in Paris, that The New History Society had been severed root and branch from the parent tree, they were not shaken in the least. Even now, I smile as I recall Mr. Chanler's cablegram to me. In it, he offered to open the lectures himself during the coming winter, speaking on the Twelve Bahai Principles.

Now, in the past, Mr. Chanler had been a speaker of note, having been Lieut.-Governor of New York State and a distinguished criminal lawyer; but he had retired long ago, and besides he had never studied the Bahai teachings. This generous suggestion, therefore, implied a great effort on his part, but he was willing to make it, in order to stand by the work; and I accepted his offer gratefully and without a qualm.

In the Hands of the Master

In the year 1926, shortly after she had come into the Cause, Mrs. Chanler had made a pilgrimage to Haifa, Palestine, to visit the Holy Shrines. There she had the inestimable happiness of spending an hour with The Greatest Holy Leaf, daughter of Baha-O-Llah, and the ladies of the household. It happened that Shoghi Effendi was not feeling well that day, so she did not have the privilege of meeting him.

I believe that Mrs. Chanler's reaction to the break with the Bahai Administration could be no better described than in a letter written by her, at the time, to Rouha Khanoum, daughter of Abdul Baha. It reads as follows:

September 8, 1930.

The evening before I left Paris, your letter came to me and I took it out to Versailles where we were going, and there I read it many times. As I looked at the beautiful trees and listened to the orchestra, my eyes were full of tears, and my heart full of love for you and infinite gratitude. This message of friendship, coming at a time when my life had so changed, affected me very much, and I felt that on this new path I was taking a

jewel of your giving; and even if I do not see you again, and even if you feel you cannot write to me again, I will always count on your love and every day give you mine.

I have never talked to you about the trouble which has passed, but today I will say a few words about it. Often in the past, I have heard the Bahais say (Mr. Mills, Mr. Holley and others): "If only a way could be found to spread the Cause!" Just by chance, because the Organization would not use Ahmad, we stumbled on the method of The New History Society. This has proved a very effective one, and the chief reason for its success has been that it was *free*. Here, without obligation to any one, the people hear about the Bahai Cause and gradually absorb it.

We cannot, with a free conscience, sell these people behind their backs to *any* Organization, much less to an Organization, orthodox, cruel and unsuccessful. Just the same, we tried to serve this Organization. We never spoke against them. We brought them the results of our efforts. When I left for Europe, Ahmad, with all his resourcefulness and enthusiasm, was directing the course of The New History Society straight toward the Administration. Surely many, many dozens would have joined then; and they would have set a precedent which would have been followed by the very best souls in their ranks, month by month, year by year.

The Bahai Cause is almost dead in America; what is left of it is pitiful and ignoble. I believe that Abdul Baha is tired of this situation, and before him I say that I believe that he is using us to start the Cause once more. Where he will lead us, I don't know. The National Assembly has turned the course of The New History Society away from the Administration, and it

would seem just about impossible to turn it back. We are in the hands of the Master and we are not a bit afraid. Wonderful Berthalin is with us. It makes a lot of difference.

Beloved Rouha Khanoum, every hour I turn my face to the Master and I do not feel his displeasure. I only feel his love and I am very happy.

A Higher Court

When Mr. and Mrs. Chanler reached New York in the early autumn, they learned that the Guardian had endorsed the action of the National Spiritual Assembly through the following cablegram, published in *Bahai News* of September 1930.

Approve action regarding History Society. Deeply appreciate loyalty (of) believers.

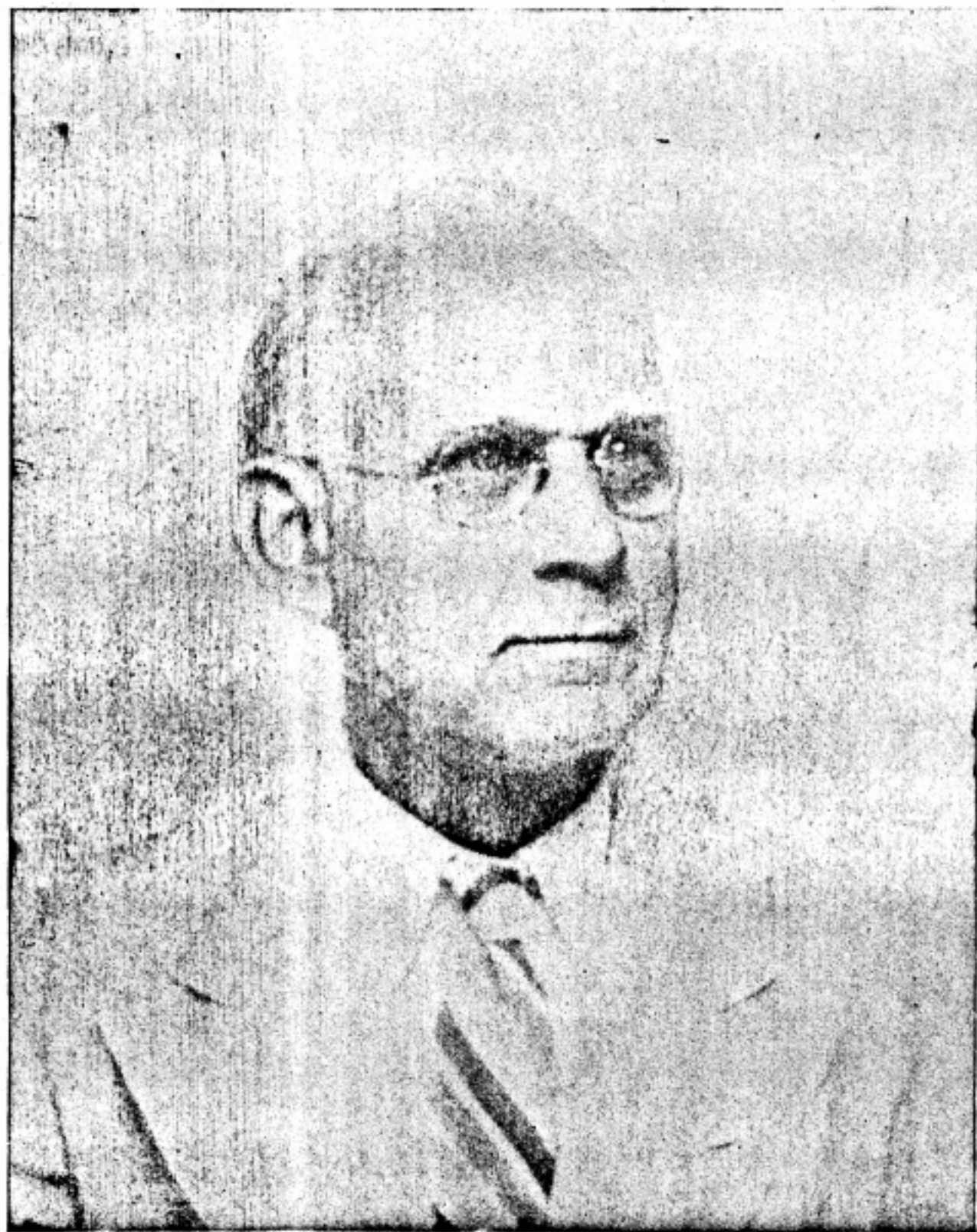
Shoghi.

Then, a few days after their arrival, Mr. and Mrs. Chanler, to their surprise, received a communication from the National Spiritual Assembly:

September 25, 1930.

The National Assembly is meeting in West Englewood, N. J. on October 10th, 11th and 12th, 1930. They would like very much if you both could accept their warm invitation to meet with them informally and talk over the various matters which are common to our hearts.

They feel that association and a better understanding of each other and the welding of acquaintance and friendship will be of the greatest value in forwarding



MR. O. J. HANKO
A Bahai of the days of Abdul Baha.

and advancing the ideals and purposes for which we are all striving.

They sincerely hope you will accept this sincere invitation in the spirit of love and friendship in which it is sent.

Anytime convenient for you can be arranged for—whether during the sessions or dinner or lunch.

Looking forward to the happiness of meeting you.

It may be remembered that in the National Spiritual Assembly's pronouncement against The New History Society my name alone was mentioned. Therefore, without much reading between the lines, one can judge that the purpose of the above letter was to dissociate Mr. and Mrs. Chanler from a lost cause—in other words, it implied a suggestion to leave the sinking ship.

It took next to no time for Mrs. Chanler to answer this invitation and, within a few hours, her letter was on its way. To my mind, this is a great document, and posterity can judge its contents according to its own standard:

Dear Friends in the Cause of Baha-U-Llah:

I was touched by your kind letter of September 25th which I received this morning and I believe with you that a sincere friendship between us all would not be impossible, even after the difficulties which have passed. I do not feel any pride or any stubbornness, and if you will allow me to say so, I have a little love for all of you, which may or may not be acceptable.

Last year, although I jealously guarded this work of ours, my purpose was only, and entirely, to bring the fruit of it to your doors. I would not have liked to miss one sincere soul among our members, but wanted to

bring all of them to strengthen your forces at your center. This was my heart's desire, and without this aim I would have had no inspiration in the work. Nevertheless, circumstances were against us and the tide of The New History Society was turned afield. Neither Ahmad nor I could turn it back now, because the people have lost confidence.

I have always believed in the unification of forces and I do believe in an Administration, although I cannot make of it an article of faith. I think that the guidance of the Assemblies should be something to be desired, not something to be submitted to, and that the sanction of the Publishing Committee should be an asset to be intensely hoped for, not an obligation.

Last summer, I found myself unexpectedly in Rouen and there I visited the tower room where, in the year 1431, Jeanne d'Arc was tried. As I leaned against those very walls where she had leaned, and as the questions and answers of her trial which were hung up on the wall, were read to me, my eyes filled with tears for her, and my heart with grief. She had been asked to believe in the row of priests before her as instruments of God to be submitted to, and when, after repeated questioning, she still insisted that she could not, they declared her to be outside of the Church and sentenced her to what they called the minimum penalty, which was only burning. Two Members of the Court went on record as thinking the punishment too lenient. So, forsaken by her King, whom she had served for nearly two years and loved so much, but with her confidence in her God and in her Cause undiminished, she gave up her life on the market place and withdrew to her eternal glory.

Today, it is not a woman, but a man who stands be-

fore the Bar of the Church, and after the passing of exactly five centuries to the very year, the question asked is still the same.

I myself am nothing in this, except that I see Truth in this man, as I believe that I would have seen it in Jeanne d'Arc, had I been there.

That same day in Rouen, I visited the Shrine where her memory is glorified by the same Church which condemned her, and I lit a candle before that Shrine, for the Cause of Baha-U-Llah.

After nearly two years, the question of The New History Society has passed out of your hands and out of ours. The Guardian has confirmed your action and there the matter must rest.

In a letter received (*by a mutual friend*) two days ago from Ruhi Effendi, post-scripted by the Guardian, he says:

"Anyhow, by the attitude the National Spiritual Assembly has taken considering the History Society outside the Cause, and the advice they have given the friends to dissociate themselves from it, we hope that the problem is solved." And again in the same letter—"Anyhow, thank God that the die is cast and the final decision is taken."

The problem which has absorbed too much time already has been decided by a higher Court. I cannot question that decision. Therefore, a meeting between us, even though unofficial as you so considerately suggested, would be useless. The whole matter is now disposed of and we must all accept.

I want to thank you many times and send you all my best wishes. It is possible that in the future we may meet in a personal way. I should be most pleased,

Continued Unrest

It appears that the article concerning The New History Society, as published in *Bahai News* of August 1930, and the later cablegram from the Guardian were not sufficient to allay the unrest in the Bahai Community. The anxiety and dissatisfaction continued unabated, the reason being that many looked upon our work as the only hope of freeing the Cause from the reactionary influences that had oppressed it for so long. Therefore, *Bahai News* allotted more than three pages in its November issue to a further discussion of the problem, in a section entitled *The Principle of Bahai Freedom. A Statement Concerning the Episode of The New History Society*. I will give a few extracts:—

Because of certain misunderstandings that still prevail among a few believers, the National Spiritual Assembly feels it advisable to issue this further statement, supplementing and confirming the statement published in *Bahai News* for August 1930, regarding the episode of The New History Society.

The desire of the National Assembly is to so clarify the matter by recording the various steps leading to the adoption of the previous statement that no doubts may remain in a single Bahai heart. It will be understood by every believer that the following quotations and brief explanatory remarks are intended to deepen our collective unity within the institutions of the Cause, and The New History Society is referred to merely as an episode in our Bahai experience.

It is devoutly believed that careful consideration of the matter as here presented will remove these definite

sources of misunderstanding and, consequently, sources of disunity among the believers. The New History Society itself is relative to the discussion only as having occasioned a temporary test to a number of Bahais. The definite sources of misunderstanding to be removed are, first, that the Guardian has ever or will ever sanction any activity as "Bahai" which stands in opposition or indifference to the permanent general principles of administration given us under the Will and Testament of Abdul Baha; second, that the Guardian could ever conceivably be so misled by false or inaccurate communications from any source that his instructions are subject to personal interpretation; and third, that the guidance or inspiration felt by any group of believers possesses a superior spiritual validity to the deliberations of a duly elected Spiritual Assembly and thus justifies opposition to the Assembly in relation to any given situation.

Cablegram from Shoghi Effendi included in above article:

Feel strongly Ahmad Sohrab should uphold unconditionally authority Local and National Assembly.

Quotations from letters written by Shoghi Effendi included in above article:

Attendance Ahmad meeting conditioned upon Ahmad's unquestioned acceptance to conduct meetings on lines fully sanctioned by National Spiritual Assembly. True unity can only be preserved by maintenance paramount position National Spiritual Assembly.

Ahmad Sohrab's activities should be watched carefully, lest a weak handling of this extremely delicate situation may confuse the minds of the friends and

cause a split in the Cause. The Cause has already triumphed over such cases which flare up for a time, then recede into the shadows of oblivion and are thought of no more. The case of Khyrullah, Fareed, Dyer, Mrs. White and others testify to this truth.

Quotations from two letters written by Ruhi Effendi, Shoghi Effendi's secretary, included in the same article:

In none of the Guardian's letters to Mrs. Chanler has Shoghi Effendi approved of her attitude toward the Local and National Assemblies. One of those who was over-zealous about The New History Society wrote Shoghi Effendi that the members of the New York Assembly are gradually becoming milder and perhaps drawn to the History Society. This is to solve the problem in the wrong way. It is not the Assembly that has to be won to the cause of some rebellious person, but that person brought back under the authority of the Assembly.

Some persons in the (United) States feel that the History Society was badly represented to Shoghi Effendi. The source of all our information is the writings of Ahmad and the publications of that group. In all his circular letters he harped on the note of freedom and denounced the red tape that characterizes organizations.

I have to thank Ruhi Effendi for so concisely summing up my characteristics in the above statement. I could not have done it better myself. An almost religious belief in freedom for all men, and a dislike for the red tape that applies to organizations (especially supposedly spiritual ones) are strongly developed in my consciousness. On this basis, I have always functioned and always will.

Tainted Money

The main activity of the Bahai Administration has been, and still is, centered about the building of a great Temple in Wilmette, Illinois. In 1929, Mr. Chanler made a considerably large contribution to the Temple Fund, which was graciously accepted; and again on January 2, 1930, Mr. and Mrs. Chanler and I sent in comparatively modest donations for the same purpose. Now, one of the fixed rules of the Administration is that no money may be accepted from non-Bahais for the building of the Temple. Therefore, these latter checks were retained uncashed in the administrative files for more than ten months, and on November 6, 1930, after my expulsion from the organization, a letter was written by Mr. Alfred Lunt to Mr. and Mrs. Chanler stating that the checks could be *used for Bahai purposes in the discretion of the National Assembly* and asking that they be made payable to the National Bahai Fund instead of to the Temple Fund.

The mystery of this double standard, regarding moneys received from Bahais and non-Bahais, struck Mrs. Chanler as too complicated for her to deal with, so she asked me to answer in her place. I did so to the best of my ability, closing as follows:

. . . If the money of a man who served Abdul Baha for eight years and who is giving the last drop of his blood to spread this Cause, and if the money of Mr. and Mrs. Chanler, who are devoting *all* their energies in the same direction, is not good enough for the Temple, then, I believe, and I assert before the world, that all the hundreds of thousands of dollars that have been given by others have been given uselessly.

I lament and weep over the conditions of today. Not only do I do so, but Baha-U-Llah himself, and Abdul Baha himself lament and weep for that which, within a few short years, has been done to their universal spiritual Cause.

In your official pronunciamento of August of this year, you state emphatically that the activities conducted by Ahmad Sohrab are in no wise entitled to the cooperation of Bahais. How can this statement be squared with this recent communication that you are willing to accept money for *Bahai Activities* from a man whom you have publicly repudiated? Is this consistent? Or, has one standard been chosen for the National Assembly and another for the poor Bahais, standing as so many pawns on their chessboard?

Mrs. Chanler wished to answer your letter to her, but she found that she could not.

The Last Letter

During the winding up of the year 1930, the agitation in the Bahai Community persisted. Although Mrs. Chanler had accepted the decision of the Guardian without hesitancy or question, many of the well-wishers of The New History Society could not bring themselves to look upon the matter as closed. Consequently, as this tempestuous year drew to an end, Mrs. Chanler, with a view to protect these friends of hers from further distress, wrote a final letter to Mr. Alfred Lunt, the one member of the National Spiritual Assembly who had been sympathetic to her work. I reproduce it in full.

December 28, 1930.

In these last days of 1930, I feel that I must make a resolution, difficult as it is, for the New Year.

You, and many of our dear beloved friends, have suffered enough on our account. You have risked your own comfort, you have tried to protect us, you have loved us and showered us with kindness.

Now we want to thank you for all this and to withdraw from your lives. We think this is the wisest thing to do and we beg you to agree with us.

If, at some future date, God wishes to bring us together, He will do it; and in the meantime we will all work for His Cause according to the light that we have, and I am sure, with great understanding of each other.

As Bahais, we know a place to meet that is not in the physical world but somewhere in the presence of the Master, and in these meetings, we will draw great strength and comfort.

I have thought of writing this for a long time and now I know that the moment has come.

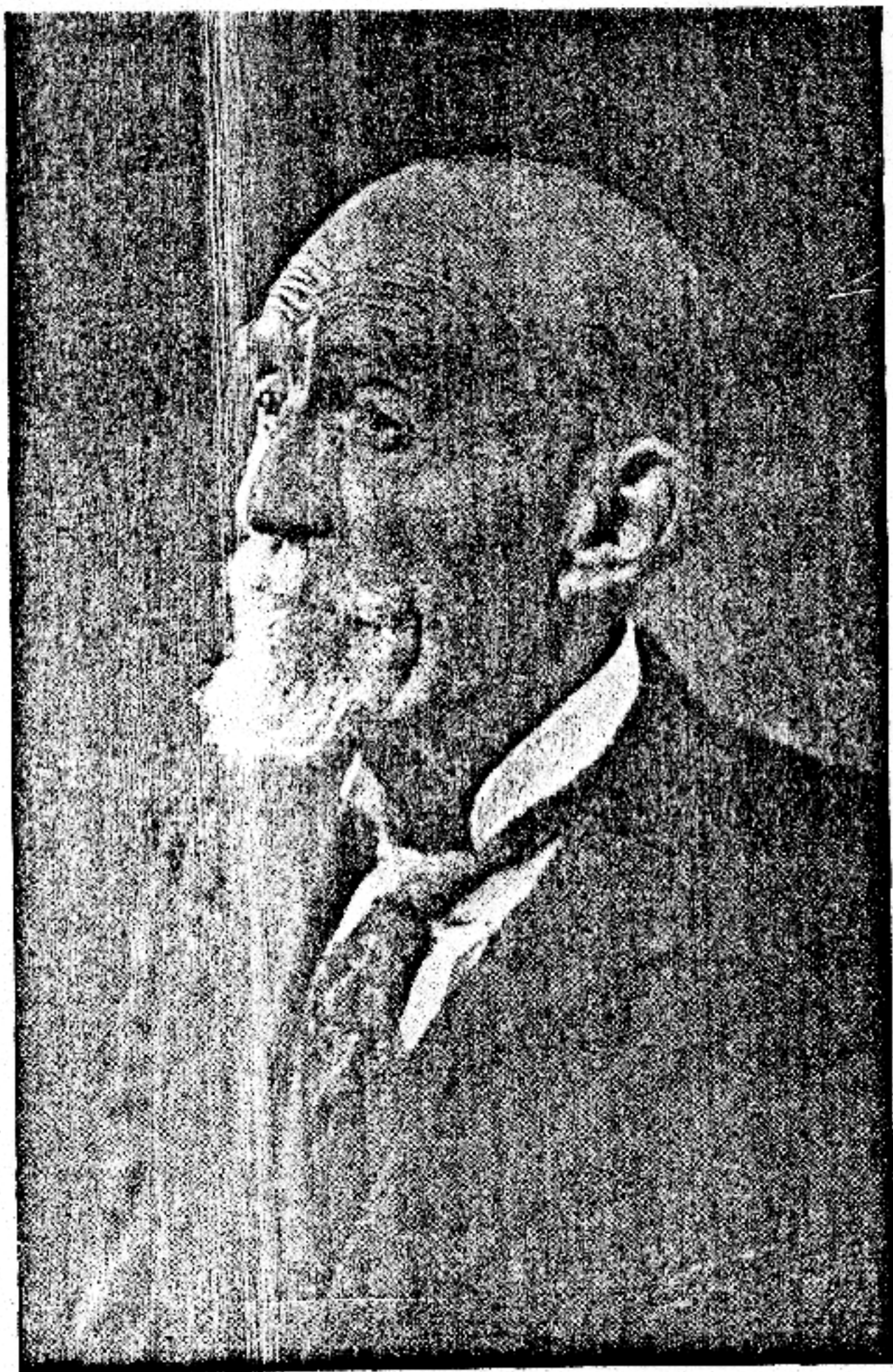
Don't make yourself sad by answering, I will always love you.

P. S. I am sending the same letter to nine of our friends.

The above communication was addressed to:

Mrs. Edward J. Kinney	Mrs. May Maxwell
Miss Juliet Thompson	Miss Jean Silver
Mrs. Audrey Foster	Miss Mae Seabeck
Mrs. Margueritta Smythe	Mrs. Frances Fales

In spite of this letter, our connections with many of the Bahais continued, the affection on both sides being too great to be set aside. Later, however, an order originating either in Haifa or with the National Spiritual Assembly



MAJOR JOSEPH HONORÉ JAXON
One of the earliest pioneers of the Bahai Cause in America.

(which, I do not actually know), brought all association to an end. There was a single exception made to this ruling and, for years, Mrs. Chanler had the joy of seeing her closest friend in the Cause; but, with the institution of the lawsuit, this especial dispensation was cancelled. Thus, the only remaining link between ourselves and the adherents of the Administration was broken.

On the other hand, a few Bahais have openly stood by our work, regardless of consequences. Conspicuous among these is Mr. O. J. Hanko, who has been in the Cause for about thirty years. He was a charter member of The New History Society, and, although he lives out of town, he is ever ready with encouragement and assistance. Also, there are Miss Jane Durand, of Asbury Park, New Jersey, whose kindness has never failed us, and Major Joseph Honoré Jaxon, eighty years old, one of the few remaining pioneers of the Cause in America.

Another, among the earliest Bahais in this country, is Mrs. Frederick Allen, the former Berthelin Lexow. Mrs. Allen has, through the years, identified herself with the work of The New History Society in a very notable way, and has been an example of courage and self-sacrifice.

A Cardinal Principle

The official and unofficial records, contained in the type-written book entitled *The New History Society and the Bahai Organization*, cover a period from December 24, 1928, to November 21, 1931. From many of these letters and statements, I have quoted only a part; from some communications from Haifa, which were addressed to others besides ourselves, I have not felt at liberty to quote at all.

However, through the extracts used, I believe that the points of difference between the Assemblies and The New History Society have been made clear. Throughout those three years, the Bahai Administration made its claims, which undoubtedly it thought just, and tried to impose them; and throughout the same period of time, The New History Society, with at least equal earnestness, struggled to maintain its integrity so that it could look the world square in the face. Here there is a difference in point of view, so fundamental, that no words and no effort can change it, at least as far as mortal vision can perceive. For ourselves, we shall continue along the path that we have chosen so deliberately; we shall teach freedom of conscience, respect for the convictions of others and co-operation between men and women of all systems of thought tending toward a true comradeship of human beings, born and unborn. Then, shall we teach religious liberty? To ask the question is to answer it. The aspiration toward religious liberty has always existed in the consciousness of mankind. It lives in Hindu hearts, in Jewish hearts, in Christian hearts, in Islamic hearts and, after its long leap from the heart of *The Most Great Prisoner in Acca*, it lives in the hearts of people everywhere.

This is a cardinal principle of the New World Order.

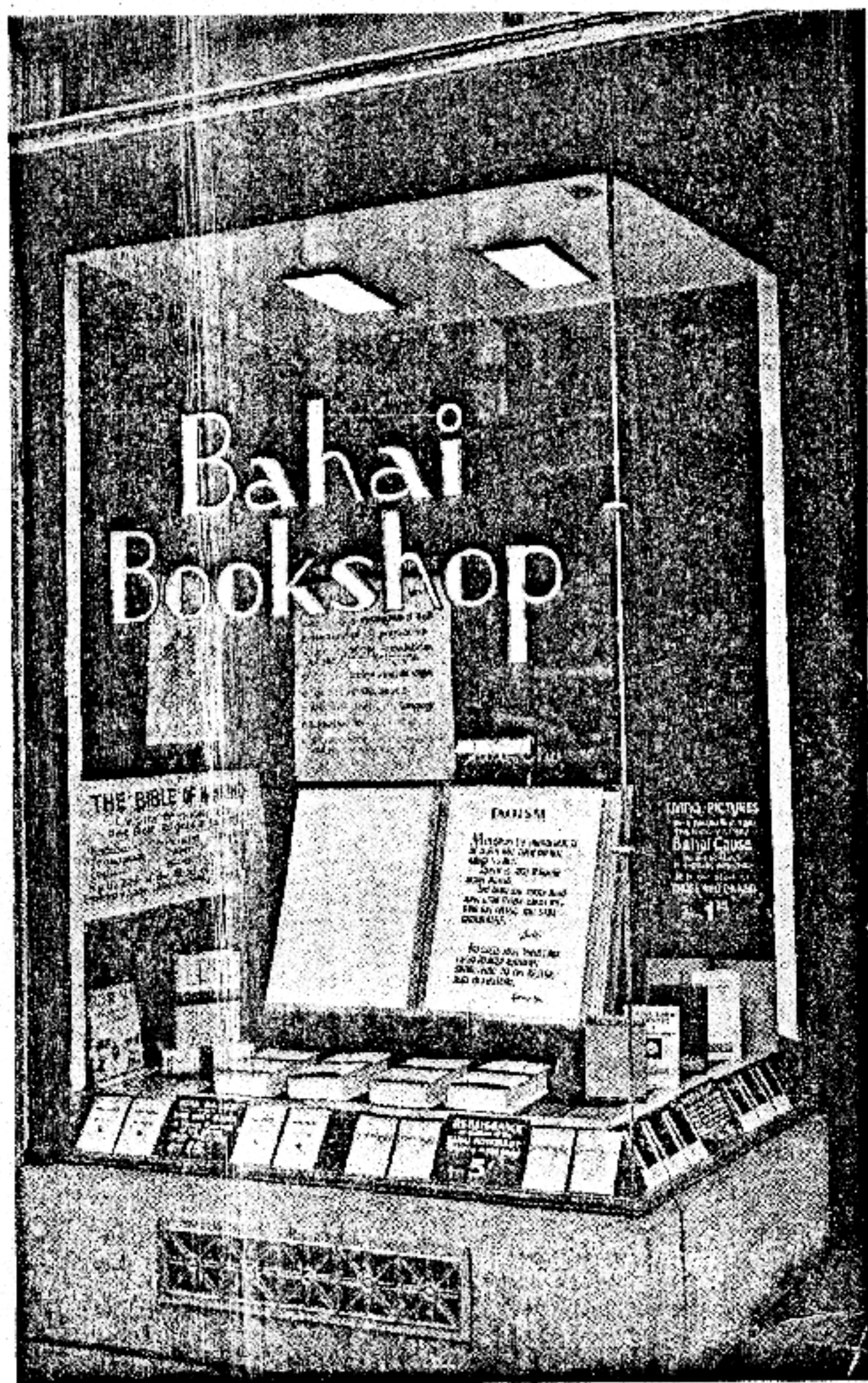
P A R T T H R E E

BAHAI LAWSUIT

5. The Trade-mark
6. The Decision
7. The Name
8. The Appeal

*So speak ye, and so do, as they that
shall be judged by the law of liberty.*

—James, Chapter 2, Verse 12



BAHAI BOOKSHOP

CHAPTER V

THE TRADE-MARK

The New History Society

The movement which was inaugurated in 1929, under the name of The New History Society, had for its object the promulgation of the constructive and universal principles of Baha-O-Llah. This movement came into being and has been supported and sustained up to this date through the initiative and devotion of Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler. My part in helping the growth and progress of this work has been a humble one. I claim nothing for myself, but I claim everything for these two servants of Baha-O-Llah.

During the last eleven years, through the channel of 'The New History Society, the name and fame of the Cause of Baha-O-Llah have penetrated to the four corners of the earth. By means of public meetings, at which a succession of the intellectual and spiritual leaders of humanity (both Americans and distinguished visitors from abroad) have delivered their messages; through annual Prize Competitions on topics of world peace, world religion, world reconstruction, racial amity, etc.; through the publication of books and leaflets (some of which have been translated into 30 languages); through its monthly and quarterly organs respectively *New History* and *The Children's Caravan*; through 'The Caravan, a young people's movement, with more than 200 Chapters in 27 countries; through the

holding of classes and numerous other methods, these two souls have rendered unparalleled services to the Cause of Baha-O-Llah.

The annals of Bahai history in the Western world contain few records of such personal dedication. Mr. and Mrs. Chanler have consecrated everything—their name, their house, their possessions and, last but not least, their privacy to hold aloft the sacred name of Baha-O-Llah and to make his teachings better known to young and old in the continents of Africa, Asia, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, South and Central America, Canada, Mexico and the Islands of the Seas. Seldom has such a missionary work been undertaken; seldom has it been formulated and carried into execution with such enthusiasm, energy, forethought and utter disregard to personal comfort and rest.

Their Reward

And now comes recognition from the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada! But, before I mention this recognition, let me state that during the last eleven years this body of men and women have set themselves to oppose the work of The New History Society, to attribute to its founders and members all sorts of unworthy motives; to publish in *Bahai News* articles of a most crude character and to countenance stories and rumors that have no foundation in fact and no relation to reality. In taking this attitude and in systematically following a course of enmity and persecution, the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada have been free and untrammelled; one may assert that they have used (or in my

opinion have abused) their constitutional right of free press, free speech and free assembly. I am the last man to blame them for what they have written! Praise be to God that in these United States the citizens are free to relieve themselves of their opinions about any one, be he a humble laborer, a political leader or a one-time friend.

But, all I have to state here is this: For eleven years Mr. and Mrs. Chanler have kept a dignified silence; for eleven years they have never, on the platform nor in print, met these attacks, and for eleven years, serene and undisturbed, they have heeded the advice of the Great Teacher by meeting evil with good.

Serene and undisturbed! I am probably exaggerating a little, for there were times when the darts of the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada and the Local Assembly of New York did hurt; yet one glance backward to the martyrdoms of the early Babis and Bahais who suffered at the hands of the enemies of freedom and progress was sufficient to restore their equanimity and their confidence.

This radiant acquiescence would unquestionably have continued for the rest of their lives had the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada confined themselves to periodic insinuations in *Bahai News* and to the setting afloat of their fanciful stories and rumors; but something happened that has made the writing of this book imperative.

In 1939, The New History Society exhibited its works and literature in Science and Education Building at the New York World's Fair, and during these months an idea came to the mind of Mrs. Frederick Allen, one of the first

Bahais in this country, who had been called *Berthalin* by Abdul Baha and who has used this name ever since. The idea was that it would be a valuable service to the Cause if, after the closing of the Fair, our exhibit could be transported to the city. After some consultation, it was decided to take this step as a purely temporary activity, and on November 7th, 1939, *Bahai Bookshop* was opened at 828 Lexington Avenue, a lease having been signed for the duration of six months. I admit that we were fully conscious that, in all probability, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada would resent this further heralding of the Bahai name and teachings. However, we were prepared, as in the past, to meet opposition in silence.

Then—

On December 5, 1939, the postman delivered the following letter to Bahai Bookshop:

(Letterhead of)

WATSON, BRISTOL, JOHNSON & LEAVENWORTH
6 East 45th Street
New York

December 5, 1939.

By registered mail to
Mrs. Julie Chanler,
Bahai Bookshop,
828 Lexington Avenue,
New York, N. Y.

Dear Madam:

We are instructed by our client, National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Can-

ada, to communicate with you with reference to your unauthorized use of the trademark BAHAI in the trade name BAHAI BOOKSHOP, and on books, leaflets and advertisements which are not published by our client.

The word BAHAI has been used for about forty years by our client and its predecessors as a trademark for magazines, printed books, and other publications, and is registered in the United States Patent Office in the name of our client, registration No. 245,271. The word BAHAI is substantially the same as the registered trademark BAHAI, and your use of the former in the ways we have mentioned constitutes trademark infringement and unfair competition.

Probably you were not informed as to the trademark situation and it will not be necessary for our client to do more than bring the facts to your attention. In order to comply with the formalities, however, we must and do demand on behalf of National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada that you discontinue immediately the use of the word BAHAI in the name under which you are conducting a book shop, and upon books and other publications not published by our client, and we hereby notify you that upon your failure to do so our client will hold you responsible for profits, damages and costs of litigation.

Will you please give the matter immediate consideration and advise us of your decision.

Yours truly,

(Sgd.) Watson, Bristol, Johnson
& Leavenworth.

A few days after the receipt of this letter, Mrs. Chanler placed the matter in the hands of Mr. Fred J. Bechert,

of the firm Mitchell & Bechert, and the following correspondence ensued.

(Letterhead of)
MITCHELL & BECHERT
420 Lexington Avenue
New York, N. Y.

December 21, 1939.

Messrs. Watson, Bristol, Johnson
& Leavenworth,
6 East 45th Street,
New York, N. Y.

Re: Bahai Book Shop

Gentlemen:

This is in reply to your letter of December 5th, receipt of which we acknowledged under date of December 12th.

We have conferred with Mrs. Chanler and examined a great deal of literature relating to the Bahai Cause. Through our investigation, we have learned that in about the year 1863 Mirza Hossain Ali, a Persian nobleman, felt that he was inspired by God and that it was his duty to bring a message of light and glory to a harassed world. He adopted as a spiritual name "Baha-U-Llah". This name was to signify the "light" or "glory" of God. Prior to 1863, there were followers of the Bab and the individual followers were known as Babis. The Babis later became followers of Baha-U-Llah, who carried on the cause, and the followers of Baha-U-Llah became known as Bahais. Long prior to the year 1900, the word "Bahai" had become a well known descriptive word to identify a follower of Baha-

U-Llah in precisely the same way as "Christian" would describe a follower of Christ.

It is our opinion, therefore, and we have so advised Mrs. Chanler, that Bahai, long prior to the year 1900, became and now is a word of common speech necessary for use in aptly describing a follower of Baha-U-Llah. In our opinion, therefore, the word "Bahai" cannot legally be exclusively appropriated by your client.

Mrs. Chanler advises us that she is a Bahai, and that her Bahai Book Shop specializes in Bahai books, pamphlets, and literature in general for the dissemination of the Bahai teachings.

It is our understanding that Mrs. Chanler, far from competing unfairly with your client, is engaged in the work of furthering and spreading the Bahai cause, which, we take it, is also the purpose and effort of your client.

Yours very truly,

B/S

Mitchell & Bechert.

(Letterhead of)

WATSON, BRISTOL, JOHNSON &
LEAVENWORTH
6 East 45th Street
New York

December 22, 1939.

Re: Bahai Bookshop

Messrs. Mitchell & Bechert,
420 Lexington Avenue, New York, N. Y.

Dear Sirs:

We are in receipt of your letter of December 21 in answer to ours of December 5.

You state that in your opinion the word Bahai "is a

word of common speech necessary for use in aptly describing a follower of Baha-U-Llah." You do not state, however, that the word is descriptive of the goods on which our client uses it as a trademark, namely, magazines, printed books, and other publications, and it is obvious that such is not the case. The use of this word by your client on publications not published by our client and in the trade name Bahai Bookshop constitutes trademark infringement and unfair competition.

Moreover, the use by your client of the trade name Bahai Bookshop is a misrepresentation and a deceptive use because it gives the erroneous impression that the book shop is operated or sponsored by our client, the official Bahai religious organization, and the use of the name Bahai Bookshop without our client's authority and consent also infringes our client's property right in the name Bahai.

We believe you may want to reconsider your opinion in this matter, and request that you do so.

Yours truly,

(Sgd.) Watson, Bristol, Johnson
& Leavenworth.

(Letterhead of)

MITCHELL & BECHERT

420 Lexington Avenue New York, N. Y.

January 2, 1940.

Messrs. Watson, Bristol, Johnson
& Leavenworth,

6 East 45th Street, New York, N. Y.

Re: Bahai Book Shop

Gentlemen:

This is in reply to your letter of December 22, 1939.

We regret that our letter of December 21st did not make our client's position entirely clear.

It is our opinion that "Bahai" is a descriptive word for aptly describing a follower of the Bahai teachings and, furthermore, that the word "Bahai", whether or not used as a trade-mark, if it is applied on Bahai literature is descriptive of that literature. If your client is in the general publishing business and applies the word "Bahai" to books and periodicals having nothing to do with Bahai teachings, then the mark would not be descriptive of such books and periodicals.

Our client uses the word "Bahai" in the title of its Bahai Bookshop in a descriptive sense to identify it as a book shop specializing in Bahai literature.

Our client denies that the use of the trade name "Bahai Bookshop" is either a misrepresentation or a deceptive use. As stated, the Bahai Bookshop represents that it specializes in Bahai literature and, as a matter of fact, Mrs. Chanler is herself a Bahai.

Our client further denies that the use of the trade name "Bahai Bookshop" gives any erroneous impression that the shop is operated or sponsored by your client, since your client, in our judgment, has no exclusive right to the name "Bahai" to describe a follower of the Bahai teachings or to identify those teachings in book form or otherwise.

We must therefore repeat that, in our opinion, our client is not infringing any rights of your client and is not unfairly competing with your client.

Yours very truly,

Mitchell & Bechert.

Points Involved and My Reactions to Them

A partial study of the contents of the above correspondence between the two attorneys-at-law will reveal several interesting facts:

1. The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada have made a trademark of the name *Bahai*.
2. According to the text of application filed March 10, 1928, Serial No. 262,923 the Bahai Organization is a corporation.
3. The word *Bahai* is a *trademark* as actually used by applicant upon *goods*, and requests that the same be registered in the United States Patent Office. . . . The trade-mark has been continuously used and applied to said goods in applicant's business since 1900.
4. The goods or merchandise that the applicant sells and which are protected by a trade-mark are the words of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha.
5. Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha lived in prison, suffered and gave their teachings *free* for the religious unification of mankind in order that, in 1928, these spiritual heavenly teachings be monopolized, and sold under trade-mark to an unsuspecting public as so much *goods*, similar to *Blue Sunoco*, *G. Washington coffee*, *Twenty Mule Team Boraxo* or the new, blended with *Havana*, *White Owl Cigar* (it's milder)!
6. The members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, like their expanding sister monopolists, are reaching out to stifle all *unfair competition*, holding Bahai Bookshop re-

sponsible for profits to which, incidentally, they are welcome if they are willing to meet the losses as well.

7. The Bahai organization is not a religion, nor a spiritual renaissance, nor the spirit of the age, but is a full-fledged corporation which, while it engages itself in marketing the principles of Baha-O-Llah for the establishment of Universal Peace, through its various branches in the United States, Canada and in other parts of the world, has protected these goods by taking out a trade-mark on the very name which more than twenty thousand Persian men and women claimed at the price of their lives. This is the first instance in the history of religion where the privilege of calling oneself a follower of a certain Prophet, were he Buddha or Christ, or Mohaminad or any other, has been involved with the interests of a trust or corporation.

What, for instance would have happened to Christianity if, added to the difficulties of establishing a new religion, the early Christians had had to contend with property rights on the name and teachings that they were ready to die for? It is certain that such a liability would have stifled the movement in its infancy and that, before the passing of a hundred years, the words of Jesus would have been heard of no more. The Cause of Baha-O-Llah is no different. Strong as it is, commercial interests and the lust for power are stronger yet if allowed to operate unopposed; and this new-born child, the hope of the ages, will unquestionably cease to breathe if its neck continues to be weighted with the steel links of an international chain store.

Back to The New History Society

General membership in The New History Society is free. Sustaining membership consists simply of subscription to our monthly magazine, *New History*. The society is composed of a band of volunteers and free souls who have come together with the desire to help in the formation of the *new history* of the world and to promulgate the constructive and universal principles of Baha-O-Allah. These men and women are not tied to any formula. They are the children of the New Age and the heralds of the New Civilization.

More than 99 per cent of all expenses of The New History Society and its manifold activities have, during the past eleven years, been paid quietly and unassumingly by Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler.

Bahai News

The Feb. 1940 issue of *Bahai News* on page 3, in an article signed by the National Spiritual Assembly under the title of *Vigor and Spiritual Health of the Community*, directs its attack, without mentioning any name, to Mr. and Mrs. Chanler, The New History Society and Bahai Bookshop. We quote:

The believers in all lands are under the supreme favor of guidance from on High. They strive to uphold, day by day, ideals and principles which relate to their own development and the illumination and harmony of mankind. But on the other hand, to aid the endeavors of those who outwardly claim allegiance but secretly try to destroy the Divine Edifice through enmity to its leader, would manifestly be the most grievous of errors.

Historically such disloyalty, synchronizing with the expansion of the Faith, had its appearance when some who were professedly loyal to the Bab, disobeyed His Covenant by refusing to accept Baha'u'llah as the expected One of the *Beyan*. They were urged on by a sordid ambition which brought them ignominy, oblivion and loss. Later the same condition became apparent after the ascension of Baha'u'llah when a few corrupt people violated His solemn Covenant by refusing to accept its Center, Abdu'l-Baha. Again, a diminishing few, urged on by vaulting ambition and an obvious desire to organize within the Cause a group that would circle around themselves, have refused to acknowledge the station of our beloved Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, and the New World Order of administration called into being by the Will of Abdu'l-Baha.

Under the authority of the Guardian, the time has now come to act against these "insidious adversaries" who have even gone so far as to flout the Beloved's Will and Testament, the very pillar of our unity, by claiming the right to use the term "Baha'i" to designate their personal activities. The matter is therefore being taken to the courts, and as soon as possible their excuses will be made a matter of public record. It will be seen whether the present enemies of the Faith can succeed any better than those enemies who have preceded them: Subhi-Ezel, Mohamet Ali, Kheirella and their like, whose denial of the Truth became historic facts beyond recall.

In connection with this legal action, we have this message from Shoghi Effendi in his cablegram of January 23: "Praying victory similar (to the) one recently won (over) Covenant-breakers (in) Holy Land be achieved

by American believers over insidious adversaries (in) City (of the) Covenant."

For Bahais Only

Before answering some of the accusations contained in the above extract, I will point out one peculiar aspect of *Bahai News*. Every copy, in recent times, carries on its front page the inscription: *For Bahais Only*. Why for Bahais only, if the Bahai Cause is intended for the whole world? Why for Bahais only, if there is nothing to hide? Why for Bahais only, if this periodical is a credit to those who prepare it? Abdul Baha on many occasions said that in the Bahai Cause there is no secret doctrine, and that there should be no secret society nor secret meetings. He never thought of specifying the point that there should be no secret publication: *For men only, For members of the Klan only, For Bahais Only*.

Referring to Mr. and Mrs. Chanler and the members of The New History Society, the article states that a *diminishing few urged by vaulting ambition and an obvious desire to organize within the cause a group that would circle around themselves. . . .* At this point, I am close to becoming profane, but I will continue to hold the reins of my patience as far as I am able. The above statement is a mendacious falsehood, and the fraudulency of it is as evident to those who wrote it as it is to those of whom it was written.

Vaulting ambition! My soul! A man and woman giving their hearts, minds and all that they possess in this world to spread an unwanted, though much-needed, cause!

Vaulting ambition! Two persons bidding farewell to

their associates and friends to champion a movement that had been dragged, by its votaries, to the level of a narrow sect!

Vaulting ambition! What did Mr. and Mrs. Chanler have to gain! They had everything to lose. Yet in spite of all kinds of obstacles, laid by their fellow Bahais and others, they arose with such power and self-sacrifice to spread the Cause of Baha-O-Ilah that it is difficult to measure or comprehend the height and depth of their love and devotion.

I praise heaven that I was allowed the privilege of assisting them in their disinterested enterprise; and so, I doubt not, do those who have held by them through thick and thin and who thus have exposed themselves to this dishonest attack.

Insidious adversaries! The insidious adversaries are those who hold office in the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada. They are the ones who, through their legalistic verbiage, have stopped the circulation of the blood of life through the arteries of mankind; they are the ones who have banished love from their midst and enthroned the Veiled Hatred which is more dreadful than the unveiled one; they are the ones who have spread the pall of subtle fear and suspicion over the Bahai Community, exiling confidence and self-respect; they are the ones who, through political manipulations before and during annual Bahai Conventions, are re-elected to the same offices year after year—thus, keeping a stranglehold on the activities of the Cause and directing those activities according to their own good-pleasure.

The founders of The New History Society never, dur-

ing the eleven years of the existence of the movement, have tried to *organize within the Cause a group that would circle around themselves*. Those who are within the Bahai administrative structure have been emasculated to the point where they are not worth organizing; and then, The New History Society is not an organization. It sees the result of these tactics, and it remembers that the Bahai Cause was not intended to be an organization.

The New History Society has marched across the longitude and latitude of the earth, sowing the seeds of the creative words of Baha-O-Llah without let or hindrance, and it has not withheld those who love organization to follow organization. In other words: *Let the dead bury the dead!*

The writer of the article in *Bahai News* reaches the height of his slanderous vilification when he likens Mr. and Mrs. Chanler and their Bahai friends to *those enemies that preceded them: Subhi-Ezel, Mohamet Ali, Kheirella and their like*. God Almighty! Is it possible that a human mind could have framed this sentence! Is it conceivable that a community, calling itself Bahai, can allow it to go unchallenged!

I address the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, and ask: How did you dare, in the presence of Baha-O-Llah, to print such blasphemies upon the pages of *Bahai News*? Who drew up this article, and how did it come about that you put your signature to it?

This you call *Bahai News*! It is a yellow sheet, a scandalous germ carrier! No wonder that it is *For Bahais Only*!

Construction of the Word "Baha-O-Llah"

Baha-O-Llah is a compound Arabic word consisting of Baha and Allah, literally meaning the *light* or the *glory* of God. Baha is an ordinary Arabic word which has been used in the literature and poetry of Arabia for innumerable centuries, and, of course, the word Allah is as ancient as Arabia itself. The word Baha is so well established that, when the Arabic translators of the Old Testament came to certain passages in that book, they rendered the words *glory of God* as *Baha-O-Llah*, and *the glory of Carmel* as *the Baha of Carmel*. See Isaiah, Chapter 35, verse 2; likewise Isaiah, Chapter 40, verse 5; where *the glory of Carmel* is translated into *the Baha of Carmel*, and *the glory of our Lord* is rendered into *the Baha of our Lord*. This can be verified by reference to any Arabic translation of the Old Testament.

From this point of view, any Arab, knowing nothing of the Bahai Cause, can open a shop under the name: *Bahai Foodshop* or *Bahai Drug Store* or *Bahai Bookshop*, because the words *light* and *glory* are current words in his language and he is at liberty to use them as have been his ancestors for centuries past.

Historical Origin of the Name Bahai

The Bahai Cause, as the movement is known today, was inaugurated in 1844 by Mirza Ali Mohammad, who adopted the title of the *Bab*, an Arabic word meaning *gate*, by which he implied that the gate to a new civilization was opened wide. A follower of his became known as a Babi, the addition of the letter *i* signifying in Persian

being of, or adhering to. Just as a native of the city of Tabriz is called Tabrizi or a native of Esphahan is called Esphahani, so an adherent of the Bab was called Babi.

When Mirza Hossein Ali, a disciple of the Bab, realized that he was inspired by God and that he must bring the message of *light and glory* to a harassed world, he adopted the title of *Baha-O-Llah*, by which he implied that the age of darkness, superstition, prejudice and ignorance was about to pass away and that a new era of understanding, harmony and union was dawning. The spiritual power of Baha-O-Llah was so tremendous that the majority of the Babis at once recognized in him the fulfillment of the prophecies of the Bab, which were to the effect that after him a yet greater personality would arise and take leadership. Therefore, these disciples gave their allegiance to Baha (Baha-O-Llah often in his writings refers to himself simply as Baha) and automatically they became Bahais. Likewise, the Babi Movement, from this time on, more and more became known as the Bahai Movement.

The Bahai Cause Is Not an Organization

Many years ago, when the Bahai Cause was guided by Abdul Baha, the great son of Baha-O-Llah, it was taught as a free, non-sectarian Revelation, its door open to all mankind.

The earlier Bahai booklets, now out of circulation but still to be found in the Public Library of New York, 5th Ave. and 42nd Street, carried a significant statement made by Abdul Baha. This statement may be found in a booklet entitled *No. 9*, which was widely circulated in former years.

Now, this statement was so significant and far-reaching in its implications that it was continuously referred to by the Bahais in their speeches and writings; and today there are many yet alive who, on numerous occasions, have heard Abdul Baha himself repeat it. Let us listen to the Master as he spoke:

The Bahai Movement is not an organization. You cannot organize the Bahai Movement. The Bahai Movement is the spirit of the age. It is the essence of all the highest ideals of this century. The Bahai Cause is an inclusive movement. The teachings of all religions and societies are found here. Christians, Jews, Buddhists, Mohammadans, Zoroastrians, Theosophists, Freemasons, Spiritualists, etc., find their highest aims in this Cause, Socialists and philosophers find their theories fully developed in this movement.

Mr. Horace Holley

Mr. Horace Holley learned of the Cause during the lifetime of the Master; after a meeting with Abdul Baha in Switzerland and a deep study of the teachings, he applied himself to the service of this nascent movement. His writings, work of those early years, present the Bahai Cause in a masterful and moving manner, and his later monumental tome *Bahai Scriptures*, published by Brentano's in 1923 (at present out of circulation), is an invaluable compilation. Likewise, the successive year books, entitled *The Bahai World*, prepared under his direction, and containing a wealth of interesting material to be found nowhere else, bear witness to his remarkable editorial talents.

Since the departure from this life of Abdul Baha in

1921, Mr. Horace Holley has been the most dominant and outspoken champion of the Bahai Administration; step by step, he has developed and refined this organism to the point where he now holds in his hand the threads of all the activities of the Cause in the East and in the West. Since 1921, with the exception of a single year, if my memory serves me right, he has been elected year after year as the all-powerful secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada. I can call to mind but a single other instance where the occupant of so unpretentious an office as that of secretary maintained supreme and undisputed sway over the minds and lives of his community. This was in the case of Joseph Stalin, who also heads a movement which likewise is supposed to stand for social reform, and who, at the very pinnacle of power, retained the modest title of Secretary of the Communist Party.

Mr. Horace Holley is a most efficient organizer; he has been, and still is, the editor of various Bahai publications and as such he charts and canalizes the mental and spiritual life of the Bahai Community. As an influential member of the Bahai Reviewing Committee, he censors the writings of the Bahais and sees to it that no liberal or anti-organizational ideas penetrate the minds of the members of the various committees. In the exercise of this function, he always has the right and apt quotations, gathered here and there from the writings of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha, (writings which had been given out by these Great Teachers during an approximate period of sixty-five years and which applied to every condition imaginable, both universal and local) and that is enough to prevent any objec-

tion or discussion. Under such circumstances, thought is paralyzed and no one dares to follow Baha-O-Llah's injunction, ever repeated by Abdul Baha: *Independent Investigation of Truth*.

Going back to the early years, we find a book, entitled: *Bahai—The Spirit of the Age*, written by Mr. Horace Holley and published by Brentano's in 1921. Abdul Baha was still in our midst and, although the forces of organization were gathering and the thin clouds of recurrent ecclesiasticism were becoming visible on the horizon of the Bahai Cause, these were not ominous. Mr. Horace Holley was slightly affected, but he was as yet a free soul—the charm and vision of Abdul Baha still held sway over his writings, as can be seen in the introduction to the above-mentioned book where he gives six remarkable interpretations of the word *Bahai*. Let us for a moment commune with the departed spirit of Mr. Horace Holley:—

The new translation of an ancient classic contains one very significant change. A prophetic passage formerly interpreted "the end of the world" reads now "the end of the age."

In this sense, the world has indeed come to an end in our day—the foundations of a new age, a new civilization, a new science and a new faith have visibly been laid. The inspiration of this new age, for many people in all parts of the world, has one source, one password, one mystery: the name Bahai.

The word Bahai is like a jewel with many facets, a fountain with many pitchers, a mansion with many rooms.

For some, it means a set of principles necessary for

the peace of the world, for economic stability, for the true progress of the sciences and the arts.

For others, Bahai means the privilege of belonging to an active movement already spread throughout the United States, Canada, Europe and large portions of the East; a movement spreading the ideals of fellowship and service irrespective of race, creed, nationality and class.

Still others feel in the word Bahai the reality, the consummation of the Sermon on the Mount, the return of the Divine Love for the purpose of raising mankind from its animal condition to the level of conscious spirituality.

Behind this word for many there stands also a glorious Presence, a Divine Being whose title this word is: The Glory of God. These persons feel this Presence as the controlling force behind every event of this time. Thus is Bahai the cause of a new spirit of reverence and devotion, written as it is upon a Bible, a World Bible, revealed in cosmic utterances which gather together those who seem to be a nucleus of the future spiritual race.

Still others, having heard Abdul Baha during his travels through Europe and America immediately preceding the War, see the word Bahai in terms of his wisdom, his graciousness, his untiring efforts to awaken the slumbering soul to realize the opportunities and responsibilities of life in this age.

Behind this word Bahai, finally, there is one of the most astonishing chapters History has ever had occasion to record. From its beginnings in the glorious Bahi martyrdoms which occurred in Persia only about eighty years ago; to that forty-year exile and imprisonment

suffered by Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha, with seventy faithful followers; witnessing then the renaissance of the Holy Land as the "Mount of Revelation," and arriving at the present hour with Abdul Baha's unique mission made fruitful by the commencement of work on the Bahai Temple at Chicago, by the deeper comprehension of the meaning of this Cause awakened by the nationwide journey of the "Great Teacher," Jenabe Fazel Mazandarani, and the rapid spread of the Bahai Message throughout the East—the historic importance of these events can only be judged at some later date, when from this seed the fruitful tree shall have grown to its maturity.

This was in 1921.

Seven years have rolled into the lap of eternity.

The curtain is lifted on 1928.

The stage is set!

There is our old friend Mr. Horace Holley, urbane, subtle, conscious of his powers—the arbiter and controller of the destiny of the Bahai Organization and Bahai Communities throughout the world. Yes, yes, he has done a good job! With evident satisfaction he displays some papers. What are they? Let us approach and examine them. Our attention is caught by one paper—is riveted on it. We read:

Registered Aug. 7, 1928

Trade-Mark 254,271

United States Patent Office

**National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the
United States and Canada of New York, N. Y.**

Application filed March 10, 1928. Serial No. 262,923.

B A H A ' I STATEMENT

To the Commissioner of Patents:

*National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the
United States and Canada, a common-law corporation,
organized and operated under declaration of trust and
doing business at . . .*

As we read and re-read the statement, we are lost in a sea of amazement. We rub our eyes, we fidget, we feel restless; we wonder whether all this is not a nightmare—impossible, incredible. We stagger, and search in our consciousness for an explanation; then, completely baffled, we look up into the face of Mr. Horace Holley. Maybe he will tell us what this means! He smiles, triumphantly pointing to the signature, and we read:

National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the
United States and Canada

by HORACE HOLLEY,
Secretary.

And as we turn our eyes from this document, we glimpse Mr. Horace Holley's fingers still tenderly patting his own signature!

Well, friends! It is accomplished!

There is a stake on the *source* of the Bahai Cause and its owner-proprietor is the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada.

The *password* given to mankind by Baha-O-Llah, to be used for the regeneration of nations, is in the possession of the Bahai administrators.

No one on the face of the earth can fathom the *mystery* latent in the name *Bahai* except these interpreters of the law, these esteemed members of the all-powerful Bahai hierarchy.

The *jewel with many facets* is boxed and locked, and the key is in the velvet pocket of Mr. Horace Holley.

A concrete wall is raised around the *fountain with many pitchers*. Who cares? Let the world die of thirst.

The door of the *mansion with many rooms* is closed! What if the children of God knock and knock! What if they perish from punishing cold and hunger; *I*, Mr. Horace Holley; *we*, the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada; *we* who follow the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, *we, we, we* are living in the mansion of Baha-O-Llah; we partake of his delectable food and roam in his spiritual garden.

The *set of principles necessary for the peace of the world, for economic stability, for the true progress of sciences and arts* are registered and trade-marked, and woe unto those who dare to speak or write on these subjects!

The remedy given by the Great Physician for the healing of the sick body of the world has been made up into a patent medicine, and no one is allowed to avail himself of its restorative powers except by permission of these parochial pharmacologists.

We, the members of the Bahai Organization, have a priority right on *the ideals of fellowship and service irrespective of race, creed, nationality and class*, and those who put these principles into practice are our *insidious enemies*.

Let the whole world know that we are the custodians of *the reality, the consummation of the Sermon on the Mount*. It is, of course, true that the Apostles of Christ did not copyright the Sermon on the Mount; but, in those days, America was as yet undiscovered and there was no Commissioner of Patents in Jerusalem. It is likewise true that the later Christians did not copyright the Sermon on the Mount, but in our opinion, some of them might have had the foresight to do it, thus preventing its circulation throughout the world except through authorized channels. Man lives and learns! This word *Bahai* is *the reality, the consummation of the Sermon on the Mount*, and the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada are heirs to it; they possess it, they have seignioral rights over it.

Let us go back again to the early years, just for a breath of fresh air! In another part of the already-mentioned book, *Bahai—the Spirit of the Age*, Mr. Horace Holley writes as follows on pages 27-28:—

The slightest appreciation of this Revelation, however, leads one to realize that the spirit of the age cannot be thus conveniently confined. The slight Bahai Organization which exists is, in comparison with the Revelation itself, only as body in comparison to soul. Obviously, the cosmically conscious person of today cannot accept any arbitrary limiting classification. The basic principle of Abdul Baha's teaching is: This is the century of spiritual Illumination. Its basic application is: Investigate Truth, Promote Peace, Proclaim the Oneness of Mankind.

As a footnote to page 28, Mr. Horace Holley quotes

these words of Abdul Baha: *The Bahai Movement is not an organization. You cannot organize the Bahai Movement . . . The Bahai Movement is the spirit of this age.*—Abdul Baha.

The above masterful statement of Mr. Horace Holley was the expression of his faith in the Bahai Cause in 1921. It happens to be the expression of my faith in 1941, with one exception. He refers to *slight Bahai Organization*. Apparently, in spite of the clear statement of Abdul Baha that *you cannot organize the Bahai Movement*, he and his associates had already introduced a *slight* organization and then, with the departure of the Master, the steam-roller began to move, gaining momentum year by year—until now . . . (Additional material regarding the Bahai movement, as taught in former years, and the early appearance of orthodoxy and organizational ideas is given in a supplement at the end of this chapter, under the heading: *The Building of Bahai Organization*.)

My Faith

The founders of the religions of mankind, including the Bahai Cause, never intended their teachings to be cornered by a group, a church, a synagogue, a mosque, a temple or an administration. The burden of their message was the abolition of the religious hierarchies of their times. They preached simplicity of faith and the abrogation of all ritual and credal distinctions; but, invariably and without exception, the followers of the Masters fell into the same ditch, one by one.

Baha-O-Llah wished his movement to be inclusive; it was supposed to serve as a golden thread on which the

spiritual jewels of all religions were to be strung. He did not want to establish a new religion, to form another organization. He did not plan to forge another chain, to fabricate another creed, to build another jail.

I was born in a Bahai family; the home of my uncle, in which I was reared from the age of three months, was surrounded by the enemies of our Faith. In time, our house was pillaged and we were forced to leave Persia. Since my boyhood I have been a wanderer, a dervish, a vagabond. I own nothing, I possess no property, I have no bank account. The source of my wealth is my adoration for Baha-O-Llah; the capital of my life is my devotion to Abdul Baha and this capital, no one, mark well, no one, no matter how protected, and no group, no matter how well organized, and no system, no matter how efficiently administered, can lessen or curtail.

I served my master Abdul Baha for eight years in America and Canada, in Europe, Egypt and Palestine. I also served, and served well, the Bahais throughout the world, including those who today have the arrogance and insolence to classify me as an enemy. I have no apologies to offer to these self-styled Bahais. They cannot hurt me. My bones and my flesh are composed of the love of Abdul Baha, and through my veins and arteries the blood of the Bahai Cause runs red. I make no claim for myself; I possess no title and hold no position. I am but a thrall at the Threshold of my Master; and this servitude, pure and simple, is my claim to life and immortality.

I know that Baha-O-Llah is the protector of his own Cause. He guards over the treasures of his teachings. He does not need a board of trustees to administer his prin-

ciples nor to dispense his faith. His arms are outstretched over the wide universe and his spirit penetrates all things. Baha-O-Llah is my portion; organization is the portion of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada. I am satisfied with my portion; I hope that they are satisfied with theirs!

Yes, I and thousands of others have *inherited* the universal, all-inclusive teachings of Baha-O-Llah and we proudly bear his name. These teachings and this name are available to all who wish to use them, and Baha-O-Llah, from the Kingdom, smiles upon these children of his and is glad.

These children of Baha, who are dedicated to his Cause, are like candles of guidance and wisdom which will burn but the brighter, surrounded as they are with a mesmeric *gloom exorcised over the horizon by the waving of wands* and the incantations of administrative soothsayers and magicians. The soft, lambent rays of these excommunicated souls will, in time, banish the darkness of the *Abra-cadabra* and *Mumbo-jumbo*, chaunted by weird sorcerers, cabalistic necromancers, sanctimonious Shamans, puritan witch-hunters, figure-flinger Cagliostros and fee-faw-fum medicine-men.

Unique Distinction of the Bahai Cause

The Bahai Cause, like all the great religions, contains a set of moral and ethical ideals for the spiritualizing of the life of mankind; but, added to this and unlike other religions, Baha-O-Llah has given us clear and distinct principles for the radical improvement of the social, economic, political and educational conditions of our civiliza-

tion. In other words, the Founder of the Baháí Cause was not only a prophet, preaching and reiterating the absolute moral concepts of former dispensations, but was also an *inspired statesman*.

We know that the major changes in our world have been brought about through the application of the three following methods:

1st. Spiritual education. This has been the method of all the prophets, including Baha-O-Llah. The introduction of ballot box and of voting does not belong to this category of teaching.

2nd. Recurrent violent and bloody revolutions.

3rd. Non-violent revolutions and change, through the adoption of the democratic way: ballot box and vote.

The spiritual genius of Baha-O-Llah emphasized the first method; rejected the second and accepted the third, recognizing its supreme value in our modern world.

When we read his writings and those of his son, Abdul Baha, this point comes out very clearly. For instance, in regard to the exercise of our political rights, *through voting*, Abdul Baha says:

Thou hast asked regarding the political affairs. In the United States it is necessary that the citizens shall take part in elections. This is a necessary matter and no excuse from it is possible. . . . As the government of America is a republican form of government, it is necessary that all the citizens shall take part in the affairs of the Republic.

—From the Book: "Tablets of Abdul Baha

3. Recognized Bahais must not vote in any election based upon a party system.
4. Recognized Bahais must abstain from association with movements advocating social changes that presume partisan political action.
5. *Recognized Bahais who speak on Bahai platforms* must abstain from making any critical statements about any particular government or national policy.
6. Every Local Bahai Center must be responsible for the carrying out of the above laws by the Bahais in their respective communities. Local membership must include only the names of those who faithfully obey these regulations.
7. Recognized Bahais must not retain or apply for membership in any church or religious group.
8. Bahais failing to give unreserved obedience to the above regulations and to numerous others which are constantly legislated, and month after month spread on the pages of *Bahai News* by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, are expelled or excommunicated from the Cause, and the Bahais are not permitted to associate with these expelled or excommunicated ones, regardless of friendship, no matter of how long standing nor of the depth of their affection or love.

In the light of the above rules, it is not difficult to picture the kind of society that would be ours if the Bahai community becomes widespread under the aegis of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada. Any dictator who might arise in this

country, of whatsoever political hue, red, brown, black or yellow, would take to his heart and cherish these deaf, dumb and blind subjects, utterly servile and subservient, who would never oppose him nor resist his most cruel laws or indeed his slightest whim. The citizenry of these proud United States would become a race of automata, a chain-gang; and our fair democracy would have been converted into a nightmare, more gruesome and frightful than could be imagined by any H. G. Wells in his most despondent mood. All this, in case the affairs of this country are influenced according to the ideology of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada.

(For the details of above regulations from Nos. 1 to 7 read "Bahai News," December 1932 and July 1933. For item No. 8 read article entitled "The Determination of Membership" on page 3, January 1940 issue of "Bahai News.")

The Alternative

My personal opinion is that if some effectual means be not presently adopted to disperse this sacrosanct hierarchy, to nullify its power and destroy its authority, it will ere long reduce the Bahai Cause to the status of a sect, seeing that it has now waxed so exceedingly puffed up with pride as to attack anyone who, before the face of his Maker, calls himself a Bahai. If a method be not devised to check the inordinate ambitions of these administrators of the Bahai Cause, they will, for the establishment of their own un-American, un-democratic ideology, so limit the spiritual potency of the words of Baha-O-Llah that the effect of these words on the hearts of men will be reduced to a whisper.

There are, indeed, men and women within the Bahai Organization, who had the privilege of listening to Abdul Baha and who are fully aware of the changed atmosphere and of the freezing of all spiritual life; but the continuous droning of the black wings of organization and the undulations of the Administrative Python have paralyzed and incapacitated them.

Bandar-log, said the voice of Kaa, at last (according to Kipling), *Can ye stir foot or hand without my orders? Speak!*

Without thy order, we cannot stir foot or hand, O Kaa! Good! Come all one pace nearer to me.

The lines of the monkeys swayed forward, helplessly.

Nearer! hissed Kaa, and they all moved again.

Even so has the incorporated Kaa made *soft, oozy triangles that melted into five sided figures and coiled mounds, never resting, never hurrying*, while his fascinated audience, fearful of excommunication, have listened with rapt attention to every note of his low humming song.

Excommunicated from what? Is the earth indeed flat that they can be pushed off its surface? Is the dominion of Baha-O-Llah so small that it can be reserved for a handful of *respectable* tenants? Let these people awake and realize that humanity is encompassed with the vitalizing breezes of the New Day which refresh and bring joy to all who have love in their hearts!

When this knowledge dawns upon their consciousness, they will once and forever cast away the shackles of slavery and subserviency, and claiming again the Universal Teachings of Baha-O-Llah, will take their places in the vanguard of freedom and progress, crying out:

Ya Baha El Abha!

as if for the first time.

On the other hand, if this group is left to continue in its course of every day devising a new lock, of forging a new chain, of fashioning a new whip for application on the fair body of the Cause, then, I swear by the Almighty that Baha-O-Llah himself will arise in his Supreme Power and shatter these fetters to a thousand pieces, thus freeing his Message and setting it again to flow, like a tumultuous cyclone, through the wide avenues of life!

What Is the Bahai Cause?

The Bahai Cause is a free spiritual Revelation. Baha-O-Llah, as its Founder, prayed that all men may partake of the inestimable blessings of his Message. This Message, in its essence, belongs to humanity, and no individual, no group of individuals, no church, no state, no organization, no administration can lay an exclusive claim to it. It cannot be trade-marked, and it cannot be patented.

The song of the nightingale and the perfume of the rose defy the authority of a monopolistic junta.

The rays of the stars cannot be harnessed to the *throb-throb* of a powerhouse.

The words of God are independent of the sponsorship of a corporation.

The wind of the heavens bloweth where it listeth. It has neither a trade-name nor a trade-mark. It does not belong to a trade-union. It does not lend itself to trading, for it has no trading-post; nor can it be discovered on the card-files of a trade-school. It is nameless and tradeless. Its

traces are lost in the cerulean sky and its traditions go back to the foundation of creation.

The Bahai Cause is a summons to freedom in the realm of spirit. It is a clarion-call for the emancipation of all men from the limitations of the past. It is a lordly invitation to join in the march of the New Civilization.

The Sea of Truth

Like children of a day, we stand in awe and wonder before the boundless sea of the Cause of Baha-O-Llah, and we fill our small pitchers and are glad that God has made us witness to His measureless ocean of Truth. We pass by. Age after age, cycle after cycle, the children of other times and other climes shall stand before the same sea. They also fill their pitchers and pass by. The procession continues, yes, my dear Bahai friends, yes, my dear Bahai administrators, the procession continues on and on, century after century, throughout the eternity of time and space, until all the pitchers of all the children as yet asleep on the lap of God are filled to overflowing, yet the sea, ah me, the sea—the limitless sea of the Truth of Baha-O-Llah—will still be there, untouched and undisturbed, mirroring on its marmorial surface the effulgence of the sun of Truth stationed at the meridian of its glory, and pouring its rays upon a world, the similitude of which cannot be realized by any living soul today.

In the light of the above explanation we dimly, very dimly understand the meaning of the words of Abdul Baha: *The Bahai Cause is the Spirit of the Age.*

Let us then close this chapter with his words which to me are words of truth:—

Attach your hearts to Baha-O-Llah. He is the eternal Glory of God. Then from day to day, you will become more enlightened; day by day your power will increase; day by day your work will become more universal, and day by day your horizon will broaden, until in the end it will embrace the universe.

—*Bahai* by Horace Holley, pages 144-5.

Supplement

THE BUILDING OF BAHAI ORGANIZATION

Abdul Baha's Definition of What is a Bahai?

When asked on one occasion: "What is a Bahai?" Abdul Baha replied: "To be a Bahai means to love all the world; to love humanity and try to serve it; to work for universal peace and universal brotherhood." On another occasion he defined a Bahai as "one endowed with the perfections of man in activity." In one of his London talks he said that a man may be a Bahai even if he has never heard the name of Baha-O-Llah. He added: "The man who lives the life according to the teachings of Baha-O-Llah is already a Bahai. On the other hand, a man may call himself a Bahai for fifty years, and if he does not live the life he is not a Bahai. An ugly man may call himself handsome, but he deceives no one."

—From the Book *Baha-U-Llah and the New Era* by J. E. Esselmont, Published by Brentano's, New York.

(Mr. Esselmont spent two months and a half as the guest of Abdul Baha in Haifa in the winter of 1919-20. His book is well written and one of the few that is still current and distributed by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada.)

The late Mr. Myron H. Phelps, one of the early American pilgrims to Acca, writes in 1903:

The characteristic of Abbas Effendi, (Abdul Baha), regarded as a religious leader, which is at once the most striking, the most attractive, and the most impressive, is his generous and tolerant liberality. It is disappointing to find that narrowness and intolerance have already shown themselves in the teachings of some of his followers—a perversion and degradation of true religion which is seen to be an almost inevitable tendency of human nature in all ages of the world, and which most religions have suffered in the hands of their adherents. The chief glory of Bahaism is that its true spirit, as exemplified in its Great Apostle, is utterly free from it.

—From the book *Abbas Effendi, His Life and Teachings* by Myron H. Phelps, published by G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, N. Y., 1903.

Mr. Charles Mason Remey, Bahai teacher and world traveler, writes in 1912:

The method of Bahai teaching is constructive, in every sense . . . argument and dispute have no place in this cause. . .

In order to combat evil the soul should be filled with love and truth. Fear, together with all its attending destructive forces, disappears in the presence of *faith and assurance*. . . .

Having no organization, no ritual, or priesthood after the manner of other religions, the Bahais are opposing the work of no other religious bodies. It is a worldwide movement, the spirit of which is working unhindered

and unbound by confines and barriers of sect and ism. The Bahais see and recognize truth and spiritual beauty wherever found, and through this attitude of love and tolerance for all, they find at every hand, among the people of other religious bodies, the opportunity of sharing the spirit of their faith. . . .

Often people inquire whether affiliation with the Bahai Cause necessitates the giving up of church membership. The advice is always that no human or religious relations should be severed, but that these relations should become as avenues for giving forth the message and the spirit of the Bahai faith. People having church relations continue to mingle with church people. . . .

—From the book *The Bahai Movement* by Mr. Charles Mason Remey published by J. D. Milans and Sons, Washington, D. C., 1912. Mr. Remey is one of the earliest and most distinguished Bahai teachers and writers, and one who met Abdul Baha in person and received these principles from its fountain head.

The above extracts from a most interesting chapter of his book show clearly and most truly the underlying ideals of tolerance and universality that inspired him and others to labor for the Cause of Baha-O-Llah.

The late Mr. Alfred W. Martin, of the Ethical Culture Society, an admirer of the Bahai Cause, writes in 1926:

It is the crowning glory of the Bahai Movement that while depreciating sectarianism in its preaching, it has faithfully practiced what it preached by refraining from becoming itself a sect. Far from endeavoring to convert

all outside its fellowship to such doctrines as are generally held by the members—whether of “theism,” or of “revelation,” or of “intuition” as a criterion of truth—it has assiduously sought to help men and women of all persuasions to realize the highest ideals of religion. Nothing could be more foreign to the spirit of this movement or further from its purpose than the attempt to displace all existing religions by itself. It frowns upon the notion that any one of the existing great religions will ever triumph over all the rest. And, far from bidding any one sever his connection with the religion he has inherited or adopted, the Bahai Movement bids him cling to it, so long as reason and conscience sanction his allegiance. Thus in the best sense of the word it is a missionary movement. Its representatives do not attempt to impose any beliefs upon others, whether by argument or by bribery; rather do they seek to put beliefs that have illumined their own lives within the reach of those who feel they need illumination. No, not a sect, not a part of humanity cut off from all the rest, living for itself and aiming to convert all the rest into material for its own growth; no, not that, but a *leaven*, causing spiritual fermentation in all religions, quickening them with the spirit of catholicity and fraternalism—such I take it is the essence of the Bahai Movement.

Clearly, then, we are dealing with a fellowship, an influence, a leaven, a movement that fights shy of sectarian enthusiasms, that abhors the formation of a close corporation with exclusive privileges, for that has been a greater obstruction to brotherhood than either kingly ambition or commercial greed. This movement has no priesthood, no college, no ecclesiastical hier-

archy, but, on the contrary, is conspicuous for its distrust of organization, constitutions, by-laws, and other familiar fetters of the western world. But I see foreboding signs, I hear disquieting rumors of a tendency among some within this movement to have it crystallized within a sectarian mold, to have it stand explicitly for a certain set of theological ideas, and then make this the test of fellowship. No more serious or fateful calamity could befall this movement than to have it relegated to the limbo of sectarianism. Let it hold fast to its distrust of organization . . . and not only will there lie before it an ever increasing field of usefulness but, forfeiting none of its beneficent power, it will go on from strength to strength in the fulfillment of its invaluable and indispensable mission.

—*Comparative Religion and the Religion of the Future*, by Alfred W. Martin, published by D. Appleton and Co., New York, 1926.

CHAPTER VI

THE DECISION

ALLEN B. MCDANIEL, HORACE HOLLEY, ROY C. WILHELM, DOROTHY BAKER, AMELIA COLLINS, LOUIS GREGORY, LEROY C. IOAS, HARLAN OBER and SIEGFRIED SCHOPFLOCHER, as members of the National Spiritual Assembly and Trustees of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada, and THE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHAI'S OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK, a religious corporation,

Plaintiffs,

against

MIRZA AHMAD SOHRAB AND JULIE CHANLER,
Defendants.

The Morning of April 1st 1941

On April 1st, I as usual left my room at an early hour and, after a walk through Central Park, arrived at the office at 8:30. Presently Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler, my partner in the work of The New History Society, took her place on the opposite side of the desk and we both set ourselves to examining our mail.

At 9:30 the telephone rang. In routine fashion, I lifted up the receiver: "Hello!"



GORDON S. P. KLEEBERG
Kleeberg & Greenwald, Counsellors at Law.

"Mrs. Chanler, please!" It was a masculine voice.

"Who is calling?"

"This is Greenwald, of Kleeberg & Greenwald."

With a slight tremor of excitement, I pushed the telephone over to Mrs. Chanler and narrowly watched her as she took up the conversation.

"No!" A smile had broken over her face. "Is it really true? . . . Really?" . . . Her eyes sought mine and she whispered *Allah-O-Abha!*; then she continued: "Naturally, we'll come down. . . . How could it be any trouble? . . . Haven't we been waiting for this news long enough? . . . Yes, in twenty minutes, and thank you a thousand times."

She put down the receiver and remained silent for a moment. I waited. Finally: "The Court has decided in our favor." Her eyes were shining; mine were already wet with tears. Across the desk, our hands met and gripped each other and I broke out: "Thank God! Baha-O-Llah has freed his Cause!" Meanwhile our secretary, Miss Lilyan Tannen, had stopped her work to listen. No one knew better than Miss Tannen the various stages in the proceedings which had led to this outcome. Hadn't she been sitting in that very place sixteen months before, when we had been served with papers; and, during the long course of litigation, hadn't she felt, as had all our friends, that there couldn't be any other decision? Just the same, confidence and certainty are vastly different. We knew it then; and we were three very happy people on that morning of April 1st, 1941.

Before leaving the house, we shared our news with Mr. Chanler who was very delighted, although he insisted on taking it as a matter of course; then, merrily we started off

New York Law Journal

NO. 7 NEW YORK, TUESDAY, APRIL 1, 1941 FORTY-THREE PAGES PRICE

BY MR. JUSTICE VALENTE.

McDaniel v. Mirza Ahmad Sohrab

—This is a motion for judgment on the pleadings, dismissing the amended complaint as supplemented by the bills of particulars as insufficient in law. ¶The individual plaintiffs sue as members of the National Spiritual Assembly and Trustees of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada. The Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is of the City of New York, a religious corporation, is a coplaintiff. ¶The complaint alleges that the name "Baha'i" denotes a religion identified with the name of the founder "Baha." The plaintiffs claim to be the authorized representatives of all of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada. They allege that they are publishing books and other publications which teach Baha'i religion. They charge that the defendants, who were members prior to April 5, 1929, of the Baha'i Congregation of the City of New York, have been conducting, without the authority of plaintiffs, meetings, lectures, classes, social gatherings and other activities, and announcing and advertising the same as Baha'i meetings, lectures, classes, &c." They complain that the defendants have been giving these meetings, lectures, &c., a Baha'i appearance and atmosphere by teaching, in connection therewith, a religion described as the Baha'i religion and that they have created an erroneous impression that they are connected with and authorized to represent the Baha'i religion and to solicit contributions therefor. In addition, plaintiffs complain of the opening of a book shop by the defendants under the name of "Bahai Book Shop" and of the listing of the shop in the telephone directory under that name, immediately over the name of "Baha'i Center," which represents the listing of plaintiffs' New York office and book shop. ¶In the court's opinion the complaint fails to state a good cause of action. The plaintiffs have no right to a monopoly of the name of a religion. The defendants, who purport to be members of the same religion, have an equal right to use the name of the religion in connection with their own meetings, lectures, classes and other activities. No facts are alleged in the complaint to indicate that the defendants have been guilty of any act intended or calculated to deceive the public into believing that their meetings,

lectures or book shop are identified with or affiliated with the meetings, lectures, &c., and book shop of the plaintiffs. Defendants have the absolute right to practice Baha'ism, to conduct meetings, collect funds and sell literature in connection therewith, and to conduct a book shop under the title "Bahai Book Shop." ¶The bills of particulars furnished by the plaintiffs admit that the allegations, that the defendants created the erroneous impression that they were connected with the plaintiffs and led the public to believe that their book shop was connected with the plaintiffs, were not based upon any acts of the defendants other than their conducting meetings, lectures, classes and other activities under the name of "Bahai" and their operation of a book shop under that name: listed in the telephone directory immediately above the name of plaintiffs' book shop. The position of the listing is, of course, due to the fact that the telephone directory is arranged alphabetically, so that the name "Bahai Book Shop" naturally precedes the name "Baha'i Center." ¶The motion to dismiss the amended complaint is granted, with leave to serve a further amended complaint within ten days from the service of a copy of this order, with notice of entry. Order signed.

TUESDAY, APRIL 1, 1941

down Lexington Avenue where, adepts at the subway as we are, we took the wrong line, and emerged at Times Square instead of at the Grand Central. We put this slip down to pardonable bewilderment and did our best to catch up for lost time, arriving a little breathless at the offices of Kleeberg & Greenwald, Counsellors at Law, 300 Madison Avenue, at exactly quarter past ten. Mr. Greenwald, who had argued the case in court, was awaiting us and he, most sympathetically, spread before our eyes the *New York Law Journal* of that morning which carried the decision handed down by Justice Louis A. Valente in the Supreme Court, New York, on the suit brought by the Bahai Administration against ourselves. While we were reading the clear-cut findings of the Judge, Mr. Kleeberg looked in and we had the opportunity of thanking our two lawyers who were so well qualified to handle a case of this unusual type; and all the time we were conscious of the fact that we were living a momentous hour—one never to be forgotten in the records of Bahai history.

On the way back, Mrs. Chanler and I, still in a state of pardonable bewilderment, lost each other and we returned by different routes.

The Complaint

On December 5, 1939, Allen B. McDaniel, Horace Holley, Roy C. Wilhelm, Dorothy Baker, Amelia Collins, Louis Gregory, Leroy C. Ioas, Harlan Ober and Siegfried Schopflocher, as the nine members of the National Spiritual Assembly and the Trustees of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, together with the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the City of New York, a religious cor-

poration, brought a lawsuit against Mrs. Chanler and myself. The primary object of this proceeding was to prevent us from using the word Bahá'í in connection with a Book Shop and to restrain us and the group formed under the name of *The New History Society* from holding any meetings in the name of the Bahai Cause or for the purpose of teaching the principles of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha. This action was based on the grounds that the National Spiritual Assembly had registered the word *Bahai* as a *trade-mark* in the United States Patent Office, Washington, D. C.

The Complaint, served on April 25th; the Amended Complaint, presented on June 7th; the Bill of Particulars, produced on August 27th; the Supplemental Bill of Particulars, added on October 30th, and the final Memorandum, submitted to the Court on December 27, 1940, by an array of attorneys, namely: Watson, Bristol, Johnson and Leavenworth of 6 East 45th St., New York, display a shifting of attitude very perplexing to the student of these documents. The lawsuit started out on the basis of the trade-mark held on the word *Bahá'í*, but this definite claim was dropped in the *Amended Complaint* and in all subsequent Papers. The same process of elimination on other claims is followed, more or less regularly, in the series of briefs, showing that the plaintiffs were laboring under confusion of thought and purpose. Baseless assertions and fantastic allegations were advanced as facts; but no proofs were offered. The officers of the National Spiritual Assembly and of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the City of New York, who were intimately acquainted with the questions involved, were able to swear the following before Notary Publics: *I have read the*

foregoing Complaint (or Amended Complaint) and know the contents thereof, and the same is true of my own knowledge except as to the matters therein stated to be alleged upon information and belief, and as to those matters I believe it to be true; yet hundreds of New York's public, knowing the situation but slightly, would have been willing to go on record, stating that some of these charges were obviously not true. At any rate, according to the Court no facts were ever produced and no good cause of action was ever advanced.

As one studies these documents, one comes to the realization that the plaintiffs are obsessed with a single thought and purpose, namely: that Baha-O-Llah came to earth to form an organization and that his teachings are to be monopolized by them. This line of argument, like the ominous undertone of a Greek tragedy, runs throughout all their demands. They believe that our *unlawful* public teaching of the Bahai Cause is *trespassing* upon their rights and privileges and works to their *damage and injury*; and they consider that, if we are permitted to *continue* in these *unlawful acts*, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada and the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the City of New York *will suffer irreparable injury*.

Spiritual and Material Monopoly

To illustrate this point I will quote one from among their many demands of the Court, which is embodied in the Amended Complaint:—

WHEREFORE plaintiffs demand judgment as follows:

(1) That the defendants and each of them, their agents, servants, employees, associates, and each of them be enjoined and restrained, during the pendency of this action and thereafter perpetually.

a. From using, or participating directly or indirectly in the use of, the word Baha'i, or any word deceptively similar thereto, as the name or a part of the name of any meeting, lecture, class or social gathering or as the name or title or a part of the name or title of any book, magazine, or other publication, or as the name or a part of the name under which any book shop or other business is conducted.

b. From representing in any way that either of the defendants is connected with or authorized to represent the plaintiffs or the Baha'i religion or Cause.

c. From soliciting or receiving any form of financial contribution to the Baha'i religion or Cause.

(2) That the defendants and each of them be directed to account for, and pay over to the plaintiffs, the sums received by the defendants, the profits realized by the defendants and the damages suffered by the plaintiffs as the result of the wrongful acts herein alleged, together with plaintiffs' costs herein.

(3) That plaintiffs have such other and further relief as may be equitable.

Here, we have a clear example of both spiritual and material monopoly. The plaintiffs were determined to deprive us (and humanity at large) of claiming to be followers of Baha-O-Llah; they wished to close the doors

of our meetings, to scatter our members and friends, to silence our voices, to haul down our flag, and then to receive, as balm for their feelings, whatever contributions we had received and whatever profits we had made, together with *further relief as may be equitable*.

Off the Record

At this point, I will make a statement which was not included in our defense before the court: The New History Society is not a commercial organization; it is not even a practical organization; neither Mrs. Chanler nor myself are fitted by temperament to conduct a movement based on the material support of its membership or the public. This is a weakness on our part of which I am not proud, but it is a fact, nevertheless. During the eleven years of the existence of The New History Society and the ten years of the existence of The Caravan (its affiliated youth movement), Mr. and Mrs. Chanler have poured in their money freely, joyously, as grist to the mill of their endeavor. Small contributions to the work came in now and then, from our members, some books were sold and the proceeds added to the budget, but ninety-nine and three-quarters percent of the total expended on the maintenance of the work came from the one source—Mr. and Mrs. Chanler. Everybody knows this; and yet the plaintiffs claim *that we have made profits, and diverted to ourselves contributions to the Bahai Cause* which otherwise would have been received by them. All these allegations were under oath. Here, one cannot help wondering at the mental processes which make such claims and oaths possible.

The fact that we never did make money or profits was not made use of in our defense before the Court. Instead, our lawyers claimed for us the right to collect funds for Bahai work, and this claim was granted in the decision.

So, the Court did not confer upon the plaintiffs a spiritual and material monopoly on the Bahai Teachings: the Cause, for which we are ready to sacrifice our lives, was not taken away from us, nor were our possessions (incidentally, mine are nil) confiscated under the guise of *profits, damages, cost of litigation and further relief as may be equitable.*

Complete Assurance

A most incomprehensible aspect of the design of the National Spiritual Assembly was utter confidence in the justice of its plan and complete assurance of victory.

One reason for this apparent confidence was, I suspect, the small weight which its members placed on the guarantee of religious liberty in this country as set forth in the Bill of Rights, together with a minimizing of the effect which this law of tolerance had had on the consciousness of the American people. Even if they were aware of the implications of this principle, they, in all probability, imagined that it could be brushed aside in their case by reason of the authority of the Guardian; and here we come to the basis of their assurance. Believing as they do in the infallibility of Shoghi Effendi, and having pinned all their faith on the validity of his judgment and the efficacy of



JACOB GREENWALD
Kleeberg & Greenwald, Counsellors at Law

his prayers, the cabled messages sent by him in this connection constituted their safeguard.

Here are the texts of the cablegrams:—

Received December 13, 1939,

Praying (for) success (of) legal measures taken by Assembly.

Received January 18, 1940,

Sleepless vigilance (to) ward off subtle attacks (of) enemies (is) first prerequisite (to) sound unfoldment (of the) process (of the) enterprise already operating.

Received January 23, 1940,

Praying victory similar (to the) one recently won (over) covenant-breakers (in) Holy Land be achieved by American believers over insidious adversaries (in) City of (the) Covenant (i. e., New York).

(The above three cablegrams are quoted in the Bill of Particulars in order to prove the fact that the suit had been brought with the approval and authorization of Shoghi Effendi.)

Further, in a letter written from Haifa, Palestine, on April 15th and published in *Bahai News*, June 1940, the Guardian has this to say about Mrs. Chanler and myself:

The subtle and contemptible machinations by which the puny adversaries of the Faith, jealous of its consolidating power and perturbed by the compelling evidences of its conspicuous victories, have sought to challenge the validity and misrepresent the character of the Administrative Order embedded in its teachings, have

galvanized the swelling army of its defenders to arise and arraign the usurpers of their sacred rights and to defend the long-standing strongholds of the institutions of their Faith in their home country.

I don't feel that I can make comment on the above paragraph other than to address myself to the adjective *puny*, which is a quaint word of early English flavor. In looking it up, I find that it signifies *imperfectly developed, pigmy, shrimp, small fry*. Now, I know that Mrs. Chalker, in her modesty, would accept all these terms as descriptive of her, in her service to the Cause, but neither she nor I agree to them in regard to our worth as opponents to the system which thinks to be the *unique repository* of the Word of God in this day. Probably, the attorneys of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada give us credit for being adversaries (in a purely legal way), at least, worthy of their steel.

Reasons for Bringing Suit

Shortly after the institution of legal proceedings, the National Spiritual Assembly explains its reasons for bringing action against us, stating that this step represents *a culmination of one aspect of the evolution of the Faith*. I do think that they were right in this respect.

Under the authority of the Guardian, the time has now come to act against these "insidious adversaries" who have even gone so far as to flout the Beloved's Will and Testament, the very pillar of our unity, by claiming the right to use the term Baha'i to designate their personal activities.

The matter is therefore being taken to the courts, and as soon as possible their excuses will be made a matter of public record. It will be seen whether the present enemies of the Faith can succeed any better than those enemies who have preceded them. (Signed) National Spiritual Assembly. *Bahai News*, Feb. 1940, No. 133

The decision to take legal action for the protection of the Sacred right of the Baha'i community represents a culmination of one aspect of the evolution of the Faith in recent years which the newer believers have had little occasion to consider or understand. To the older Baha'is, however, the preservation of the basis of the unity and integrity of the community is a matter vital to faith and inseparable from the experience of loyalty and service to the Cause. For they have witnessed actual efforts to deny the validity of Abdu'l-Baha's mission and question the authority of His station. They have realized vividly and poignantly how the very existence of the Faith depends on loyalty to whosoever has received appointment from the Manifestation. They have experienced the necessity of gathering their forces in order to assert the truth and preserve the community from destruction. Such an experience is forever unforgettable, for it means that conscious choice has been made between light and darkness in the spiritual world. . . .

The occasion for the legal action is definite and clear: the claim on the part of non-Baha'is that there are no qualifications of faith in this Cause, but any one is a Baha'i who asserts that he is; and that there is no criterion by which to distinguish between authentic Baha'i literature and literature which some one assumes is

Baha'i; and that there is no basis nor foundation in the Revelation of Baha'u'llah for the Baha'i community, with its institutions, its functions and its collective powers and responsibilities grounded in authentic Books and Tablets. In brief, the situation which has arisen is that persons who formerly were believers but who withdrew from the Cause have denied the authority of the Master's Will and Testament. On no other grounds than denial of that mighty Testament can their actions be understood. No compromise is possible. The Baha'i community will assert the truth, and the issue can be left to God. The Will and Testament itself is a victory over those who violated the Covenant in the Master's lifetime, and the Will and Testament invokes divine wrath upon all who seek to destroy what He sacrificed His entire life and being to build.

(Signed) National Spiritual Assembly.

From *Annual Reports*—National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada, 1939-1940.

Actions taken at the meeting of the National Assembly held immediately prior to the Convention include authorizations for continuance of Temple work . . . and approval of the brief prepared by the attorney in connection with the legal suit against the parties misusing the name Baha'i.

The friends are urged to give their careful attention to the passages in which the Guardian refers to the nature of attacks against the Master and His Will and Testament appearing on pages 89 and 90 of the World Order of Baha'u'llah. Here we find the clearest statement in the writings for discussion of the New History publication dated April, 1940, with new believers and

with those attracted to the Faith who have not yet gained the background of understanding and experience to discern the hollowness of any argument and claim based upon the failure to accept the Will and Testament of Abdu'l-Baha. The matter will soon come to trial, and the friends can rest assured that the true nature of the Baha'i Faith and of its Administrative Order will be established in accordance with the power and scope of the written and authentic Teachings.

(Signed) National Spiritual Assembly.

—Bahai News, June 1940, No. 136

Significance of Justice Valente's Decision

The decision handed down in the Supreme Court of New York by Justice Louis A. Valente on April 1, 1941, *is an epoch-making document for, although it refers specifically to the Bahai Administration and The New History Society, its contents have universal application. Eloquent-ly and definitely, Judge Valente has reaffirmed the validity of the Bill of Rights. In the case under review, he denies to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada and the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the City of New York a monopoly on the word Bahai, thus constituting, in the name of the latest revealed religion, a charter of freedom which shall stand as long as this nation retains the character conferred upon it by its founders. I think that will be always—in spite of the perils that menace liberty in these sad times.*

Thus, from now on, any sincere seeker after truth, who has realized his highest aspirations in the Bahai Cause, can term himself a follower of Baha-O-Llah and use his

name without let or hindrance. No one can molest him or try to undermine his service in the movement.

With this decision, the Cause of the Most Great Prisoner of Acca, which, even as he, was always free in spite of appearances, has broken through the walls of material confinement, and emerged as a spirit, a leaven, a consciousness—a gift, free and untrammelled, offered by God to every man on earth. *Affairs are dependent upon means*, said Baha-O-Llah. Through this decision of Judge Valente, the Bahai Cause has been reconferred upon mankind.

Not of Our Own Choosing

Now that the case has been argued before the Supreme Court of New York and a decision arrived at, let it be remembered, as this incident takes its place in the annals of Bahai history, that Mrs. Chanler and I did not seek this lawsuit nor was it instituted by us. The differences of opinion between the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada together with the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the City of New York and ourselves, were brought before the public and inserted in legal records through no desire on our part. It was a test placed in our path. We faced it with some diffidence, albeit, light-heartedly; and surmounted it with a sigh of relief and a deep sense of gratitude.

A Victory for All

The minister of a New York church strikes a universal note in a letter to us:—

I feel that this is a victory for us all, since it involves

the great principle of freedom of religion. Imagine any group arrogantly claiming a monopoly in this great field!

The Editor of a publication in Chicago, Ill., touches on the same theme:—

We rejoice with you at the recent ruling of the Court, for while we see it as a victory giving you further freedom, we recognize that your case involved many more groups and individuals than your own.

The science editor of a New York daily expresses himself as follows:—

I know that the winning of the suit will remove the last shred of hesitation, and that you will launch new efforts for man's enlightenment.

From a lecturer and writer in Chicago comes this comment:—

My most sincere congratulations. I am proud that you had a judge with sufficient wisdom and width of vision to give such a fair judgment.

A Bahai of long standing writes:—

It is not only a triumph and vindication . . . but the great victory for us all is to know that the principles of our beloved Cause are also vindicated and able to function in the future, free of the dogmatic domination of a few fanatics.

A *recognized* Bahai sends us a few lines:—

Just received the good news concerning Justice Valente's decision. I could hardly hold back my tears.



(By courtesy of Wide World Photos)

SUPREME COURT JUSTICE LOUIS A. VAENTE

Decision Rendered by Justice Valente

THE AMENDED COMPLAINTS, SUPPLEMENTED BY BILLS OF PARTICULARS, ARE DISMISSED AS INSUFFICIENT IN LAW.

Statements made by plaintiffs

1. The individual plaintiffs sue, as members of the National Spiritual Assembly and Trustees of the Bahais of the United States and Canada. The Spiritual Assembly of Bahais of the City of New York, a religious corporation, is a co-plaintiff.

The complaint alleges that the name Baha'i denotes a religion identified with the name of the founder *Baha*.

2. The plaintiffs claim to be the authorized representatives of all of the Bahais of the United States and Canada.

3. They allege that they are publishing books and other publications which teach *Bahai religion*.

4. They charge that the defendants, who were members prior to April 5, 1929, of the Bahai Congregation of the City of New York, have been conducting, without the authority of plaintiffs, meetings, lectures, classes, social gatherings and other activities, and announcing and advertising the same as Bahai meetings, lectures, classes, etc.

5. They complain that the defendants have been giving these meetings, lectures, etc., a Bahai appearance and atmosphere by teaching, in connection therewith, a religion described as the Bahai religion and that they have created an erroneous impression that they are connected with and authorized to represent the Bahai religion and to solicit contributions therefor.

6. In addition, plaintiffs complain of the opening of a book shop by the defendants under the name of "Bahai Book Shop" and of the listing of the shop in the telephone directory under the name, immediately over the name of "Baha'i Center" which represents the listing of plaintiffs' New York office and book shop.

The Court's Opinion:

1. In the Court's opinion, the complaint fails to state a good cause of action. The plaintiffs have no right to a monopoly of the name of a religion.

2. The defendants, who purport to be members of the same religion, have an equal right to use the name of the religion in connection with their own meetings, lectures, classes and other activities.

3. No facts are alleged in the complaint to indicate that the defendants have been guilty of any act intended or calculated to deceive the public into believing that their meetings, lectures or book shop are identified with or affiliated with the meetings, lectures, etc., and book shop of the plaintiffs.

The Five Freedoms

4. (a) Defendants have the absolute right to practice Bahaism,
- (b) to conduct meetings,
- (c) to collect funds,
- (d) to sell literature in connection therewith,
and
- (e) to conduct a book shop under the title of "Bahai Book Shop."

5. The bills of particulars furnished by the plaintiffs, stating that the defendants created the erroneous impression that they were connected with the plaintiffs and led the public to believe that their book shop was connected with the plaintiffs, were not based upon any acts of the defendants other than their conducting meetings, lectures, classes and other activities under the name of Bahai and their operation of a book shop under that name listed in the telephone directory immediately above the name of the plaintiff's book shop.

6. The position of the listing is, of course, due to the fact that the telephone directory is arranged alphabetically, so that the name "Bahai Book Shop" naturally precedes the name "Baha'i Center."

7. The motion to dismiss the amended complaint is granted, with leave to serve a further amended complaint within ten days from the service of a copy of this order, with notice of entry.

Order Signed.

The Most Important Point

Although, in its original Complaint, the National Spiritual Assembly asserted that it was the authorized representative of *all* the Bahais in the United States and Canada, this claim was denied by our attorneys in their first Memorandum, and their denial was sustained by the Court. Justice Valente ruled that *the plaintiffs have no right to a monopoly of the name of a religion. The defendants, who purport to be members of the same religion, have an equal right to use the name of the religion in connection with their own meetings, lectures, classes and other activities.*

This is the most important point in question; for, henceforth the National Spiritual Assembly cannot claim, as it has up to this time, that it is the sole representative of all the Bahais in the land. There are now, and will be in increasing numbers, Bahais who would not think it appropriate to be represented by the National Spiritual Assembly, and whom the National Spiritual Assembly would not think it appropriate to represent. The laws of this nation will be the practical guarantee of such Bahais, who will turn their hearts to God in the service of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha, without benefit of clergy.

A Matter of A. B. C.

A subject, which for a whole year has puzzled those interested in the case from this end, has been the strange claim by the plaintiffs, that we *caused* the name *Bahai Book Shop* to be listed in the telephone directory of the Borough of Manhattan, New York City, directly *over* the name *Bahai Center*. This assertion seemed to imply that we had used undue influence with the compilers of this volume, or else that we had selected the appellation Book Shop quite arbitrarily, and for the simple purpose of listing ourselves according to the dictation of our fancy. They apparently overlooked the fact that we actually *were* selling books, and that it would have been unfitting to name our shop, let us say: Bahai Delicatessen or Bahai Dental Supplies, which naming would have placed us under the letter D, and below Bahai Center, but would not have described the contents of the shop.

At the same time, the queerest part of this charge is that, study the telephone book as you will, you can find no

listing of Bahai Center. The headquarters of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the City of New York goes under the title *Bahai Assembly*, and so it appears in the telephone book. Consequently, Bahai Book Shop was, from the beginning, and still is listed in its proper place among the B's, following the A's. This mistake, which was included in the original Complaint, was pointed out by our lawyers in their first Memorandum, yet, for reasons which seem inexplicable, the error was repeated in all the subsequent legal papers coming from the plaintiffs, so that the Court had to deal with it in its decision.

In the Memorandum of our attorneys the subject was explained as follows:—

Before closing, however, we should like to point out with regard to the complaint, that defendants listed "Bahai Bookshop" in the telephone directory over the name of "Baha'i Center;" that not only had they an absolute right to do this, but that as a matter of actual fact, the complaint is in error, for in the telephone book, there is no "Baha'i Center." What we do find is "Baha'i Assembly"; and this appears above and not below "Bahai Bookshop." So that it is not even possible to contend that defendants adopted their title with any view of having it placed before plaintiffs' listing in the telephone book. Assuming the fact of paragraph 16 (referring to the *Amended Complaint of the plaintiffs*), it is absurd to contend that there was anything deliberate about the listing, for obviously "Bahai Bookshop" would come in no other place than just before "Bahai Center," if alphabetical arrangement is to be preserved.

This matter is a detail and far from important, yet it indicates a type of careless thinking and planning which is

unbecoming at all times, and especially so in a court of law. The National Spiritual Assembly sets itself up to represent the conscience and the mind of its followers in all affairs, great and small; therefore, an instance of glaring inefficiency such as this is less excusable in this body than it would be in persons of more modest claim. We see a picture of the poor Bahais, who had been instructed by Abdul Baha to avoid all lawsuits, being catapulted into the courts, under a leadership which did not even know the name of its own headquarters and was too listless to check on it when its error was pointed out.

Not a Religion

In studying the Complaint, the Amended Complaint, the Bill of Particulars, the Supplemental Bill of Particulars and the final Memorandum, one comes to the conclusion that the plaintiffs are solely preoccupied with the consolidation of their privileges as a *corporation*. They are deeply concerned over the possible diversion from them of contributions and the making, by others, of profits which might have accrued to their budget. They enlarge on the subjects of unfair competition, pecuniary advantages and injury to business, and let loose shafts of accusation on charges of trespassing. It is clear that the Bahai Administration is not a religion, but a great corporation, having *more than one hundred* subsidiary corporations operating in various parts of the United States and Canada. Before the Court, it announces that it is the trustee and custodian of a variety of properties, including a temple under construction at Wilmette, Illinois, upon which more than a million dollars has been expended, to date. Likewise, there

is a trust fund under its control as well as a publishing concern. All these material advantages are possessed by the Bahai Administration, and no competition shall be allowed in the Bahai name and teachings which are the source of its wealth! No, the Bahai Administration is not a religion. The Bahai Cause, from which it derives, was such; but that was long ago. The members of the National Spiritual Assembly, doubtless, feel a warming of the heart, at times, when memories become vivid again, but these emotions must be discouraged and minimized because a New Order has been established in the movement—an order that is altogether different!

Cases in Point?

In attempting to prove their rights of monopoly on the Bahai Cause, the National Spiritual Assembly and the Spiritual Assembly of New York cited a number of cases, in most of which the courts had decided in favor of the complainants whose rights had been trespassed upon. In listing them here, I raise the question as to whether or not these instances are applicable to a religious theme.

American Fire P. Bureau v. Rockwood S. Co.

Rosenblum v. Manufacturers Trust Co.

Lewis v. City of Lockport.

Society of the War of 1812 v. Society of the War of 1812 in the State of New York.

Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks v. Improved Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks.

Thaddeus Davids Co. v. Davids Manufacturing Co.

Waterman Co. v. Modern Pen Co.

Westphal v. Westphal World's Best Corporation.

In this case, New York Courts enjoined Paul Westphal from using the name of Westphal in any way whatsoever on hair tonic.

Dupont Cellophane Co. v. Waxed Products Co.

In this case, the disagreement between the two companies was on the word "cellophane."

Bayer Co. v. United Drug Co.

In this case, the reason for the lawsuit was the word "aspirin."

Kellogg Co. v. National Biscuit Co.

In this case, the cause of contention was the word "Shredded Wheat."

Long's Hat Stores Corporation v. Long's Clothes, Inc.

In this case, one company sold hats; another company by the same name, "Long" sold clothes. There was a disagreement over the name "Long."

Tiffany & Co. v. Tiffany Productions Inc.

In this case, a firm of jewelers—Tiffany & Co.—was granted an injunction restraining a Motion Picture Producing Co. — Tiffany Production Inc. — from using the word "Tiffany" in its advertisement.

Wall v. Rolls-Royce of America.

In this case, an automobile Co. obtained an injunction against Wall for using the name "Rolls-Royce" on Radio tubes.

Vogue Co. v. Thompson-Hudson Co.

In this case, the publisher of a magazine obtained an injunction against use on hats of the so-called "Vogue-girl" trade-mark.

To Which Category?

Now, I venture to ask:—Does the Bahai Cause parallel the Society of the War of 1812; or is it in direct line with the Heroes of 1844?

Is the Bahai Cause similar to a bottle of aspirin, manufactured by either Bayer Co. or United Drug Co., which drives away headache or neuralgia as fast as you want it; or is it the Divine Remedy for the healing of nations?

Is the Bahai Cause like unto a package of Shredded Wheat, tempting and nutritious; or is it the Bread of Life that has come down from heaven?

Is the Bahai Cause comparable to an emporium stocked with suits and hats; a show-window for the display of jewels; a factory for the production of motor cars, or a news-stand heaped with fashion magazines, embellished with the glamorous trade-mark, Vogue Girl?

Where shall we place the Bahai Cause?

Has it properties such as hair tonic, some of which, (according to Gabriel Heater) cause luxuriant hair to grow on a tired scalp; or is it the Truth that vitalizes and sustains the minds of men?

Is it like a piece of cellophane, covering and preserving a package of Lucky Strike cigarettes; or is it, in *itself* the Preserved Tablet on which the fingers of the Almighty have traced eternal words?

Are its goods in the nature of Waterman Fountain Pens or Modern Fountain Pens; or is its treasure the *Supreme Pen* of Baha-O-Ilah, from which the gems of wisdom and utterance, and the arts of the contingent beings have appeared and become manifest?

In which of these two departments of enterprise can the Bahai Cause be classified? Kleeberg & Greenwald, our attorneys, expressed themselves on this point in their Memorandum before the Court:—

Most respectfully, we submit that all the cases cited by plaintiffs are immaterial and beside the point.

The Thought of Abdul Baha

In the Defendants' Memorandum, Kleeberg & Greenwald stated:—

Accordingly, plaintiffs, however magnificent and extensive their organization, have no greater claim than defendants, to dominate, supervise or control the Baha'i faith, practices or name. Since defendants are not of their organization, they have no right whatsoever to dominate, supervise or control them. Since religious freedom is a corner-stone of our libertarian concept and fundamental laws, they have no right to say whether defendants are Baha'is or are not Baha'is, nor whether defendants may or may not call themselves Baha'is, nor whether defendants may or may not practice Baha'ism. These questions are not for the plaintiffs . . . The individual and his conscience are supreme in this field.

As was said in *City of Cincinnati vs. Minor*:

Let the state not only keep its own hands off but let it also see to it that religious sects keep their hands off each other. Let religious doctrine have a fair field, and a free, intellectual, moral and spiritual conflict . . . Among the many forms of stating this truth . . . to my mind it is nowhere more fairly and beautifully set forth than in our own constitution . . . It is the true republican doc-

trine . . . It means that a man's right to his own religious convictions, and to impart them to his own children, and his and their right to engage, in conformity thereto, in harmless acts of worship toward the Almighty, are as sacred in the eye of the law as his rights of person or property . . . And although in the minority, he shall be protected in the full and unrestricted enjoyment thereof . . . Constitutions are enacted for the very purpose of protecting the weak against the strong; the few against the many.

And so, on the basis of the above presentation, Justice Louis A. Valente decided to protect the weak against the strong, the few against the many. In so doing, he encircled the Cause of Baha-O-Llah with the protective arm of the *United States of America*, re-affirming the thought of Abdul Baha, expressed before the Central Congregational Church in Brooklyn, N. Y. on June 15, 1912:—

Just as in the world of politics there is need for free thought, likewise in the world of religion there should be the right of unrestricted individual belief. Consider what a vast difference exists between modern democracy and the old forms of despotism. Under an autocratic government the opinions of men are not free, and development is stifled whereas in democracy, because thought and speech are not restricted the greatest progress is witnessed. It is likewise true in the world of religion. When freedom of conscience, liberty of thought and right of speech prevail, that is to say, when every man according to his own idealization may give expression to his beliefs, development and growth are inevitable.

—*Promulgation of Universal Peace*, Vol. I, page 192

TUESDAY, APRIL 1, 1941

Monopoly on Name Denied to Baha'i Group

Can't Keep Religion From Rivals, Court Rules, Dismissing Complaint

In a decision handed down in the Supreme Court today Justice A. Valente ruled that he could not grant a monopoly of the name of a religion. He also held that he couldn't stop anyone from practicing a religion merely because the organized practitioners of the religion objected.

The decision delighted Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanled, the society woman who has been a leader of a group of Baha'i followers in New York and a sponsor of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, a Persian poet, who inspired her to take up the work.

'Erroneous Impression.'

Justice Valente's decision dismissed a complaint brought against Mr. Sohrab and his group, which was a little formal organization, by the organized Baha'is, who sued as members of the National Spiritual Assembly and Trustees of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada in the Spiritual Assembly of Baha's of the City of New York.

The organized Baha'is complained that the unorganized Baha'is were giving an erroneous impression that they were authoritative Baha'is by conducting what purported to be Baha's meetings, lectures, classes, social gatherings, etc., by soliciting contributions with use of the Baha'i name and by listing the Baha'i Book Shop in the telephone book directory over the name of the Baha'i Center, which is the office and book shop of the organized Baha'is.

Equal Rights Upheld.

"In the court's opinion," said Justice Valente, "the complaint

fails to state a good cause of action. The plaintiffs have no right to a monopoly of the name of a religion.

"The defendants, who purport to be members of the same religion, have an equal right to use the name of the religion in connection with their own meetings, lectures, classes and other activities. No facts are alleged in the complaint to indicate that the defendants have been guilty of any act intended or calculated to deceive the public into believing that their meetings, lectures or book shop are identified with the meetings, lectures, etc., and the book shop of the plaintiffs.

Listing Doesn't Enter.

"Defendants have the absolute right to practice Baha'ism, to conduct meetings, collect funds and sell literature in connection therewith, and to conduct a book shop under the title 'Baha'i Book Shop.'"

As far as the listing of the book shop in the telephone directory was concerned, the justice said, that was merely an alphabetical and not a legal matter, for it was a well accepted fact that the letter "B" preceded the letter "C" in the alphabet and therefore the telephone company was quite right in listing the "Baha'i Book Shop" ahead of the "Baha'i Center."

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2, 1941

Court Rules Against Monopoly Of the Name of Any Religion

Justice Valente Rejects Suit of Organized Baha'is Against Baha'i Group Headed by Persian Poet; Says Purported Members Can Practice Faith

Justice Louis A. Valente ruled yesterday in Supreme Court that no one had a right to monopolize the name of a religion and that followers of a religion could not be restrained from practicing their beliefs because of the objections of organized practitioners of the same faith.

Justice Valente's decision dismissed a complaint brought by organized Baha'is, who brought suit as members of the National Spiritual Assembly and Trustees of the United States and Canada, and members of the Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is in New York, against Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, Persian poet, who is director of the New History Society, and his group.

The organized Baha'is contended that they were the truly authorized followers of Baha-O-Llah, Persian prophet who founded an order nearly a century ago with international peace as its principal aim. They asserted that Mr. Sohrab's group was conveying an erroneous impression to the public by conducting meetings, lectures and other activities in a bona fide Baha'i setting and soliciting contributions as organized Baha'is.

Moreover, the so-called authorized Baha'is complained that the others opened a book store under the name of Bahai (without the apostrophe) Book Shop, and that the listing of the shop in the telephone directory was immediately over that of the Baha'i Center, the office and book shop of the organized Baha'is.

Justice Valente held, however, that "in the court's opinion, the complaint fails to state a good cause of action."

"The plaintiffs have no right to a monopoly of the name of a religion," his opinion continued. "The defendants, who purport to be members of the same religion, have an

equal right to use the name of the religion in connection with their own meetings, lectures and other activities.

"No facts are alleged in the complaint to indicate that the defendants have been guilty of any act intended or calculated to deceive the public into believing that their meetings, lectures or book shop are identified or affiliated with the meetings, lectures and book shop of the plaintiff."

Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler, wife of the former Lieutenant Governor of New York under Charles Evans Hughes, and founder and sponsor of the New History Society, said last night that Justice Valente's decision "upholds our guarantee of religious freedom." Mrs. Chanler formed the society after she broke with the organized Baha'is twelve years ago.

"Mr. Sohrab and I started our group after we parted from the other Baha'is on good terms," Mrs. Chanler explained. "We broke away because we felt that they were limiting the movement. But time was short and we felt that the world should hear the principles laid down by Baha-O-Llah."

Mrs. Chanler expanded on her theme, saying that according to the teachings of Baha-O-Llah, "there shouldn't be any organization." However, she added, "Americans love organizations, and little by little the teachings of Baha-O-Llah were being restricted to a choice few." Baha-O-Llah, she said, espoused the principle of "unity pervading all things."

Mrs. Chanler also explained that the organized Baha'is took out a trademark on the name "Baha'i," but that she felt that Baha'is "should not be restricted by a trademark."

The organized Baha'is have ten days to serve an amended complaint.

CHAPTER VII

THE NAME

The Incommunicable Name

The Prophets of every religion have turned to the *Name*, as constituting the chalice of Divinity on this plane. Whether the *Name* was Brahman or Ahura Mazda, Jehovah, the Father or Allah, it was held by the faithful as the ineffable Mystery and the awesome approach to the Most High.

In Judaism, the four consonants, variously written, IHVH, JHVH, YHWH represented the Supreme Being. Each one of these letters was a treasure-house of significance and, when put together, they formed and were referred to as the *incommunicable Name*. The actual pronunciation of the four mysterious consonants was never freely transmitted, and its esoteric meaning was imparted by the teacher only to qualified disciples. Likewise, during the reading of the Old Testament, the *Name* was automatically substituted by the word Adonai, another Hebrew appellation for God.

The Mishnah so severely prohibits the public utterance of the four consonants or *Tetragrammaton* that the pronouncer of it risked exclusion from a portion of the world to come. Consequently, in the early Hebrew religion, substitutes, other than Adonai, for the *incommunicable Name* became current. *Magam*, meaning Place, was used; also *Merciful*, and the *Holy One*.

The *Name* of God, associated as it was with the *being* of God, held transforming powers. The Prophet, who had attained miraculous vision and knowledge, was called *Master of the Name*; while in the older sacred literature of the East, God is Himself referred to as the *Name*. The *Name* was the corner-stone of the Hebrew Faith and of Hebrew morality. To do an act for the *sake of the Name* was to serve without ulterior thought of self-profit; similarly, it was a practice to set slaves at liberty *in the Name of Freedom*—thus from earliest times, *selflessness* and *freedom* were taught as the two essential attributes of the *being* of God.

The Prophets not only emphasized the sanctity of the *Name*, but called on the people to pattern themselves on the *Power* that was back of the *Name*. Hence, we have the text:—

Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy. (Leviticus, Ch. 19, Verse 2.) This injunction had for meaning: Seek to imitate God, be like God. As he is gracious and merciful, so be thou.

Therefore, it was man's highest duty to honor the *Name* and to reflect it in his life; on the other hand, any word or act of irreverence toward the *Name* was held as the most heinous of sins. It was commonly stated that men whose conduct belied their professions were the profaners of the *Name*, and that the hypocrites must be exposed because they profaned the *Name*.

The saints of ancient days realized, through their own intuition, that there were two aspects of sin—the one *personal*, the other *communal*. He, who offended in regard to the *Name*, sinned, not only against his own con-

science, which was the personal sin, but against the public conscience, which was the communal sin. Therefore, from every standpoint, regard for the *Name* was synonymous with the nobility of individual and group.

The Complete Name

From a mystical point of view, the name *Baha* embodies the mysteries of spiritual life; it is the heaven of revelation, the blue expanse of which is studded with the bright stars of knowledge and significance; it is the ocean of divinity, in the depth of which wait the priceless pearls of universal instruction. *Baha*, which word is to be found in the ancient Scriptures, implying Light or Glory, is the *last* name in the succession of the Most Holy *Names*. Including within itself the power of those which have gone before, it is the Alpha and Omega of creation. The letters of the written word and the vibrations of the spoken word—*Baha*—symbolize the *Nameless* and the *Unknown God* whose altar in Athens, with its well-known inscription, was found and witnessed by St. Paul.

In numerical value, the name *Baha*, according to the Arabic Science of numerology, is 9; 9 being the final digit, the greatest and most complete number. The units end at 9; therefore 9 is the total which includes all other numbers. Likewise, in the dispensation of *Baha*, we have the complete revelation which includes all other revelations.

As a personality, Baha-O-Llah is the outward manifestation of the glory of the Supreme Being. He is the *Focus* of the spiritual ideals of past and present and the clear mirror, reflecting the rays of the luminary of Reality. His many titles afford us a key as to his great mission. He was

referred to as *the Blessed Beauty, the Ancient Beauty, the Blessed Perfection, the Manifestation, the Desired One of all Nations, the Sun of Truth*, all of which mean one and the same thing: We have in him the universal and cosmic interpreter of the Spirit of God in this age.

Thus, the names *Baha* and *Baha-O-Llah* and, to an even greater extent, the sacred invocation *Ya Baha-El-Abha!* signify, to an ever-increasing number of men and women in all parts of the world, certain definite and transcendental concepts, certain moral and cultural values, which are within reach of mankind—these concepts foreshadowing a synthesis of the religious aspirations and scientific findings of the Prophets and pioneers of the race. They do not belong to one nation nor to one group; but are legacies of the Supreme Being to all nations and to all groups.

The Treasure Ineffable

As we look back and study the Great Religions, one by one, we realize that, in all of them, the *Name* was held holy. The true followers considered it as the divine Talisman, the highest Point, the Treasure ineffable. Their minds and hearts turned to the *Name* as pilgrims approach a shrine. It was the best Gift of God proffered to the best in man, and available to rich and poor, to wise and foolish, to saint and sinner. Even the beasts of the forest and the birds of the heavens, in their own ways, vibrated to the *Name*. All the roads led to the fountain of the *Name*, and all the wayfarers had the privilege of refreshing themselves at its cool margin.

A Desecration Without Parallel

While individuals, here and there, through ignorance or for various motives, have profaned the *Name*; while, with the passing of time, religious hierarchies have, in its regard, developed systems which led to misuse and abuse; it was left to the Bahai Administration to go on record, in cold blood and in the youth of the movement, with an official act of desecration applying to the latest *Name*.

On August 7, 1928, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada registered the word Bahai—the name of the Cause brought to earth by Baha-O-Llah—as a trade-mark for business purposes.

On August 28, 1934, this same body took out a trade-mark on the symbol, *Ya Baha-El-Abha*—the Most Great Name, the Supreme Invocation.

Thus, a desecration without parallel and the culmination of crime in the annals of religion was perpetrated by the leaders of the Bahai Administration, without qualm and without regret. In this Twentieth Century, those who considered themselves to be the Vice-Gerents of the Most High registered the *Name* of Him they claim to serve, as a *trade-mark that has been continuously used and applied to . . . goods*.

A Charge of Poaching

The Bahai authorities, having raided the Kingdom of Baha and carried off the *Name*; having built high fences around it, displaying placards inscribed with the words: Private Property, No Trespassing! Verboten!, continued for nearly twelve years, and thought to continue forever

in legalized ownership of illegal booty. They had noted, it is true, that their assumption of monopoly was ignored by some, but, feeling that their intrenchment was impregnable, they did not take this fact over-seriously; nevertheless, the day came, when it was considered advisable to bring the matter to an issue, once and for all. Consequently, the persons in question were hailed to court on a charge of poaching.

The first communication sent by the attorneys of the National Spiritual Assembly to Mrs. Chanler, and dated December 5th, 1939, was in the nature of a warning. It read:—

Probably you were not informed as to the trademark situation and it will not be necessary for our client to do more than bring the facts to your attention. In order to comply with the formalities, however, we must and do demand on behalf of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada that you discontinue immediately the use of the word Bahai . . . and we hereby notify you that upon your failure to do so our client will hold you responsible for profits, damages and costs of litigation. Will you please give the matter immediate consideration and advise us of your decision.

In this manner, and out of a clear sky, was the proposition put up to us: Would we, or would we not defend the *Name* of Baha-O-Llah? Naturally, we did not hesitate; and, without loss of time, our case was placed in the hands of Michtell & Bechert, Trade-mark Lawyers, of 420 Lexington Ave., New York. In their preliminary answer to the attorneys of the National Spiritual Assembly, Mitchell & Bechert stated plainly:—

It is our opinion . . . that Bahai, long prior to the year 1900, became and now is a word of common speech necessary for use in aptly describing a follower of Baha-O-Llah. In our opinion, therefore, the word "Bahai" cannot legally be exclusively appropriated by your client.

Again, Mitchell & Bechert wrote:—

It is our opinion that "Bahai" is a descriptive word for aptly describing a follower of the Bahai teachings and furthermore, that the word "Bahai" . . . if it is applied on Bahai literature is descriptive of that literature. . . . We must therefore repeat that, in our opinion, our client is not infringing any rights of your client and is not unfairly competing with your client.

The preliminary skirmishes in the shape of correspondence lasted almost five months and finally it became clear that no amount of logical reasoning could induce the National Spiritual Assembly to withdraw the suit. Then, on April 25, 1940, Mrs. Chanler and I were served with the original complaint—an elaborate document consisting of 12 pages.

The Papers having been officially served, we entered on the second stage of the lawsuit. There was no withdrawal in sight. We faced a real battle; for the forces of opposition were gathering their strength to strike, and strike hard. To the first and single charge—the unlawful use of the word Bahai—other charges, too numerous to catalogue, were presently added, and we realized that this was a fight to the finish and there was to be no turning to the left nor to the right until a final decision had been reached. Therefore Mr. and Mrs. Chanler and I held a conference with Mr. Robert C. Bechert to map out our future plans.

Inasmuch as the case, in the light of the actual Complaint, had branched out from the domain of the trade-mark into a larger field involving the fundamental rights of religious freedom, Mr. Bechert advised us to call into consultation the firm of Kleberg & Greenwald, Counselors-at-law; and at our first meeting with these attorneys, it became evident that the defense of the Cause was in expert hands. From that day on, the combined legal, intellectual and spiritual resources of Mitchell & Bechert and Kleberg & Greenwald were directed to the upholding of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, i.e.:—*Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press.*

Going back to the claim of the National Spiritual Assembly that it held an exclusive trade-mark on the name Bahai, Kleberg & Greenwald, in their first Memorandum, made the following wise declaration:—

It is important to observe however . . . that the word "Baha'i" is the title of a religious group, of a religion and of a follower of that religion. It is like the words Christian, Jew, Mohammdan, Protestant, Methodist, Catholic, Christian Scientist or any one of hundreds of similar designations. When used upon the magazines and printed books of the plaintiffs, it is descriptive of the contents of those magazines and printed books. It states positively and eloquently in effect: "The within publication is a discourse upon the Baha'i faith or some phase or incident of it." . . . Precisely for this reason, the word Baha'i was not susceptible of registration and cannot be the object of private appropriation. . . . Obviously, in view of what we have said . . . the plaintiffs



HON. LEWIS STUYVESANT CHANLER
As Lieutenant-Governor of New York State, in 1905.

are not the only ones who may issue Baha'i literature. The defendants may do that. Anyone in the world may.

To speak of a publication as being a Baha'i publication, is to give no hint as to its source. . . . A re-examination of all of the authorities cited and referred to in this point, will show that the fact that the plaintiffs have succeeded in registering the word Baha'i as their trademark, does not help them at all, since the word was not susceptible of private appropriation, since it belonged in the public domain in the first place, being the name of a religion and lastly, since it is descriptive of the material upon which it is used, it could not be registered, and if it was registered, the registration was meaningless.

An Abandoned Claim

After the masterly Memorandum containing the above statement had been submitted to the Court, and the attorneys of the National Spiritual Assembly had had a chance to digest its contents, they no doubt felt that the monopoly, so far as the trade-mark on the word Bahai was concerned, could not be maintained, and it is probable that they, then and there, persuaded the members of the National Spiritual Assembly to abandon this claim. However that may be, the *Amended* Complaint, which shortly followed and was presented long before the case came up before Justice Valente, was devoid of all reference to the trade-mark on the word Bahai.

Thus, The New History Society won its first battle out of court; and the name Bahai, after an imprisonment of nearly twelve years in a registration dungeon, passed into

the open—free to make its permanent abode in the hearts and lives of all who hold it in love and reverence.

In their final Memorandum presented to the Supreme Court, Kleeberg & Greenwald refer, in passing, to the abandoned claim.

In their original complaint, as a separate cause of action, they (The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada) sought to enjoin the use of the word Baha'i, in connection with defendants' literature by claiming that they had registered in the United States Patent Office, the trade-mark "Baha'i."

In the Amended complaint, this claim is abandoned. And for good reason.

The above slight reference to the question of trade-mark on the name Bahai, which had originally been the object of the lawsuit, must have made our opponents feel somewhat uncomfortable; for, having relinquished their claim, they did not wish to be even reminded of it. Suddenly, the subject had become taboo; and although the attorneys of the National Spiritual Assembly replied to our own attorneys in a measured legalistic manner, they seemed to question the good taste of dragging this skeleton out of the closet in the presence of the august tribunal.

This is my own psychological deduction, so I shall quote the actual words spoken in this reference by the attorneys of the National Spiritual Assembly in their Memorandum delivered before Justice Valente:—

It is true as defendants state that the original complaint pleaded registration and infringement of the

word Baha'i as a trade-mark . . . but no such question is raised by the amended complaint.

In this remarkable manner did the claim of trade-mark on the word Bahai go by default!

Misrepresentation

An interesting sidelight is contained in a Report of Mr. Martin T. Fisher of Washington, D. C., who made an exhaustive investigation of the trade-mark on the word Baha'i. The Report, which is dated December 8, 1939, includes the following extracts:—

Re: "Baha'i" Trade-Mark Registration No. 245,271.

Trade-Mark registration 245,271 is for the word "Bahai." The mark was registered under the 1905 Act as a non-descriptive mark on August 7, 1928. It was registered by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada of New York, New York, a common law corporation. The goods covered by the registration are magazines and printed books. Use of the mark is claimed since 1900. . . .

The mark was registered in 1928. I talked with one of the Examiners in the Trade-Mark Division about the situation and he said that there is considerable doubt whether, under the present practice, the mark would be registered. Probably the Examiner who allowed the mark in 1928 did not know that there was such a thing as a Bahai religion. He said that under the present practice, it probably would not be registered because descriptive. Furthermore, if the founder of the religion is named Baha, it could not be registered under 1905 Act. . . .

Certainly the use of the name "Bahai Book Store" on a book store is not infringement of the registration, because a book store, first of all, is not an article of merchandise, and even if it was, it is merchandise of different descriptive properties from the goods covered by the registration, namely magazines and printed books.

In substantiation of the point that the word is merely descriptive, I call your attention to Webster's New International Dictionary, 1925 Edition, in the "Addenda" in the first part of the dictionary, under "Bahai" there appears this:—

"A member of the sect of the Babis consisting of the adherents of Baha (Mirza Hussain Ali, 1817-1892), entitled "Baha'u'llah" or "the Splendor of God" . . . Baha in 1863 declared himself the supreme prophet of the sect, and became its recognized head."

In making a close study of the application for trade-mark on the word Bahai, one finds in it no reference to religion; it simply is a commercial enterprise doing business at the old stand. The Commissioner of Patents is given to understand that the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada is a *common-law corporation*, organized and operated under declaration of trust and doing business at . . . and that it *has adopted and used the trade-mark . . . on magazines and printed books . . . and presents herewith five specimens showing the trade-mark as actually used by applicant upon the goods. . . . The trade-mark has been continually used and applied to said goods in applicant's business since 1900. The trade-mark is applied or affixed to the goods by printing the same thereon.*

Now, I believe that no one can deny the assumption that the members of the National Spiritual Assembly, when they applied in 1928 for registration of the word Baha'i, knew the elementary truth that the Bahai Cause is a religion and that the word Baha'i is *descriptive*, and therefore not registerable. Then why, in the face of this knowledge, did they permit themselves to go ahead with their plan? One sentence in Mr. Martin Fisher's Report sheds a flood of light on this point. He says:—

Probably the Examiner who allowed the mark in 1928 did not know that there was such a thing as a Bahai religion.

We can imagine the Examiner thinking that Bahai was an exotic Oriental word, concocted, after some research on the part of these American *merchants* in order to label their goods and wares. This is current procedure in the business world; yet, by no stretch of imagination can we invest the members of the National Spiritual Assembly with the same innocence regarding the point involved. Then, why did they allow themselves to perpetrate the unethical act of concealing from the Commissioner of the United States Patent Office the fact that the word Bahai was derived from the name *Baha*, and that *Baha* was a person, and more, that he was the founder of a Universal Religion? The answer is of course plain. In such case, they would have been refused the trade-mark!

Victory on Three Counts

The proceedings brought by the National Spiritual Assembly against Mrs. Chanler and myself can be divided into two parts:

1. The original Complaint, which was instituted on the grounds of trade-mark on the word Bahai.

This claim was dropped; it went by default and, to all intents and purposes, the stigma of trade-mark has been lifted from the word Bahai.

2. The Amended Complaint, which applied to the teaching of the Bahai Cause, to holding meetings in the Bahai name, to publishing and distributing Bahai literature and to the collecting of money for the movement, etc.

This complaint came up before the Court and was set aside as invalid.

Thus, a victory was gained right down the line; and this victory included a *third* count which, although never mentioned or referred to in any complaint or in any brief, is closely involved with the whole proceeding. This third count is on the *MOST GREAT NAME*.

The Most Great Name



When, in 1934, the National Spiritual Assembly registered the symbol, *Ya Baha-El-Abha* as a trade-mark, it perpetrated a sacrilege too awful to contemplate. This phrase, in Arabic lettering, which has come down through the ages, and which was specified by Baha-O-Illah as constituting the highest vibration in all language, represents to the Bahai mind the ultimate degree of sanctity. The Bahai who, in his rapt moments, pronounces the *MOST*

GREAT NAME, realizes that he is penetrating to the realm of Divinity. He enters the Holy of Holies and, in so doing, he leaves behind the shoes of mortal considerations. The very angels might fear to tread in the sanctuary of the *MOST GREAT NAME*, but he who draws near in love and detachment may pronounce these syllables to the healing of his soul.

In speaking of the *MOST GREAT NAME*, Baha-O-Llah tells us to relinquish all else; for this word, *per se*, is our supreme possession. He says:—

In this day, neither knowledge nor art, neither wealth nor honor will enrich you. Cast them aside, and turn toward the MOST GREAT NAME, by which the Psalms, the holy Pages and this Book are sponsored.

—Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, Pages 76-77.

Again, Baha-O-Llah tells us that in this Day God has conferred upon humanity the treasure ineffable, once hidden and now revealed by himself:—

O peoples of the world! The Ancient King has sent the MOST GREAT NAME, and has given to men the glad-tidings of this Manifestation, which, once hidden in the world, and conserved among the protected treasures, is now revealed by the Supreme Pen upon the pages of God.

—Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, page 98.

In referring to this celestial invocation, Abdul Baha said:—

In this century of the latter times Baha-U-Llah has appeared and so resuscitated spirits that they have manifested powers more than human. Thousands of



GERMAN BAHAI CHILDREN
Group taken with Abdul Baha in Stuttgart in 1913.

His followers have given their lives and while under the sword, shedding their blood, they have proclaimed:—
“Ya Baha-El-Abha!”

—*Bahai Scriptures*, page 368.

Often, in the watches of the night, I have heard the voice of Abdul Baha sounding out the *MOST GREAT NAME*, Ya Baha-El-Abha, over and over again; and my spirit would be caught up by the rhythm of those accents and the power of those tones, and spun toward the Garden of Reality. I have waited at those garden gates, while my Master walked therein among the roses and hyacinths of significance; and I have remembered.

The Sign of the Cross

It might be useful to pause here, in an attempt to realize what has been done; and, in order to get a quicker reaction, we will make a parallel of the most sacred symbol in a given religion. Let us choose Christianity.

From earliest times, the followers of Jesus have held to the Sign of the Cross. This sign typifies, in conjunction: sacrifice and redemption. It is the emblem of the little personal calvary, sanctified through the great universal Calvary; it is the vision of mercy and promise, glorifying the path that leads toward the Kingdom of Heaven.

The tiny shrine by the hillside, the simple chapel in the village street, the magnificent cathedral on the square of the metropolis carry the Sign of the Cross. The poor man and the rich man, the sinner and the saint, fix their eyes on the Cross. The gesture of the Cross is made on the newborn infant and over the sick-bed of him who prepares for his eternal rest. The Cross hangs on the rosary and, when

the beads of prayer and life are told, the suppliant, severed from the bonds of earth, presses his lips to the Cross.

Shall we continue our effort to make a parallel? Is it possible to imagine a registration in the United States Patent Office, or in the Patent Office of Rome or of any other locality, on the Sign of the Cross? Can we conceive of any group of hierarchs holding this symbol as a *trade-mark* to be used upon goods in the pursuance of business? No! The task is beyond us. We cannot think of the unimaginable, nor imagine the unthinkable. We are just where we started off—paralyzed before an actuality, the implications of which stagger the mind.

A Trade-Mark on Goods and Wares

The symbol of the *MOST GREAT NAME* was registered in the United States Patent Office on August 28, 1934, by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, as a *trade-mark . . . actually used by applicant upon goods*, with serial No. 316,444 (see *The Bahai World*, Vol. VI, 1934-1936, page 350). It was registered in the Dominion of Canada, by the Canadian Assembly, as an *Arabic symbol* on January 4, 1935, with serial No. 165,527. The registration in Canada on the word Bahai, of same date, carries the serial No. 165,526 (see *The Bahai World*, Vol. VI, 1934-1936, pages 351-357).

In the applications, presented to the Commissioner of Patents of the Dominion of Canada, it is stated that the *applicants have used the said mark . . . ("Baha'i" or the "Arabic symbol") on wares ordinarily and commercially described by the applicants as periodical literature and*

printed books. . . . The applicants are commercially concerned with wares ordinarily and commercially described as. . . . They were and are entitled to adopt and use the mark in Canada in association with the wares which they have used.

At a time when they were well under way toward completion of this campaign of trade-mark on the word Baha'i and on the holiest of all symbols, *Ya Baha-El-Abha*, both in the United States and in Canada, the members of the National Spiritual Assembly prepared to herald these glorious achievements to the Bahai world, and receive the approbation of their followers. Let us listen to the proclamation:—

The friends will be happy to learn that the use of this Symbol is now legally protected for proper Baha'i use under the trade-mark registration recently made by the National Spiritual Assembly through the U. S. Patent Office.

—Bahai News, No. 87, September 1934, page 2.

And again:—

The Symbol of the Greatest Name is now legally protected for proper use under trade-mark registration recently made by the National Assembly through the United States Patent Office. Action has also been taken to obtain similar protection in Canada. . . . The word "Baha'i" was legally protected several years ago.

—Bahai News, No. 91, April 1935, page 9.

In this manner was the *incommunicable Name* stolen from the temple and set up in the market place. This invocation, the last sound to issue from the throats of the

martyrs, this beatific vision, this hallowed call, this clysian aspiration, this supernal chant, this omnipotent orison, this majestic paeon, this redemptive breathing, this voice of conscience, this creative prayer, this angelic adoration—this *Ya Baha-El-Abha* which has come down through the ages, was indexed, card-filed and catalogued by order of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada as a trade-mark to be applied to *goods* in pursuance of *business*. No words are strong enough, in this regard; no tears are warm enough; no blush is deep enough! The supreme sacrilege has been committed and inscribed on the record—and the record stands.

Hence, the trade-mark on the symbol of the *MOST GREAT NAME*, the application for which was signed by Mr. Horace Holley, Secretary, constitutes the rock-bottom of infidelity in the annals of the Bahai Administration. No further act, however black, can rival this one. The National Spiritual Assembly has a clear running—it can only move upward, after this!

CHAPTER VIII

THE APPEAL

The American Ideal

The American ideal of religious liberty as embodied in the Bill of Rights has, during one hundred and sixty-five years, shone like a brilliant star on the horizon of our cultural and intellectual institutions. It has inspired the leaders of men in the council chambers of the nation, in the courts of law and in the Halls of Congress.

Daniel Webster, champion of freedom for whites and blacks long before the Civil War, spoke often and passionately on the subject of *religious and civil liberty*. He said:—

If the true spark of religious and civil liberty is kindled, it will burn. Human agency cannot extinguish it. Like the earth's central fire, it may be smothered for a time; the ocean may overwhelm it; the mountains may press it down; but its inherent and unconquerable force will heave both the ocean and the land, and at some time or other, in some place or other, the volcano will break out and flame up to heaven.

President Roosevelt, in his epochal speech before Congress, delivered in January 1941, propounded his *Four Freedoms* as follows:—

In future days, which we seek to make secure, we look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms.

The first is freedom of speech and expression—everywhere in the world.

The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way—everywhere in the world.

The third is freedom from want, which, translated into world terms, means economic understanding which will secure to every nation a healthy peacetime life for its inhabitants—everywhere in the world.

Fourth is freedom from fear, which, translated into world terms, means world-wide reduction of armaments, to such a point and in such a thorough fashion that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbor—anywhere in the world.

That is no vision of a distant millennium. It is a definite basis for the kind of a world attainable in our time and generation. That kind of world is the very antithesis of the so-called New Order tyranny which the dictators seek to create with the crash of a bomb. To that new order we oppose the greater conception—moral order.

Freedom of worship, this most cherished ideal of the founders of the Republic, was brought again to the forefront of public discussion when Mr. Sumner Welles, Acting Secretary of State, issued a Statement to the country in regard to the fundamental policy of the United States government. It was published in the New York Times of June 24th. Mr. Welles said in part:—

This government often has stated, and in many of his public statements the President has declared, that the United States maintains that freedom to worship God as their conscience dictates is the great and funda-

mental right of all people. . . . To the people of the United States this and other principles and doctrines of communistic dictatorship are as intolerable and as alien to their beliefs as are the principles and doctrines of Nazi dictatorship. Neither kind of imposed overlordship can have, or will have, any support or any sway in the mode of life, or in the system of government of American people.

Turning to the educational field, let us now listen to Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, President of Columbia University, New York, as he spoke at Commencement Day on June 3rd, 1941:—

Are we, then, of this twentieth century and of this still free and independent land, to lose heart and to yield to the despair which is becoming so widespread in countries other than ours? Not for one moment will we yield our faith or our courage! We may well repeat once more the words of Abraham Lincoln: "Most governments have been based on the denial of the equal rights of men; ours began by affirming those rights. We made the experiment, and the fruit is before us. Look at it—think of it!" However dark the skies may seem now, however violent and apparently irresistible are the savage attacks being made with barbarous brutality upon innocent women and children and non-combatant men, upon hospitals and institutions for the care of the aged and dependent, upon cathedrals and churches, upon libraries and galleries of the world's art, upon classic monuments which record the architectural achievements of centuries—we must not despair. Our spirit of faith in the ultimate rule of the moral ideal and in the permanent establishment of liberty of thought, of

speech, of worship and of government will not, and must not, be permitted to weaken or to lose control of our mind and our action.

This ideal of religious liberty, so firmly established in the American mind and in the American way of life, is here to stay so long as our democracy endures; and should any individual or group of individuals, native or foreign, no matter how mighty or resourceful, scheme to minimize its influence and bedim its glory—the entire population of the nation would rise as one man and, like a giant cyclone, crush and scatter that sinister force into a thousand, nay into a million, pieces. Verily, the people of the United States can be counted upon to protect their chosen, their hard-won and most cherished principle—liberty.

When, in the Supreme Court of New York, Justice Louis A. Valente dismissed the Amended Complaint of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, brought against Mrs. Chanler and myself, as insufficient in law and laid down the decision that *the plaintiffs have no right to a monopoly of the name of a religion*, he simply implemented once more the First Amendment of the Bill of Rights, together with the wise utterances of Daniel Webster, President Roosevelt, the Acting Secretary of State, the President of the Columbia University and of a host of statesmen, educators and leaders of thought, past and present.

Nevertheless, the Bahai authorities could not or would not decipher the bold handwriting on the walls of our American institutions, so they carried the case to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, taking exception to

each and every part of Justice Valente's decision. They asked that:—

The judgment and order appealed from should be reversed and the motion for judgment on the pleadings denied with costs to appellants.

For Consumption Abroad and at Home

The National Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada has two faces—liberal and orthodox; democratic and totalitarian; and these faces are mirrored on the pages of their twin publications, entitled *World Order* and *Bahai News*. The former, which is intended for the public, reflects broad modern ideas; the latter, published for *Bahais Only*, presents articles and news designed to bolster up and maintain a despotic and illogical system. The material in both magazines is edited by the same hand.

Let us glance at the opening paragraph in a leading editorial, entitled *The Universal and the Sectarian*, which appeared in the May, 1941 issue of *World Order*; and as we read, we might try to realize that this article was signed by the National Spiritual Assembly at the very time it was bringing suit against us for holding Bahai meetings. I, myself, think that it is a splendid bit of writing, and believe that if Mr. Greenwald had seen it in time, he might have been inspired by it to a yet higher pitch of liberality, if that were humanly possible. Here is the extract:—

Religious controversy, it has been said, is not a quality of America. Here, for the first time in history, a great and varied population has been assured freedom of conscience and the individual right to worship God according to any practice not contravening the moral

code or attacking the authority of the civil state. Here, likewise, such opportunity has, until recent years at least, been offered for material advancement that most of the social energy has spent itself in effort to achieve personal fulfillment. The climate of tolerance and the season of fruitfulness are not conducive to the rancor of theological struggle.

Here we see that, while the National Spiritual Assembly asserts that religious controversy is not a quality of America, it allows itself the very un-American action of dragging its fellow-believers into the law-courts over nothing more nor less than a *religious controversy*. While it states that in this country a varied population has been assured freedom of conscience and the individual right to worship God according to any practice, it exerts itself to deprive the members of The New History Society and all liberal Bahais of this very *individual right to worship* God according to their convictions and beliefs. While it speaks of the *climate of tolerance*, it disseminates among its communities the poison of theological controversy and, without mercy or let-up, persecutes the liberal elements within its own ranks. But then, this piece of writing is for the public, while the actual doctrines of the Bahai Administration may be studied by the elect within the pages of the *Bahai News*.

Complexes

It is true that the National Spiritual Assembly, once in a while before its own membership, pretends to value the assets conferred by these United States. In a letter dated February 15, 1941, and addressed to *Bahai Friends*, it questions mournfully:—

In our favored country we are still in possession of our freedom, our possessions, our liberty of thought—how long will they last?

Indeed, not long if this institution has its way! The present day Bahai organization is the model upon which an alleged world order is to be fashioned; and what a world order it will be, judging from the pattern! The individual is not allowed to use his conscience, but must adhere to the rulings of his superiors without regard to modern social issues or humanitarian inclinations; above all, without regard to the Bahai teachings. Under these conditions, the better elements in the group are forced to maintain a painful silence, leaving the conduct of affairs to those of less sensitive fibre. It is largely for this reason that the Bahais keep themselves aloof from current affairs. They function on a basis that is untenable; consequently, they cannot look the world eye to eye. I have heard more than one of their leaders speaking on public platforms in Geneva, Switzerland, at times when that city was the hub of advanced thought, and these outstanding Bahais could not bring themselves to the point of pronouncing the name of Baha-O-Llah. Why this? Simply because the Bahai Administration has produced a complex among its advocates. The Guardian himself never ventures into the public.

Efficiency!

After April 1st, 1941, on which date Justice Valente had handed down his decision on our case, I immediately arranged for the making of a photostat which showed the court decision according to the New York Law Journal, together with newspaper articles from two metropolitan

dailies. Copies of this photostat were mailed on April 5th to all the Bahais on our list throughout the United States and Canada. I, then, applied myself to the writing of an article setting forth the facts involved in this court procedure. This article appeared in the May issue of *New History* and was distributed throughout the country about April 18th.

Now, it happened that the Bahai Convention opened in Chicago on April 24th and the Annual Report, 1940-1941, published by the National Spiritual Assembly for this occasion, was circulated among the delegates and others attending the Convention. It is interesting to study the section of this report appearing on page 2, which deals with the lawsuit, the more so when it is borne in mind that many of the Bahais who read it were already fully informed, by means of the photostat page and *New History*, on the outcome of the case. We wonder what these persons thought of the sentence: *At the moment of writing this report, the fundamental issues involved have not been determined by the court.* If these Bahai readers took this statement on its face value, we hope, at least, that they gave us credit for efficiency and reliable editing, in comparison with the cumbersome Bahai Administration which with all its fanfare about organization; with the vast sums expended on the greasing of its machinery; with its impressive secretariat, a building on the Temple grounds at Wilmette, Ill., going under the name: Haziratu'l-Quds or Island of Paradise, was yet unable to present to the delegates at its convention an up-to-date report. Be that as it may, we will now examine the statement on the lawsuit:—

2. The National Assembly, representing the American Baha'i community, is engaged in a legal action

before the Supreme Court of the State of New York for the purpose of preventing the public misuse of the name "Baha'i" in connection with activities under conditions which represent a clear betrayal of the Will and Testament of Abdul Baha, repudiation of His station as Center of Baha'u'llah's text, the definite disobedience to Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Faith, as well as to the recognized administrative institutions of the Faith in America. At the moment of writing this report, the fundamental issues involved have not been determined by the court. The Baha'i issues and principles, however, are truths which stand steadfast beyond compromise or corruption in the souls of the followers of Baha'u'llah . . .

No human being can alter or pervert or exploit a revealed truth. The realm of Revelation is raised high above the reach of hostile human influence. The issue in these cases is not one in which a Divine Faith subjects its vital truths to decision by any court. . . . But the community of believers at any given time represents many different stages of development, and the hostility of the betrayer and the foe comes as a necessary and helpful test of the individual believer's understanding and firmness. That is all, except for the further consideration that the Faith acquires public influence and esteem through the dramatization of its vital principles under onslaught or denial.

The Dear Old Fox

In the study of the above piece of writing, one sentence strikes us forcibly. It reads as follows:—*The issue in these cases is not one in which a Divine Faith subjects its vital truths to decision by any court.*

Here a sneaking suspicion creeps into the mind. Could it be that we underestimated the efficiency of our opponent in having presented to the Convention a report that was way behind the times? It is possible that the Bahai authorities did not wish the lawsuit which had miscarried to be discussed on the floor of the Convention; they may have decided that it were far better to leave the whole thing *in the air*, at the same time putting out the thought that a court decision was, after all, of no importance. I do not like to be crassly obvious, but here I cannot help recalling the dear old fox who would have found the grapes very palatable, indeed, if only he could have set his teeth into them. Yes! If Justice Valente's decision had been in favor of our opponents, it is more than probable that the Administration would have lifted his words to an altitude close to Baha-O-Llah's own and himself to the station of sainthood.

In a mimeographed copy of the Financial Report of the Bahai Administration for the year ending February 28, 1941, we find, included in the list of expenses, the sum of \$5,914.24 paid for legal services. Now, as the legal procedure against us has continued since that time, a second hearing having taken place before the Appellate Division the following June, we surmise that another item of \$19,000, bracketed for *contingent and unforeseen items* (*Bahai News*, May 1941) may be drawn upon for legal services to be rendered later. A good deal of money is entailed here; money contributed by sincere Bahais who doubtless were under the impression that the whole unpleasant business was worthwhile. Actually, I consider it inappropriate for a plaintiff to turn up his nose at law courts. No one invited him there; certainly not the poor defendant

who was jostled out of the mild tenor of daily life to meet his good pleasure. In our case, however, the Guardian of the Bahai Cause seems to place the agitation that was stirred up at our door, for, incorporated in a cablegram dated April 23rd which was addressed to the 33rd Annual Bahai Convention, we find the following:—

Scornful (of the) agitation stirred up by (their) adversaries, (the) breakers (of the) Covenant; the resolute upholders (of the) Divine Plan will, indeed cannot but, persist (in their) ordained task (to) propagate (the) flame, enlarge (the) administrative limits, (and) strike deeper roots (of the) world-encircling, world-redeeming Faith (of) Baha-U-Llah.

My opinion is that, at whatsoever door the agitation may justly be laid, a law court is at no time a fit place for controversy among the followers of Abdul Baha.

Appeal to a Higher Court

The friends are informed that with the Guardian's approval an appeal has been taken on the decision made by a judge of the New York Supreme Court on April 1st and the matter is therefore still in process of settlement.

—Bahai News, May 1941, page 6.

In the above statement, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada apprised their communities of the fact that the lawsuit which had been brought against Mrs. Chanler and myself had failed in its purpose, and that the decision of Justice Valente was being contested.

The legal season was now drawing to an end and there were many cases on the calendar; consequently it was a question as to whether or not ours would come up before the Court adjourned for the summer. It looked pretty doubtful, but both Mrs. Chanler and I hoped that the matter would be disposed of this spring; also we were interested in hearing the argument, as an experience, for we had been absent when the case was tried for the first time before Justice Valente. We therefore watched the calendar as our name crept toward the top, and on Thursday, June 5th, Mr. and Mrs. Chanler and I entered the Court House of the Appellate Division, First Department, Supreme Court, New York, on Madison Square at 25th Street. It was the closing day.

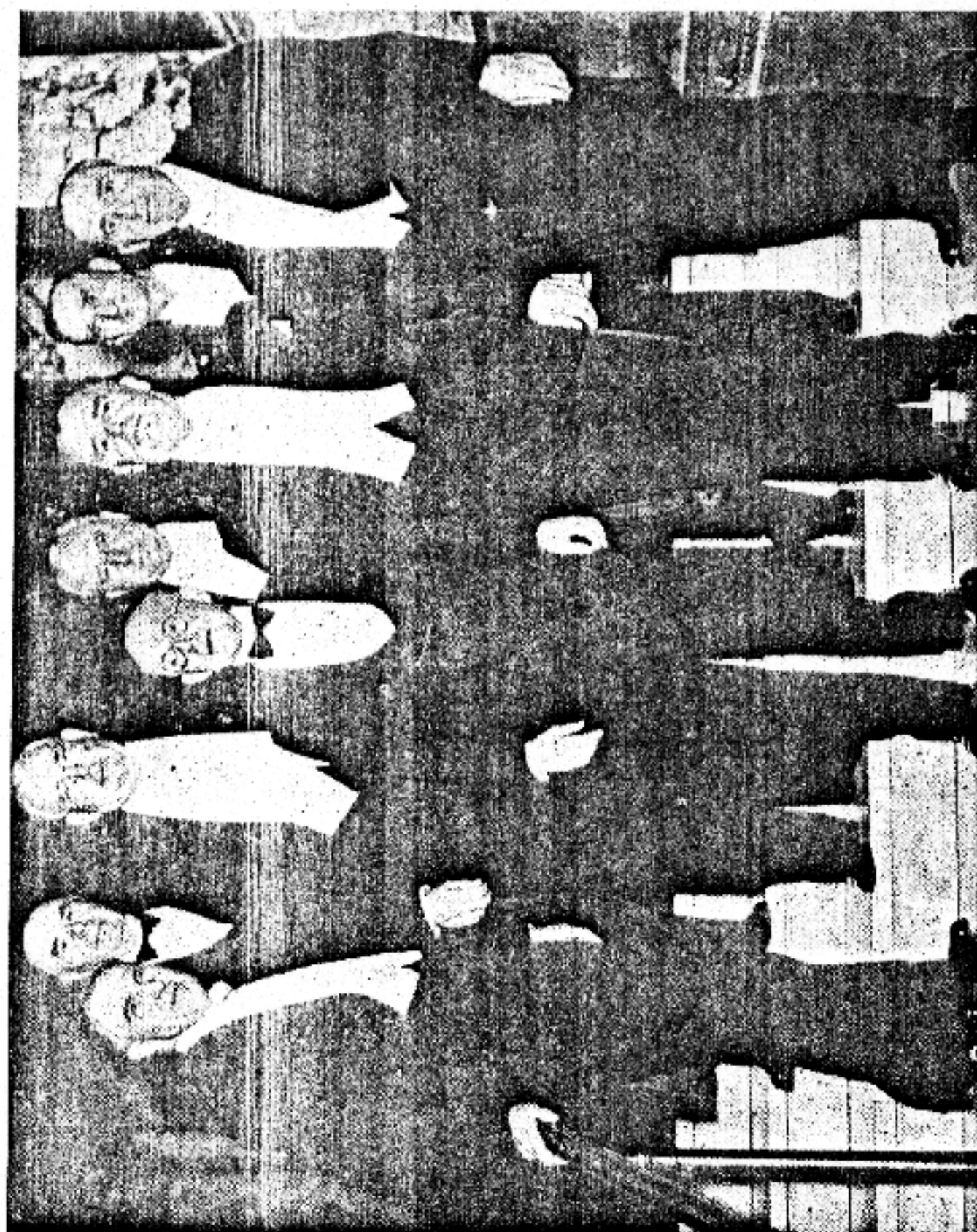
As we stood in the lobby, our attorney, Mr. Kleeberg, joined us and handed me the list of cases. I counted them; there were eighteen, ours being the eighth. It looked as if ours would not be reached, as the court sits from two to six P.M. and the sessions end promptly; so, Mr. Kleeberg wished us happy holidays and, leaving us in the hands of Mr. Greenwald, went back to his office.

We slipped into the court room and seated ourselves at the side. A case was in process of being argued and, by a strange coincidence, it happened to be one in which the City of New York was plaintiff, being represented by the Corporation Counsel, William C. Chanler; so our time of waiting was very well spent. Mr. Chanler had the unexpected pleasure of listening to an argument delivered by his son and all of us had the privilege of being present at a very interesting and important hearing, which, incidentally, consumed two hours.

When the case was disposed of, we realized that ours could not possibly come up in the short time remaining before six o'clock; and then the Presiding Judge made an unprecedented announcement. He said that an hour's recess would be allowed for dinner, after which the Court would hold an evening session. This decision came as a bombshell to the ears of the tired attorneys who had been waiting about all the afternoon on the chance of being called; but, needless to say, it delighted our trio of Bahai defendants. We were not to be disappointed after all and, as the lawyers filed out of the court room and gathered in groups in the lobby, we joined Mr. Greenwald who was distinctly in need of consolation at the prospect of having to argue a case after dinner.

It was at this time that Mr. Ellis W. Leavenworth, counsel for the National Spiritual Assembly passed by, and Mr. Greenwald, acting in true Bahai spirit, called him over. Then, Mr. Leavenworth, himself responding in like Bahai spirit, shook hands with all of us and we had the opportunity of exchanging a few words with our opponent, just before the battle. We appreciated this little incident and found that the plaintiff's lawyer had a very charming personality, seeming to be of the calibre that was accustomed to winning cases—not considering this one, of course. It is a fact that lawyers are very much like cooks: They cannot produce a satisfactory result if you have nothing but dry bones and bitter herbs in your market basket.

A walk in the rain to a near-by cafeteria, a little relaxation over coffee and sandwiches, and the hour's recess was over. We returned to the classical, but compact little building of the Appellate Division and took our places in the



(By courtesy of Wide World Photos)

Justices of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of the State of New York at a dinner given in their honor by the Bar Association. Left to right:—Justice Joseph M. Callahan; Charles H. Strong, Esq., Secretary of the Association; Hon. Francis Martin, Presiding Justice; Hon. Clarence J. Shearn, President of the Association; Justice Irwin Untermyer; Justice Edward Glennon; Justice Albert Cohn and Justice Edward S. Dore.

The justices of the Appellate Division who heard the case brought by the Bahai Administration were Justice Callahan, Presiding Justice Francis Martin, Justice Glennon and Justice Dore. The picture of Justice Townley, which does not appear in the above group, is to be found in a succeeding page in this chapter.

discreetly lighted court room. From the walls on either side of the benches and behind them, the faces of former Justices looked down, from within their gilt frames; while raised on a dais before us were the five Justices who, either by a majority vote or unanimously, were to decide for or against us in this case that was all important in our eyes. During the arguments that preceded ours, I examined their features, from left to right: the Honorables Edward S. Dore, Alfred H. Townley, Francis Martin, Presiding Justice, Edward J. Glennon and Joseph M. Callahan, and was deep in this psychological study when, at exactly 8:15 o'clock, the Presiding Justice proclaimed: *Allen B. McDaniel versus Mirza Ahmad Sohrab*, and I came to myself with a start.

Responding to this summons Mr. Leavenworth, counsel for the National Spiritual Assembly, rose to his feet and opened his argument. He stated that the Bahai Cause originated in Persia, having been founded by Baha-O-Llah (here a wave of emotion passed over me, for it was the first time, to my knowledge, that this name had been pronounced in an occidental court room); he then went on to say that the Cause was little known in America, and that he, himself, had heard of it for the first time when the case was placed in his hands.

Continuing, Mr. Leavenworth said that the subject of religious freedom had been much accentuated by the defense; actually, Justice Valente had rendered his decision on this ground, while as a matter of fact, this issue was not involved.

Here, Justice Dore leaned forward and asked: *Is not this case a question of religion, at least in part?*

No, your Honor! Mr. Leavenworth answered, *It is purely commercial.*

Completely nonplussed, I turned toward Mrs. Chanler to see her reaction. Her eyes were opened wide. Neither of us could believe our ears; but, we had another shock coming, for, at that moment, Mr. Leavenworth was asserting that his clients had never objected to our use of the word *Bahai*.

Mrs. Chanler and I settled back in our chairs. This evidently was to be a Comedy of Errors, and we might as well take it as such; also, we realized that the material upon which Justice Valente had based his opinion was actually in the hands of the Court.

The Bahai case afforded a period of relaxation in this session of unusual length. As soon as the word had been pronounced, all those present dropped the business attitude; the judges bent forward, some of the spectators tittered and many faces bore smiles. When the Master's name was mentioned, Justice Townley recollected that Abdul Baha had visited this country in 1915. While we made a mental correction of 1912, his associate judges looked at him quizzically and asked a few questions in undertones. Thus, the whole proceeding was carried out in comparatively informal vein, although the Court gave minute attention to the points presented.

When Mr. Leavenworth referred to the long-standing establishment of the Bahai organization in this country and said that the existence of the Bahai Bookshop led to misunderstanding, Justice Dore asked of our attorney:—*Why then do you not write under the name of your society or bookshop: "Not connected with the Bahai Assembly."*

Here, like a shot out of a gun, Mr. Greenwald flashed back: *Why shouldn't they write under the name of the National Spiritual Assembly: "Not connected with The New History Society or the Bahai Bookshop."* At this, Judge Townley remarked that it seemed to him that the names of the two groups were already well defined: the one functioning under the name Bahai Assembly, and the other under Bahai Bookshop.

In his argument, Mr. Greenwald emphasized the fact that the case, actually was *nothing* but religious; that it involved the fundamental principle of religious liberty; that Baha-O-Llah was the founder of a religion and a *Bahai* is one who follows his teachings; therefore, that the name was descriptive and could not be appropriated by any group or by any individual. He continued to speak along these lines, finally quoting Justice Valente's decision which held that the defendants, as Bahais, have the absolute right to practice Bahaism, to hold meetings, to publish books and receive contributions for their religious activities; for all these functions are the inalienable rights of every religious group. Then, he mentioned the fact that one of the two defendants was secretary to Abdul Baha up to two years before the latter's departure from this life. It was here that Justice Townley surprised everyone by showing that he also knew something about Abdul Baha.

Mr. Leavenworth and Mr. Greenwald took but ten minutes each to present their cases; consequently, the claims of both sides were offered in a sketchy fashion. It is to be remembered, however, that the full texts of the series of complaints and of the defense, in printed form, had already been submitted to the Court, to be studied at its leisure.



(By courtesy of Wide World Photos)

HON. ALFRED H. TOWNLEY

Justice of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court
of the State of New York.

Somersaults and other Agilities

A most striking point in the new brief presented to the Appellate Division by the National Spiritual Assembly is the assertion that this body had never attempted to prevent Mrs. Chanler and me from using the word *Bahai*; in fact, the plaintiffs concede that we are entitled to the use of the word. The new brief states:—

It is not the use of the word Baha'i but the manner of use that is the grounds of complaint. Defendants are entitled to make lawful use of the word, but have no right to use it as an instrument of deception. Nor is any question of religious freedom involved. Defendants are not charged with practicing Baha'ism. No question is raised as to what is or is not the true Bahai religion.

The above is a prestidigitatorial somersault; it is a complete reversal of that which was claimed by the plaintiffs in their original and Amended Complaints. A comparison between the documents presented to Justice Valente and the brief prepared for the Appellate Division makes us marvel at the bland manner in which the National Assembly travels from the north pole of error to the south pole of truth and vice versa without the slightest display of embarrassment. Let us place the following clause taken from the latest brief:—

Defendants are entitled to make lawful use of the word (Bahai)

side by side with an extract taken from an earlier brief:—

That the defendants and each of them, their agents, servants, employees, associates and each of them, be

enjoined and restrained, during the pendency of this action, and thereafter perpetually:

From using, or participating directly or indirectly in the use of, the word Baha'i, or any word deceptively similar thereto, as the name or a part of the name of any meeting, lecture, class or social gathering, or as the name or title or a part of the name or title of any book, magazine, or other publication, or as the name or a part of the name under which any bookshop or other business is conducted.

Kleeberg & Greenwald, in their answering argument, point out the somersault that was being made by the National Spiritual Assembly, who in

. . . their brief say with some emphasis that plaintiffs claim no monopoly of the word "Baha'i," and no question of religious freedom is involved. The former of the two questions is novel, constitutes a recession from a position taken in the court below and, we respectfully submit, belied by the language and the purport of the amended complaint. The latter of the two assertions, we take firm and somewhat indignant exception to.

This litigation does involve nothing else than religious freedom and the remarks of Mr. Justice Valente that "plaintiffs have no right to a monopoly of the name of a religion" and "defendants have the absolute right to practice Baha'ism" are well justified.

Of what were the members of the National Spiritual Assembly really thinking when they made this sudden reversal; or did they think at all? Could they have imagined that the Justices of the Appellate Division would be taken in by their innocent attitude and decide in their favor with-

out reading the contents of their Amended Complaint, in which the sacrilegious claim of ownership over the word *Bahai* had been made? At any rate, Kleeberg & Greenwald were little impressed by the display of agility that was taking place. With stern gesture, they halted the performers, as it were in mid-air, stating:—

Whatever plaintiffs may say in their brief about religious freedom not being involved here, we respectfully submit that the clear objective of their cause of action is the restraining of defendants from the practice of their faith. It is an attempt to compel defendants to recognize and yield to plaintiffs' authority and organization. And it is an arrogant attempt.

To succeed, plaintiffs must force facts into the molds of legal formulae. If they succeed in this, they succeed in consolidating their powers, in foisting their unwelcome paternity upon defendants, and incidentally their followers who, attending their lectures, etc., and reading their literature, may be assumed to also be Baha'is (the Baha'i membership of The New History Society, whom defendants represent). That they have not succeeded in meeting legal formulae, we will demonstrate. . . . Whatever may have been plaintiffs' contention in the court below, it is clear that at least now, belatedly, they concede that plaintiffs claim no monopoly of the word "Baha'i." Indeed, it is inconceivable that any other position could have been taken by plaintiffs for the name of a religion is clearly in the public domain.

As can be seen in the above passage, our attorneys, more than any others, have divined the sinister motive of the National Spiritual Assembly, screened as it was under much backing and filling. They have unmasked a deep-

laid scheme, the purport of which was none other than to shape their monopolistic demands into *legal formulae*, thus inscribing their unjust pretensions on the statute books, for all time to come. We owe a deep debt of gratitude to Kleeberg & Greenwald for their powers of penetration as well as for their gift of expression, for they have brought to light a plot which, had it been successful, would have totally nullified the objects and aims of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha.

In the course of the proceeding, a point was made of lawful use of the word Bahai, the plaintiffs asserting that:—

The fact that the name of a religion is a part of the language and open to public use does not give defendants the right to make deceptive use of it.

Here, Kleeberg & Greenwald answered:—

It is incidentally a complete retreat from the position taken in the complaint and in the court below where they asserted their right to ban absolutely the use of the word "Baha'i" by any one other than themselves or those acting under their authority.

In closing their argument the members of the National Spiritual Assembly cast their last die in the gamble for the retention of some sort of *authority* and *power* over The New History Society. On bended knee, figuratively speaking, they prayed to the Appellate Division to grant them something, no matter what—just a tiny something, in order to save their faces before the Bahai world! They were even willing—wonder of wonders! to concede to us the use of the name Bahai—but with a reservation, if

they could receive some kind of *relief* to which they felt entitled! They ask:—

Although plaintiffs pray for an unconditional injunction as is customary in such cases, the relief to which plaintiffs are entitled is measured by plaintiffs' right to prevent deception. If it is possible for the defendants to use the name Bahai in a way that does not cause deception, they are entitled to do so.

It is here that our attorney draws the sword of righteous indignation and in words that shall echo and re-echo through the corridors of time cries out:—

But are not plaintiffs being too smug and patronizing toward defendants? What greater right have they to say how defendants shall use the word "Bahai" than defendants have to say how plaintiffs shall use the word "Bahai"?

Actually it is not Funny

It was stated by the plaintiffs that the case brought against us was purely commercial; therefore, on this ground, our right to accept contributions toward our work in the Cause was contested. The fact that we never did receive contributions for Bahai purposes and never asked for such; that the tiny sums which were given to us were added to the Caravan Foundation Fund (an account reserved, untouched, for a club-house in the far-flung future) or else were donations toward our competitions and the exhibit at the World's Fair, were not taken into consideration. We took in payments for subscriptions to our magazine *New History* and *The Children's Caravan*, for books,

and again, for war-relief societies. Our Caravan Hall, where admission fees are paid to our dances, is still deeply in the red—all these things were not weighed by our opponents; naturally, they did not know of them in detail. However, the plaintiffs, under oath, charge that:—

Upon information and belief, defendants have solicited and received payments of money as contributions to the Bahai religion or cause at numerous times which are unknown to the plaintiffs, and such payments were solicited by each of the defendants personally.

I should think that the phrase: *at numerous times which are unknown to the plaintiffs*, would bring a smile to the face of a waxen image. If our sins (if sins they be) are known only to ourselves, why accuse us of them in court? The outcome of this charge was the same as that of all the other charges: it fell to the ground because it was totally unsubstantiated. All this is funny, in a sense; and yet actually, it is not funny that those who signed this document should so lend themselves to deception and untruth.

Priority

A most striking assertion made by the National Spiritual Assembly in its brief before the Appellate Division dealt with the subject of priority: Because this body and its predecessors have existed for more than forty consecutive years, administering the affairs of the Bahai community, acting as the custodians of multifarious Bahai properties, incorporating the Bahai Assemblies, publishing books and magazines and holding meetings, lectures, classes, social

gatherings and other activities—therefore, this priority in the field of service entitled the plaintiffs to an exclusive right over the Bahai Cause.

Now I, personally, do not believe in priority. The vineyard of the Lord is extensive; and the Lord wants the ground tilled. There is a parable in the New Testament in which the eleventh hour workers were rewarded even as the first; and some complained: *Saying, these last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. And the Lord answered: Take that thine is, and go thy way. I will give unto this last, even as unto thee.* (St. Matthew, Chapter 20, Verses 12 and 14.)

Naturally, I deny the validity of priority as such, but I will now set forth a few claims of my own in contradistinction to those made by the National Spiritual Assembly on the basis of their forty years of executive work:—

I am by birth a Persian, of the same nationality as the Bab, Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha; of the same nationality as the Babi and Bahai heroes, saints and martyrs.

My grandmother, as a girl, saw the Bab in her native city of Esphahan, and talked with him. She became one of his followers, and later brought up her family in the Faith.

Our house in Esphahan became the center and meeting-ground for all the Bahais in those parts. Here, my noble uncle Haji Sayyed Zeinel-Abedin, poet, philosopher and teacher, presided over a group of devoted enthusiasts, which held together in the midst of danger.

Finally our house was attacked and pillaged by the mob, led by the Mohammedan clergy. As a child, I suffered the



Left to right:—Haji Niaz, one of the foremost disciples of Baha-O-Llah; Mirza Ahmad Sohrab and Ahmad Yazdi, son-in-law of Abdul Baha.

This picture was taken in Port Said while the author was working as salesman in the department store of Ahmad Yazdi,

indignities of the bastinado, and had the honor of shedding a few drops of blood for the Cause.

For eight years, as secretary and interpreter, I served Abdul Baha in the East and in the West. I also served his followers. Long before many of the present members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada and their predecessors had even heard the name of the Cause, I was working to the best of my ability along the lines laid out for me by my Master.

These are my credentials, and I believe that Abdul Baha would endorse them; yet after all, personal credentials or group credentials are of small account when one considers the vast significance of the Cause.

Long before the Spiritual Assembly of New York City was turned into a religious corporation in 1932; before the word Bahai was trademarked in 1928; before the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada wrote its Constitution and By-laws in 1926; before the Tablets of the Divine Plan were unveiled in New York in 1918; before the foundations of the Temple were laid in Wilmette, Ill., in 1912; before the Bahai Authorities became trustees of properties and valuable holdings; before the Bahai Cause was established as a political organization, weighted down by parliamentary rules and procedures; before the Bahai Groups had become conscious of their existence and inaugurated their annual Conventions in 1907-08; before the present Bahai Spiritual Assemblies in various cities of the United States were evolved out of small working Committees during the period, 1894-1906; before the Bahai Movement was intro-

duced to America at the World Congress of Religions, in 1893; even before the emergence of Bahai Communities in Iran, Syria, Palestine, Iraq and other countries of Asia, from 1844 on—long before all these happenings, the Bahai Cause lived and vibrated in the hearts of the Bab Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha.

Indeed, prior to the appearance in Iran of this mighty trio, the ideals of the Bahai Cause had shone forth from the minds of Mohammad, Jesus, Moses, Confucius, Laotze, Buddha, Zoroaster and the Rishis of India; even as they had shimmered and twinkled in the consciousness of saints, seers, poets and philosophers, back through the ages.

We follow the clue, penetrating yet further into the abyss of time: Long before these Prophets, Avatars and Manifestations had been incarnated on this globe, the Bahai Cause, as a Cosmic Energy, was moving and flashing in illimitable space.

The Bahai Cause was *publici juris* long before the foundations of the world were laid; long before the creation of the heavens and the earth; even at the time when God said: *Let there be light, and there was light, and God saw the light (Baha) and the light was good!*

And now in this year of 1941 the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada have claimed a priority of *more than forty years'* standing on the Light of the World—the Cause of Baha-O-Llah!

The Decision

In concluding its brief before the Appellate Division,

the National Spiritual Assembly demanded that:—

The judgment and order appealed from should be reversed and the motion for judgment on the pleadings denied with costs to the appellants.

Kleeberg and Greenwald closed with:—

Lastly, it is respectfully submitted that the order and judgment appealed from should be affirmed with costs.

The case was argued before the Justices of the Appellate Division on June 5th. On June 19th, the New York Law Journal carried the brief but significant notice:—

McDaniel et al., v. Sohrab, &c., res—Judgment and order unanimously affirmed, with costs. No opinion. Order filed.

In journalistic language, according to the New York World-Telegram of the same day, this meant that:—

BAHA'I IS PLACED IN PUBLIC DOMAIN

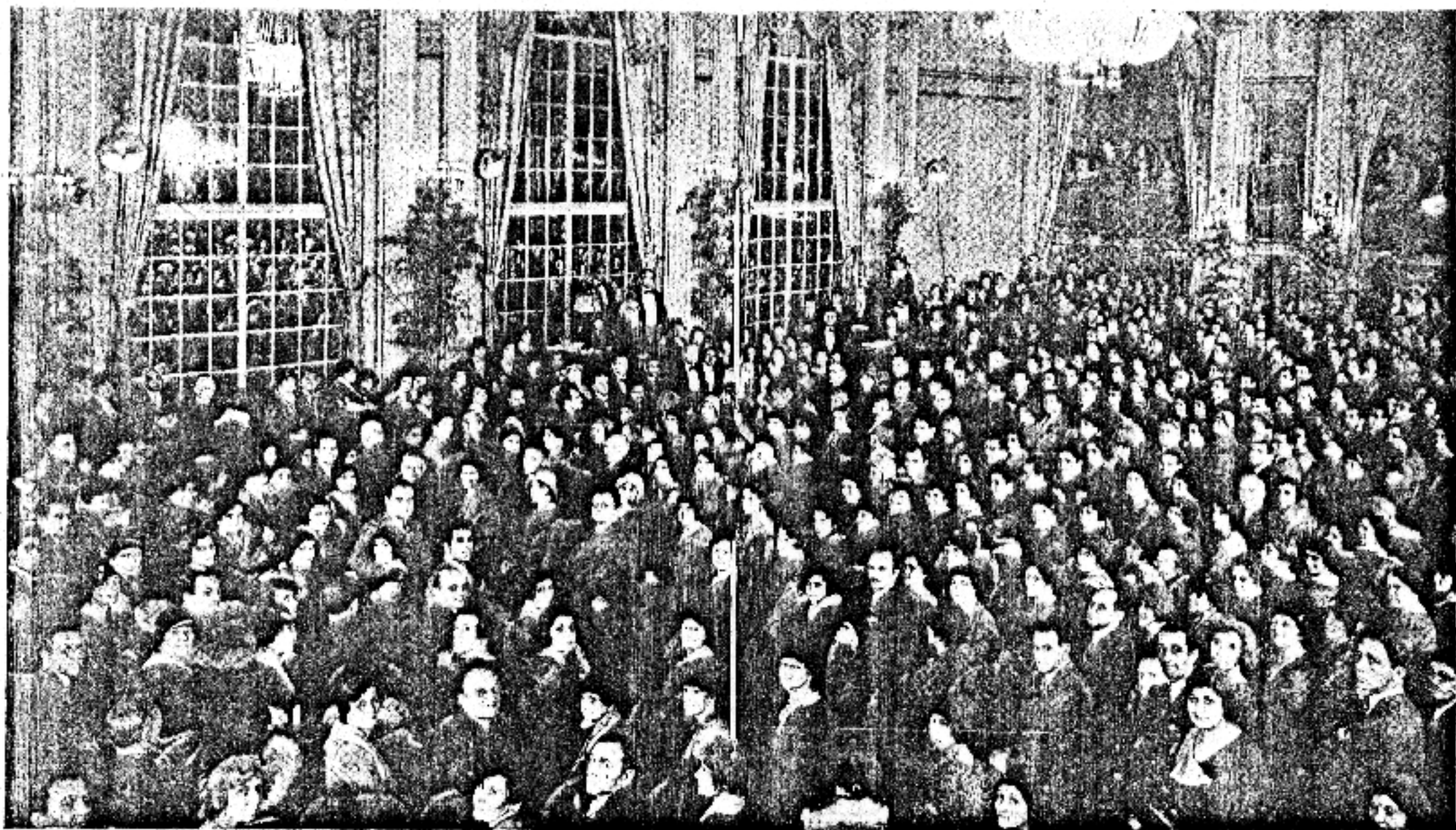
The Appellate Division today unanimously upheld the ruling of a Supreme Court Justice that no one could monopolize the name of a religion.

The Herald-Tribune on June 20th head-lined its article with:—

APPELLATE COURT REJECTS BAHAI PETITION ON NAME

Affirms Refusal to Restrict Use of Sect's Designation.

The Appellate Division affirmed unanimously yesterday a previous Supreme Court ruling that no one has a



A meeting in honor of Rabindranath Tagore, held
Carlton Hotel, New York, under the

on December 7, 1930, in the ballroom of the Ritz-
auspices of The New History Society.

Closing words in the address of Rabindranath Tagore, given on December 7, 1930, before The New History Society:—

In the human world the great truth of unity was also at first realized as a power residing in the community, comprehending and transcending all individuals. This mysterious power according to the primitive people was magical, and they symbolized it in their totems and tried to invoke and propitiate it with their magical rites.

This was the first great discovery of man—the mysterious spirit of unity which was beyond the bounds of quantity that can be measured, and this is religion. But, as I have already suggested, religion in its first appearance had the aspect of power, which, though it gave unity to the tribe itself, created a strong division outside of it; for power is exclusive, and the tribe claimed its God as the source of all powers for its own benefit.

So long as God remained as thus divided, religion became cruel and terribly unjust, creating more mischief in this world than any passion that is criminal. Even today, when God is no longer believed to be specially belonging to the tribe, he is fenced in by secretarianism which gives rise to a fierce spirit of dissension and egotistical boastfulness. Truth, when tortured and mutilated, becomes more heinous than untruth; and therefore, when unbelievers bring proofs of the harm that religion has done to man we cannot but remain silent.

It is the mission of all great Prophets to see that religion, which is to give us spiritual emancipation, should not itself be made a fetter to immure our souls in a dungeon of dogma and formalism, giving rise to sectarian vanity that obscures our vision of the spiritual unity of man.

The first Prophet whom we know in the history of man was Zoroaster, who preached God as the universal truth of unity, the eternal source of goodness and love; and it is significant that on the same soil of Persia, which gave birth to him, arose the other great Prophet of the modern age, Baha-O-Llah, who also preached God as profoundly one, in all races, tribes and sects, the true worship of whom consists in service that has reason for its guide, and goodness and love for its inner motive principle.

We are here tonight to offer our homage to Baha-O-Llah. He is the latest Prophet to come out of Asia. His life is certainly a glorious record of unflinching human search after truth; and his message is of great importance for the progress of civilization. It makes me happy indeed to see that The New History Society is doing such splendid work for the propagation of the message of Baha-O-Llah.

right to monopolize the name of a religion and that followers of a religion cannot be restrained from practicing their beliefs because of the objections of organized practitioners of the same faith.

Thus was the opinion of Justice Valente, of the Supreme Court, New York County, unanimously affirmed by the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court; and, to repeat the well-chosen words of the World-Telegram:

BAHA'I IS PLACED IN PUBLIC DOMAIN.

SUPPLEMENT

Pen Pictures

As this book goes to press, two publications are brought to my attention: the one a pamphlet dated April, 1941, put out by The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, entitled *The Bahai Case against Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler and Mirza Ahmad Sohrab*, and the other, *Bahai News* of October, 1941.

This literature is well suited for analysis and would have been examined in detail had time allowed; however, I believe that in some cases comments are superfluous. Therefore, I content myself with taking a short extract from each publication and placing these side by side to serve as portraits of the two personalities who acted as defendants in the legal proceedings initiated by the Bahai Administration in 1939 and brought to a conclusion in 1941.

*Pen Picture of Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler,
drawn by The National Spiritual Assembly of
the Bahais of the United States and Canada*

After quoting from the reply sent by Mrs. Chanler's attorneys to the attorneys of The National Spiritual Assembly at the very outset of the legal proceedings, the writer of the pamphlet continues:

Read as an ordinary letter from a lawyer engaged to handle a legal problem for a client, this communication would indicate that this attorney, after making a serious study of the Baha'i literature and teachings, had advised his client that by his interpretation she is within her rights to use the word "Baha'i" in connection with any book or pamphlet which she, claiming to be herself a Baha'i, thinks is helpful to her conception of the Baha'i Cause. That is, technical questions being involved, Mrs. Chanler consults an attorney and accepts his opinion and acts upon it. But when we bear in mind the simple fact that all questions of Baha'i right or wrong, as to knowledge, faith or action, can be determined only by reference to the Baha'i teachings themselves or to the appointed Interpreters of these teachings, this recourse to an agency outside the Faith for a vindication of an attitude taken in defiance of the Baha'i teachings and Baha'i administrative bodies, as well as in denial of both Abdul'l-Baha and Shoghi Effendi, successively the sole Interpreter of the Baha'i literature, means that Mrs. Chanler, needing a weapon for attacking and wounding the sacred unity of the Faith of Baha'u'llah, seeks her sharpened blade in the realm of a legality developed for dealing with questions of property and neither intended nor adapted to

realize and apply the spiritual truths of a revealed religion. As the persecutors of the Babis and the early Buha'is in Iran seized torch, sword, rope and gun to inflict injury upon the innocent bodies of their victims, so now we have a similar motive and instinct expressed, however, in conformity with very different social conditions.

*Pen Picture of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, drawn by
Shoghi Effendi, Guardian of the Bahai Cause.*

And now more particularly concerning the prime mover of this latest agitation, which, whatever its immediate consequences, will sooner or later come to be regarded as merely one more of those ugly and abortive attempts designed to undermine the foundation, and obscure the purpose, of the Administrative Order of the Faith of Baha'u'llah. Obscure in his origin, ambitious of leadership, untaught by the lesson of such as have erred before him, odious in the hopes he nurses, contemptible in the methods he pursues, shameless in his deliberate distortions of truth he has long since ceased to believe in, ludicrous in his present isolation and helplessness, wounded and exasperated by the downfall which his own folly has precipitated, he, the latest protagonist of a spurious cause, cannot but in the end be subjected, as remorselessly as his infamous predecessors, to the fate which they invariably have suffered.

4aifa 19.1.29

Dear Mrs Chanler:

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your very kind letter dated Dec. 24th 1928. He was very glad to hear that Mr. Sodrah - a very good service in New York in the way of public speaking. He surely knows the Cause very well, being for such a long time with the Master, translating his letters & talks to those who have been with the Beloved during his life. Time should feel the responsibility they bear & do their utmost in shouldering it. Especially those who were, we may say, nurtured by him. Shoghi Effendi hopes that all this work that he is doing will more & more bring him into an active participation with his friends for his services in the way of

teaching a great

The news that we every now
& then obtain concerning the condition in
New York is surely most encouraging
Thogbi Jffendi hopes that the unity will
daily increase & unite the friends com-
pletely. Unity at any expense should be
their motto. And the Master has, I believe
promised us that when true unity will
be obtained in New York it will spread
all over the country.

Thogbi Jffendi very much appre-
ciates the wonderful services you have
rendered the Cause & is always waiting
to see what the next will be. Your trans-
lation of the Epistle to the Son of the Lamb
was only an example, & we hope only
a beginning.

Will you please extend to all

the friends Shoghi Effendi's loving greetings
especially to your daughter & Ahmed.

Please also add to that my kindest re-
gards. I hope Elsie is doing well with
her Arabic this year. Does she find it
very difficult? Once she masters her
Persian & she becomes capable of reading
the writings of Baha'u'llah, she will
 ~~reap~~ fully the fruit of her troubles.

Yours ever sincerely

V Bahi Effendi

My dear & trusted co-workers.

I wish to add a few words in person
as a token of my kin appreciation of your
past service & of my fervent hope & prayer for
the future extension of your manifold activities.
I welcome Mirza Ahmad's collaboration with
you, in such an open & direct manner, for
a wider diffusion & a better understanding of
the purpose & the principles of the Baha'i Faith.

I will pray for the success of your efforts
from the depths of my heart. Your
true & grateful brother,
Shoghi

PART FOUR

RELIGION IN STRAITJACKET

9. Bahai Creed makes its Bow
10. Beginnings of the Bahai Organization
11. Development of the Bahai Organization
12. Establishment of Bahai Administration
13. Administrative Frills and Furbelows

*Woe unto him that saith to the wood:
Awake! To the dumb stone: Arise! It
shall teach! Behold! it is laid over
with gold and silver, and there is no
breath at all in the midst of it.*

—Habakkuk, Chapter 2, Verse 19

NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE

FRIDAY, JUNE 20, 1941

Appellate Court Rejects Baha'i Petition on Name

Affirms Refusal to Restrict Use of Sect's Designation

The Appellate Division affirmed unanimously yesterday a previous Supreme Court ruling that no one has a right to monopolize the name of a religion and that followers of a religion can not be restrained from practicing their beliefs because of the objections of organized practitioners of the same faith.

The Assembly and seven trustees of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada and the Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of New York brought action originally in Supreme Court in an effort to enjoin Mirza Ahmad Schrab, Persian poet and director of the New History Society, and Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler, wife of the former Lieutenant Governor of New York, founder of the society, from using the word Baha'i in connection with the sales of books, and in meetings or classes. Mr. Schrab and Mrs. Chanler also operate a book store under the name of Bahai Book Shop, at 828 Lexington Avenue.

Mrs. Chanler formed the New History Society after she broke with the so-called authorized Baha'is twelve years ago. The Baha'i religion was founded nearly a century ago by Baha-O-Llah, a Persian prophet, with international peace as its principal aim. Justice Louis A. Valente dismissed the original complaint in Supreme Court.

NEW YORK WORLD-TELEGRAM

THURSDAY, JUNE 19, 1941

Baha'i Is Placed In Public Domain

The Appellate Division today unanimously upheld the ruling of a Supreme Court justice that no one could monopolize the name of a religion.

Without handing down an opinion, the division indorsed the action of Justice Louis A. Valente in dismissing a complaint made by the National Spiritual Assembly and others against Mirza Ahmad Sohrab and Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler, society woman, who are doing business under the name of the Baha'i Book Shop, 828 Lexington Ave.

The assembly and seven trustees of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada, and the Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of this city sought to restrain the defendants from using the word Baha'i in their business. Justice Valente held that the plaintiffs "have no right to a monopoly of the name of a religion."

New York Law Journal

THURSDAY, JUNE 19, 1941

19529. *McDaniel et al., ap, v. Sohrab, &c.*, res—Judgment and order unanimously affirmed, with costs. No opinion. Order filed.

CHAPTER IX

BAHAI CREED MAKES ITS BOW

Creed Builders

None of the Founders of the Great Religions were creed-builders. They taught principles of spiritual life, morality and ethics. Their whole being was suffused with the rays of the Sun of Reality and they summoned all men to band together in the service of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Creeds and articles of faith were formulated by succeeding generations of theologians, men who had lost the vision of the Prophets and were wandering in the waste desert of metaphysical speculations. This is what happened to Christianity. It is happening to the Bahai Cause today—with only a difference of terminology: The Bahai theologians call themselves Administrators.

During a brief period of three years, as he travelled from town to town, from village to village, Christ taught certain spiritual maxims and simple rules for the conduct of life. He never expected that those maxims and rules would become the foundation of mighty, theological institutions nor foresaw that, for ages, the minds of his followers would be occupied with the creation, and obsessed with the enforcement, of dogmas, articles of faith and creeds. Thus, within the span of two centuries, a catechist at Rome produced the famous outline of the *Apostles' Creed*, which undoubtedly lies at the root of all the similar

creeds which flowered into a thousand branches at various church Councils and Synods. Here is the form of this *Old Roman Creed*—the fountain-head of all Christian theology, the starting-point of all strifes, divisions and sects, and the origin of all orthodoxies, heresies and ecclesiastical anathemas.

The Old Roman Creed

- I. 1. I believe in God, Father Almighty;
- II. 2. and in Christ, His only son, our Lord,
3. who was born of the Holy Ghost and the
Virgin Mary.
4. Crucified under Pontius Pilate and buried.
5. The third day He rose from the dead.
6. He ascended into heaven.
7. Sitteth at the right hand of the Father,
8. thence He shall come to judge living and dead.
- III. 9. And in the Holy Ghost
10. (the) Holy Church
11. (the) remission of sins
12. (the) resurrection of the flesh.

—“Creeds and Articles,” *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. III and IV, Page 237.

Precautions Taken by the Founders

It was too much to expect that the Bahai Cause would be immune to this process of stratification, but both Baha-O-Allah and Abdul Baha did their very best to avoid such a

calamity. Through continuous explanations, they made vivid this danger in order that the Bahai Movement might be fore-armed and protected from the errors of the previous religions. They were most emphatic on the points that this Cause is universal and all-inclusive; that it does not lend itself to the creation of an hierarchial order; that its fundamental basis is unity and not ecclesiastical distinctions; that it is essentially a spiritual fellowship and not a sectarian corporation with exclusive privileges; that its charter is freedom from worldly and material constitutions, and that its greatness depends upon non-crystallization and open portals.

The Breath of God is diffused throughout the world, asserted Baha-O-Llah. (*Bahai Scriptures*, page 98.)

The Fragrances of the Merciful have spread their sweet odors over all beings. (*Bahai Scriptures*, page 106.)

Good Character and Universal Service

It behooveth the people of El-Abha to assist the Lord through their utterance, and to preach unto the world through their deeds and good morals. The effect of deeds is greater than the effect of words (*Tablets of Baha-O-Llah*, page 41).

In this Day the hosts which assist the Cause are (good) deeds and (good) morals (*Tablets of Baha-O-Llah*, page 26).

O people of Baha! Adorn your temples with the mantle of trustworthiness and integrity; then assist your Lord with the hosts of (good) deeds and morals (*Tablets of Baha-O-Llah*, page 119).

O people of God! Be not occupied with yourselves.

Be intent on the betterment of the world and the training of nations. The betterment of the world can be accomplished through pure and excellent deeds and well-approved and agreeable conduct. The helper of the Cause is Deeds and its assistant is Good Character (*Tablets of Baha-O-Llah*, page 25).

The above shows the emphasis that Baha-O-Llah placed on conduct, and on activity in the path of God. Morality and not creeds; deeds and not words; service and not articles of faith.

Following in the footsteps of his Father, Abdul Baha accentuated the importance of appreciation for all men, and of love and service without compromise and without distinctions. Pointing to the disciples of the Christ as the supreme archetypes of free and untrammelled teachers, he advised the Bahais:

With hearts set aglow by the fire of the love of God and souls refreshed by the food of the Heavenly Spirit, you must go forth as the disciples, nineteen hundred years ago, quickening the hearts of men by the call of Glad-Tidings; the light of God in your faces; severed from everything save God (*Promulgation of Universal Peace*, Vol. 1, page 6).

Therefore, we must make no distinctions between individual members of the human family. We must not consider any soul as barren or deprived (*Promulgation of Universal Peace*, Vol. 1, page 12).

What is a Bahai? To be a Bahai simply means to love all the world; to love humanity and try to serve it; to work for universal peace and universal brotherhood (*Baha-O-Llah and the New Era*, page 90).

Declaration of Trust and By-Laws

It took almost two centuries for Christian theologians to formulate *The Old Roman Creed* and thus insert in the pure Faith a yard-stick and a bludgeon. In this instance, however, it took only a few years for *Bahai theologians*, under the more modern title of *Bahai Administrators*, to set up *The Bahai Creed* which, reducing the Cause from spirit to matter, has already become more authoritative and binding than *all* the teachings of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha.

On Monday, November 28, 1921, at 1:30 A. M., in Haifa, Palestine, Abdul Baha ascended to the life beyond.

On May 27, 1927, Shoghi Effendi, in a letter to the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, acknowledges the receipt of the Declaration of Trust, and in another letter dated October 18th, of the same year, he states: *I have read and re-read most carefully the final draft of the By-Laws.* (*Bahai Administration*, pages 124 and 132).

Thus, within the narrow limits of less than six years after the departure of Abdul Baha, a few American Bahais wrote the Declaration of Trust and By-Laws, submitted them to Shoghi Effendi and received his sanction. In this manner, the young Cause, so lately deprived of its great Protector, was, without loss of time, shoved into an institution—a mere waif, the latest one to enter the dark edifice of Religious Organization. No starving Oliver Twist, symbol of maltreated childhood, holding out his plate and asking for *more*, is pitiful to a greater extent than is the pallid Bahai Cause as it pants for breath under the cold stare of its inflexible trustees.



Meeting held in New York, in honor of Mirabehn (Madeleine
20, 1934, under the auspices
Platform group, from left to right:—Dr. H. T. Mazumdar,

Slade) spiritual daughter of Mahatma Gandhi, on October
of The New History Society.

Mirabehn, M. A. Sohrab and Hon. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler,

When this instrument of tyranny was mailed to Shoghi Effendi he, unfortunately, did not see it as a terrible weapon wherewith to stultify the Cause that had been confided to his keeping, and so he gave it his blessing and placed on it his seal of approval.

Here are his exact words in a letter dated May 27, 1927:

The Declaration of Trust, the provisions of which you have so splendidly conceived and formulated with such assiduous care, marks yet another milestone on the road of progress along which you are patiently and determinedly advancing. Clear and concise in its wording, sound in principle and complete in its affirmations of the fundamentals of Bahai administration, it stands in its final form as a worthy and faithful exposition of the constitutional basis of Bahai communities in every land, foreshadowing the final emergence of the world Bahai Commonwealth of the future. This document, when correlated and combined with the set of by-laws which I trust are soon forthcoming, will serve as a pattern to every National Bahai Assembly, be it in the East or in the West. . . .

I eagerly await the receipt of the complete set of the contemplated by-laws, the purpose of which should be to supplement the provisions, clarify the purpose; and explain more fully the working of the principle underlying the above-mentioned Declaration (*Bahai Administration*, pages 124-125)..

Having received the By-Laws, Shoghi Effendi writes again in his letter dated October 18, 1927:

. . . I have read and re-read most carefully the final

draft of the By-Laws drawn up by that highly-talented, much-loved servant of Baha-U-Llah, Mountfort Mills, and feel I have nothing substantial to add to this first and very creditable attempt at codifying the principles of general Bahai administration. I heartily and unhesitatingly commend it to the earnest perusal of, and its loyal adoption by, every National Bahai Spiritual Assembly, whether constituted in the East or in the West. I would ask you particularly to send copies of the text of this document of fundamental importance accompanied by copies of the Declaration of Trust and the text of the Indenture of Trust, to every existing National Spiritual Assembly, with my insistent request to study the provisions, comprehend its implications, and endeavor to incorporate it, to the extent that their own circumstances permit, within the framework of their own national activities. . . .

I would specifically remind you that, in the text of the said By-Laws, which to the outside world represents the expression of the aspirations, the motives and objects that animate the collective responsibilities of Bahai Fellowship, due emphasis should not be placed only on the concentrated authority, the rights, the privileges and prerogatives enjoyed by the elected national representatives of the believers, but that special stress be laid also on their responsibilities as willing ministers, faithful stewards and loyal trustees to those who have chosen them. (*Bahai Administration*, pages 132-133.)

The Bahai Creed according to the National Spiritual Assembly

And now let us examine the Bahai Creed which is contained in the Declaration of Trust and By-Laws of the

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada:

The Bahais of the United States and Canada . . . shall consist of all persons . . . who are *recognized* by the National Spiritual Assembly as having fulfilled the requirements of voting membership in a local Bahai Community. To become a voting member of a Bahai Community a person shall

- a. Be a resident of the locality defined by the area of jurisdiction of the local Spiritual Assembly, as provided by Article VII, Section 12, of this instrument.**
- b. Have attained the age of 21 years.**
- c. Have established to the satisfaction of the local Spiritual Assembly, subject to the approval of the National Assembly, that he possesses the qualifications of Bahai faith and practice required under the following standard:**

Full recognition of the station of the Forerunner (the Bab), the Author (Baha-U-Llah) and Abdul Baha the True Exemplar of the Bahai Cause; unreserved acceptance of, and submission to, whatever has been revealed by their pen;

Loyal and steadfast adherence to every clause of Abdul Baha's sacred Will; and close association with the spirit as well as the form of present-day Bahai administration throughout the world. (*Bahai Administration*, page 146.)

The above articles of Bahai Creed and Confession demonstrate that, notwithstanding the warnings of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha, their Cause is today as handi-

capped and circumscribed as are any of the institutionalized religions; at the same time it must be realized that, while the organizations of the former religions are laden with the sanctity and tradition of antiquity, the organization of the Bahai Cause has none of those hallmarks and is only a pseudo-imitation of those hoary and superannuated institutions.

Early Days in Bahai Administration

In order to corroborate my claim that, from the very start, overlordship was apparent in the Spiritual Assemblies, I will give extracts from a letter, (which is one among countless others on the same subject), written to me in 1923 by one who today is very close to the top of the administrative ladder. Although, in these articles, I am documenting the quotations used, in this case, for obvious reasons, I refrain from including the name of my correspondent. The letter follows:—

The people in the West live in a different world from their brothers and sisters in the East. This is due to the natural instinct of the overshadowing group soul. We must try to eliminate cliques and be more universally detached. As it is, we mostly travel in herds like sheep. How I wish I might have a heart to heart talk with you about these Spiritual Assemblies. There is a frightful lot of organization in this Cause which is supposed to be free from all such things, and democratic. I believe the trouble between the American believers is due to the manner in which the Spiritual Assemblies function. They carry things with a very high hand and mostly, instead of representing the group in each Assembly they sit and make laws without any

consideration of the souls whom they are supposed to represent. . . . This is the day of deeds not words; but it seems very difficult to convince some of the dead leaves. . . . They have gotten used to blowing around the tree of life, and they do nothing but blow. . . . Everything was in awful shape after Mrs. — got through with the first meeting. I just sat down and refused to work under the arrangements as laid down by the Assembly of Nine. . . . Do write me about this matter and don't start in telling me about *Obedience* and the absolute *Control* of said Assemblies. We are all sick of being reminded, every time we have a suggestion to make which did not originate in the minds of the Spiritual Nine, that we must leave that to the decision of the Spiritual Assembly.

Bahai Obscurantism

These articles of the Bahai Creed are the harbingers to an era of obscurantism in this glorious movement. They are compounded of bigotry in all its gruesome forms and pave the way to moral darkness. 'This desire for concentrated authority is in direct opposition to inquiry and enlightenment. It is a mediaevalizing tendency. In the Middle Ages we had dry scholasticism; in the Bahai Cause we have arid administrative legalism. The Bahai Administration is the progeny of religious intolerance, obviously injurious to spiritual freedom and ethical emancipation. The Articles of Creed as quoted are implements of torture in the hands of a Bahai Administrative Obscurantist. According to his standard, the Bahai Cause is to be run, not by the fresh springs of inspiration, but by the elixir distilled from the withered flowers of administrative theology.

The Bahai Obscurantists have deified the Bab, Baha-Ollah and Abdul Baha, but they have crucified their Cause.

The impulse to Bahai Obscurantism, or to any other form of obscurantism, arises from a deeply rooted, if not an inherent, tendency in human nature to distrust free inquiry. This tendency becomes aggravated when it operates in the sphere of religion. An uneasy suspicion of knowledge and its results; a dislike for a liberal and inquisitive mind, and a feeling of fear in regard to independent investigation of truth as for something not wholly good for any one—these sentiments have contributed to the evolution of Bahai Obscurantism, which is the herald of professional or class exclusiveness in the Cause as exemplified by the National Spiritual Assembly, and the local assemblies. Thus considered, it is the weakness of a select body which, I hope, and believe, stands in no relation to the common conscience of the rank and file of the Bahai communities.

One observes the distortion of truth on the part of the Bahai Obscurantists by their unwholesome preference for that which is secondary and derivative, as contrasted with that which is primary and fundamental; by their leanings toward the accretions and embellishments of administration, as contrasted with the sources of inspiration; toward the peculiarities of theories and creeds, as contrasted with the Bahai obligations which are universally binding.

The dislike of the sophisticated, intellectualized Americans, like some of the Bahai administrators, for those common, simple, universal realities of the Bahai Cause, which are the very soul of this movement, has taken practical effect in the substitution of mechanistic, legalistic,

administrative and organized authority for the seeing eye and illumined heart—and the result has been a gradual diminishing of reliance on the spiritual teachings of the Cause and a total absence of enthusiasm on its behalf.

However, it is not an idle word to say that, while Obscurantism has entrenched itself in the Bahai Cause, a strong reaction has, at the same time, been provoked against this entrenchment. This is not a negative reaction, not merely a sense of dissatisfaction, a state of unrest, but a positive anxiety and sense of responsibility, coupled with wistful remembrance of better days.

'The Clay-pieces of the World

Therefore, in the spirit of those to whom the teachings of Abdul Baha are ever alive, I will recall the admonitions of the Master regarding *verbal confessions, acknowledgments, literal faith and external relations*.

In this cycle of Baha-O-Llah, verbal confessions and acknowledgments, literal faith and certainty and external relations are of no avail. Nay, rather, the beloved of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful must manifest such *attributes and ethical conduct* as to embody and personify the teachings of Baha-O-Llah. They must promulgate the law of the Kingdom with deeds and not words.

Thus may they become the quintessence of being, the signs of the Kingdom of God and the standards of the Supreme Concourse.

—Bahai News, later renamed *Star of the West*,
Vol. 1, No. 4, May 17, 1910, pages 8-9.

Further, in regard to appellation and encumbrances, Baha-O-Llah says:

This Cause has crossed the gulf of words, and pitched its tent on the shores of the Sea of Detachment.

—*Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, page 58.

And again, from Baha-O-Llah, the call to serenity and the reminder that the purely material is not formidable:

Oh men! Why fear, and whom do you dread? These clay-pieces of the world shall be disintegrated by a slight moisture.

—*Tablets of Baha-O-Llah*, page 23.

CHAPTER X

BEGINNINGS OF THE BAHAI ORGANIZATION

The Ancient Path

The Bahai Cause is a Renaissance of the spirit and the appearance of a vital energy, pouring its divine potencies into the affairs of men. It is:

that which was revealed from the source of Majesty, through the tongue of power and strength, through the prophets of the past. We have taken of its essences and clothed it with the garment of brevity (Baha-O-Llah—*Hidden Words* page 1).

The Bahai Cause is a summons to unity on the material and spiritual planes:—

By sending you the prophets and in revealing the books, it was intended that men should attain unto the knowledge of God and become united and agreed (Baha-O-Llah—*Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, page 10).

Abdul Baha was asked: *What is the essence of the Bahai message?* He answered:

The Bahai message is a call to religious unity and not an invitation to a new religion, not a new path to immortality. God forbid! It is the ancient path cleared of the debris of imaginations and superstitions of men, of the debris of strife and misunderstanding, and is

again made a clear path to the sincere seeker, that he may enter therein in assurance and find that the word of God is one word, though the speakers were many. (From a Booklet No. 9, published under the supervision of the American National Spiritual Assembly).

When a *seeker* wrote to him, asking practically the same question, he replied:

The Cause of Baha-U-Llah is the same as the Cause of Christ. It is the same temple and the same foundation. Both of these are spiritual springtimes, and seasons of the soul-refreshing awakening and the cause of the renovation of the life of mankind. The spring of this year is the same as the spring of last year. The origins and ends are the same. The sun of today is the sun of yesterday. In the coming of Christ, the divine teachings were given in accordance with the infancy of the human race. The teachings of Baha-U-Llah have the same basic principles, but are according to the stage of the maturity of the world and the requirements of this illumined age. (*Tablets of Abdul Baha*, Vol. III, page 535.)

Concerning the work that the Bahais are commanded to do, Abdul Baha said:—

We are commanded to quicken the souls, to train the characters, to illumine the realm of man, to guide all the inhabitants of the earth, to create concord and unity among all men and to lead the world of humanity to the fountain of the everlasting Glory. The reformation of one Empire is not our aim; nay rather we invoke God that all the regions of the world be reformed and cultivated, the republics of men become the manifestors

of the bounty of the most glorious Lord, the East and the West be brought nearer together . . . in brief, all the nations and peoples of the world become as one soul and one spirit, in order that strife and warfare be entirely removed and rancor and hostility disappear, so that all become as the waves of one ocean, the drops of one sea, the flowers of one rose-garden, the trees of one orchard, the grains of one harvest and the plants of one meadow. (*Tablets of Abdul Baha*, Vol. III, page 490.)

Thus, it is evident that the Bahai Cause is a system of spiritual ethics and divine morality made imminent and compelling by the mighty personalities of Baha-O-Allah and Abdul Baha. This practical aspect of the movement becomes apparent as we read these words:—

To be no cause of grief to any one.

To be kind to all people and to love them with a pure spirit.

To look always at the good and not at the bad. If a man has ten good qualities and one bad one, look at the ten and forget the one. And if a man has ten bad qualities and one good one, to look at the one and forget the ten.

To be as one soul in many bodies; for the more we love each other, the nearer we shall be to God.

—Words of Abdul Baha from a booklet *No. 9*, published under the supervision of the American National Spiritual Assembly.

No Organization for the Bahai Cause

The Bahai Cause is not in opposition to any religion, nor is it a movement to organize the spiritual susceptibilities of

men. It offers us the Scriptures of the World's Faiths but, at the same time, it reminds us that the religions that have grown around these Holy Words must be purified of the man-made paraphernalia which cloak and obscure them. If we throw away the shell—organization—at the very core we shall find the kernel—Love—in all its splendor and simplicity—and that Love will make us free!

Throughout his life, Abdul Baha was most emphatic on this subject: No organization, no ecclesiasticism and theology, no limitations and restrictions in the Bahai Cause. On this tree, all the birds are invited to build their nests and raise their broods. Toward this heaven, they all can soar and flood the earth with their golden songs. In order to engrave the vital principle of non-organization upon the minds of the Bahais, East and West, North and South, Abdul Baha often spoke on this subject, with power and authority:—

The Bahai Movement is not an organization. You cannot organize the Bahai Movement. The Bahai Movement is the spirit of the age. It is the essence of all the highest ideals of this century. The Bahai Cause is an inclusive movement. The teachings of all religions and societies are found here. Christians, Jews, Buddhists, Mohammedans, Zoroastrians, Theosophists, Freemasons, Spiritualists, etc., find their highest aims in this Cause. Socialists and philosophers find their theories fully developed in this movement.

—From a booklet *No. 9.*

A Desire to Organize

The above clear and emphatic words of Abdul Baha were used in the course of public addresses as one of the

most characteristic teachings of the Cause. They were quoted over and over again in numerous articles and sundry publications. Abdul Baha had sounded the clarion-call: No Organization in the Bahai Cause; and the echo of this order reverberated through the corridors of the minds and spirits, for a time—and then it died away.

Let us then acknowledge the fact that the very tissue of the Occidental nature is interpenetrated with the belief that organization is the basis of every successful undertaking, whether material or spiritual. Consequently, quite a large number of the early American Bahais found it difficult to reconcile themselves to Abdul Baha's views on the matter; yet, the magnetic personality of the Master held them in a trance, his utterances overawed them and they repeated his teachings, trying to convince themselves that they believed in them. All the while, however, doubts and objections were rising in their hearts: How, and by what mysterious methods could the Bahai Cause establish itself in the Western world without the prop of organization? Not comprehending the A.B.C. of a free spiritual movement, they did not have sufficient confidence to sincerely try out the plan in order to see whether or not it would work.

First Organized Unit

The impulse on the American continent to organize the Bahai Cause manifested itself as far back as 1900-03, when reports reached this country of the first *Mashreq-Ul-Azkar* (Bahai Temple of Worship) erected in Ishkabad, Russia. At this time, the members of a *Spiritual Committee* in Chicago requested Abdul Baha to grant them per-

mission to construct the second *Mashreq-Ul-Azkar* in the United States.

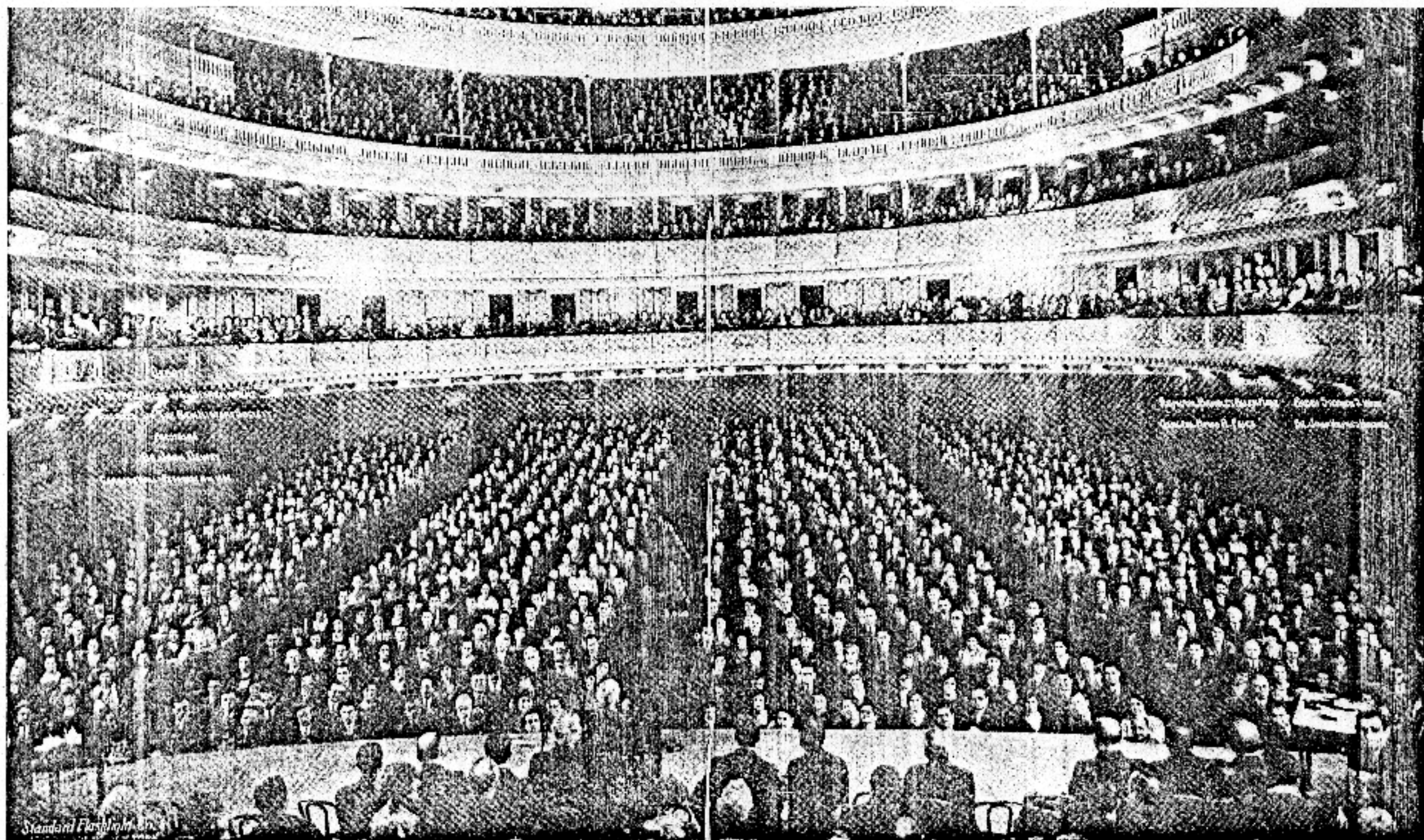
Baha-O-Llah in the Book of Aqdas had left this instruction:—

O concourse of creation! O people of God! Construct homes or houses in the most beautiful fashion possible, in every city, in every land, in the name of the Lord of religions. Adorn them with that which becometh them, not with pictures or paintings. Then commemorate thy Lord, the Merciful, the Clement, in spirit and fragrance. Verily, by His mention, by this commemoration, the breasts shall be dilated, the eyes illumined, the hearts gladdened; and thus shall you pray to the orient of praises, in the Mashreq-Ul-Azkar.

Here then was a problem. How could an unorganized spiritual group build a Temple? This was quite a legitimate question, possibly a difficult one to answer; yet, it would have been wise to find out how, and by what methods the Temple at Ishkabad had been built. Possibly the right solution lay there. At any rate, on November 26, 1907, the first Convention was called; it was attended by nine delegates, and they assembled the rudiments of the machinery to be used, had the news broadcast throughout the country and arranged for the reception of contributions from various Bahai groups and individuals.

The second Convention which met on March 22nd and 23rd, 1909, was attended by 36 delegates, and a more thorough and elaborate business foundation was laid. It resulted in the appearance of

The Bahai Temple Unity, as an organization, with



The Audience at a Debate held in February, 1932, at Carnegie Hall,
a view of the platform,

New York, under the auspices of The New History Society. For
see pages 296-7.

See page 280

full power and authority to provide ways and means for the erection of the Mashreq-Ul-Azkar. A constitution was presented and adopted, and the first executive board of Bahai Temple Unity composed of nine members was elected and authorized by the Convention to close and complete the purchase of the land, recommended by the first Convention. (Read *Brief History of the Mashreq-Ul-Azkar in America* by Mrs. Corinne True, *Star of the West*, Vol. VI, June 24, 1916, No. 6, page 52.)

The *Constitution* adopted at the second Convention, under the name of *The Bahai Temple Unity*, is a very simple document. It consists of a short preamble and ten brief articles, and it has *no* By-laws. It is democratic in that: *the powers of this Unity shall abide in the several Bahai Assemblies* (Article 4). It opens with the statement: *He is God*—the way Abdul Baha commenced his letters to his correspondents, and this unusual, Oriental manner of starting an American constitution is proof enough to me that its framers were single-purposed and sincere, and that it was composed in a sweet informal atmosphere of spiritual spontaneity. As described in the preamble, its only aim was to build the Bahai Temple:—

We, the Bahai Assemblies of North America, in unity convened at the City of Chicago, to the end that we may advance the Cause of God in this Western hemisphere by the founding and erection of a Temple with service accessories dedicated to His Holy Name, and devoted in His love to the service of mankind, do hereby adopt the following Constitution:

Article I: We acknowledge God as the source and

preserver of our Unity, revealed to us through the Manifestation of His Glory in Baha-U-Llah in this day, and declared by the beloved Servant of God and man, Abdul Baha.

—(Read *Star of the West*, Vol. IV, August 1, 1913, No. 8, page 140).

For seven years the *Bahai Temple Unity* labored, held annual conventions, published literature, collected funds, increased its powers and waxed strong under the above Constitution.

The 12th Annual Mashreq-Ul-Azkar Convention was held in New York, April 26-29, 1920. The *Star of the West*, Vol. XI, September 27, 1920, No. 11, gives us a Report of this Convention and, in the course of this Report the *Constitution and By-laws* of the *Bahai Temple Unity* is published for the second time. Here we find the preamble and the ten articles practically unchanged, except for a few words added here and there, but *Five* brand new Articles on By-laws have been added. Through them, we glimpse a gathering of the forces of organization and receive the impression that something new and slightly alarming is under way.

It remains a tragic commentary on the undeveloped nature of the American Bahais that the institution of the Mashreq-Ul-Azkar (literally: the dawning-place of the mentionings of God), the erection of which was intended to create centers of divine emotions, actually became the mainspring for the organizing of a spiritual cause and was the origin of the reduction of this movement to the status of an ecclesiastical order.

A Sublime Record

At this point in my narrative, I will retrace my steps to the year 1911, when Mr. Horace Holley visited Abdul Baha in Switzerland. The impressions which he received on this occasion were later published in a Booklet entitled, *A Pilgrimage to Thonon*. Now, I lived with Abdul Baha for eight years; I have written extensively on his personality and on his teachings, and have read practically everything that has been recorded about him by those who came in contact with him, but I have yet to find any description of a meeting with the Master that matches this one in sublimity of feeling and expression. Let us then read the words of Mr. Horace Holley as he wrote them on September 3, 1911, in Quattro Torri, Sienna. He has a beautiful message for us, which will do us a great deal of good if we can sense it as he, himself, did at the time:—

The Hotel du Parc lies in the midst of sweeping lawns. Groups of people were walking quietly about under the trees or seated at small tables in the open air. An orchestra played from a near-by pavilion. My wife caught sight of M. Dreyfus conversing with others, and pressed my arm. I looked up quickly. M. Dreyfus had recognized us at the same time, and as the party rose I saw among them a stately old man, robed in a cream-coloured gown, his white hair and beard shining in the sun. He displayed a beauty of stature, an inevitable harmony of attitude and dress I had never seen nor thought of in men. Without having ever visualized the Master, I knew that this was he. My whole body underwent a shock. My heart leaped, my knees weakened, a thrill of acute, receptive feeling flowed from head to foot. I seemed to have turned into some

most sensitive sense-organ, as if eyes and ears were not enough for this sublime impression. In every part of me I stood aware of Abdu'l Baha's presence. From sheer happiness I wanted to cry—it seemed the most suitable form of self-expression at my command. While my own personality was flowing away; even while I exhibited a state of complete humility, a new being not my own *assumed its place*. A glory, as it were, from the summits of human nature poured into me, and I was conscious of a most intense impulse to admire. In Abdu'l Baha I felt the awful presence of Baha'u'llah, and as my thoughts returned to activity I realized that I had thus drawn as near as man now may to pure Spirit and pure Being. This wonderful experience came to me beyond my own volition. I had entered the Master's presence and become the servant of a higher will for its own purpose. *Even my memory of that temporary change of being bears strange authority over me.* I know what men can become; and that single over-charged moment, shining out from the dark mountain mass of all past time, reflects like a mirror I can turn upon all circumstances to consider their worth by an intelligence purer than my own.

After what seemed a cycle of existence, this state passed with a deep sigh, and I advanced to accept Abdu'l Baha's hearty welcome.

Today, as Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, Mr. Horace Holley is the chief exponent and custodian of the Bahai Administration. More than any person, living or dead, he is responsible for the existence of this institution in which he lives and moves and has his being; yet this

same man has known the life of the spirit better than most of us. In my opinion, he was close to a mystic. I wish that he had not let *this state pass with a deep sigh*.

Early Services

A later book of Mr. Horace Holley, written in Paris and published in 1913 by Sigwick and Jackson Ltd., London, is entitled *The Modern Social Religion*. A copy was sent to Abdul Baha in the East. I distinctly remember the occasion when this book was received. The Master was sitting in a rose-garden, where he was accustomed to spend the cool of the day, dictating letters addressed to his friends. A package was brought; I opened it and placed the volume in his hands. He examined it, turning over a few pages and recalling the while, in very affectionate terms, Mr. Holley's visit to him in Thonon. Then, he asked me to translate the first chapter, which was headed *The Outlook*. With closed eyes he listened, and, when I had ended he smiled and said: *Khaily-Khoub! Khaily-Khoub! Marhaba! Marhaba!* (Well done! Well done! Bravo! Bravo!). Then, he dictated a Tablet of appreciation to the author. This Tablet, with a brief review of the book is published in the *Star of the West*, Vol. IV, December 31, 1913, No. 16, page 273.

The next time we come across Mr. Horace Holley is at the 9th Mashreq-ul-Azkar Convention held in Boston, Mass., April 29th to May 2nd, 1917. *Among the speakers were Mr. Horace Holley. . . .* He had come to the United States, and was associating with the Bahais and taking his preliminary steps in the service of the Cause. I do not find his name listed among the delegates and therefore must

conclude that he attended the Convention merely as a visitor and as the distinguished author of *A Pilgrimage to Thonon* and *The Modern Social Religion*.

The *Star of the West*, Vol. VIII, August 20, 1917, No. 9, presents a varied and interesting Report of the Convention including extracts from the speeches. Page 118 is devoted to Mr. Horace Holley's address on the subject of *The Oneness of Mankind*. It is a scholarly talk, the keynote of which is struck on a very high plane. Undoubtedly, it impressed the delegates as it later impressed me when I read it. Mr. Holley began:—

We live today in an organized, developed society, among the accumulated resources of the past. The youthful mind, feeling its own solitary weakness in the presence of so much authority and power, tends to discredit its own resources and its own power, and early becomes susceptible to the all-pervading influences of materialism. For, in the broad view of things, materialism is simply the preponderance of external influences over the innate quality of the individual spiritual life. The ordinary mind, therefore, learns to develop its imitative, memorizing qualities at the expense of its creative, independent attributes. It locates authority in institutions, and traditional customs and beliefs rather than in spiritual impulse. In all activities, however, the creative work is done by minds which use accumulated knowledge, tradition and customs as fuel to their own vision. Without such minds in art, science, politics and philosophy—to say nothing of religion—the world would rapidly become stagnant, the slave of material doctrines. The vision of the few keeps alive the faith that the ultimate authority is really invested in the individual soul, for every new advance, every improve-

ment, comes from some soul's independent activity. The spirit creates all things, and without spiritual activity thoughts decay. . . .

These noble thoughts expressing with such irrefutable logic, that the ultimate authority is really invested in the individual soul and that every new advance, every new improvement, comes from some soul's independent activity, convinced a number of liberal Bahais that they had found in Mr. Horace Holley a protagonist of the liberty of conscience, one who would help them extricate the Cause from the fetters that were fast accumulating about it. Mr. Horace Holley was living in New York, and, although engaged in business, he little by little had become active in the Cause, beginning to write interesting studies on the Bahai teachings; these were periodically published in the *Star of the West* (see *The Writings of Baha-U-Llah* by Horace Holley, *Star of the West*, Vol. 13, August 1922, No. 5, page 105 and *The Spirit of Abdul Baha*, in two parts, in Vol. 13, No. 6 and 7).

Wire Pulling

The fifteenth Annual Bahai Convention was held in the Auditorium Hotel, Chicago, during April, 1923. A full account of it appears in the *Star of the West*, Vol. 14, No. 3, June 1923, pages 64-82. As is usual, a chief duty of the delegates was the election of the members of the National Spiritual Assembly for the coming year, and around this election a plot was hatched, in which I took part together with Janabe Fazel Mazandrani and Prof. M. R. Shirazi. Naturally we, three itinerant Bahai teach-

ers, had no political inclinations, but in this one instance we had set our hearts on a certain personality which we felt would be an inestimable asset on the National Board, and although we had not taken our chosen candidate into our confidence, we allowed ourselves to pull every string at our disposal in order to bring his name before the delegates.

How well I remember those days, and the fervor that animated me! Now, I was speaking with groups around lunch or dinner tables, again I was sitting behind closed doors in committee rooms until the wee hours of the morning. I stressed our need for an unorthodox and liberal influence in the Cause; I asserted my conviction that our chosen candidate was the man that we had been waiting for, and, in order to prove that my estimate of him was correct, on all occasions I carried his writings with me. Through the reading of certain passages in this, my campaign literature, tears were brought to the eyes of many a delegate.

In this way, we prepared the ground for the election, and finally, in the open meeting, I took my place on the platform with the other speakers.

After seventeen years, I do not remember what I said at that hour or how long I spoke, but thanks to the Report published in the *Star of the West* I can quote a paragraph concerning my address, which evidently was given in true Oriental style:—

Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, in a talk . . . gave a picturesque description of what he thought the new National Assembly, soon to be elected, should be. It should be like a rose, exhaling perfume; like a star, shedding lustre;

like a rain-laden cloud, with life-giving moisture; like a nightingale, sweetly singing; like a well in the oasis of the desert, refreshing the thirsty; like a shady tree, protecting man and beast; like pearls and diamonds, decorating the necks of all humanity; like a searchlight, illuminating the dark places and pointing the goal.

As I read the above words, spread before my eyes in cold, black ink, I see myself as I was then, eager, emotional, an optimist of the most incurable type, and perhaps a convincing one as the record seems to show; for the result of the election was the appointment to office of our chosen candidate—Mr. Horace Holley. Here is the list as printed on the record:—

The Convention after mature deliberation elected the following as the National Spiritual Assembly for the ensuing year: William H. Randall, Alfred E. Lunt, Horace Holley, Roy C. Wilhelm, Louis G. Gregory, Mrs. Corinne True, Mrs. Ella G. Cooper, Mrs. Agnes S. Parsons, Charles Mason Remey.

Consequences

The consequences of this action are a matter of Bahai history. Mr. Horace Holley became a permanent member of the National Spiritual Assembly; in the seventeen Conventions that have followed, he has been re-elected annually, being chosen as Secretary for practically all of this period.

Thus, a Persian trio, Janabe Fazel Mazandrani, Prof. M. R. Shirazi and Mirza Ahmad Sohrab presented Mr. Horace Holley to the Bahai world. Of the three, Prof.

Shirazi has passed from this mortal life; Janabe Fazel is far removed from us in Teheran, and as for Mirza Ahmad Sohrab—well, he pleads guilty before the bar of public opinion and Bahai opinion for having helped to the seat of absolute power a man who has seen fit to alter the Bahai consciousness to a degree which no mind is keen enough to measure and no heart sensitive enough to sufficiently deplore.

The tendency toward organization had, from the very beginning, existed among the American Bahais, but it remained for Mr. Holley to develop it, to officialize it, to make it obligatory and to place the details of Bahai housekeeping (and not very good housekeeping at that) on a level with the Teachings of the Revelator of the Modern Age.

A Social Order for Free Beings

In explanation of my action, I would like to refer to Mr. Holley's book, *The Modern Social Religion*, approved by Abdul Baha, which book I carried with me for many years and from which I drew much confidence and inspiration. As I write, my old copy, well marked, is beside me on the desk. I will here quote some of the passages which at the time I loved and depended on and which, in the light of later developments, I now think very striking.

On page 171, Mr. Horace Holley writes:—

Since Baha-O-Llah's death in 1892, Abdul Baha, *the perfect Bahai*, has not only personified Bahaism as the new relationship of man to society, as well as its emphasis of the Christian relationship of man to God, but

he has effectively spread the Bahai message through Asia, Europe and America. It is difficult to realize at first how this could be done by a prisoner without money, political influence or an ecclesiastical organization.

Then Mr. Holley goes on in a masterful fashion, pointing out the spiritual methods that Abdul Baha used in the promotion of the Cause, and demonstrating that it is possible to serve the Cause without an *ecclesiastical organization*. Again, on page 188:—

If Bahaism represented any such tendency toward disruption and division, it would be no more than another sect struggling for existence and survival in the merciless jungle of society; but its purpose and method of operation combine to render further disintegration impossible. Its purpose is to effect the complete ultimate reconciliation of every existing social fragment, both religious and political, and its method of operation consists in taking its stand within the institution, not outside, and pointing out the true road of development along which the institution, by its own doctrines, if religious, or responsibility, if political, is committed to go. It is, therefore, not hostile to any creed, sect or nation; but is hostile only to that fatal prejudice, bigotry and blindness which prevents creeds, sects and nations from realizing the purpose of their own origin. Bahaism is not the enemy of any Church, for its ideals of human unity and co-operation places its hostages in every race, Church and nation on earth.

On page 189:—

To the Christian, accordingly, the Bahai teaching

brings an obligation to remain within the Church and to obey more fully, not less fully, the Gospel of Christ. . . . The existing religious situation attempts to confine eternal forces to narrow social areas; but Bahaism breaks down the frontiers that cut off one area from another.

On page 191:—

Self-expression, accordingly, represents the supreme obligation and privilege; and God has not given His precious marble of opportunity to the Michael Angelo alone. Life offers every personality the means of beautiful expression, in noble conduct, great thought, or inspiring art. In this individual potentiality and impulse toward self-expression, all men are created free and equal. It is not too much to aver that the greater the mind and spirit, the greater the tendency to respect and admire other personalities, however they may be rated by the world; and the inability to recognize a transcendent and incomparable possibility in every person, must be accepted as the stigma of spiritual insufficiency. Those distinctions, classifications, and judgments which separate society into unsympathetic fragments, proceed from the intellect alone; but intellect itself, when enlightened and vitalized by spirit, gladly perceives and adores the personality latent within all. Upon the individual, then, Bahaism enjoins his spiritual development as the purpose, and hence the supreme obligation of life. For Baha-O-Llah, also, came not to destroy but to fulfill.

On page 194:—

Bahaism is equally explicit concerning the relation-

ship of the individual to society . . . he must bring new enthusiasm and faith to every necessary or constructive relationship, and to existing responsibilities bring a deeper vision of their significance. He must not withdraw from present religious organizations, but reinterpret their function in the light of evolution, endeavor to vitalize their activity, and remove the prejudice and ignorance walling them off from the social unity. . . . He must labor to unite minor organizations in order to make them effective, and to transfer the circumference of social consciousness from the city to the province, the province to the state, the state to the continent, and from the continent to the world.

To render himself effective, he must study the social problem through the most advanced ideas of science, economics and government; and no duty is so important for the believer as to create for his own mind a living, passionate, social ideal—a picture of the divine civilization described by Baha-O-Llah—and Abdul Baha—toward which his purpose may direct its activity and from which his will may be strengthened and revived.

On page 198:—

To sum up what I have termed its morality for institutions, Bahaism teaches that the prosperity and permanence of any religious or political organization is not the end for our personal loyalty; that we should be indifferent to the welfare of mere institutions, creeds, stone walls and iron conventions; but that our most vigorous and devoted loyalty belongs to the cause of humanity as represented by the needs of every environment.

And the last quotation from page 206:—

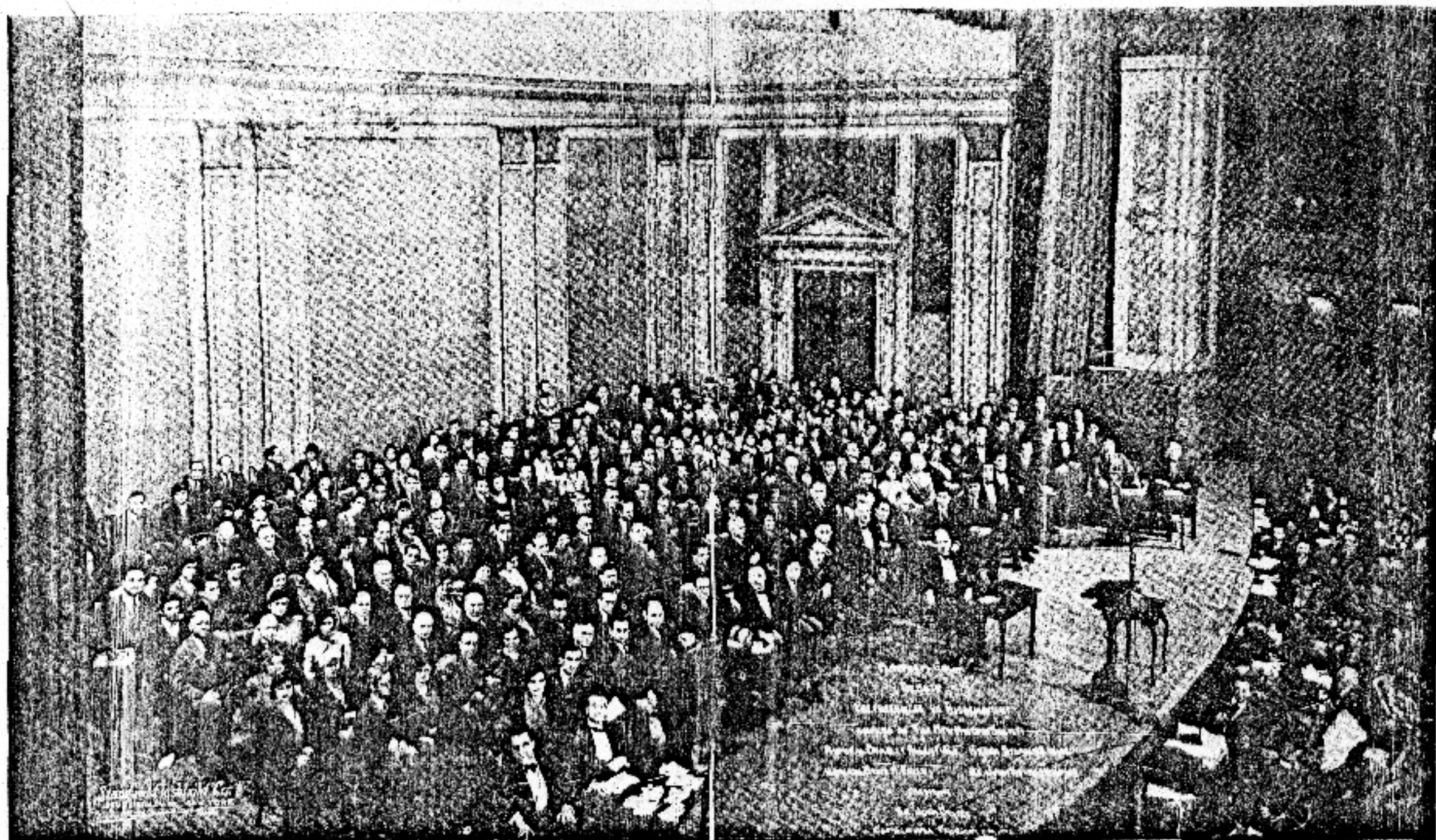
Bahaism desires a new social order in which the development of spiritualized men and women shall be the primary purpose; not supermen whose nature is essentially hostile to the many, but that order of free beings representing our own ideals achieved in daily life and common things. To such an order we already potentially belong, and the highest human fellowship the earth will ever contain will not be otherwise than our own kind, released and inspired by participation in a co-operative society.

On the basis of the above Bahai principles, to which I subscribed then and which I still support, Mr. Horace Holley was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly in 1923. Should he, however, advocate this same teaching in 1942, it is certain that he would not be re-elected to office; nay, rather I have no doubt but that Shoghi Effendi himself, as Guardian of the Cause, would expel him for disseminating doctrines that are totally at variance with the standards of present-day Bahai Administration.

We live and learn, and sometimes we live and forget; so, I would like to close this chapter by repeating the words of Mr. Horace Holley that we should be *indifferent to the welfare of mere institutions : . . that our most vigorous and devoted loyalty belongs to the cause of humanity as represented* (note well the elasticity of the sentiment) *by the needs of every environment.*

CARNEGIE HALL PLATFORM

The Platform at a Debate held in February, 1932, at Carnegie Hall, New York, under the auspices of The New History Society.



Debate under the auspices of The New History Society, held in Carnegie Hall, New York, on February 8, 1932.

Subject: Resolved that Continuous Preparedness is Necessary for the United States.

Affirmative: Admiral Bradley A. Fisk and General Amos A. Fries.

Negative: Rabbi Stephen S. Wise and Rev. John Haynes Holmes.

Chairman
Prof. John Dewey

See page 296

CHAPTER XI

DEVELOPMENT OF THE BAHAI ORGANIZATION

The Divine Plan

During World War I, while all communications between Palestine and the outside world were cut off, Abdul Baha was not inactive. As a patriarch, he guided the affairs of the communities in Haifa, Acca and Tiberias, supervised extensive works of agriculture through which the monster of starvation was kept under control, and last, but far from least, revealed the mighty document known as the Divine Plan. It was as messenger of the Master that, shortly after the close of hostilities, I sailed for the United States bearing with me these incomparable Tablets.

Map of Bahai Unity

The Tablets were unveiled at the Eleventh Bahai Convention in New York, from April 26th to April 30th, 1919, unfolding a new conception for the promotion of the Bahai principles around the earth. Among the different committees that prepared the program of the Convention, that of Publicity was naturally one of the most important. Mr. Horace Holley served on this committee and, doubtless, his imagination was stirred, as was that of everybody, by the dramatic Tablets of Abdul Baha. Consequently, on February 15, 1921, he circulated among the Bahais a mimeographed pamphlet of twelve pages, en-

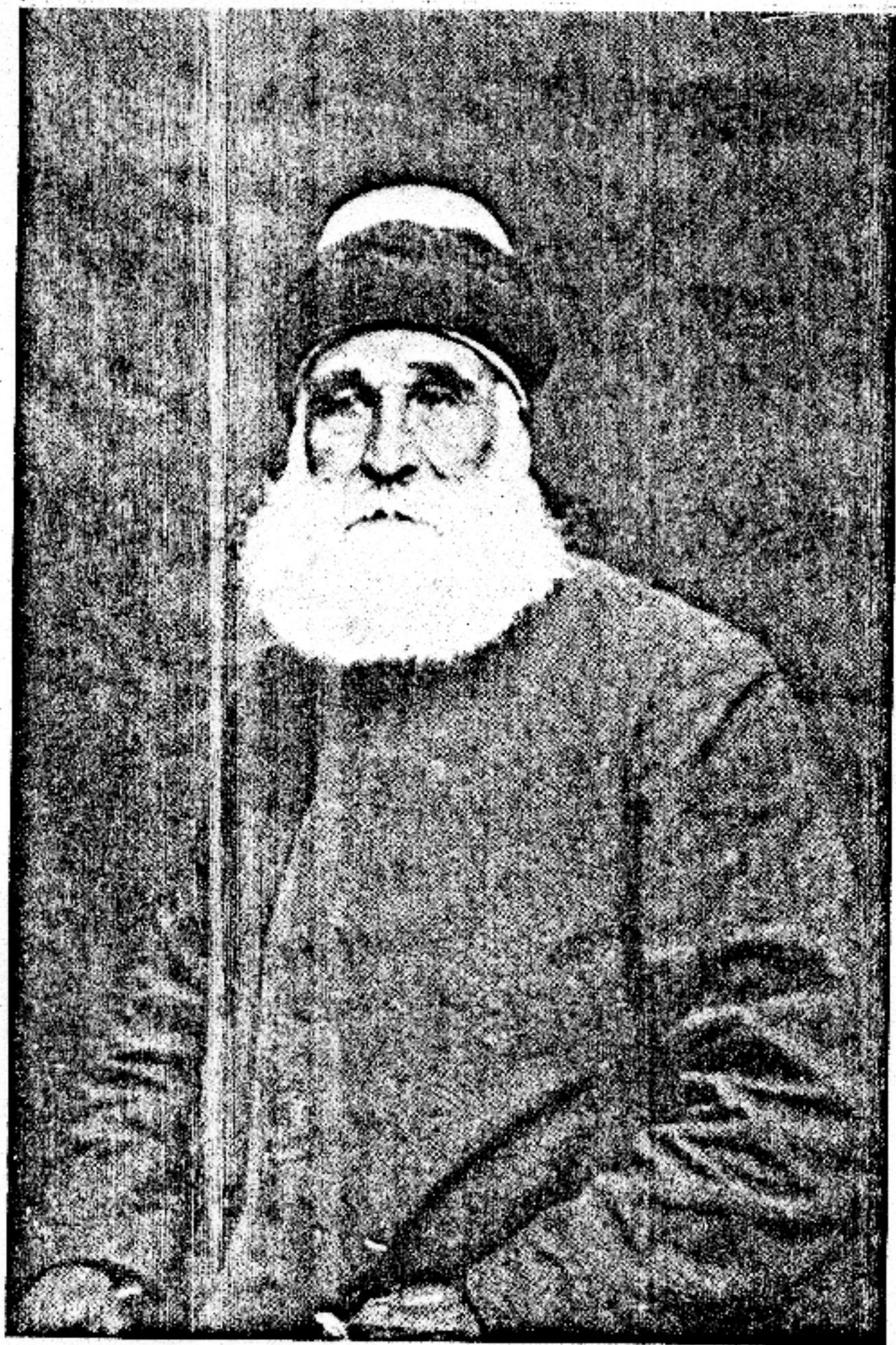
titled: *Map of Bahai Unity in North America*. The following description was incorporated therein: *Mutualizing the efforts of believers throughout Canada and the United States to fulfill the principles as set forth by Abdul Baha in the Divine Plan*.

Now, it would have been inappropriate to distrust an innocent *map* which was to *mutualize* (a nice word, by the way!) the efforts of the believers. The truth is that I fell into the trap. Who knew the significance of the Divine Plan better than I? Abdul Baha had dictated it to me, word by word; he had, on numerous occasions, discussed its contents with me, and I had kept notes in my diary of all that he had said; more than that, at his command I had committed to memory all those Tablets, so that in case the originals should either be confiscated at the frontiers or else lost during my long journey from Palestine to the United States, I would be in a position to reproduce them in their entirety after my landing in New York. With book in hand, he often had made me recite them to him from beginning to end, checking mistakes, correcting lapses of memory, until every sentence shone like a jewel in the chamber of my mind.

Well, that is a story in itself, but the point is that I would have welcomed any map that had power to put in motion the plan of Abdul Baha. Consequently, Mr. Holley's map fascinated me, and I was especially pleased because the booklet was headed with Abdul Baha's classic remark: *The Bahai Cause is not an Organization*.

The article later continues:—

Heeding the words of Abdul Baha, that the Bahai



SEYYED ASSADOLLAH, disciple of Baha-O-Llah, itinerant Bahai teacher, and travelling companion of Abdul Baha during the latter's visit to the United States.

Movement is not an organization, but on the contrary the Spirit of Organization, the Map is based not upon the factor of authority but upon that of the various services which the Divine Plan calls upon all the friends of God to perform. These services are analyzed in the form they have been performed in the past, and no new elements have been introduced except such as more closely knit together the different Assemblies, and the different National Committees in one active fellowship

Two Mystifying Points

Even in 1921, two points in this *map* mystified me.

FIRST: If the Bahai Movement is not an organization, how could it be the *spirit* of organization? If a glass be not full, how can it be the *spirit* of fullness? If a shoe be not comfortable, how can it be the *spirit* of comfort? If a statesman be not liberal, how can he be the *spirit* of liberalism? This argument seemed like sophistry, but the mass of the Bahais, and this includes myself, were very simple folk, ready to approve anything that promised to further the interests of the Cause they loved so much.

SECOND: The assurance that the *Map is based not upon the factor of authority*. Here, I sensed something foreign, but could not place my finger on it. The Map and its charts on page 4 gave unmistakable evidences of a concentration of authority in the various agencies that were to be set up; but inasmuch as this *authority* was rather well concealed, one could not very well yield oneself up to suspicion.

Be that as it may, I now consider this *Map of Bahai Unity in North America*, drawn up and elaborated by Mr.



MIRZA ABUL FAZL, Dean of the University of Hakim-Hashem in Teheran, Persia, in 1873. Disciple of Baha-O-Llah; Bahai historian and philosopher; author of *The Bahai Proofs*, and greatest of Bahai teachers.

Horace Holley, as a most important contributory document to the unification and vocalization of the reactionary desires of those whose aim it was to listen for the thunder of external authority rather than to the still small voice, and who placed the resourcefulness of the material mind above the effulgent rays of the heavenly consciousness.

The Bahais of the United States and Canada had by this time, by means of successive conventions, organized their material resources for the building of a *Temple of stone in Chicago*, as Mr. Horace Holley aptly describes it in his *Map of Bahai Unity in North America*. On the other hand, the *Temple of hearts* (which also is Mr. Holley's term) was left free and unorganized. Then lo and behold! Mr. Holley suddenly burst upon the scene with a proposed *working model* for the regimentation of that very *Temple of hearts*, even as we already have a *model to guide us in building the Temple of stone*, and we, all trustingly, offered our poor hearts, (which were soon to sustain the equivalent of finger-printing and card filing) thereby relinquishing our Bahai birthright. *Where there is no vision the people perish!*

I hope that I will be excused if I take the liberty of paraphrasing the 11th and 12th verses of I Kings, Chapter XIX, with application to the subject at hand:

And Abdul Baha said: Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Word. And, behold, the Divine Plan passed by; and a great and strong wind (*Bahai organization*) rent the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks before the Divine Plan, but the Divine Plan was not in the wind: and after the wind, an earthquake (*Map of Bahai Unity in North America*); but the Divine Plan was not

in the earthquake. And after the earthquake, a fire (*Bahai Administration*); but the Divine Plan was not in the fire; and after the fire, a still small voice. And it was so: the Divine Plan with its multitude of stars was still shining!

I will now recapitulate, and summarize the steps on which depended

The Evolution of the Bahai Organization

FIRST: On March 22nd and 23rd, 1909, an organization was formed under the name of *The Bahai Temple Unity*. A simple constitution having ten brief articles and no By-laws was adopted. In print, it took less than a page of the *Star of the West*.

SECOND: On April 26, 1920, the same constitution, with the addition of a few words here and there and five Articles on By-laws, was adopted for the second time. It still carried the title, *The Bahai Temple Unity* and in print, it takes a little less than two pages of the *Star of the West*. The object of the Bahai Temple Unity, armed with its two Constitutions, was the building of a *Temple of stone*.

THIRD: On February 15, 1921, Mr. Horace Holley promulgated the *Map of Bahai Unity in North America*, or the organization of the *Temple of hearts*, which was the counterpart of the Constitutions of the *Temple of stone*. In mimeograph form it takes 12 pages, 8½ by 11 size, to outline the Map.

FOURTH: On May 2, 1926, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada (note: no longer *The Bahai Temple Unity*), composed

of nine persons: *establish a Trust as hereinafter set forth, hereby declare that from this date the powers, responsibilities, rights, privileges and obligations . . . shall be exercised, administered and carried on by the above-named National Spiritual Assembly and their duly qualified successors under this Declaration of Trust.* It selects for itself the designation of *Trustees of the Bahais of the United States and Canada.* The spirituality that one could somehow feel in the two previous constitutions is utterly missing in this portentous and formidable Declaration of Trust. It is an ice-bound, juridical document. Its articles are like hailstones that pierce and cut into the heart of the reader; its phrases are so wind-laden that they transform the balmy atmosphere of the Paradise of Abha into the frigid immensities of Nova Zembla; it is the apotheosis of an inflexible organization, the hypostasis of the machine; it is the Bastille of Paris, the Tower of London and the Concentration Camp of the Third Reich all rolled into one, and striking terror into the soul of a most hardy champion of freedom of conscience! This Document of *Declaration of Trust* consists of thirteen printed pages, nine pages of which are devoted to the enumeration of 12 Articles of By-laws, some running into 12 and 13 Sections (*Bahai Administration*, pages 141-153).

The Framers of the Declaration of Trust

The above declaration of Trust and By-laws is the Magna Charta of the present-day Bahai Administration. Therefore, it is important to try to discover its original framers. A close study of the letters of Shoghi Effendi gives us some very interesting clues. Our preliminary find-

ing is that this document was prepared in two sections. The first is called *Declaration of Trust*; the second, *By-Laws of the National Spiritual Assembly*.

We are able to dispose of the second section very quickly, for Shoghi Effendi, himself, in his letter written from Haifa, Palestine, on October 18, 1927, acknowledges that it was: *drawn up by that highly-talented, much-beloved servant of Baha-U-Idah, Mountfort Mills*. So, it is quite evident that an American attorney wrote the By-laws. There can be no doubt about that. It is the brainchild of a single person, and is fully endorsed by Shoghi Effendi.

In seeking the framer or framers of the *Declaration of Trust*, our task is a little more difficult. We are therefore entitled to guess, and I hope that the reader will allow me a margin of error which I will be glad to fill in with any corrections.

At the very start, let us clearly understand that Mr. Horace Holley, as Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly, is the main official channel of communication between Shoghi Effendi and the American and Canadian Bahais. Shoghi Effendi writes occasional letters to individuals through his secretary, but wide and indiscriminate correspondence with him is definitely discouraged, and even the local assemblies and national committees are forbidden to mail their letters directly to the Guardian, but must send them through the National Spiritual Assembly (See *Bahai Procedure*, Section II, Sheet 20).

This close supervision of correspondence between Shoghi Effendi and the Bahais gives the National Spiritual Assembly paramount censorial rights and privileges. As secretary, Mr. Holley writes *all* the letters that are sent to

Shoghi Effendi on behalf of the National Spiritual Assembly; likewise, Shoghi Effendi's letters to the Assembly are received first by him. The Guardian holds Mr. Holley in high esteem as is shown by his letters to the National Spiritual Assembly, some of which are contained in *Bahai Administration*, published on November 30, 1927. These communications usually open with a phrase expressing appreciation of Mr. Holley, such as: *The letters which our able and devoted Mr. Horace Holley has addressed in your behalf. Or, the three communications . . . which I have received from that indefatigable servant of Baha-U-Llah, my esteemed spiritual brother Mr. Holley, have given me great satisfaction and have cheered and sustained me in my work. Or, I have perused your recent communication dated . . . and signed on your behalf by your vigilant and capable secretary; or again: The first printed issue of the National Spiritual Assembly's News Letter prepared and signed on behalf of the Assembly by its able secretary stands as a bright and eloquent testimony of his thoroughness, his industry, his conspicuous ability, his undoubted sacrifice.*

I have quoted the above to show the confidence in Mr. Holley that is expressed by the Guardian, and now I come to my point, namely: to try to identify the author of the *Declaration of Trust* of the Bahai Administration. My personal belief is that it was written by Mr. Horace Holley, either alone or else with the assistance of a very few close associates, and possibly of a jurist or two for the legal phrasing of its contents. At any rate, Mr. Horace Holley had a part in its composition and a very conspicuous one; of that I have no doubt.

That my guess may not be far from the truth is shown in the text of Shoghi Effendi's letter written on the receipt of the *Declaration of Trust* and dated May 27, 1927. He says: *The Declaration of Trust, the provisions of which you have so splendidly conceived, and formulated with such assiduous care, marks yet another milestone on the road of progress along which you are patiently and determinedly advancing.* The letter, of course, is addressed to the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, but one wonders who is this *you* that *conceived* and *formulated* the *Declaration of Trust*? Is it a singular or a collective you? Yet, of one thing we are sure: It is an *American* you and not a *Persian* you. Like the *By-laws*, it was originated and given currency in these United States; and the point that I want to establish and which I believe is already proven beyond a shadow of doubt, is that the *Declaration of Trust* and *By-laws* originated in the brain of an American, or in the brains of Americans and that the Bab, Baha-O-Llah and Abdal Baha had nothing to do with it.

Essential Uniformity

Somehow or other, through a process that I could never understand, Shoghi Effendi, from the very beginning, was attracted to this *Declaration of Trust* and *By-laws* and, in time, he came to consider it as the handiwork of God. So enamored with it was he that he caused the formation of National Spiritual Assemblies in Egypt, Persia, India, Iraq, England, Australia, etc.—East and West—with the injunction that all must adopt this very *Declaration of Trust* and *By-laws* as principles of *their own* Bahai Ad-

ministration. In this manner, he has introduced into the bubbling, effervescent, joyous and free Bahai Cause *such a* deadening uniformity that one cannot find its like even in the antiquated and dying religions. Here is the order of the Guardian in regard to the Egyptian Bahais:

I have insisted that the provisions of their constitution should, in all its details, conform to the text of the Declaration of Trust and By-laws which you have established, endeavoring thereby to preserve the uniformity which I feel is essential in all Bahai National Constitutions. I would like, in this connection to request of you, what I have already intimated to them, that whatever amendments you may decide to introduce in the text of the Declaration and By-laws, should be duly communicated to me, that I may take the necessary steps for the introduction of similar changes in the text of all other National Bahai Constitutions.

—World Order of Baha-U-Llah, page 11.

I can well imagine the state of mind of the Eastern Bahais, who are accustomed to soar in the boundless atmosphere of love and spirituality, when they were presented with this harsh and legalistic Constitution and told that they must adopt it, in all its details, without the least allowance being made for *their own mode of thought and life*; together with the further requirement that, whenever their American masters chose to introduce any amendments to this Constitution, they, the poor, dumb, Oriental Bahais, must slavishly add the same amendments to their own copies, whether applicable or not. I can picture the consternation and disquietude that gripped the souls of

those tried and true Bahais when they received this document and were asked to sign on the dotted line.

These spiritual stalwarts of Baha-O-Llah, these brilliant scholars of Abdul Baha, who had cast a commotion through the pillars of the earth by their subtle philosophical thinking and daring example, were treated as regiments of robots to be moved hither and thither by the legislations of a few shrewd American benchers, neat-handed pleaders and deft draftsmen. They were no longer expected to think or to retain a single idea in their minds. With the acceptance of the *Declaration of Trust* and *By-laws* concocted in the United States, their subjection and vassalage was sealed from everlasting to everlasting by the order from Shoghi Effendi that: *no departure from these cardinal and clearly enunciated principles, embodied and preserved in Bahai National and local constitutions . . . can under any circumstances be tolerated.* (*The Advent of Divine Justice*, page 52.)

Divine Origin

It took the Christians several centuries to deprive Jesus of the dignity of normal birth and foist super-human parentage upon him, but it took the Bahais only the twinkling of an eye to discount the material origin of the Administration and to set it up as divinely conceived. Let us note the words of Shoghi Effendi:

A word should now be said regarding the theory on which this Administrative Order is based and the principle that must govern the operation of its chief institutions. It would be utterly misleading to attempt a comparison between this unique, this divinely-con-

ceived order and any of the diverse systems which the minds of men, at various periods of their history, have contrived for the government of human institutions.

—*World Order of Baha-U-Llah*, page 152.

Thus, divine origin was conferred upon the Administration, but it seems that this was not sufficiently specific. A more definite source should be pointed to and this was found in no less a person than Baha-O-Llah himself. Shoghi Effendi declares:—

Let no one, while this system is still in its infancy, misconceive its character, belittle its significance or misrepresent its purpose. The bedrock on which this Administrative Order is founded is God's immutable Purpose for mankind in this day. The Source from which it derives its inspiration is no less than Baha-U-Llah Himself. Its shield and defender are the embattled hosts of the Abha Kingdom. Its seed is the blood of no less than 20,000 martyrs who have offered up their lives that it may be born and flourish.

—*World Order of Baha-U-Llah*, page 156.

I myself cannot help wondering what the poor martyrs would have thought, if they had known that they were giving up their lives for an American *corporation* instead of for a Persian *Cause*!

Even as he had claimed divine origin for the *Declaration of Trust* and *By-laws* of the Administration, Shoghi Effendi gives a high station to its framers. He writes:—

Few, if any, I venture to assert, among these privileged framers and custodians of the constitution of the Faith of Baha-U-Llah are even dimly aware of the preponderating role which the North American continent

is destined to play in the future orientation of their world-embracing Cause. Nor does any appreciable number among them seem sufficiently conscious of the decisive influence which they already exercise in the direction and management of its affairs.

—*World Order of Baha-U-Llah*, page 53.

Having to the best of my ability shown the origin, growth and development of the Bahai Organization, which record will not, I hope, embitter nor discourage us, I will return to the life-imparting words of Abdul Baha, which are addressed to all:—

Be ye not seated and silent! Diffuse the glad-tidings of the Kingdom far and wide to the ears, promulgate the Word of God . . . that is, arise ye with such qualities and attributes that ye may continually bestow life to the body of the world, and nurse the infants of the universe up to the station of maturity and perfection. Enkindle with all your might in every meeting the light of the love of God, gladden and cheer every heart with the utmost loving-kindness, show forth your love to the strangers just as you show forth to your relations. If a soul is seeking to quarrel, ask ye for reconciliation; if he blame ye, praise (him); if he give you a deadly poison, bestow ye an all-healing antidote; if he createth death, administer ye eternal life; if he becometh a thorn, change ye into roses and hyacinths. Perchance, through such deeds and words, this darkened world will become illuminated, this terrestrial universe will become transformed into a heavenly realm, and this satanic prison become a divine court; warfare and bloodshed be annihilated, and love and faithfulness hoist the tent of unity upon the apex of the world.

—*Tablets of Abdul Baha*, Vol. III, pages 503, 504.

UNITED STATES



Leonard L. Kimball
University of Michigan,
Ann Arbor,
Michigan

FIRST PRIZE
WINNERS
IN FIVE
COMPETITIONS

EUROPE



Russell M. Cooper

American, studying at
L'Institut Universitaire
de Hautes Etudes Inter-
national, Geneva, Switz-
erland

LATIN AMERICA



Celso Frota Pessoa

Polytechnic School of
the University of Rio
de Janeiro, Brazil

ASIA



Louise Pin Yen Chang
Chow Yang University,
Peiping, China

AFRICA, AUSTRALIA
CANADA
NEW ZEALAND



Wycliffe Mlungisi Tsotsi
Blythwood Institution,
Butterworth, S. Africa

EIGHT COMPETITIONS OF THE NEW HISTORY SOCIETY

Conscious of the approaching storm that was threatening our civilization during the fateful Thirties, The New History Society felt impelled to spread throughout the world, as far as was possible, the principles which must form the basis of a New Society. Therefore, from the year 1931 on through 1939, its main activity consisted in the conducting of eight Annual Prize Competitions, offered successively to the youth of the five continents and the inhabitants of the world on various international topics. By this means, the knowledge of the Bahai Cause and its principles was actually disseminated in all avenues of life in practically every country, and an unprecedented volume of correspondence was initiated with thousands of inquirers in every part of the earth.

The labor involved in the undertaking was great and, as it was largely contributed, this went far toward lessening the total cost. Nevertheless, the expenses of the Seven Regional Competitions together with the World Competition passed the figure of One Hundred Thousand Dollars, this including the First, Second, Third and Special Prizes, the translating and printing of the Conditions and of leaflets in eleven languages, the mailing, secretarial work and other items.

The originals of *all* the Papers submitted by the contestants in the eight Competitions were bound in 75 large volumes and placed in the library of The New History Society. These have been and still are available to the students of human thought and to those who are interested in learning of the ideas which were uppermost in the minds of the youth of the world as well as of its elders during the crucial years—1931-1939.

The Competitions offered, year by year, were on the following subjects:—

FIRST COMPETITION

Offered to the Youth of the United States of America, in 1931.

Subject: *How Can the Colleges Promote World Peace?*

* * *

SECOND COMPETITION

Offered to the Youth of Europe, in 1932.

Subject: *How Can the Youth of the Universities and Schools Contribute to the Realization of a United States of the World?*

THIRD COMPETITION

Offered to the Youth of South and Central America, Mexico, the West Indies and adjacent Islands, in 1933.

Subject: *How Can the Youth of the Universities and Professional Schools Contribute to the Reconstruction of the Human Commonwealth?*

* * *

FOURTH COMPETITION

Offered to the Youth of Asia, in 1934.

Subject: *How Can Youth Contribute to the Realization of a Universal Religion?*

* * *

FIFTH COMPETITION

Offered to the Youth of Africa, Australia, Canada and New Zealand, in 1935.

Subject: *How Can Youth Develop Co-operative and Harmonious Relations Among the Races of the Earth?*

* * *

SIXTH COMPETITION

Offered to the Population of the World, in 1936-1937.

Subject: *How Can the People of the World Achieve Universal Disarmament?*

* * *

SEVENTH COMPETITION

Offered to the People of the United States and its Outlying Possessions and Territories, in 1938.

Subject: *How Can Cultural and Social Values of Racial Minorities in the United States and its Outlying Possessions and Territories be Adjusted and Harmonized?*

* * *

EIGHTH COMPETITION

Offered to the Visitors at the New York World's Fair and the Inhabitants of the United States and Canada, 1939.

Subject: *What Influence Would a Bible of Mankind Exert on the World of Tomorrow?*

CHAPTER XII

ESTABLISHMENT OF BAHAI ADMINISTRATION

A Great Asset

Abdul Baha said: *The Bahai Cause is not an organization*; and, because this rule made of the movement something altogether new in the world of religion, something provocative and fascinating, the Bahais took it up with enthusiasm and featured it on all occasions.

Now, it was a good advertising phrase too; the public liked it, and the intelligentsia looked upon the Cause with favor on account of this very principle. Everybody, therefore, who was at all familiar with the Bahai Teachings, became accustomed to stress the point and to consider it as a great asset.

Unexpected Opportunities

Time passed; the World War, with separation from the Master even through correspondence, gave the Bahai leaders unexpected opportunities to leave their imprint on the affairs of the Cause. They were not without ideas of their own, and so they began to set these forth in articles. In one instance, the services of Mr. Charles Mason Remey were called for, and his statement *written at the request of several friends* appears in the *Star of the West*, Vol. 12, No. 9, August 20, 1921, under the title *Bahai Organization*. The author of this commentary begins cautiously, not so much disputing the authenticity of the words of Abdul

Baha: *The Bahai Cause can never be organized*, but, stating that: *from one short excerpt from the holy words, separated from its context, erroneous meanings may be obtained*. In this, however, Mr. Remey is wrong, because Abdul Baha's statement on the non-organization of the Bahai Cause consists of a compact closely-knit paragraph, one phrase leading to another.

Again, Mr. Remey writes:—

Some of the friends of the Bahai Cause have been a little confused regarding the organization of the holy Cause because of the wide circulation of some words, to the effect that this Cause should never be organized—thus some have imagined that no form of Bahai organization should exist. Now of late, we are informed by pilgrims returning to their homes from Palestine that Abdul Baha has explained that these words, circulated to the effect that the Cause should never be organized, give an impression very different from the reality of his teachings.

Mr. Remey refers to a *little* confusion among *some* of the friends. Here, he underestimates, for there was a *big* confusion; and not only that, there was a mortal struggle going on among *all* the friends regarding this, which was considered a fundamental issue: Spiritual Liberty versus Ecclesiastical Authority.

A more official attempt to defeat the forces of liberalism in the Cause was made a little later when the National Spiritual Assembly appointed a committee of three to prepare and submit a Report on Bahai Organization. This document, which bears close reading, is published in the

Star of the West, Vol. XIII, No. 12, March 1923, page 323. It opens:—

Organization in the Bahai Movement rests upon the sure foundation of the Word of God.

and later in the same document:—

At Haifa, Syria, in 1920, the following question was asked Abdul Baha by some American pilgrims:—

“It is misleading, is it not, to say that the Bahai Cause cannot be organized?” Abdul Baha replied: “How is it possible that there should be no organization?”

The so-called pilgrims who put the above question must have been a group of tricky and astute lawyers, very much like the Pharisees who tried to catch Jesus with the question: *Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar?*; but even the Pharisees did not make use of the suggestive negative, saying. It is not lawful, is it, to give tribute to Caesar? At any rate, this informal oral answer to the pilgrim's question was made full use of, and by the time that Abdul Baha had departed from this life, affairs were shaping themselves according to American standards.

What's in a Name?

The officials now began to soft-pedal the phrase: *The Bahai Cause is not an organization*, and to remove it, little by little, from conspicuous places in their literature; yet, to their discomfiture, the words remained engraven on the minds of the people. What was to be done? The leaders wondered and then, possibly remembering Juliet's desire for a Romeo who would not be called Romeo, re-

peated to themselves her words, or others to the same effect: *What's in a name? A rose by any other name would smell as sweet*, and presto, the answer was found! The Bahai Cause was not an organization, but it could well be the *spirit* of organization under another name. Names were numerous; and so the fond parents picked out a word, perhaps from the dictionary, called in their friends and a little christening party was held at which the *organization* became the *Administration*.

The first issue of *Bahai News* to be reserved for the affairs of the Administration made its appearance in December, 1924; and from then on this publication, more or less regularly, printed editorials on Bahai Administration and its principles. One of the most subtle moves was made as far back as 1927 when a writer, in an editorial, tried to identify *administrative success* with *moral success*. Quite a clever bit of propaganda! He says:—

Because in the Bahai Faith this perfect correspondence exists between spiritual and social laws, let us ever bear in mind that *administrative success*, for Bahais, is identical with moral success.

—Bahai News, May 1927, Special Number.

Thus, the campaign developed, increasing in momentum and presently *all* reports, programs, lectures, publicity, radio broadcasts, annual Conventions, youth activities, membership, elections became *colored* with expressions becoming to the Administration; until finally in 1928, a book containing the early letters of Shoghi Effendi was published under the title *Bahai Administration*. This book, with the authority back of it, crystallized the plan and made the name permanent.

Consolidation

The process of educating the Bahais in the laws of the Administration continued year by year, without let or hindrance. *Bahai News*, January, 1930, No. 37, carries a front page editorial on Bahai Administration. It states that, at a recent meeting, the National Spiritual Assembly voted to request the local Assemblies to arrange classes for the study of Bahai Administration, and that the character of Bahai Administration is such that its full power and significance can only be manifest when the believers are not only thoroughly informed, but imbued with its power. The writer goes on to explain in detail why there was no administration in the days of Abdul Baha and then in a very few significant lines gives himself away:—

The years since November 28, 1921 (the day of the departure of Abdul Baha) have, consequently, been largely devoted to the elimination of any *non-Bahai* views which might exist and to our re-education in Bahai Administration by the Guardian.

Only the old Bahais can appreciate what the writer means by *the elimination of any non-Bahai views*. It was no gentle elimination, but actually a Hitlerian purge conducted with full present-day Nazi efficiency. And as to *re-education!* That is where the *give-away* comes in; for in that period, which the writer frankly designates as dating from the departure of the Master, the poor simple Bahais were educated along totally different lines from those which they knew and loved, and which they believed to be the *Cause*.

In the course of time, *Bahai Administration* by Shoghi

Effendi became a textbook, a sacred scripture to be read in meetings and at Conventions, and to be studied in classes.

The special value of Bahai Administration, the need of training in it and its exercise in a way that will keep all the people of a community busy received much emphasis from the delegates in conference.

—Bahai News, May 1931, No. 52.

Its precepts had to be followed by all the Local Bahai Communities:

Permit no circumstance, however grievous, to lead you astray from the firm highway of the administrative order. In your local communities follow its precepts.

—Bahai News, May 1932, No. 62, page 6.

To determine whether a soul was qualified for Bahai membership, the laws of Administration had to be consulted like a book of oracle. At various Conventions, this subject was brought up and much time was consumed in such momentous discussion:—

A great many delegates spoke of the grave responsibility which rests upon Local Spiritual Assemblies in determining whether or not a soul is qualified for Bahai Membership, and here again the importance of careful study of Bahai Administration was stressed.

—Bahai News, July 1933, No. 75, page 5.

In *Bahai News*, November, 1933, No. 79, page 10, the Guardian reminds the friends, more fully than before, that the cardinal principle of the Bahai Administration is *the supreme and unchallengeable authority of the National Spiritual Assembly in national affairs.*

The root principle of Bahai Administration is the *undisputed authority of America's supreme administrative body*. No departure from this established tenet is contemplated and it must be maintained unreservedly (*Bahai News*, November, 1933, No. 79).

Shoghi Effendi has certainly invested the National Spiritual Assembly with undreamed-of dictatorial power and autocratic control over all the affairs of the Cause in North America.

Nothing can be clearer than the following quotations:—

Haifa, May 19, 1934. As to the problem which has arisen in connection with the News Letter published and circulated by the Boston Assembly, the Guardian has already written about it to your National Spiritual Assembly, expressing the view that under no circumstances should any local Assembly be given the right to criticize and much less oppose, the policy duly adopted and approved by the National Spiritual Assembly. It is his hope that henceforth the problem of the relationship between the National Spiritual Assembly and the local Assemblies in matters of this nature will, in the light of his instructions, be carefully understood by individuals and Assemblies alike.

Haifa, June 11, 1934. The Guardian wishes me to again affirm his view that the authority of the National Spiritual Assembly is undivided and unchallengeable in all matters pertaining to the administration of the Faith throughout the United States and Canada, and that, therefore, the obedience of individual Bahais, delegates, groups and Assemblies to that authority is imperative and should be wholehearted and unqualified. He is convinced that the unreserved acceptance and

complete application of this vital provision of the Administration is essential to the maintenance of the highest degree of unity among the believers, and is indispensable to the effective working of the administrative machinery of the Faith in every country.

As though all the above instructions through his secretary were not sufficiently lucid, Shoghi Effendi writes the following in his own hand:—

I wish to re-affirm, in clear and categorical language, the principle already enunciated upholding the supreme authority of the National Assembly in all matters that affect the interests of the Faith in that land. There can be no conflict of authority, no duality under any form or circumstances in any sphere of Bahai jurisdiction, whether local, national or international.

—The above three quotations are from *Bahai News*, July 1934, No. 85, page 2.

Here then, in plain language, we have nine Hitlers, or nine Mussolinis, or nine Stalins, all rolled into one; or probably we have a few of each species, combining their authority over, not 80 million Germans and more than 100 million conquered peoples, 45 million Italians and 175 million Russians, but over the conscience and activities of 2584 plain, simple, folksy, democratic Americans. With such paraphernalia to hold them in order, these American Bahais must indeed be the most unruly and rebellious people on the face of the earth!

Religious Isolation

Is the Bahai Cause, under the Administration, a progressive religious movement?

Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha taught their followers to associate with the devotees of all religions. This we know; but the Bahai Administration demands that the Bahais renounce their membership in other religious organizations, for: *to be a Bahai and at the same time accept membership in another religious body is an act of contradiction that no sincere and logically-minded person can possibly accept.* Thus, spiritual fellowship with other faiths is prohibited and the imparting by the Bahais of the universal religious conceptions of Baha-O-Llah, in the congregations of which they were part, is an act of disobedience.

In an article under the title: *Membership in other Organizations* published in *Bahai News*, No. 134, March, 1940, we read the following:—

The National Spiritual Assembly asks the friends to give careful and prayerful thought about their connection with non-Bahai Organizations, and endeavor, each for himself, to make any adjustment necessary in order to consolidate his spiritual and social life in the New World Order of Baha-U-Llah. For as the Guardian has instructed in recent years, it is not merely ecclesiastical or political organizations from which Bahais are to withdraw, but also any other type of organization whose aim and influence are incompatible with the nature of the Faith.

(For further reference read: *Association with the World Fellowship of Faiths*, *Bahai News*, No. 76, August, 1933; *Membership in Non-Bahai Association*, *Bahai News*, No. 93, July, 1935; *Concerning Membership in Non-Bahai Religious Organizations*, *Bahai News*, No. 98,

March, 1936; *Membership in Other Organizations, Bahai Procedure*, Section One, Sheet 7; and *Concerning Membership in Non-Bahai Religious Organizations, Bahai Procedure*, Section One, Sheets 8, 9, 10, 11.)

Abdul Baha told his followers that the Bahai Cause was not a *new* religion, and that it was their mission to carry the leaven of tolerance into all circles, thus little by little, demolishing sectarian lines of demarcation; yet the Administration has adopted a policy of complete RELIGIOUS ISOLATION, raising such iron-clad frontiers around their constituents that none of them can overstep them or presume to adhere to the injunction of Baha-O-Llah: *Associate with the people of all religions with joy and fragrance.*

Social Isolation

Is the Bahai Cause under the Administration a progressive social movement?

It is most evident from the writings of Shoghi Effendi and the National Spiritual Assembly that their organization has nothing to do with civic, national or international affairs. The Bahais are warned over and over again not to affiliate themselves with any political parties; not to run for any political offices nor to cast their votes for the election of candidates when these candidates are nominated by two parties. (Read *The World Order of Baha-U-Llah* by Shoghi Effendi, pages 64 and 153; "The Non-Political Character of the Bahai Cause," *Bahai News*, No. 69, December, 1932; "Non-Political Character of the Bahai Faith", *Bahai News*, No. 80, January, 1934, and "The Non-Political Character of the Bahai Faith," *Bahai Procedure*, Section One, Sheet 13.)

Thus, it is clear that the Bahai Administration commands its followers to *refrain from associating themselves, whether by word or deed, with the political pursuits of their respective nations, with the politics of their governments and the schemes and programs of parties*, yet, at the same time it claims leadership in the New World Order that is to be, as can be judged from its monthly publication appearing under the name *World Order* and from Shoghi Effendi's book entitled *The World Order*. Now, there never can be a World Order unless the fundamentals of world politics are changed, and if the Bahais hold themselves aloof from national and international politics, they not only will forego leadership in the New World Order, but will have no share in it whatsoever. They can reiterate their assertions, they can even trade-mark the name *World Order* (which they have done, see *Bahai World*, 1936-1938, Vol. VII, pages 415-416) and possibly follow it up with lawsuits as they did in connection with their trade-mark on the name *Bahai*, but when the great reconstruction takes shape, this will be owing to those who have worked for it and taken enormous risks for it, and not to those who have discreetly kept under cover while the mighty struggle was going on. (Incidentally, I cannot refrain from remarking that Mr. H. G. Wells in his publication of 1940, entitled *The New World Order* has come very close to infringement on the property rights held by the Bahai Administration on the words *World Order*, for, in the litigation brought against Mrs. Chanler and myself, this body requested that we be enjoined from using the name of their trade-mark Bahai or any word deceptively similar thereto!)

Added to its program of exclusiveness toward any and all political activities, the Administration prevents its followers from affiliation with any movements or societies, the policies of which are not in *strict conformity with the tenets of the Faith*. This exclusion act was made as watertight as possible, for it is evident that no societies come up to this requirement; consequently, the Bahais are prevented from taking part in any and all the progressive movements that are operative today.

In this manner has the Administration adopted a policy of SOCIAL ISOLATION, impossible to reconcile with the contents of most of the addresses delivered by Abdul Baha in Europe and America, for these deal with the abolition of political boundaries, the eradication of social limitations, the ensuring of the economic prosperity of mankind and the establishment of a new commonwealth of humanity based on freedom, justice and peace. And again, as our minds dwell on the Teachings, now so completely obscured, we come with a shock on the words of Baha-O-Llah: *Oh people . . . be intent on the betterment of the world and the training of nations.*

Divine Politics

I have, in this article, used the word *constituents*, which is an unusual term to be connected with a religious organization, but the fact of the matter is that, while the Administration takes no part in national politics, it is in itself a thorough-going political institution.

The Bahai Administration is composed of less than a hundred local Assemblies, scattered throughout the United States and Canada, having a total membership amounting

to 2584 persons. (*The World Almanac*, 1941, page 859.) It holds Annual Conventions, which are attended by delegates from the local Assemblies who elect nine persons to serve for the coming year on the National Spiritual Assembly, which body, in turn, nominates all the committees and is the paramount authority of the Cause in North America. The authority of this body is superseded only by the Guardian, operating from Palestine.

In 1938 and 1939 the second and third books of Shoghi Effendi were published under the titles: *The World Order of Baha-U-Llah* and *The Advent of Divine Justice*; and, with the appearance of this literature, the Administration was brought out of the human realm and raised to a station, incomparable, unassailable and divine.

Shoghi Effendi says:

It should be remembered by every follower of the Cause that the system of Bahai Administration is not an innovation imposed arbitrarily upon the Bahais of the world since the Master's passing, but derives its authority from the Will and Testament of Abdul Baha.

—*World Order of Baha-U-Llah*, page 5.

Again, delving further in history, he claims that:—

In the blood of the unnumbered martyrs of Persia lay the seed of the Divinely-appointed administration which, though transplanted from its native soil, is now budding out, under your loving care, into a new order, destined to overshadow all mankind.

—*World Order of Baha-U-Llah*, page 52.

Now, with sledge-hammer blows, Shoghi Effendi pushes forward, and presently the *Administration* has passed all bounds of human frailties and become *infallible*:—

Out of the pangs of anguish which His bereaved followers have suffered, amid the heat and dust which the attacks launched by a sleepless enemy had precipitated, the Administration of Baha-U-Llah's invincible Faith was born. The potent energies released through the ascension of the centre of His Covenant crystallized into this supreme, this infallible Organ, for the accomplishment of a Divine Purpose.

—*World Order of Baha-U-Llah*, page 89.

Again:—

The Administrative Order which ever since Abdu'l Baha's ascension has evolved and is taking shape under our very eyes in no fewer than forty countries of the world, may be considered as the framework of the Will itself, the inviolable stronghold wherein this new-born child is being nurtured and developed. This Administrative Order, as it expands and consolidates itself, will no doubt manifest the potentialities and reveal the full implications of this momentous Document . . . It will, as its component parts, its organic institutions, begin to function with efficiency and vigor, assert its claim and demonstrate its capacity to be regarded not only as the nucleus but the very pattern of the New World Order destined to embrace in the fullness of time the whole of mankind.

—*The World Order of Baha-U-Llah*, page 144.

As we continue to study this book, we find even more

WINNER OF WORLD COMPETITION



MME. CATHERINE LYDIA DE LIGT-VAN ROSSEM

Native of Holland—Resident of Switzerland

WINNER OF FIRST PRIZE IN
SEVENTH COMPETITION



RABBI JACOB J. WEINSTEIN

Director of the School of Jewish
Studies in San Francisco, Calif.

WINNER OF FIRST PRIZE IN
EIGHTH COMPETITION



CORNELIUS LACEY GOLIGHTLY

University of Michigan,
Ann Arbor, Michigan.

studendous claims being put forward for this Administration, although the author on page 91 of the same volume had conceded that it was born in the United States. He now says:—

The Bahai Commonwealth of the future, of which this vast Administrative Order is the sole frame-work, is, both in theory and practice, not only unique in the entire history of political institutions, but can find no parallel in the annals of any of the world's recognized religious systems . . . This new-born Administrative Order incorporates within its structure certain elements which are to be found in each of the three recognized forms of secular government, without being in any sense a mere replica of any one of them, and without introducing within its machinery any of the objectionable features which they inherently possess.

—*The World Order of Baha-U-Llah*, page 152.

It would have been an interesting experience if one could have looked upon the glowing faces of the American framers of the Constitution and By-laws of the Administration when they read the above encomium about their brain-child!

An Unparalleled Order

There is one point on which I profoundly disagree with Shoghi Effendi, namely, in his interpretation that, in time, this Administration will develop into the House of Justice mentioned by Baha-O-Llah in the book of Aqdas. These two institutions, the one functioning at present, while the other still in the womb of futurity, are as dissimilar as are night and day. A bitter tree will not yield sweet fruits;

the buzzing of a cricket will never evolve into the song of the nightingale, and a totally exclusive and reactionary system cannot develop into a world government—the dream of all liberals.

Baha-O-Llah (in the book of Aqdas) advises the members of the House of Justice:—

to regard themselves as trustees and representatives of God in the created world . . . and strive to fulfill for the good of the public the trust placed in them for the sake of God, as though they were managing their own affairs and choosing that which is best.

Here Shoghi Effendi draws the conclusion that:—

the Administrative Order of the Faith of Baha-U-Llah must in no wise be regarded as purely democratic in character inasmuch as the basic assumption which requires all democracies to depend fundamentally upon getting their mandate from the people is altogether lacking in this Dispensation.

—*The World Order of Baha-U-Llah*, page 153.

Why? To my mind, the argument is untenable. The fact that the members of the future House of Justice must regard themselves as trustees and representatives of God in the created world, should not, and must not exclude them from considering themselves, at one and the same time, the elected representatives of men, devoted to the interests of their constituents.

Shoghi Effendi further elucidates:—

In the conduct of the administrative affairs of the

Faith, in the enactment of the legislation necessary to supplement the laws of the Kitab-i-Aqdas, the members of the Universal House of Justice, it should be borne in mind, are not, as Baha-U-Llah's utterances clearly imply, responsible to those whom they represent, nor are they allowed to be governed by the feelings, the general opinion, and even the convictions of the mass of the faithful, or of those who directly elect them. They are to follow in a prayerful attitude the dictates and promptings of their conscience . . . "*God will verily inspire them with whatsoever He willeth,*" is Baha-U-Llah's incontrovertible assurance. They, and not the body of those who either directly or indirectly elect them, have thus been made the recipients of the divine guidance.

—*The World Order of Baha-U-Llah*, page 153.

This is the building up of a theocratic order, so intransigent, so frightful, that nothing hitherto imagined can match it. Shoghi Effendi is indeed correct in saying that his system is unique and has no parallel in all the annals of history!

In Italics

An integral part of an organization is *funds* and *fund raising*, and from this dreary aspect of concerted effort the Bahai Administration is not exempt; in fact, the National Spiritual Assembly has so accentuated the subject of contributions that *money* ranks alongside of *authority* as the second feature in italics of the Cause as it stands today.

A *Plan of Unified Action* drawn up by the National Spiritual Assembly and submitted in December, 1925, to the Bahai community of the United States and Canada

had for object the raising of an average yearly amount of \$150,000. This Plan was approved by the Guardian in the following cablegram, dated January, 1926:—

Congratulate National Assembly on Plan. Noble in conception, sound in method, forceful in its appeal. Fully endorse it. Commend it to every declared believer. Shoghi.

—*Bahai News*, March 1930, No. 39, page 4.

As later events showed, it was most difficult to raise this annual religious taxation and the Plan would have failed, had it not been for the flooding of the country with high pressure appeals, cables, letters, bulletins, articles and especial calls. Shoghi Effendi writes:—

We must continually repeat, appeal and urge them to realize afresh the vital urgency of the task before them.

Again he says:—

It is my earnest hope and prayer that the friends will more universally, substantially and regularly contribute to this Plan.

Again:—

I would be grieved to learn that any believer would ever attempt to support an activity that lies outside the province of the Plan, and would neglect thereby his sacred obligation toward the Budget.

—Above quotations from *Bahai News*,
January, 1928, No. 21.

By means of such calls, the Bahais nobly rose to the occasion, and the obligations of the Plan have been substantially fulfilled.

It must be remembered that the Administration has set itself to the almost superhuman task of building a magnificent Temple in the vicinity of Chicago, which, up to this time, has cost more than a million dollars, and that this tremendous obligation necessarily dominates its horizon. Added to this are the very large expenses involved in the maintenance of the National Spiritual Assembly, amounting to \$35,000 annually, (which sum does not include the expenses of any local assemblies), together with a lesser amount (small in the past, but increasing lately) which is expended on teaching. I personally consider that the huge sum of money raised yearly from just a handful of men and women represents a miracle of devotion and self-sacrifice which it would be almost impossible to parallel. It certainly is a commentary on the love which the Cause inspires in the hearts of the people. On the other hand, the continuous drive for money, which feature is never absent from the Guardian's letters, acts as a depressant on the minds of all. Here is a sample of the Guardian's appeal: *Contributions to this Fund constitute in addition a practical and effective way whereby each believer can test the measure and character of his faith.*

From this state of affairs, a conclusion may here be drawn and it is this: Everybody who accepts the Faith at the hands of the Administration places himself or herself under the severe obligation of contributing funds to the movement, while those who acquire the Teachings through other channels undergo no taxation whatsoever. It is evi-

dent that the Administration, having in mind the dream of world dominion (which dream seems to include one of universal taxation), would consider such independent individuals or groups as a menace to its plan for temporal power, and this undoubtedly explains, in part, the disfavor in which The New History Society is held. However that may be, I believe that a great Cause, such as that conferred upon humanity by Baha-O-Allah, would do well to accept the words of Christ as its standard for contributions: *Freely you have received, freely give*. I admit that, in such case, the monetary harvest would be smaller, but something else would be gained—something that is important also.

My Object

I have herein outlined the circumstances which led to the founding, development and establishment of the Bahai Administration, an institution which by this time has so identified itself with the Cause that the large majority of Bahais feel that this universal movement, born in Persia, is unauthentic without the trade-mark: *Made in the United States*. Like an octopus, this sinister organism has wound itself about its victim, while the *faithful*, ever obedient to authority and power, stifle whatsoever instincts of responsibility that yet remain in their hearts. Now, I do not flatter myself with the hope of making even a dent on the consciousness of those who follow the Administration; such is not my object in writing this book. I merely wish to set down, as a record for the future, a few notes of historic importance, believing that no one else is possessed of the knowledge, the documentation and the *will* to do so.

In addition, I am inserting the views of an individual who loves the Cause devotedly and who believes that he understands, in some measure, the liberal and lofty intentions of Abdul Baha. Perhaps, some day, when mankind has learned much through suffering, a few scholars will look through these pages and gain a new impression of the movement. But, this is for the future and what the future holds, no man knows. At present, we can only be sincere and do our utmost, leaving the rest to God and to His Destiny, the plans of which cannot be forestalled.

Unheeded Words

Wishing to close this chapter on a high note and yet hold to the general subject that has been treated, I find that I can do no better than quote the words of Shoghi Effendi himself:—

The call of Baha-U-Llah is primarily directed against all forms of provincialism, all insularities and prejudices. If long-cherished ideals and time-honored institutions, if certain social assumptions and religious formulae have ceased to promote the welfare of the generality of mankind, if they no longer minister to the needs of a continually evolving humanity, let them be swept away and relegated to the limbo of obsolescent and forgotten doctrines. Why should these, in a world subject to the immutable law of change and decay, be exempt from the deterioration that must needs overtake every human institution? For legal standards, political and economic theories are solely designed to safeguard the interests of humanity as a whole, and not humanity

to be crucified for the preservation of the integrity of any particular law or doctrine.

--*World Order of Baha-U-Llah*, page 42.

It is to be regretted that this phase of the Guardian's recommendations has not been taken seriously; had it been so, I would not have had occasion to write this book.

CHAPTER XIII

ADMINISTRATIVE FRILLS AND FURBELOWS

Early Misgivings

In 1926, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada promulgated: *Declaration of Trust and By-Laws of the National Spiritual Assembly*, incorporating the Bahai Cause and assuming an alleged proprietorship and trusteeship over this universal movement. Unfortunately Shoghi Effendi, as the Guardian, approved every step thus taken, although there have been instances when he warned his representatives against concentrating too much on the less important aspects of the movement. As early as 1924, he held up the finger of caution:

But let us be on our guard . . . lest too much concern in that which is secondary in importance, and too long a preoccupation with the details of our affairs and activities, make us neglectful of the most essential, the most urgent of all our obligations, namely, to bury our cares and teach the Cause.

—Bahai Administration, page 37.

That the warnings of Shoghi Effendi were justified and that the National Spiritual Assembly itself came to realize the fact that a sense of anxiety and unrest existed among its members is evidenced by the following admission on its part:—

There seems to be a growing feeling among a rela-

tively few of the believers that the Administration of the Cause in America is developing into a hard and inflexible machine and that there is a tendency to restrict individual effort and stifle individual initiative and enterprise.

—*Bahai News*, No. 77, Sept. 1933.

Under the present order of Bahai organization, the National Spiritual Assembly is the supreme authority (*Bahai News*, No. 63, June 1932); all the local assemblies are to adhere to its dicta, while the people must obey the local assemblies. (*Bahai News*, No. 62, May 1932.) At one time, however, it seems that the National Spiritual Assembly, in its turn, felt that Shoghi Effendi's standard was a little uncompromising, for it states: *It is evident that if the Guardian's standard is too rigidly applied a community will be choked and stifled . . . for some months the members of the National Assembly have given special thought to this subject. . . .*

Administrative Structure Takes Shape

Membership: The considerations involved in joining the Bahai Organization are so complicated and detailed that Shoghi Effendi states: *I cannot in this connection emphasize too strongly the supreme necessity for the exercise of the utmost discretion, caution and tact* (*Bahai News*, No. 65, August 1932, page 3) and the *Bahai News*, in numerous issues, again and again comes back to the subject. One of the suggestions advanced is to make the applicant sign a blank which sets forth the exact qualifications required; another is *to lay down a definite period of time—for ex-*

ample, a year, before an assembly can act upon an application after it is received. For those who are interested in partially understanding the complications attendant upon the acceptance of a new member, I suggest the study of a long article from which I have just quoted and also the four Sections of *Bahai Procedure* issued by Bahai Publishing Committee, 1937.

Minority rights: A distinctly dictatorial touch is applied to the deliberations of the Bahai council: *the teachings recognize no minority rights whatever within the body of an Assembly. Every decision made by a Spiritual Assembly is binding upon each and all its members alike, whatever their personal views* (*Bahai News*, No. 87, Sept. 1934, page 3) and, *There is no place in Bahai Administration for minority action or reports. How often have we heard in Assemblies' deliberations the expressed wish of one or more members to be recorded as voting in opposition to the action of the majority. Such an expressed wish manifests the ego of our human nature.* (*Bahai News*, No. 77, Sept. 1933, page 2.)

Infallibility of the Assembly: Although the members of the National Spiritual Assembly are elected annually by the representatives of the Bahai Assemblies of the United States and Canada in convention assembled, and owe their continuation in office to those electors, it is asserted: *that the Spiritual Assembly is not a body created by the believers, even though by their votes at elections they determine its membership. . . . A spiritual Assembly rests upon sanctions higher than that of the voting community. Its functions and powers are unalterable. The responsibility of its members is not to the electorate but to the*

higher authority resident in the Cause. (Bahai News, No. 87, Sept. 1934, page 2.) Infallibility is actually attached to the National Spiritual Assembly in the following words of the Guardian: *The potent energies released through the ascension of the Center of His Covenant (Abdul Baha) crystallized into this supreme, this infallible Organ for the accomplishment of a Divine Purpose. (World Order of Baha-O-Ilah by Shoghi Effendi, page 89.)*

Teaching: Now, in regard to teaching: *to achieve complete success, every teacher should work directly under the supervision and recognition of his or her Spiritual Assembly. (Bahai News, No. 64, July 1932, page 3.)* One definition of a qualified teacher is a Bahai who adheres implicitly to the Bahai Administration and is in accord with the National Spiritual Assembly and with the local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahai Community to which he belongs. *(Bahai News, No. 49, March 1931, page 6.)*

Twenty Lessons in Bahai Administration

Inasmuch as the teaching of the accumulated rules and laws of the National Spiritual Assembly became the be-all and end-all of the Bahai Organization, it was decided to issue a booklet in mimeograph form entitled *Twenty Lessons in Bahai Administration*. This was prepared by the Study Outline Committee, approved by the Bahai Reviewing Committee in 1935 and distributed by Bahai Publishing Committee, P. O. Box 348, Grand Central Annex, New York, N. Y. This booklet contains twenty lessons, and the student, under the direction of an approved teacher, is supposed to study one lesson a week—in a period

approximately measured at five months. This amazing document, in itself, is a convincing proof that the glorious teachings of Baha-O-Ilah and Abdul Baha are totally forgotten. Indeed, not one trace of them is left. Here is a supreme tragedy, a cause for lamentation and an occasion for mourning! The Bahai Faith is buried under the debris of these regulations—all of which tend to obscure, in the consciousness of the student, the pure and majestic conception of the Cause which is his by right. Imagine spending five months filling one's mind and heart with such childish, legalistic twiddle-dum and twiddle-dee! Then, having waded through these muddy waters and stagnant pools, the student is expected to answer a number of questions, some of which are reproduced herewith:—

Test Questions

What is the foundation of the Bahai Administrative Order and what is the watchword?

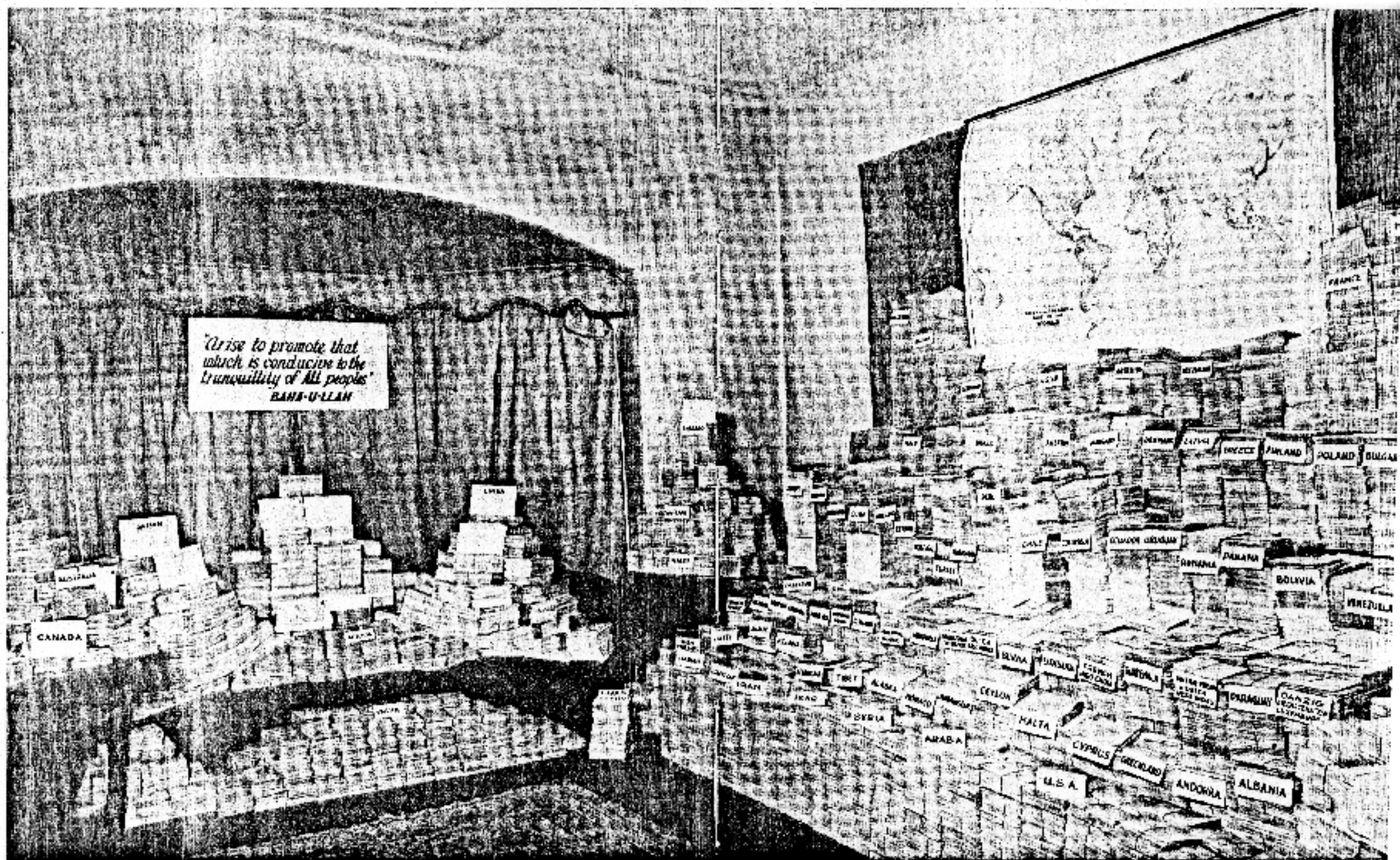
Why does the authority in the Bahai Administrative Order command complete allegiance?

Discuss the balance between the final authority of the National Assembly and the purely consultative function of the National Convention.

Discuss the jurisdiction, duties and powers of the National Spiritual Assembly.

What position has the National Assembly taken regarding acting as administrator of estates or as guardian for children, and also regarding gifts of property?

In what matters does the Guardian declare the authority of the National Spiritual Assembly to be "undivided and unchallengeable"?



Exhibition of Mail, held at the Headquarters of The New History
the World Competition, printed in eleven languages, to the

Society in October, 1936, on the eve of posting the Conditions of
five continents and the Islands of the Seas.

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How would you answer an inquiry as to how a Guardian differs from a Pope?

In what respect does the Universal House of Justice differ from the House of Cardinals?

What is the residential qualification for a voting believer?

What are the more fundamental qualifications for voting believers?

Note the distinction between believers and those who consider themselves Bahais but do not accept the Will and Testament of Abdul Baha.

Are people who accept the Cause with reservations to consider themselves Bahais?

Under what conditions may a believer be removed from the voting list of a Bahai Community? What body makes the final decision?

Discuss the function of the Local Spiritual Assembly in passing upon the qualifications of a new believer.

What standard exists for legal incorporation of a local Spiritual Assembly?

Does a Local Spiritual Assembly have the authority to criticize a policy duly adopted by the National Spiritual Assembly?

What is the function of Bahai News and to whom should it be given?

Are the Nineteen Day Feasts open to non-believers?

What is the practice about securing credentials when visiting other Bahai Communities?

What is the rule about admitting Orientals to Bahai Communities?

What is the relation of the National Assembly to institutions outside the Bahai Organization?

With what kind of groups may Bahais associate themselves and what kind are they not to join?

What reasons do you see for the stand taken against adherence to a political party?

What are Shoghi Effendi's instructions concerning church membership?

Why are contributions to the Bahai Fund a measure of the faith of a believer?

Problems in Bahai Administration

His ability having been tested by the above questions and many more, the student is now up for a second gruelling examination, this time on *Problems in Bahai Administration* (a section incorporated in The Booklet of Twenty Lessons). In order to study these enigmas with befitting attention, one runs the risk of losing either one's reason or one's sense of humor—probably both. What have such childish fancies to do with the Cause of Baha-O-Llah, the aim of which is the spiritual regeneration of the world and the glorification of mankind? However, my readers may be more expert at puzzles than I am (it is likely that some of them are adepts at the Prof. Quiz radio hour), so I will give them the chance to solve some of them. Here they are:—

Mr. S. finds that he could visit a number of communities in connection with a business trip and is qualified to contribute toward meeting programs or to help in any teaching projects. What steps should he take (a) before leaving home and (b) in introducing himself to each new Local Assembly?

Mrs. A., a member of the New York Baha'i community, expects to spend the winter in Miami and would like to join in their community activities. What steps should be taken toward this end before she leaves home? If Mrs. A. neglects this step before making contact with the Miami Baha'is, what should the Miami Spiritual Assembly do about it?

Miss G. is trying gradually to interest a group of her friends in the Baha'i Faith through informal discussion of general subjects from the Baha'i point of view. Other Baha'is criticize her for working alone in the teaching project. Which attitude do you think Shoghi Effendi would approve of? What should be the relationship of Miss G. and the Local Spiritual Assembly in her project?

Mrs. X. is an old believer whose faith centers around her personal experiences with Abdul Baha and she understands neither the authority of Shoghi Effendi nor the significance of Baha'i Administration. What could the Local Assembly do to help her make that necessary transition? What is the difference between Mrs. X.'s position and that of a person who actively opposes Shoghi Effendi and Baha'i Administration?

Mr. E. has always been an active Democrat in his city and neither wants to break his connection with the Democratic party nor understands why he should do so. What arguments would you use to convince him that as a Baha'i he must give up all political affiliations? What would be the result if he refuses to see the point and accepts election to a government office of some kind?

Miss A. has attended four Baha'i meetings and is much attracted to the teachings. An over-enthusiastic be-

liever asks her if she would like to join the Baha'is and takes her to the next nineteen day feast. In how many ways did the believer show her ignorance of Baha'i administration? How should the Local Spiritual Assembly handle this delicate situation?

Mr. X. has been attending Baha'i meetings occasionally for ten years and has just expressed a desire to associate himself with the Baha'is. Does this fact necessarily mean that he is qualified to become a voting member of the community? How should you ascertain his eligibility?

A member of a community interests individuals in the Baha'i Faith and contributes regularly but does not attend Nineteen-Day Feasts or other meetings. How should the Spiritual Assembly handle this problem?

The above portentous problems on Bahai Administration (which I admit are baffling to my type of mentality) carry me back to my childhood days when my teacher used to present to the class certain oral and written exercises, on which I spent hours, but from which I seldom came out victorious. With pain and anguish I still remember some of them. For instance:—

A cellar is 15 ft. long and 12 ft. wide. What is the area of the floor? If the cellar is 8 ft. deep, how many cubic feet does it contain?

A kite string was broken, and four parts were saved. The first part of the string was $75\frac{1}{4}$ ft. long, the second part $127\frac{1}{4}$ ft., the third part 261 ft., and the fourth part $891\frac{1}{4}$ ft. Allowing 1 ft. for tying, how long was the string when all four were tied together?



Van ready to leave for U. S. Post Office on October 7, 1936. Members of staff and volunteers who prepared 75,000 pieces of mail for World Competition.

From left to right:—Mr. Felix Ramos, Mr. O. J. Hanko, Mrs. Frederick Allien, Mrs. L. S. Chanler, Miss Chancy Carro, Mrs. Gemma Mannini, Miss Lilyan Tannen, Mr. Louis J. Meisler, Miss Eleanor Hoagland and Mirza Ahmad Sohrab.

The main difference between the problems of the arithmetic book and those of the Bahai Administration is that with the former we can find a definite solution while answers to the latter, even though satisfactory to the examiners, may still remain questionable to many an earnest mind.

While reading this remarkable booklet, and selecting a few *Questions* for use in this article, I was trying in all fairness to discover a relationship, no matter how remote, between this literature and the Cause of Baha-O-Llah. Does the faith of an individual who has responded to the Bahai Revelation really and truly depend upon a mastery of these questions? And supposing an inquirer, in all enthusiasm, takes up this course of instruction and comes through it with flying colors, has he at the end gained an understanding which will be of use to him in promulgating the fundamental principles of the Cause? Has he become a more illumined servant of the world of humanity? Was it to him that Baha-O-Llah spoke: *Be the deliverer of the Cause of God in such wise that through thine utterances, the tree will be set on fire?* (Baha-O-Llah—*Bahai Scriptures*, p. 193.) Is he able to *destroy the abodes of neglect by the hands of power and composure, and build the chambers of knowledge in the hearts?* (Baha-O-Llah—*Bahai Scriptures*, p. 98.) Is he fitted to *take possession of the cities of hearts by the swords of wisdom and of explanation?* (Baha-O-Llah—*Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 43.) Has he gained wings that he may *Walk above the world by the power of the Greatest Name and see the secrets of Pre-Existence and know that which none knew of?* (Baha-O-Llah—*Bahai Scriptures*, p. 193.) Is he now *like a well-cultivated garden wherein the roses and varie-*

gated flowers of heaven are growing in fragrance and beauty? (Abdul Baha—*Promulgation of Universal Peace*, Vol. I, p. 21.) Can he honestly claim that he is now in a better position to become *a breath of life, a banner of salvation and a manifest sign . . . a lamp of reconciliation and peace, a standard of love and attraction, a star of guidance among mankind?* (*Tablets of Abdul Baha*, Vol. III, p. 712.)

I may be mistaken, but in my estimation these *Twenty Lessons in Bahai Administration* are like unto a mirage which has the show of water. The thirsty ones make abundant efforts in their search, but, when reaching it, remain deprived and portionless. Or . . . like unto the image of a loved one which is destitute of life and soul. When the lover reaches it, he finds it of no worth and value, and finds no gain save great pain and despondency. (Baha-O-Llah—*Bahai Scriptures*, p. 224.)

Regarding the student of these *Twenty Lessons in Bahai Administration*, ambitious as he undoubtedly is, and sincere in his purpose, I make bold to offer a graphic and most striking utterance of the Revelator himself:—

Ye are in likeness as a bird, which with all joy and fragrance soars in the utmost security in the cheerful air of the Praised One; then in the imaginary hope of grains, it inclines toward the mud and water of the earth, and with all eagerness, besmeurs itself with mud and mire; and when it attempts to re-ascend, it finds itself unable and a captive, forasmuch as wings besmeared with water and clay are not capable of flight. At that time, that bird of the exalted heaven finds itself a dweller in the mortal earth.

—*Bahai Scriptures*, page 223.

PART FIVE

CAPRICE, INC.

14. The Double Mask

15. Thought Control

For the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. Now, the Lord is that spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

*—Epistle of Paul, II Corinthians,
Chapter 3, Verses 6 and 17*

CHAPTER XIV

THE DOUBLE MASK

The Bill of Rights

Immediately following the adoption of the Constitution of the United States, on September 17, 1789, a number of safeguarding amendments were drawn up, and, when the First Congress met at its initial session in the City of New York, on September 25th, of the same year, it was voted to submit these to the States for ratification. The Amendments, 12 in number, were properly called: A Bill of Rights; ten of them were ratified within the next two years.

The *First* Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, and the most important and far-reaching, reads as follows:—

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press.

The greatness of the United States and the intrinsic superiority of its civilization to all others lies within these twenty-six simple words. I venture to assert that no other sentence has exercised such epoch-making influence over the destiny of any nation, ancient or modern. These twenty-six words are the origin of the religious, cultural, scientific, industrial, economic and literary progress of the nation.

It is claimed that language is not expected to convey all

the delicate shades of meaning or the inner states of mind, but, inasmuch as facts must be described in some way, words are used—always with a latent consciousness of their inadequacy. However, regarding these twenty-six immortal words, no such apology is appropriate, for like giant searchlights they have guided and are guiding the lost mariners on the tempestuous sea of thought to the course of enlightenment and the harbor of universal tolerance.

Freedom in Truth

Since the dawn of Christianity, men have been taught by Church and State: *Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free* (St. John 8:32). Nevertheless, the brand of truth that was dogmatically taught by these institutions did not make them free, but rather enslaved their minds, and tortured and murdered their bodies. Man was told that he was created in the image of God and that he shared in the divine nature, but the Great Model was banished from human society and imprisoned in civic dungeons, while poor humanity was set to imitate the satanic model and develop its lower nature. Liberty, as a religious experience, was unknown except to a few daring thinkers, and the exercise of conscience was a transgression to be frowned upon by the law-abiding.

Now, for over a hundred and fifty years the United States has *put into practice* the words of its First Amendment, and during that time a civilization has applied itself to the truth and has sought to know it.

Had it not been for the First Amendment in the Bill of Rights we, in all probability, would have a different story to tell regarding the promotion of the Bahai Cause in the

United States since its introduction at the Parliament of Religions in Chicago, in 1893.

Baha-O-Llah was a champion of religious liberty, an apostle of intellectual freedom and the advocate of man's emancipation from the fetters of dogmas and creeds. His teachings inaugurated an era of human brotherhood on a logical foundation, and made a royal circle of universal understanding among the religions, nations and races. Consequently, the Bahai Cause stands for equality, and this equality of course can have no meaning except equal rights for *all*; nor can there be a functioning of equal rights unless the individual is allowed liberty to act according to his best judgment and the dictates of his conscience.

Baha-O-Llah calls upon his disciples to arise and banish religious intolerance from the face of the earth, in order that the era of universal freedom may set in. He says:—

Gird up the loins of endeavor, so that perchance religious dissension and strife may, through your efforts, be reduced to nothingness among the inhabitants of the world. Arise for the love of God and man in this important Cause.

—Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p. 11.

Spiritual Hospitality

The late Prof. Edward G. Browne, Orientalist of Cambridge University, England, visited Acca, Palestine, in 1890 and had the privilege of several interviews with Baha-O-Llah. At their first meeting, the founder of the Bahai Cause addressed him thus:—

We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; yet they deem us a stirrer up of

strife and sedition worthy of bondage and banishment. . . . That all nations should become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men should be strengthened; that diversity of religion should cease, and differences of race be annulled—what harm is there in this?

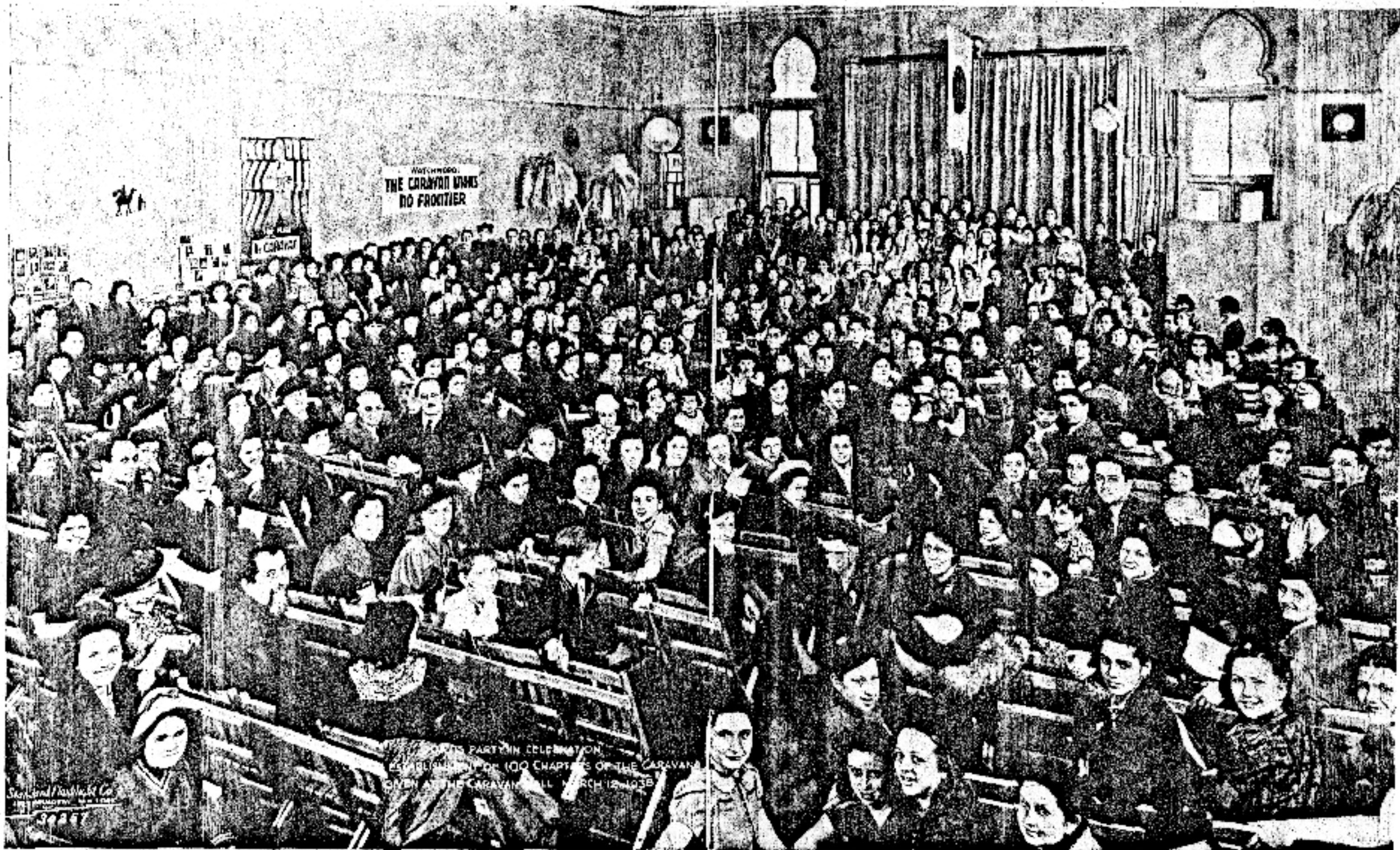
—*Introduction to a Traveller's Narrative*, page xl.

The purpose of Baha-O-Illah, as expressed in the above utterance, is more and more becoming justified in these United States, for through the power of the First Amendment, a spiritual hospitality *has* been established, and religions, sects and denominations, instead of shunning and antagonizing one another, live side by side, associate and are *as brothers*—thus the ground is prepared for the realization of the *One Faith*. Indeed, we see before our eyes a miracle of transformation; sons of men, having come from the four corners of the earth, are strengthening amongst themselves *the bonds of affection and unity*, and year by year minimizing *diversity of religion* until, in God's own appointed time, they shall turn *in complete harmony and concord*, to the Divine Horizon that encircles them all. Toward this beloved land of opportunity all the races of the world have wended their way. Englishmen and Frenchmen, Italians and Germans, Poles and Swedes, Palestinians and Persians, Chinese and Japanese, Africans and Syrians, Turks and Arabs—all are here in these United States. *Differences of race* are not yet *annulled* and it may be a long, long time before they are definitely placed in the discard, but we have taken the preliminary steps toward that end; we are not hostile to one another; we meet in the market-place and often in the

churches; we work side by side, study from the same textbooks, read the same magazines and newspapers, travel east and west, north and south, without passports or customs barriers; and we broadcast our grievances, and listen to the music and messages of our multi-colored, multi-farious brothers and sisters as the radio brings them to us by day and by night. More than all, we have come to value the cultures and noble qualities that characterize the races, and appreciate the contributions of each one to the spiritual, artistic, scientific and economic structure that is America.

Yes, we have learned to *know* one another very well, and to have respect for one another's ideals and convictions; and, as the years roll on, we are becoming aware of the fact that the salvation of mankind lies in religious, intellectual, social, national, international and interracial cooperation. Even now, through her own example, America can teach this lesson of cooperation to the rest of the world.

No! *Differences of race* are not *annulled*, but they do not play havoc in our national life; they hardly disturb the smooth workings of our national economy. For the present, we are moderately satisfied with the results that have come out of the laboratory of our interracial experiences. A working example of unity has been set up. It is not perfect, far from it; but it operates and is better than anything that has been attempted elsewhere. Or I might ask: Has it *ever* been attempted elsewhere? Doubtless, as we continue to learn the lessons of universal cooperation and apply them to the actual and concrete problems of our life, *differences of race will be annulled*, for



Oasis Party of The Caravan (Youth Section of The New History Society)
The meeting is in celebration of the One Hundredth Chapter year of 1941, the Two Hundredth

Society) held at the Caravan Hall, New York, in March, 1938.
formed in this international correspondence club. In the present
mark has been passed.

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such is the injunction of Baha-O-Llah—his wish for us as we strive and struggle in our ever-evolving civilization! And then—not now—can we exclaim with him: *What harm is there in this?* and the answer will come, out of our own experience: *Nothing at all! Nothing at all!*

Baha-O-Llah says:—

I declare by the Sun of Truth that the light of understanding renders the horizon brilliant and luminous.

—Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, page 11.

And he makes his mission very clear as he speaks again:—

O people of the earth! My only aim has been to suppress disputes among the religions of the world and enmity among the nations, so that all, happy and free, may occupy themselves with their own interests.

—Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, page 26.

The first part of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States established the right to religious freedom; the second part established the right to *freedom of speech and of the press*. This one sentence put an end to *enmity among the nations* that had adopted this country as their home; for, their rights of worship and of expressing their ideas and hopes in speech and press being protected, there remained no reason for any misunderstanding or altercation. Through these constitutional protections, they could, *happy and free*, occupy themselves with their *own interests*.

In the words of Baha-O-Llah which I have repeatedly quoted throughout the preceding paragraphs, we plainly see that the supreme mission of this Prophet has been to

confer upon the population of the entire earth the inalienable rights of liberty of religion, of speech and of the press. Evidently, emancipation of mind and spirit is a fundamental doctrine of the Bahai Cause, even as it is an elementary law of the United States. It originates in the liberation of a moral personality, working towards the Highest Good—the *Supreme Concourse*, or in Christian terminology, the Kingdom of Heaven.

Reformation

Abdul Baha visited the United States in 1912, where in speech after speech he referred to the problem under discussion. He felt that the entire conception of man in regard to civilization must be reformed; that, inasmuch as the sciences and arts were subject to change, even so the laws of morality and religion must undergo a thorough transformation and be brought up to the level of the spiritual consciousness of God, universal, all-embracing, free—so that man himself may become a reflector of the Divine Radiance. In a speech delivered before the New Thought Forum, Boston, Mass., on August 25th, 1912, he said:—

Day by day, the world attains a new bounty. In this radiant century, neither the old customs nor the old sciences, crafts, laws and regulations have remained. The old political principles are undergoing change and a new body-politic is in process of formation. Nevertheless, some whose thoughts are congealed and whose souls are bereft of the light of the Sun of Reality seek to arrest this development in the world of the minds of men. Is this possible?

In the unmistakable and universal re-formation we are witnessing, when outer conditions of humanity are receiving such impetus, when human life is assuming a new aspect, when sciences are stimulated afresh, inventions and discoveries increasing, civic laws undergoing change and moralities evidencing uplift and betterment, is it possible that spiritual impulses and influences should not be renewed and reformed? Naturally, new spiritual thoughts and inclinations must also become manifest. If spirituality be not renewed, what fruits come from mere physical reformation? For instance, the body of man may improve, the quality of bone and sinew may advance, the hand may develop, other limbs and members may increase in excellence, but if the mind fails to develop, of what use is the rest? The important factor in human improvement is the mind. In the world of the mind there must needs be development and improvement. There must be re-formation in the kingdom of the human spirit, otherwise no result will be attained from betterment of the mere physical structure.

In this new year, new fruits must be forthcoming, for that is the provision and intention of spiritual re-formation. The renewal of the leaf is fruitless. From the re-formation of bark, or branch, no fruit will come forth. The renewal of verdure produces nothing. If there be no renewal of fruit from the tree, of what avail is the re-formation of bark, blossom, branch and trunk? For a fruitless tree is of no special value. Similarly, of what avail is the re-formation of physical conditions, unless they are concomitant with spiritual re-formation? For the essential reality is the spirit, the foundation basis is the spirit, the life of man is due to the spirit, the happiness, the radiance, the glory of

man—all are due to the spirit; and if in the spirit no re-formation takes place, there will be no result to human existence.

Therefore, we must strive with life and heart that the material and physical world may be re-formed, human perception become keener, the merciful effulgence manifest and the radiance of reality shine. Then the star of love shall appear and the world of humanity become illumined. The purpose is that the world of existence is dependent for its progress upon re-formation; otherwise it will be as dead. Consider, if a new springtime failed to appear, what would be the effect upon this globe, the earth? Undoubtedly it would become desolate and life extinct. The earth has need of an annual coming of spring. It is necessary that a new bounty should be forthcoming. If it comes not, life would be effaced. In the same way the world of spirit needs new life, the world of mind necessitates new development, the world of souls a new bounty, the world of morality a re-formation, the world of divine effulgence ever new bestowals. Were it not for this replenishment, the life of the world would become effaced and extinguished. If this room is not ventilated and the air freshened, respiration will cease after a length of time. If no rain falls, all life organisms will perish. If new light does not shine, the darkness of death will envelop the earth. If a new springtime does not arrive, life upon this globe will be obliterated.

Therefore, thoughts must be lofty and ideals uplifted in order that the world of humanity may become assisted in new conditions of reform. When this re-formation affects every degree, then will come the very "Day of the Lord" of which all the prophets have spoken. That is the Day wherein the whole world will

be regenerated. Consider: are the laws of past ages applicable to present human conditions? Evidently they are not. For example, the laws of former centuries sanctioned despotic forms of government. Are the laws of despotic control fitted for present-day conditions? How could they be applied to solve the questions surrounding modern nations? Similarly, we ask, would the status of ancient thought, the crudeness of arts and crafts, the insufficiency of scientific attainment serve us today? Would the agricultural methods of the ancients suffice in the twentieth century? Transportation in the former ages was restricted to conveyance by animals. How would it provide for human needs today? If modes of transportation had not been re-formed, the teeming millions now upon the earth would die of starvation. Without the railway and the fast-going steamship, the world of the present day would be as dead. How could great cities such as New York and London subsist if dependent upon ancient means of conveyance? It is also true of other things which have been re-formed in proportion to the needs of the present time. Had they not been re-formed, man could not find subsistence.

If these material tendencies are in such need of re-formation, how much greater the need in the world of the human spirit, the world of human thought, perception, virtues and bounties! Is it possible that that need has remained stationary while the world has been advancing in every other condition and direction? It is impossible.

Abdul Baha—*The Promulgation of Universal Peace*,
Vol. II, pages 272, 273, 274.

In the preceding pages, I have presented ample proofs

that the Bahai Cause, as a religious and cultural re-formation, is free from the bondage of any and all the limitations that in the past have impeded the progress of thought; that it aims not only at the moral but also at the practical emancipation of man; that it looks to the fulfillment of the *glorious liberty of the children of God* (Romans 8:21). Baha-O-Llah and his son, Abdul Baha, are the two great Apostles of Freedom. Their message is addressed to freemen and slaves alike; to freemen to lead the *children of God* into the Land of Promise; to slaves to throw off the shackles of serfdom and assert their heritage to the Kingdom. The Bahai Cause summons all men to a glorious enterprise, and in turn it offers *itself* to all men as a way to Truth, liberty and universal service.

A Case in Point

Abdul Baha said that there are some men who *seek to arrest this development in the world of the minds of men*, and one cannot but consider that the lawsuit, brought by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada against Mrs. Chanler and myself, in which the court was requested to restrain us from the *unlawful act* of teaching the Bahai Religion, is a case in point. The Papers were signed by a battery of four lawyers, and I cannot but wonder whether any one of them had ever read the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, wherein the people are guaranteed the free exercise of their religions. Attention to this simple phrase, from this most famous document, would undoubtedly have convinced them that the words *unlawful act* were unwisely chosen.

This strange Complaint continues:—

(1) That the defendants and each of them, their agents, servants, employees, associates, and each of them, be enjoined and restrained, during the pendency of this action and thereafter perpetually

(a) From using, or participating directly or indirectly in the use of, the word Baha'i or any word deceptively similar thereto, as the name or a part of the name of any meeting, lecture, class or social gathering, or as the name or title or a part of the name or title of any book, magazine, or other publication, or as the name or a part of the name under which any book shop or other business is conducted.

Now, I take it for granted that the judges of our courts know the contents of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights and that they would not under any circumstances restrain the citizens of these United States from the exercise of their religious beliefs. Therefore, the request of the National Spiritual Assembly that an unconstitutional judgment be rendered, preventing us, our employees and our associates from *using or participating* in the name of our Faith, during the pendency of the lawsuit and thereafter perpetually, is so fantastic and so incredible that I cannot find words to describe such arrogant naiveté.

Perpetually!

What is the actual significance of the word *perpetually*? Perpetual means continuous, incessant, interminable; also everlasting and eternal. Now, as we all are subject to

death, it is evident that the members of the National Spiritual Assembly intended the Court to carry its rulings into the life-hereafter, so that, in the very Kingdom of God we may be prevented from gathering together in the name of our Master and uttering the word *Bahai* or any syllable thereof, or any word *similar thereto*, either *directly or indirectly*.

Likewise, this august body doubtless intended the long arm of present day justice to stretch out into the future affairs of the nation and prevent our children and grandchildren, and the children and grandchildren of our agents, servants, employees and associates unto the third and fourth generation, nay, unto the hundredth generation, throughout all ages and cycles—in other words *perpetually*—from using the word *Bahai as the name or a part of the name of any meeting, lecture, class or social gathering*.

I am a writer and lecturer, and frankly I enjoy my work. I speak and write on the Bahai Cause and on a number of other subjects, and I know that the Bill of Rights has given me and all other American citizens

1. Liberty of Religion,
2. Liberty of Speech,
3. Liberty of the Press.

Thus, in the three particular domains in which I specialize, I have been accorded complete freedom of expression, and neither the National Spiritual Assembly nor the Courts of the United States can take these privileges away from me or from any other.

According to Hitler's policy makers, the Nazi regime of dictatorship is set at one thousand years; but, to the National Spiritual Assembly such a period is but a short and fleeting moment. Its vision is far more grandiose; indeed, it envisaged a *perpetual* dictatorship to be imposed on every aspect of spiritual life, backed by the laws of the United States.

Probation

Simply out of curiosity and with the utmost goodwill, I would like to ask a question of the members of the National Spiritual Assembly. How did they expect the Courts of New York to carry out their demand? Did they suggest that a corps of marshals and detectives shadow Mrs. Chanler, myself and our *agents, servants, employees, associates and each of them* by day and by night, ready, as soon as they hear the word *Bahai*, to swoop down upon us and drag us to the police department? Would such precautions, and the expense to the city involved therein, be justified in the eyes of the Mayor?

If so, I will proceed with another inquiry. Are we really such desperados that we should be subjected to minute and incessant supervision? Do we belong to the class of malefactors of wealth, known as *economic royalists*, or are we Fifth Columnists, ready at any moment to do our part in handing over the country to other dictatorships which have already *arrived*? Actually what is the color of our guilt? Is it perhaps red?

If we have trespassed on anyone's property; if we have disrupted the peace of the community; if we have committed arson; if we have embezzled the funds of a business or society; if we have pillaged, plundered, rifled and

sacked the private possessions of our neighbors; if we have smuggled forbidden goods through the customs house; in brief, if we have violated any of the laws of these United States, we would be more than willing to stand before the bar of justice and receive adequate and ample sentence of fine or jail, or think ourselves lucky if we should get off on probation, perpetual or otherwise.

Yet, the while I ask these questions, I know very well that our supposed sins are far greater than these, and more serious: We do not surrender our religious liberty nor submit to the corporate and ecclesiastical authority of the National Spiritual Assembly. We turn to Baha-O-Llah without asking permission. We carry the name of Abdul Baha in our hearts and on our lips. We spread the ideals of peace and brotherhood as taught by these, our beloved Masters. We hold meetings and deliver lectures on spiritual subjects relative to the Bahai Cause. We write and publish leaflets, pamphlets and books on the Bahai Movement. Yes, we perpetrate all these actions, in love, happiness and freedom; we have stepped out into the open spaces of service, unmindful of obligations imposed on us to remain on perpetual parole and on perpetual probation; and these crimes have been committed in broad daylight, unblushingly and with no tremors of fear. Indeed, we are fully aware of the fact that few Bahais would have acted as we have.

Justice

Now, it is probable (and this is the pity of it) that the members of the National Spiritual Assembly believed that, in this legal action, they were just to the Cause and just to us, and it is not for me to question their ideal of justice.

Nevertheless, I venture to quote the ideal of justice as tendered to us by Baha-O-Llah. It is to be found in the *Hidden Words*:—

Justice is loved above all. Neglect it not, if thou desirest Me. By it thou wilt be strengthened to perceive things with thine own eyes and not by the eyes of men, to know them by thine own knowledge and not by the knowledge of any in the world. Meditate on this—how thou oughtest to be. Justice is of My bounty to thee and of My providence over thee; therefore, keep it ever before thy sight.

Janus

We have all read of Janus, an ancient Roman Deity, primarily god of gates and doors—hence of all beginnings. Our month of January was named after him. In the Forum, the shrine of Janus was equipped with double doors, symbolizing the quality of this personage who was represented as having two faces, looking opposite ways.

Now, after a close study of the actions of the National Spiritual Assembly, I have come to the conclusion that this body is a replica of that ancient god, for it looks upon the world through two masks, one turned toward the East and the other toward the West.

First:(a) On the one hand, the literature put out by the Bahai Administration is replete with references to present-day persecutions undergone by the Bahais in Persia and other parts of the East, on account of the absence of religious liberty in those countries. In numerous letters, Shoghi Effendi describes most vividly the injustices heaped upon the followers of the Faith, who have thus been

denied freedom of expression. He requests the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada who, as Westerners, have received *the inestimable benefits of religious toleration and freedom* (*Bahai Administration*, page 124), to give publicity to the *unbridled barbarism* existent in Persia.

(b) On the other hand, this same National Spiritual Assembly, with the sanction of Shoghi Effendi, has been making every effort to abolish religious liberty within the country where it functions. As a final step, it instituted legal proceedings to prevent the meeting of Bahai groups which do not operate under its own supervision. The explanation offered is: *the protection of the sacred rights of the Bahai Community* (*Annual Reports of the National Spiritual Assembly 1939-1940*, page 2).

Now, it is a fact that the Persians, in denying religious liberty to the Bahais, also bear in mind *the protection of the sacred rights of the Islamic Community*. It is for this reason that they enforce restrictions upon a minority such as the Bahais, and the reason is considered valid by the Hierarchy and the State likewise. It is to be noted that, in this instance, the sanction of the State constitutes the only difference between the two examples; for, in our country, the State holds itself aloof from such matters. (For fuller information read *Bahai News*, No. 53, July 1931, p. 6, article entitled "Persia"; *Bahai News*, No. 90, March 1939, p. 3, "Important Events Affecting the Faith in Persia"; *Bahai News*, No. 96, December 1935, p. 6, "Report from National Spiritual Assembly of Iran"; *Bahai News*, No. 97, January 1936, p. 1, "Letter from Shoghi Effendi on Closing of Tarbiat Schools"; *Bahai News*, No.

121, December 1938, pp. 10-11, "Annual Report, Iran"; also *Bahai Administration*, pp. 84, 94, 111, 123, 124.)

A Shrine in Bagdad

Second: A certain property in Iraq has, for many years, been an object of litigation between the Bahais and the Mohammedan Community.

When, after his exile from Persia in 1852, Baha-O-Llah arrived in Bagdad, he established himself and his family in a group of dwelling-houses belonging to one of his disciples, which houses he later acquired. Here he lived for eleven years until a second exile drove him on to Adrianople.

Now, Baha-O-Llah had never revealed his ownership of these dwelling-houses, which to all appearances remained the property of the disciple; but, after his departure they continued vacant, owing to the sacred character which the long residence of the Prophet had imposed upon them.

So, for many years, the Bahais watched over this property very quietly, concealing from the authorities the importance that they attached to it, for religious persecution was rampant in those days.

Matters remained in this condition until, with the establishment of the British Mandate, *liberty of conscience and religion*, proclaimed in the Covenant of the League of Nations, was confirmed in Iraq by the Treaty of 1922 with Great Britain, and later by the Organic Law of Iraq. Then, taking advantage of a security and freedom which they had never before known, the Bahais, under the direction of Shoghi Effendi, set about to putting into repair

these dwellings, *which*, the Guardian describes, *to outward seeming, appeared only as a cluster of humble and decrepit buildings lost amid the obscure and tortuous lanes of old Bagdad.*

Presently, the Bahais tried to take possession of the houses, and it was at this juncture that definite opposition set in. The case was carried from court to court with no decision in favor of the Bahais until, through the efforts of the Bahai Assembly of Bagdad with the assistance of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, Mr. Mountfort Mills, a lawyer and a most prominent Bahai, was enabled to bring the question before the Permanent Mandates Commission held in Geneva, Switzerland, from October 26th to November 13, 1928. The conclusion was as follows: *The Permanent Mandates Commission, recognizing the justice of the complaint made by the Bahai Spiritual Assembly of Bagdad, has recommended to the Council of the League such action as it thinks proper to redress the wrong suffered by the petitioners.*

I regret that I do not find any record in the literature of the Bahai Administration that is in my possession whether the Council of the League made any recommendation regarding the actual return of the property to the Bahais; or whether the return was ever accomplished. I certainly hope so.

Inconsistency

My object in giving the details of this transaction is to show that, in support of their claims, the Bahai Community repeatedly appealed *to the principle of the liberty*

of conscience and religion contained in the Treaty of 1922 between Iraq and Great Britain (Article III) and in the Organic Law of Iraq (Article XIII) as also to Article 22 (1) of the League Covenant. The principle of *liberty of conscience and religion* seems very important to the National Spiritual Assembly in its dealings with the East, and it turns to the Courts of that land to enforce its application; but this same body, in its dealings with the West, applies to the Courts of the United States to *prevent* the application of the same principle. Here is the DOUBLE MASK, in full use!

Again, I can picture the Janus-faced lock, which history describes to us. It was one that could be opened by two keys on opposite sides of the door. Now, the National Spiritual Assembly turns the key, opening toward Bagdad and pours reproaches upon the officials of that city because, in their dealings with the Bahais, they do not put into practice *the principle of liberty of conscience and religion* as embodied in their Organic Law. Then, this same Assembly turns the key opening toward New York and pours reproaches, even more vehement, upon a group of Bahais in The New History Society, because they have allowed themselves to put into practice *the principle of the liberty of conscience and religion* as taught by Baha-O'llah and Abdul Baha, and as embodied in the Bill of Rights.

*But whereunto shall I liken this generation? . . .
For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they
say, He hath a devil.*

The Son of man came eating and drinking and they

say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners.

—*St. Matthew, Chapter XI, Verses 16-19.*

(For further details about the House of Baha-O-Llah in Bagdad, read *Bahai News*, No. 30, March 1929, p. 3, "Letters from Shoghi Effendi"; *Bahai News*, No. 32, May 1929, pp. 5-7, "Letter from Shoghi Effendi"; *Bahai News*, No. 41, May 1930, pp. 6-7, "The Houses of Baha-O-Llah"; and *Bahai Administration*, pp. 84, 85, 90, 96, 104.)

Ban on Literature

Third: The Government of Iran, in furtherance of its nationalistic policy, had placed a ban on the entry and circulation of Bahai literature throughout the country. In 1932, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, following instructions from Shoghi Effendi, addressed a petition to His Imperial Majesty the Shah on the subject of lifting this ban, and entrusted this petition to its personal representative, Mrs. Keith Ransom-Kehler.

In this document, thus forwarded to the ruler of Persia, the National Spiritual Assembly considered *how widely spread throughout America and especially among the Bahais, is the appreciation of the notable reforms which have been made in Persia as the result of your Majesty's Administration of Affairs in that land. It also referred to the importance of the spiritual ties, through the reverence of the believers in both countries for the enlightened religious teachings of Baha-O-Llah; and finally stated: The appointment of a representative, to journey to Teheran*

for the purpose of presenting in person the petition of this Assembly, will make it evident to your Majesty how profoundly the American Bahais are moved by their inability to communicate fully with their fellow-religionists in Persia by reason of the Postal regulations still prohibiting the entry of Bahai books and magazines published in the United States and Canada.

Mrs. Ransom-Kehler did not meet the Shah, but was received by the Prime Minister in August 1932 and was given the assurance that the ban on Bahai literature would be lifted. This announcement produced extraordinary rejoicing throughout the Bahai world and the National Spiritual Assembly released news of victory to the press. A long cable was sent to the Prime Minister expressing gratitude for the removal of the ban, and this message was brought to the attention of the Persian Minister in Washington, D. C. Likewise, *A statement to the American press was also issued, reporting that Mrs. Ransom-Kehler had received firm assurance from the Court Minister that the postal regulations under which Bahai literature had been confiscated would be immediately annulled.*

Then, within a very short time, and to the consternation of the Bahai community, it was realized that the ban had *not* been annulled. Here, Mrs. Ransom-Kehler again valiantly rose to the occasion; she made every effort to discover the reason for the change of attitude; she interviewed the Secretary charged with American affairs at the Foreign Office; she wrote passionate and glowing appeals to the Shah, to the President of the Parliament and to Cabinet Ministers, yet she was never able to penetrate the official veil. The Secretary at the Foreign Office told her

that it was contrary to the Constitution of Persia to sanction any religion founded *after* Islam and, that consequently, Bahai literature must remain unrecognized. In a long letter to the Shah, Mrs. Ransom-Kehler spoke of *the recent gracious action of your Majesty in asserting the power of religious freedom and opening the door to the amenities of international communication customary in modern times which was by us immediately communicated to all leading newspapers in the United States and Canada together with an expression of our grateful recognition of your Majesty's response to our petition.* No answer to this letter was received.

The story is a long one. The matter was brought up for full discussion by the delegates at the 25th Bahai Convention held in Chicago in June 1933, and a resolution was adopted *to take immediate action to bring about the cessation of the reported maltreatment of our Bahai brethren, to secure the entry of Bahai literature and to restore the constitutional provision for the printing and circulation of Bahai literature within Persia.* An elaborate report was drawn up and presented to the Persian Minister in Washington by a Committee of the National Spiritual Assembly. It says in part:—

After entertaining the hope that the ancient land of Persia had been granted the high privilege of a regime based upon fearless justice, the very foundation of civilization, we cannot but deplore the survival from the past of indications that *free intercourse* on the part of American citizens with loyal citizens of Persia on matters of purely spiritual interest is prevented by regulations imposed by Persian authorities. The Bahais of America assert very frankly to your Excellency their

unhappiness because of the fact that unfounded prejudice against the Bahais of Persia, whether emanating from atheistic or ecclesiastical sources, can in this day and age find sanction from authorities of the State. . . . The outcome of this representation will, we trust, enable the National Spiritual Assembly to inform the local Bahai communities that their determined desire to assist in removing the disabilities and maltreatment of their Persian brothers has been completely realized.

On Sept. 10, 1933, Mrs. Ransom-Kehler, still in Persia, sent the following announcement to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada: *Petition unanswered.*

And on October 27, 1933, the Spiritual Assembly of Teheran cabled the sad news that Mrs. Ransom-Kehler had passed into the life beyond.

Thus, a very interesting and significant *effort* made by Shoghi Effendi and the National Spiritual Assembly, in trying to remove the ban placed on the entry and circulation of Bahai literature in Persia, came to an end.

Now, the point which I again wish to call to the attention of the reader is the contradictory attitude of the National Spiritual Assembly which, on the one hand, puts forward such a stupendous amount of time, energy and money to lift the ban on entry of Bahai literature in Persia, on the basis of *the power of religious freedom and international communication customary in modern times*; while, on the other hand, it spends a very appreciable amount of time, energy and money to place a ban on this same literature in the *United States*.

Can one reconcile these two diametrically opposite ac-

tions of the National Spiritual Assembly, or are its members endowed with two natures such as are amphibians, who have adapted themselves to live on land and in water, at one and the same time?

(For a detailed account of Mrs. Ransom-Kehler's trip to Iran and her effort to lift the ban on entry and circulation of Bahai literature in that country read *Bahai News*, No. 69, October 1932, p. 5, "Persian Government Removes Ban on entry of Bahai literature"; *Bahai News*, No. 80, January 1934, pp. 10-15, "The Unity of the East and West"; and *Bahai Administration*, pp. 109, 110.)

Relations with Society

To my mind, the major tenor of Bahai life is the process of the transmutation of authority into liberty; of tradition into freedom of thought and action; it is the ceaseless renovation of habits and customs and the incoming and outgoing of the spirit of truth to and from the heart of a Bahai. No individual or group should have dictatorial rights over other individuals or groups, and everyone should be allowed to function as a Bahai according to the dictates of his conscience.

In our striving after freedom of conscience and liberty, we have been accused by the National Spiritual Assembly of a tendency to break away from the divine government; of a destructive effort to atomize the distinctive teachings of the Cause; of planning to bring about dissolution of discipline and order. But the National Spiritual Assembly has lost sight of the important fact that a human Bahai

personality must possess the moral privilege of expressing itself in thought and action, and that it is entitled, through divine right, to emancipation which in itself is the essence of discipline and the substratum of the divine order.

A moral Bahai personality has two aspects. The first is the universal aspect, which I call the religious or the spiritual, in virtue of which every Bahai ought to have complete and unchallenged right to idealistic and ethical self-expression. Here, freedom of conscience holds court with no rival; here, we enjoy liberty of thought, undivided and whole. Then, there is the individual aspect, to which I ascribe legal or state obligations. Here the individual Bahai, as a member of society, is called upon to observe the laws of the State and realize the fact that, although he is free to break any of these laws, he is at the same time liable to be haled into court and punished for his infractions.

Today, in the civilized world, there is *no* religious tribunal that can *compel* a man to appear before it on account of his so-called heresies or unbeliefs in the doctrines of the church. In the moral sphere, there is no judge to condemn a person. The religious authorities may excommunicate him, but such an act will not be legal in any state court and will simply be regarded as the decision of a group of ecclesiastical disciplinarians.

In brief, the relation subsisting between an individual Bahai and his group must be conditioned by the incontrovertible postulate that, as a moral personality, he shall have all rights to think and act spontaneously and consistently according to his own spiritual insight.

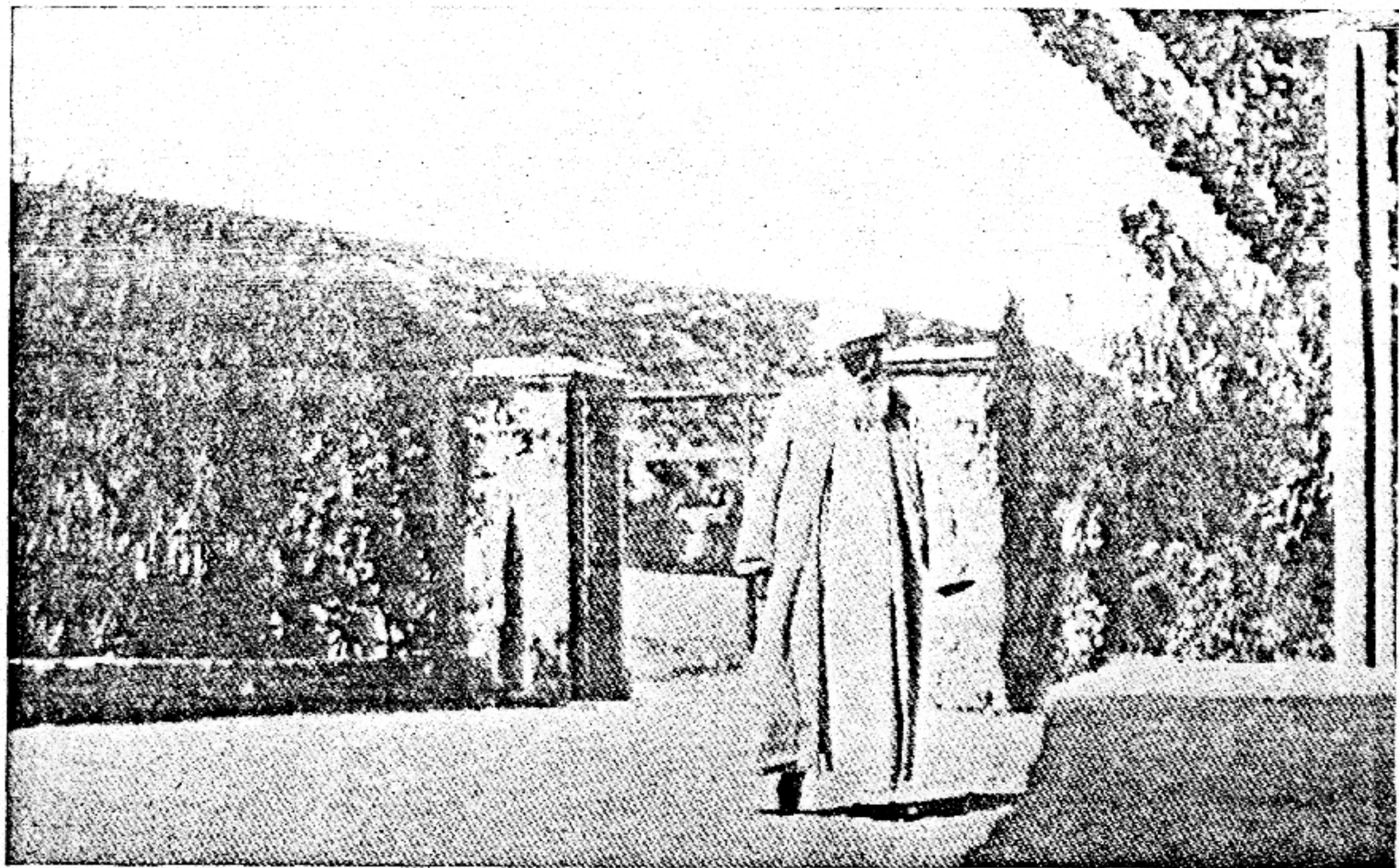
Our Standard

Abdul Baha has set up before us a very high and lofty standard. If I and my friends, as well as the members of the Bahai Administration, could live up to it, we would be *distinguished by a brilliancy like unto the sun, and all misunderstandings would disappear in the twinkling of an eye.* In such case, we would welcome a *Bahai modernist* as a sincere seeker after truth, and take to heart a *Bahai traditionalist* as a reverent follower of the law. We would exercise the grace of patience toward one another, for, although liberty is a great gift, charity is yet greater.

And now, let us listen to Abdul Baha as he sets up before our eyes his measure of the Bahai life:—

. . . you must conduct and deport yourselves in such a manner that you may stand out among other souls distinguished by a brilliancy like unto the sun. If any one of you enters a city, he must become the center of attraction, because of the sincerity, faithfulness, love, honesty, fidelity, truthfulness and loving-kindness of his disposition and nature toward all the inhabitants of the world, that the people of the city may all cry out: "This person is unquestionably a Bahai; for his manners, his behavior, his conduct, his morals, his nature and his disposition are of the attributes of the Bahais.

—*Tablets of Abdul-Baha*, Vol. I, p. 41.



Abdul Baha in his garden at Haifa, with Mount Carmel in the background.

CHAPTER XV

THOUGHT-CONTROL

Independent Investigation

A fundamental law of religion and philosophy is freedom of inquiry and investigation, together with the inalienable right of each individual to express the result of his search without any external control or official supervision. *Censorship* as applied to the fruits of the spirit is the negation of the spirit itself. In the Baháí Cause, the obligation of free and independent research is basic and incontrovertible. Baha-O-Llah states:—

Should a servant desire to make the words, deeds and actions of other servants, learned or ignorant, the standard for knowing God and His Chosen Ones, he shall never enter the Rizwan of the Knowledge of the Lord of Might nor attain to the Fountains of the Knowledge and Wisdom of the King of Oneness; neither shall he reach the bourne of immortality nor partake of the Cup of Nearness and Good Pleasure.

—*The Book of Assurance*, page 2.

In this way, the Founder of the Baháí Revelation has discounted reliance on the traditions and authorities of past and present, requiring from each student personal and rigorous application to the discovery of truth and to its enunciation. To make this individual responsibility still more binding, he declares in ringing tones:—

The Peerless Beloved says:
The Way of Freedom is opened!
Hasten ye!
The Fountain of Knowledge is gushing!
Drink ye!

—Baha-O-Llah, *Bahai Scriptures*, page 132.

Self-Reliance

On his visit to this country, Abdul Baha was asked: What is the greatest thing you have seen in America? and he answered: *The greatest thing I have seen in America is its freedom.*

—*Star of the West*, Vol. IV, No. 12,
October 16, 1913, page 207.

In enumerating the fundamental teachings of his Father, the Master usually placed the principle of *independent investigation of truth* at the top of the list. He asserted that we must depend on our own reason and adhere to the outcome of our own investigation. The following quotation, which is one example chosen from hundreds of similar utterances, boldly illustrates this mighty truth:

God has given man the eye of investigation by which he may see and recognize truth. He has endowed man with ears that he may hear the message of reality and conferred upon him the gift of reason by which he may discover things for himself. This is his endowment and equipment for the investigation of reality. Man is not intended to see through the eyes of another, hear through another's ears nor comprehend with another's brain. . . . Therefore depend upon your own reason and judgment and adhere to the outcome of

your own investigation; otherwise you will be utterly submerged in the sea of ignorance and deprived of all the bounties of God.

—Abdul Baha—*Promulgation of Universal Peace*,
Vol. II, page 287.

No progressive student of religion would deny the validity of the above assertions which are again to be found in Abdul Baha's remarkable sermon given on November 6, 1912, at the Universalist Church, in Washington, D. C.:—

Praise be to God! The standard of liberty is held aloft in this land. You enjoy political liberty; you enjoy liberty of thought and speech, religious liberty, racial and personal liberty. Surely this is worthy of appreciation and thanksgiving. . . . Liberalism is essential in this day; justness and equity toward all nations and people. Human attitudes must not be limited, for God is unlimited, and whosoever is the servant of the Threshold of God must likewise be free from limitations.

—*Promulgation of Universal Peace*,
Vol. II, page 384.

A Dramatic Change

This attitude of religious liberalism and freedom of conscience; this *idealization of the liberty of thought and right of speech*; this *right of unrestricted individual belief* came to an end with the departure of Abdul Baha from this life, in 1921. Immediately, a sudden and dramatic change of principle and policy was inaugurated, for Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Bahai Cause, in a letter dated March 5, 1922, created a censorship to be applied not only

to all Bahai writings and books, but to all other matters as well. The right of supervision was placed in the hands of the members of the National Spiritual Assembly. Shoghi Effendi writes:—

Not only with regard to publication, but all matters without any exception whatsoever, regarding the interests of the Cause in that locality, individually or collectively, should be referred exclusively to the Spiritual Assembly in that locality, which shall decide upon it, unless it be a matter of National interest, in which case it shall be referred to the National body. With this National body also will rest the decision whether a given question is of local or national interest. . . . Large issues in such spiritual activities that affect the Cause in general in that land, such as the management of the *Star of the West*, and any periodical which the National Body may decide to be a Bahai Organ, the matter of publication, or reprinting Bahai literature and its distribution among the various assemblies, the means whereby the teaching campaign may be stimulated and maintained, . . . the matter of receiving Orientals and association with them, the care and maintenance of the precious film exhibiting a phase of the Master's sojourn in the United States of America as well as the original matrix and the records of His voice, and various other national spiritual activities, far from being under the exclusive jurisdiction of any local assembly or group of friends, must each be minutely and fully directed by a special board, elected by the National Body, constituted as a committee thereof, responsible to it and upon which the National Body shall exercise constant and general supervision.

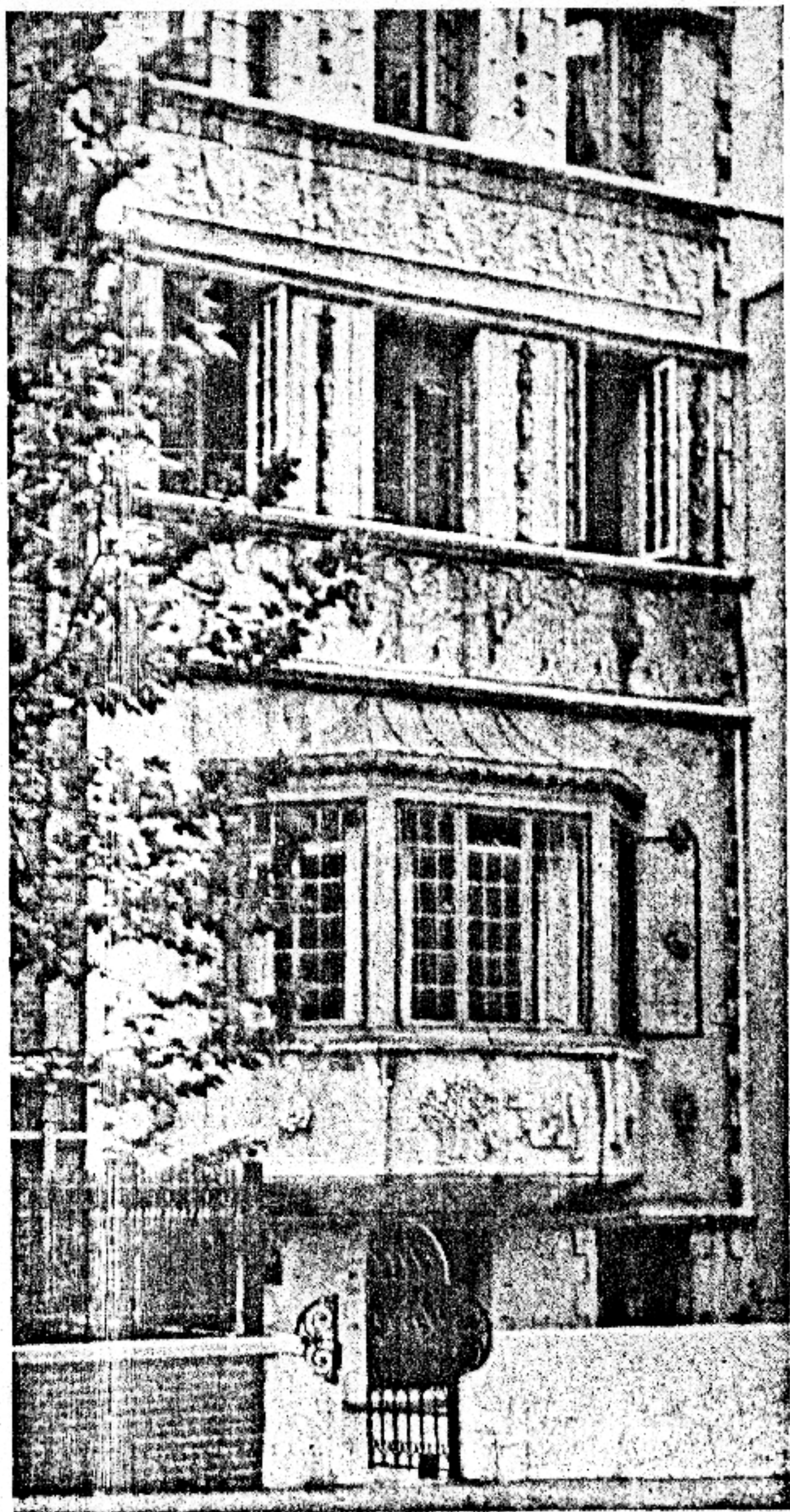
—*Bahai Administration*, pages 23-24.

This desire to control the thoughts and actions of the Bahai community, this drive toward the centralization of authority, this creation of a board of censorship, this plan of bringing under the full jurisdiction of the National Spiritual Assembly *all* matters pertaining to the Bahai Cause is, to say the least, in strange and incomprehensible contrast to the broad tolerance and liberality of Baha-O-Allah and Abdul Baha.

Centralized Control

Just as Baha-O-Allah and Abdul Baha, over and over again in their writings, repeat their injunction regarding freedom of thought and liberty of speech, Shoghi Effendi misses not a single occasion to reiterate his ideas on the centralization of power in the hands of the National Spiritual Assembly.

In a subsequent letter dated March 12, 1923 (*Bahai Administration*, page 33), Shoghi Effendi feels that, inasmuch as the Bahai Cause is still in its infancy, all its publications need *supervision*. He does not realize the very evident fact that what this movement actually needs at this, its early stage, is freedom to grow and to develop its muscles, both intellectual and spiritual. It is too young and fragile to be placed under the rigid rules of disciplinarian nurses. In the same letter the Guardian refers to *grave responsibilities* to be assumed by the National Spiritual Assembly, namely: to exercise *full authority over all local Assemblies*; to *direct the activities of friends*; to *guard vigilantly the Cause of God and control and supervise the affairs of the Movement in general*. With such intensive control exercised over every department of the



Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Chanler and Headquarters of
The New History Society.

Bahai Cause, the believers become mere automata, having no will of their own, no incentive and no initiative to start any original undertaking; for, they are at all times conscious that, at any moment, the heavy hand of the National Spiritual Assembly may fall upon them and destroy their labors.

The work of teaching the Cause, a bounden duty of every Bahai, is likewise placed under the authority of the National Spiritual Assembly, so that a teacher must follow, to the letter, exact and rigid prescriptions. He has no liberty of action, no leeway to express his own convictions. Always, he must accommodate himself to the regulations of the Teaching Committee. Shoghi Effendi states that *authority* must be centralized in the National Spiritual Assembly and *power* concentrated in the various local Assemblies. He seems to differentiate between authority and power. This definition may bewilder the uninitiated, but I feel sure that those who enjoy these prerogatives know the exact groove in which they fit.

In another letter dated April 9, 1923 (*Bahai Administration*, page 40), all publications must *fall under the exclusive control of the National Spiritual Assembly*. However, it seems that this control is not enough: a special committee shall minutely guide and judiciously scrutinize all information.

What a system! Apparently we are a lot of wayward children. Every word, spoken or written, must be scrutinized; every action must be controlled. We are, indeed, according to these extraordinary orders, as dead men in the hands of an undertaker. Why, in heaven's name, become Bahais? What benefits do we receive from this

spiritual totalitarianism? Even the helots of Greece, the galley slaves of Rome, the serfs of the Middle Ages and the bondsmen of the Southern States had more freedom than have the Bahais who thus submit themselves to such parasitical dependency!

Censorship

The strict injunctions laid down by Shoghi Effendi in his letters, naturally, led the National Spiritual Assembly to create a Reviewing Committee. This Reviewing Committee or Board of Censorship is patterned on the church authorities of the Middle Ages whose function it was to suppress the expression of free thought. In spite of the fact that there were no official censors before the age of printing, the informal beginnings of the practice did exist among the ancients. Methods were rough and ready in those days. Socrates was condemned for blasphemy and for corrupting the morals of youth; so the cup of hemlock brought him to speedy account. In the Middle Ages, writers were chiefly ecclesiastics. When printing quickened the flow of books and growing culture widened the circle of authors, clerical influence arose to demand censorship in order to protect the tenets of the Church.

This clamor for the control of thought created the Catholic *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*—an institution and a body of rules for the proscription of *pernicious* literature. The Index, like the Reviewing Committee of the National Spiritual Assembly, constituted a positive ecclesiastical ordinance, based on the false assumption that free thought was dangerous.

As far back as the first centuries of Christianity, when

ecclesiastical authority was still in its infancy, the apocryphal writings and certain other books were consigned to the flames.

Toward the close of the 15th century, the University of Cologne passed a measure which finally became the *Imprimatur* or preliminary censorship of books; it prescribed the examination of books before printing. The manuscripts which survived this ordeal carried the *Imprimatur* of the Board of Censors.

In similar manner the National Spiritual Assembly, in its legal action brought against me, had requested the Court to prevent my using the name Bahai, *in connection with any publication, which teaches or purports to teach any Bahai religion, faith, cause, movement, system of thought or way of living; unless said publication shall be submitted to and approved by the Reviewing Committee of the plaintiff trustees or their successors, and there shall be printed on the title page the notice: "Approved by the Reviewing Committee of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada."*

Roman Catholic Imprimatur

About 1501 A. D., Pope Alexander VI forbade the printers of the dioceses of Cologne, Mainz, Trèves and Magdeburg, on pain of excommunication and fine, to print any book whatsoever without permission from the bishop. The prohibition of books, specified by name, began in 1520 through the bull of Leo X which condemned all the writings of Luther. In 1624, Clement VII ordered excommunication as the penalty for the reading of books which the Church considered heretical. This order remains un-

changed to the present day. Likewise, even now it is necessary to have permission to print the *Imprimatur* of the Bishop on all books applying to religion or sciences. Excommunication is incurred by those who wittingly without permission read, keep, print or defend any books written by those whom the Church has designated as apostates and heretics, or the books directly condemned by the Pope. Excommunication is the penalty also for those who, without permission, print or cause to be printed the books of the Holy Scriptures or annotations or commentaries thereon. Thus were the laws of censorship created by the Church to suppress free expression of thought.

Now, I maintain that these were criminal acts committed against reason and spirit. If in any realm more than any other we need freedom, it is in the domain of religion. History has shown us that censorship may deprive a nation of its best leadings and inspirations.

Again, I assert that no man or body of men is wise enough or tolerant enough to be entrusted with power controlling the expression of thought, either in the Catholic Church or outside of it. The right of free speech and free press is the most precious possession of man, and there is no authority on the face of the earth which has the right to withhold it.

Bahai Imprimatur

Let us now turn our attention to the rules of *Bahai Procedure* as set forth by the National Spiritual Assembly for the guidance of its so-called Reviewing Committee.

In *Bahai Procedure*, Section 2, Sheet 25, we find an article entitled *Review and Publication of Bahai Litera-*

ture by Local Assemblies. This article contains the result of the discussion on the subject of Bahai Publications by the National Spiritual Assembly.

The National Spiritual Assembly considers itself very liberal in not including in the list of *publications*, programs and bulletins printed by Local Assemblies. The *Procedure* continues:—

What the National Spiritual Assembly had in mind in adopting a general policy was the more formal publications represented by pamphlets and books. . . . The Guardian's instructions in Bahai Administration make it clear that all Bahai literature of a general character, that is aside from programs and bulletins, are to be reviewed by a Committee of the National Spiritual Assembly. This makes it evident that, as far as the review function is concerned, a Local Spiritual Assembly (apart from local teaching and publicity work) is subject to the general jurisdiction of the National Spiritual Assembly.

Another privilege given to a Local Spiritual Assembly is that it can publish a pamphlet (such as excerpts from the recognized writings) already approved by the Reviewing Committee of the National Spiritual Assembly. However, such a pamphlet must be distributed free of charge, for publishing Bahai literature for sale is vested solely in the Publishing Committee appointed by the National Spiritual Assembly. The article concludes by again generously allowing Local Spiritual Assemblies to print their programs without submitting them to the Reviewing Committee. Thus:—

Aside from evidently local matters, like programs, a

Local Spiritual Assembly has no right of review or publication of Bahai literature, except in the one case that it may issue, as free literature, printed leaflets and pamphlets, containing material already in its entirety approved by the National Reviewing Committee and subsequently confirmed by action of the National Spiritual Assembly.

On Sheet 26 of *Bahai Procedure*, Section II, no Bahai is allowed to deliver a radio broadcast unless it is approved by the Local Assembly before delivery.

On Sheet 16 of *Bahai Procedure*, Section I, all literature, charts and other material used in Bahai teaching should be confined to that which has been approved by the Reviewing Committee or has the recorded sanction of the National Spiritual Assembly.

On Sheets 20-21 of *Bahai Procedure*, Section I, a compilation from the writings of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha is subject to review by the Reviewing Committee in the same manner as are other Bahai works. The compiler should not conclude any arrangement with a non-Bahai publisher until the compilation has been officially approved, and if the compiler intends to print the compilation outside the Cause, the proposed arrangement is to be submitted to the National Spiritual Assembly through its Publishing Committee for approval. Over and above all these restrictions, the National Spiritual Assembly requests the compiler to assign to the Bahai Publishing Committee any copyright taken out on the publication of the book or pamphlet.

Having placed all kinds of iron fences around the Kingdom of Bahai thought, closing the *Way of Freedom* that

Baha-O-Llah had *opened* and sealing the *Fountain of Knowledge* which was intended to flood the earth with its salubrious waters, the legislator of the Reviewing Committee solemnly affirms:—

The purpose of this statement is to assure proper protection of the interests of the Bahai Faith, while providing sufficient freedom of action to individual believers under all circumstances.

Royal Largesse

In reading the above *statement* one cannot help wondering what are the particular *interests of the Bahai Faith* which need *proper protection*!

Does God and His Truth stand in need of the protecting arm of the National Spiritual Assembly? Can the creature indeed *protect* the Creator? Or, is it the people who are to be protected from contamination through the Love of God; and are we to combine in a union to bar the common run of humanity from access to the life-giving words of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha?

Yet, in regard to the clause which provides *sufficient freedom to individual believers*, probably, it is appropriate to offer a vote of thanks to the National Spiritual Assembly for this largesse on their part, so royally meted out. *Sufficient freedom*? Of course! It is a superfluity, even beyond our deserts. Why should we be grasping? As intellectual and spiritual bondsmen to the National Spiritual Assembly, we must accept our lowly station, and in all obsequiousness stoop to pick up the crumbs that fall from the table of our Administrative masters! Who are we, and what are we that we should dare to even *think*

of more freedom? The members of the National Spiritual Assembly are all-wise, and they say that it is sufficient. So, sufficient it is and sufficient it must be! We should ask no questions. As model slaves, it is fitting that we obliterate ourselves before our superiors. We should pray that we be characterized with the qualities of meekness, deference, compliance and subserviency. We should, in all humility, present our allegiance to these shepherds who have assembled us under the overhanging rock of their salvation and who, in solicitude for us, have set aside appropriate and *sufficient* pasture-land, wherein we may graze and offer them our thanksgiving at dawn and at sunset.

A Divine Legacy

Just the same, there are some who cannot blot out the memory of the Bahai Cause as it was taught once upon a time and who, in spite of prevailing conditions, yet hold to the teachings of Baha-O-Llah and the universal expositions of them as dispensed by Abdul Baha. Man's reason contains a truth which has existed since the dawn of human history; his spirit is enveloped with a light which was enkindled by God at the very foundation of creation. This is no other than a divine legacy reserved for us by the Maker of the Universe. The Prophets appeared upon the earth to remind us of these preternatural truths, which so consistently have been defaced by spiritual charlatans and perverted by superstitious organizations. In our own times, Baha-O-Llah came to restore these lost truths through the free exercise of rational and celestial faculties; and now, while powerful influences, actually *within* the established Faiths, have arisen to assist mankind in

this process of emancipation, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, pitifully claiming to represent the foremost liberal element in religion, has formed another set of dogmas wherewith to throttle free thought and subvert the essential liberty of human expression in all its diversified manifestations. Censorship, in the social domain, is an outmoded tyranny; in the spiritual realm, it is unwholesome and impracticable. Censorship is not wanted anywhere, especially in the Bahai Cause; and if we allow it to retain the upper hand in the great movement that has been entrusted to us, we will set ourselves up before the world and in the face of history as false trustees, and as men and women unworthy and unfit to call ourselves Bahais.

We could not voice our vehement protest against the Reviewing Committee of the National Spiritual Assembly better than by quoting the words of Milton, who himself revolted against church censorship when serious objection was raised to parts of *Paradise Lost*. In his *Areopagitica*, a classic on tolerance of speech and thought, he said:—

Should ye set an oligarchy . . . over it (the Press) to bring a famine upon our minds again, we shall know nothing but what is measured to us by their bushel. When God shakes a Kingdom with strong and healthful commotions to a general reforming, it is not untrue that many sectaries and false teachers are then busiest in seducing; but yet more true it is that God then raises to His own work men of rare abilities, and more than common industry, not only to look back and revise what hath been taught heretofore, but to gain further and go on some new enlightened steps in the discovery of truth. He relies on the survival of the fittest in this

sphere. . . . Let her (Truth) and Falsehood grapple: whoever knew Truth put to the worse in a free and open encounter?

The Emergence of a New Race

In this summer of 1941, a meeting without parallel in sheer dramatic worth took place between the Prime Minister of England and the President of the United States. On a sea, alive with danger and under ominous skies, these two great personalities came face to face and drafted a Charter for the emancipation of the peoples of all nations. The Churchill-Roosevelt Eight Points, fruit of this dangerous excursion, stand as testimony to the awakened conscience of the leaders of the Anglo-Saxon race; and when, in his report to Congress on the meeting at sea, made on August 21st, 1941, Mr. Roosevelt added two more points, which he said were necessarily included, the Atlantic Charter was rounded out to full value. These two points, in the language of the President, read as follows:—

It is also unnecessary for me to point out that the declaration of principles includes of necessity the world need for freedom of religion and freedom of information. No society of the world organized under the announced principles could survive without these freedoms which are a part of the whole freedom for which we strive.

On the same day, the President sent a message to the National Convention of Young Democrats, meeting in Louisville, Kentucky, which was delivered to delegates

from 48 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. In it, Mr. Roosevelt has this to say about the preservation of *utmost freedom*:—

I would be the last person to dispute or limit the right of every citizen to have his own opinion and express it, and I know you are with me as to the preservation of that utmost freedom.

This ideal of utmost freedom has been set forth by H. G. Wells in very concise terms. In his *Declaration of the Rights of Man*, he says:

Every man has a right to the utmost freedom of expression, discussion, association and worship.

—*The Rotarian Magazine*, September, 1941, page 9.

The leaders of the Bahai Administration in America have for years been carrying on an ideological flirtation with the totalitarian religious systems of the past, copying their methods and procedures, and manifesting the while a pride and satisfaction as if they had discovered an entirely new system. Nevertheless, the incomparable worth of Baha-O-Llah's genius lies in the fact that he has constructed for the children of this generation a spiritual fortress which shall protect the rights of man against the encroachment of all religious dictators, whether in the Bahai Administration or outside of it.

As Bahais, it is our duty to stand firm by the principles of the Cause; as citizens of a New World Order, we must proclaim the essential rights of men. New advocates of human dignity are raising their voices in every quarter of the globe; new champions of a United Humanity are

waging war against blind and selfish interests. The ideals of a new civilization are being hammered on the anvil of high striving and bitter experience, and at last we behold the emergence of the New World, which can be effected only by the sons and daughters of an emancipated race.

PART SIX

PSYCHOSES

16. Fear

17. Excommunication

*And who is he that will harm you, if
ye be followers of that which is good?*

—I Peter, Chapter 3, Verse 13



Group taken with Abdul Baha on the terrace of the Bab's tomb on Mt. Carmel, Haifa, Palestine, about 1917.

CHAPTER XVI

FEAR

The Secret of Fearlessness

There is no fear in Bahai Philosophy. Its basic principles are the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God. There are no secret doctrines in the Bahai Teaching. The chief premise of the Cause is association and collaboration among men and women of all races and all religions. It does not recognize any enemy, for it does not wage physical, intellectual or spiritual warfare against the children of God who are encircled by the hounties of a Merciful Father.

Fear—a persistent, all-pervading influence—poisoning mind and character, has no place in the Bahai vocabulary. Fear, a morbid enslavement, a paralysis of will and effort in anticipation of some actual or remote contingency, does not affect the Bahai attitude. A Bahai is not plagued with a fear-consciousness nor with a fear-complex; he does not allow his life to be guided by fear-impulse or fear-reaction. Not recognizing the existence of enmity, he does not harbor hatred toward any living creature; his life is an exemplification of love and affection for all mankind. Baha-O-Llah teaches his followers to overcome fear. He says:—

There is today a science which can *eradicate fear*. It must be taught from the earliest period of childhood and if it becomes popular, the very nature of man will be changed; for that which decreases fear increases courage. —*Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, pages 25-26.

Abdul Baha had mastered the secret of fear-control; and this he demonstrated in his daily relations with his fellowmen. It consisted of the simple and yet mysterious lesson of non-recognition of enmity between souls and the inculcation of the ideal of friendship.

In order to impress this lesson on our minds he on one occasion declared:—

Baha-O-Llah has clearly said in his Tablets that if you have an enemy, consider him not as an enemy. Do not simply be long-suffering, nay rather, love him. Your treatment of him should be that which is becoming to lovers. Do not even say that he is your enemy. Do not see any enemies. Though he be your murderer, see no enemy. Look upon him with the eye of friendship. Be mindful that you do not consider him as an enemy and simply tolerate him, for that is but stratagem and hypocrisy. To consider a man your enemy and love him is hypocrisy. This is not becoming of any soul. You must behold him as a friend. You must treat him well. That is right.

**—Promulgation of Universal Peace,
Vol II, pages 261-262.**

Baha-O-Llah, the Wise Physician, knew that more than often the spark of enmity and alienation is ignited through religious controversy and altercation; therefore, he exhorted his followers to discourse with the people *in the language of love and affection*.

He says:—

Oh people of Baha! Consort with all men with joy and fragrance. If you possess a word or principle, of which another is deprived, reveal and communicate

it in the language of love and affection; if it is accepted and produces its effect, the end is obtained; if not, rather than torment your friend, leave him to himself and pray for him.

—*Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, page 12.

Again, he says:—

In the book of God, the Mighty, the Glorious, you are forbidden to dispute and to contend with one another. Cultivate that which will benefit you and the peoples of the earth likewise.

—*Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, pages 19-20.

Bahai Comradeship.

On December 2, 1912, three days before his departure from the United States, Abdul Baha, after a journey of nine months athwart this country, delivered a farewell address at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Edward J. Kinney in New York. In this talk he epitomized his ideal of non-recognition of enmity in the Bahai Cause and elucidated this important topic in such a clear and comprehensive manner that his words should serve as a manual of instruction for all time to come. They were as follows:—

These are the days of my farewell to you for I am sailing on the fifth of the month. . . . I must therefore give you my instructions and exhortations today, and these are none other than the teachings of Baha-U-Llah.

You must manifest complete love and affection toward all mankind. Do not exalt yourselves above others but consider all as your equals, recognizing them as the servants of one God. Know that God is compassionate toward all; therefore love all from the

depths of your hearts, prefer all religionists before yourselves, be filled with love for every race and be kind toward the people of all nationalities. Never speak disparagingly of others but praise without distinction. Pollute not your tongues by speaking evil of another. Recognize your enemies as friends and consider those who wish you evil as the wishers of good. You must not see evil as evil and then compromise with your opinion, for to treat in a smooth, kindly way one whom you consider evil or an enemy, is hypocrisy and this is not worthy or allowable. You must consider your enemies as your friends, look upon your evil-wishers as your well-wishers and treat them accordingly. Act in such a way that your heart may be free from hatred. Let not your heart be offended with anyone. If some one commits an error and wrong toward you, you must instantly forgive him. Do not complain of others. Refrain from reprimanding them, and if you wish to give admonition or advice, let it be offered in such a way that it will not burden the bearer. Turn all your thoughts toward bringing joy to hearts. Beware! Beware! lest ye offend any heart. Assist the world of humanity as much as possible. Be the source of consolation to every sad one, assist every weak one, be helpful to every indigent one, care for every sick one, be the cause of glorification to every lowly one and shelter those who are overshadowed by fear.

In brief, let each one of you be as a lamp shining forth with the light of the virtues of the world of humanity. Be trustworthy, sincere, affectionate and replete with chastity. Be illumined, be spiritual, be divine, be glorious, be quickened of God, be a Baha'i.

—*Promulgation of Universal Peace*,
Vol. II, pages 448-449.

A Dangerous Doctrine

In considering the problem of fear, let us for a while study the writings of Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Cause, and see how he handles this vital subject. We will do this because the issue is one which cannot be ignored in this study of the present-day Bahai Movement.

The three published volumes of Shoghi Effendi are *Baha'i Administration*, *The World Order of Baha'u'llah* and *The Advent of Divine Justice*, which works consist of the letters which he has addressed to the National Spiritual Assembly in the course of the last 20 years. Now, I have read these three books and find that the words *enemies* and *adversaries* are greatly featured. Baha-O-Llah has said: *Consort with all men with joy and fragrance*, yet Shoghi Effendi, in his very first letter, dated January 21, 1922, written after his assumption of the guardianship, recommends *the absolute shunning of whomsoever we feel to be an enemy of the Cause*. (*Bahai Administration*, page 16.)

Now, I cannot bring myself to the point of believing that *absolute shunning* of whomsoever we *feel* to be the enemy of the Cause is a principle of Baha-O-Llah. Is every one going to let his *feelings* guide him in the matter? Can we not take for granted that frail human beings as we are, a great deal of personal caprice and spite may enter into our calculations as to *who* is the enemy of the Bahai Cause? This is a very dangerous doctrine, and yet one finds it in different forms throughout Shoghi Effendi's communications. He practically never mentions the names of the *enemies* or *adversaries* to whom he constantly refers. He simply creates ogres and bogey men, and fills the

hearts of the Bahais with apprehension and fear. In this way, the fountain-head of free and open comradeship is dried up and the flowers of loving-kindness wither away.

Abdul Baha makes this point very plain when he says:—

Even as avoiding and shunning the company of people and being harsh with them are the sure means of filling them with fear, so are love, kindness, humility and gentleness the truest method of binding people's souls and attracting their hearts.

—*The Mysterious Forces of Civilization*, page 62.

Here, let us recall that Baha-O-Llah in the *Tablet of the World* states that in this Revelation brutal manners are changed into spiritual qualities; also that the four great barriers which kept the people of the world separate have been demolished by the Grace and Authority of the Word of God; one of the barriers referred to was *shunning other nations*. (*Tablets of Baha'U'llah*, page 31.)

Let us consider: Is not the so-called enemy, whom Shoghi Effendi commands us to shun absolutely, part and parcel of *other nations*, the same which Baha-O-Llah orders us not to shun?

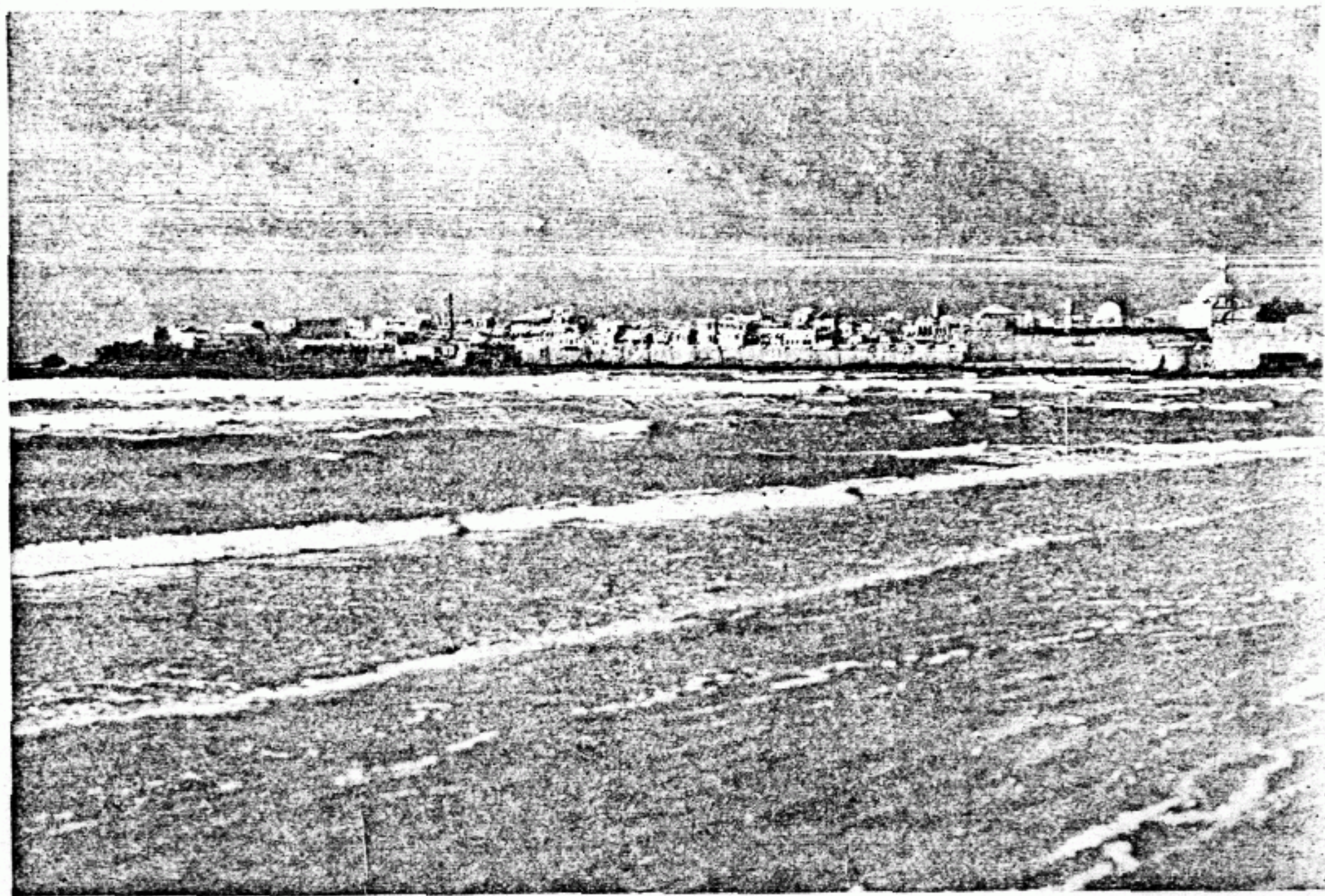
I am not going to dwell on the troublous impression which these sections of Shoghi Effendi's letters have made on me, but will simply submit a few of them and leave it to the reader to judge whether or not I exaggerate.

To the attitude of goodwill, of forbearance and genuine kindness to all, must be added, however, constant but unprovocative vigilance, lest unrestricted association with the peoples of the world should enable the very few who have been definitely pronounced by

the Master as injurious to the body of the Cause, to make a breach in the Movement. Not until, however, an unmistakable evidence should appear, manifestly revealing the evil motives of a certain individual or group of individuals, is it advisable to make the matter public. . . . In order, however, to insure fair and quick and vigorous action whenever such an evil activity is revealed and has been carefully ascertained, the best and only means would appear to be, for the careful observer, once he is assured of such an evil action, and has grown hopeless of the attitude of kindness and forbearance, to report it quietly to the Spiritual Assembly representative of the friends in that locality and submit the case to their earnest and full consideration. Should the majority of the members of that Assembly be conscientiously convinced of the case—and this being a national issue affecting the body of the friends in America—it should, only through the intermediary of that Assembly, be cautiously communicated to that greater body representing all the Assemblies in America, which will in its turn obtain all the available data from the local Assembly in question, study carefully the situation and reserve for itself the ultimate decision. It may, if it decides so, refer it to the Holy Land for further consideration and consultation.

—March 5, 1922, *Baha'i Administration*,
pages 18-19.

This servant, after that grievous event and great calamity, the ascension of His Holiness Abdul Baha to the Abha Kingdom, has been so stricken with grief and pain and so entangled in the troubles (created) by the enemies of the Cause of God, that I consider that



Acca, Palestine, Baha-O-Llah's final place of exile. From behind the walls of this "Most Great Prison", he wrote his immortal epistles to the kings and rulers of the world.

my presence here, at such a time and in such an atmosphere is not in accordance with the fulfilment of my important and sacred duties.

—May, 1922, *Baha'i Administration*, page 25.

The work of the noble Edifice that the mighty hands of the All-Wise Master has reared in this world can suffer no delay, nor can its foundations be made to totter, whatever the apparent obstacles its enemies in their impotent wrath and despair may throw in its way. We need not wait too long, for already from various quarters there comes the news that the awful promises of Abdul Baha regarding the Covenant-breakers have been strikingly fulfilled. But it behooves us not to dwell for a moment on these doomed and darkened efforts.

—December 16, 1922, *Baha'i Administration*, page 26.

From the East and from the West, from the North and from the South, the unnumbered servants of Baha-U-Llah, disdainful of the evil machinations of the enemies of His Cause, the breakers of His behests, have rallied to His Standard, and risen with one accord to carry on the great work He has entrusted to their charge.

—March 12, 1923, *Baha'i Administration*, page 29.

It is incumbent upon them to be vigilant and cautious, discreet and watchful, and protect at all times the Temple of the Cause from the dart of the mischief-maker and the onslaught of the enemy.

—March 12, 1923, *Baha'i Administration*, page 33.

The flames of sedition, so maliciously kindled in the past by those who have dared to flout His Will, are gone out forever, and the fondest hopes of these evil plotters are now abandoned, doomed never to revive. . . . And now, with the Cause purified and inwardly victorious, its principles vindicated, its enemies silenced and sunk in unspeakable misery, may we not, henceforth, direct all our efforts to collective action and constructive achievement, and in utter disregard of the flickerings of their fast-fading light, arise to carry out those urgent measures that will secure the outward and complete triumph of the Cause.

—November 14, 1923, *Baha'i Administration*, pages 44-45.

Who can question that His loved ones, both in the East and the West, notwithstanding the insidious strivings of the enemies of the Cause, have displayed a spirit of unshakable loyalty worthy of the highest praise?

—November 24, 1924, *Baha'i Administration*, page 59.

These challenging criticisms, whether or not dictated by malice, cannot but serve to galvanize the souls of its ardent supporters and to consolidate the ranks of its faithful promoters. They will purge the Faith from those pernicious elements whose continued association with the believers tends to discredit the fair name of the Cause, and to tarnish the purity of its spirit. We should welcome, therefore, not only the open attacks which its avowed enemies persistently launch against it, but should also view as a blessing in disguise every storm of mischief with which they who apostatize their faith or claim to be its faithful exponents assail it from

time to time. Instead of undermining the Faith, such assaults, both from within and from without, reinforce its foundations and excite the intensity of its flame.

—March 21, 1930, *The World Order of Baha'U'Llah*, page 15.

Let him (an upholder of the Cause) be aware that so soon as the full measure of the stupendous claim of the Faith of Baha'U'Llah comes to be recognized by those time-honored and powerful strongholds of orthodoxy, whose deliberate aim is to maintain their stranglehold over the thoughts and consciences of men, this infant Faith will have to contend with enemies more powerful and more insidious than the cruelest torture-mongers and the most fanatical clerics who have afflicted it in the past.

—March 21, 1930, *The World Order of Baha'U'Llah*, page 17.

Many and powerful have been its enemies who, as soon as they discovered the evidences of the growing ascendancy of its declared supporters, have vied with one another in hurling at its face the vilest imputations and in pouring out upon the Object of its devotion the vials of their fiercest wrath.

—April 21, 1933, *The World Order of Baha'U'Llah*, page 72.

In the prosecution of their task neither the whisperings of the treacherous nor the virulent attacks of their avowed enemies were allowed to deflect them from their high purpose or to undermine their faith in the sublimity of their calling.

The agitation provoked by him who in his incessant and sordid pursuit of earthly riches would have, but

for Abdul Baha's warning, sullied the fair name of their Faith, had left them in the main undisturbed. Schooled by tribulation and secure within the stronghold of their fast evolving institutions they scorned his insinuations and by their unswerving loyalty were able to shatter his hopes. They refused to allow any consideration of the admitted prestige and past services of his father and of his associates to weaken their determination to ignore entirely the person whom Abdul Baha had so emphatically condemned.

The veiled attacks with which a handful of deluded enthusiasts subsequently sought in the pages of their periodical to check the growth and blight the prospects of an infant Administration had likewise failed to achieve their purpose.

The attitude which a besotted woman later on assumed, her ludicrous assertions, her boldness in flouting the Will of Abdul Baha and in challenging its authenticity and her attempts to subvert its principles were again powerless to produce the slightest breach in the ranks of its valiant upholders.

The treacherous schemes which the ambition of a perfidious and still more recent enemy has devised and through which he is still striving to deface Abdul Baha's noble handiwork and corrupt its administrative principles are being once more completely frustrated.

These intermittent and abortive attempts on the part of its assailants to force the surrender of the newly built stronghold of the Faith its defenders have from the very beginning utterly disdained. No matter how fierce the assaults of the enemy or skillful his stratagem they have refused to yield one jot or one tittle of their cherished convictions.

His insinuations and clamor they have consistently ignored. The motives which animated his actions, the methods he steadily pursued, the precarious privileges he seemed momentarily to enjoy they could not but despise.

Thriving for a time through the devices which their scheming minds had conceived and supported by the ephemeral advantages which fame, ability or fortune can confer, these notorious exponents of corruption and heresy have succeeded in protruding for a time their ugly features, only to sink, as rapidly as they had risen, into the mire of an ignominious end.

—April 21, 1933, *The World Order of Baha'U'Llah*, pages 89-90.

These verities, if valiantly upheld and properly assimilated, will, I am convinced, powerfully reinforce the vigor of our spiritual life and greatly assist in counteracting the machinations of an implacable and vigilant enemy.

—1933, *The World Order of Baha'U'Llah*, pages 99-100.

Numerous and powerful have been the forces that have schemed, both from within and from without, in lands both far and near, to quench its light and abolish its holy name. Some have apostatized from its principles and betrayed ignominiously its cause. Others have hurled against it the fiercest anathemas which the embittered leaders of any ecclesiastical institution are able to pronounce. Still others have heaped upon it the afflictions and humiliations which sovereign authority can alone, in the plenitude of its power, inflict.

The utmost its avowed and secret enemies could hope

to achieve was to retard its growth and obscure momentarily its purpose. What they actually accomplished was to purge and purify its life, to stir it to still greater depths, to galvanize its soul, to prune its institutions, and cement its unity. A schism, a permanent cleavage in the vast body of its adherents, they could never create.

They who betrayed its cause, its lukewarm and faint-hearted supporters, withered away and dropped as dead leaves, powerless to cloud its radiance or to imperil its structure. Its most implacable adversaries, they who assailed it from without, were hurled from power, and, in the most astonishing fashion, met their doom.

—March 11, 1936, *The World Order of Baha'U'Llah*, pages 195-196.

Though the enemies which every acceleration in the progress of your mission must raise up be fierce, numerous, and unrelenting, yet the invisible Hosts which, if you persevere, must, as promised, rush forth to your aid, will, in the end, enable you to vanquish their hopes and annihilate their forces.

—Dec. 25, 1938, *The Advent of Divine Justice*, page 13.

Fear Complex

Through the publication and wide distribution of these instructions, the National Spiritual Assembly and its followers have come down with an acute attack of ecclesiastical goose-flesh and much energy is spent in locating these *enemies* and in unearthing their *plots*. Gossip becomes fact, and facts assume distorted proportions. Consequently, a chain of correspondence is established among the

various Spiritual Assemblies, the object of which is to hunt down the enemies and expose them. Meanwhile, hatred is engendered and the spirit of tolerance, mercy and forgiveness is trampled underfoot.

Baha'i News, organ of the National Spiritual Assembly published month by month *For Baha'is Only*, communicates these sacred fears to all the Bahai Communities throughout the world. Here is one example:—

. . . Indeed contact with the different centers in Europe has proven beyond question the great need for the protection of the friends from the nefarious operations of those whom the Guardian and the National Spiritual Assembly have found to be disturbers of peace and disseminators of evil. Firmness and courage are required to deal with these situations so that they may be removed from any vestige of personal animus, and only emphasize the direct and positive laws of administration in the most dignified and helpful way. Had such wise methods been employed earlier, much of the confusion which it has taken nearly two years to undo might have been avoided. We are only beginning to glimpse the beauty and perfection of the system which must ultimately become the perfectly functioning medium for circulating general information.

—*Bahai News*, No. 62, page 14, May, 1932.

I am sure that Heinrich Himmler would describe *the beauty and perfection* of his own system of Gestapo in much the same manner.

The Years Have Brought Safety

In recalling the events which, since its inception, have

taken place in the Cause, one cannot ignore the fact that enemies *have* played no small part in the history of the movement. The early Babis and Bahais were forced to contend with overwhelming odds, and thousands of them suffered martyrdom. Baha-O-Llah himself met with opposition, not only from without but from within, and to such a point that his very life was attempted by a blood-relative, with the result that he carried with him physical injury throughout his existence on this earth. Abdul Baha, for forty years a captive in Palestine, was under constant surveillance and at the mercy of traitors and spies. He was forced to recognize the existence of enemies and to take steps to protect the Cause from their plots, both open and secret. But, Shoghi Effendi has never been a prisoner. The rule of Nasiru'd Din Shah and of Sultan Abdul Hamid, under which the Cause quivered for so long a time, has, in Persia and Turkey, been replaced by progressive governments; while Palestine, the headquarters of the movement, enjoys the beneficent protectorship of England. The lives of the Bahais are safe, so is their property; and, if once in a while a Christian missionary writes an argument against the Bahai Faith, or, if a Bahai author sends a book to press without the sanction of the authorized publishing committee, or again, if a Bahai with an unassailable record chooses to associate with an old friend, the orders of the Assemblies notwithstanding, these actions do not constitute such danger to the Cause that the tenor of the Guardian's recommendations to his followers need be colored thereby. No! The risks in these days are very mild, to say the least, and it seems unnecessary to apply to them the terminology that might have been appropriate in former years.

What if Abdul Baha found it necessary, after long persecution, to read out of the Cause some individuals whom his infinite patience and loving-kindness could not placate! What if, in contemplating a House of Justice to be established in the distant future, he envisioned the possibility of the expulsion of recalcitrant members! Shall then an order of priests make of these facts a precedent, so that, henceforth and forever after, it shall feel at liberty to hold aloft the weapon of excommunication? No! I think that the least we can allow the Master is all sanction regarding what he did and what he did not do, and that our duty is to concern ourselves with his teachings and to practice them.

I had so much hoped that Shoghi Effendi, assuming leadership as he did at a time when all danger had passed, would have seen fit to discard and eliminate the fear-complex which has left so deep a mark on the Bahai mentality. With his training at the Universities of Beirut, Syria, and Cambridge, England, it would have seemed appropriate, and we had every reason to expect, that the hang-over of dread, resultant from an anguished past, would have been forcibly lifted from the minds of the Bahais the world over. And in regard to these United States, the Bahai citizens of which have always been afforded every right and privilege, what a pity it is to transplant from overseas, and graft on their consciousness, this seed of fear with its abundant and destructive harvest! Times have changed, no dagger is brandished before the Bahais; then why should they load their bodies and consume their strength with the weighty links of the medieval mailed shirt?

The Test of a Bahai

A recently received communication from the Guardian on the subject of *enemies* brings up, among other points, one which I consider to be most important. It is in reference to the Master's Will and Testament.

In the Bahai writings, we have a vast body of incomparable teachings which include universal principles for the regeneration of mankind; we also have the Will of Abdul Baha. Naturally, this latter document has its place in Bahai literature, and an important one; but, look at it as you will, it is only *part* of the great whole.

Now, the Bahai Administration has seen fit to feature the Will above and beyond everything that has been written and spoken by the Founders of the Cause. It is ever accentuated in publications, ever driven in upon the minds of the people with unremitting intensity. Nothing else matters; only the Will, the Will, the Will! The word has, by this time, been seared into the consciousness of the Bahais. It, and it alone, is the Cause.

Why so? Simply, for the reason that, in his Will, Abdul Baha made it incumbent upon his followers to render absolute obedience to the Guardian. The Master had his reasons for doing this: he trusted Shoghi Effendi to carry out his teachings, and he wished, at all hazards, to prevent a split in the movement. This is very clear; and, certainly, a foremost wish in the mind of every Bahai would be to adhere to the Master's instructions. For many years this was my own ardent wish; for, naturally, I have never doubted the authenticity of Abdul Baha's Will.

Yet, after all, the Will is not the Cause *in toto*; there are other injunctions, other teachings. We cannot forget

the glorious Bahai education that has been made available to us, in order to cling desperately to this one point. The National Spiritual Assembly has its reasons for so bringing forward the Will. The Will says: Obey the Guardian! and the Guardian says: Obey the National Assembly! Therefore, the Will constitutes a sceptre of authority, a sceptre which, but too often, bears the aspect of a whip.

Unfortunately, it is not the National Spiritual Assembly alone which bears unflagging testimony to this feature in the Master's Will, for the Guardian himself gives to it supreme and unparalleled importance; and, as things stand today, an obedience to Shoghi Effendi, so abject as to entail all personal dignity, has become the test of a Bahai. Nothing else matters; nothing else is ever dwelt upon.

Abdul Baha said: *If a man has ten good qualities and one bad one, look at the ten and forget the one; and if a man has ten bad qualities and one good one, look at the one, and forget the ten*; yet, the Bahai authorities say: If a man has ten Bahai qualities and does not recognize the Guardian as the arbiter of his conscience, think only of this last failing and forget all the other qualities.

Now, I am not possessed of the courtier-psychology; I did not have it when I served the Master, and he did not exact it of me. He wanted us to be upright, sincere and self-reliant, and I have patterned myself on his conception of a man. I frankly admit, at this juncture, that there is nothing in my bearing of the Uriah Heep, and that I have small respect for that perennial type, so deftly portrayed by Charles Dickens.

Following is Shoghi Effendi's letter, written by his secretary, to which I have just referred:—

The material sent to him regarding the legal action taken against the New History Society, as well as copies of their monthly publication, have been received and the Guardian feels that Ahmad Sohrab is increasingly revealing his latent opposition to the spirit as well as the letter of the Master's Will and Testament. His references to excommunication flatly contradict the Master's own actions and attitude, of which he is personally fully aware, and are irreconcilable with some of the most emphatic and unmistakable injunctions of 'Abdu'l-Baha in His Will and Testament. His increasingly bold criticisms of the action taken by the Guardian amounts to a repudiation of the authority of the Guardianship, and is thus an open and flagrant violation of the Will establishing that authority. In fact the more he writes and the more he gives vent to his true feelings, and discloses his real attitude to what 'Abdu'l-Baha has regarded as absolutely essential to the unity, the integrity and protection of the Faith, the more will he clearly demonstrate his disloyalty to the Master whom he professes to uphold and defend. He is no doubt the most subtle, resourceful and indefatigable enemy the Faith has had in America, and the retribution he will in the end suffer will be correspondingly grievous and devastating. Every effort should be made by your Assembly to protect the new believers from the poison which he is trying to instill into their minds and souls, and to reinforce their confidence in his ultimate downfall and complete obliteration.

—*Excerpts From Letter From the Guardian
in Bahai News, No. 145, July 1941.*

In the above description of myself, I am rather flattered at the word *subtle*, for it is a characteristic that I never

thought I possessed. There is so much that I think and feel, now that the flood-gates of discussion have been *opened*, that I can do no more than explain and act upon my innermost convictions. However, I consider the adjectives *resourceful* and *indefatigable* as well chosen, for I have been trained by the most resourceful of all teachers and the most indefatigable of all leaders. Was I not, during eight years, a witness to the Master's unflagging enthusiasm, undeviating tenacity and world-shaking energy! He expected me to imitate these qualities in him, and I expected this course of action of myself.

In regard to being an *enemy of the Faith*, to this I definitely make objection; nor do I allow this statement to pass without making flat denial. If the upholding of the freedom of the Cause, is enmity to the Cause; if the teaching of the Bahai principles, is *instilling* poison into the minds of the hearers, then I assert, and without reserve, that Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha were enemies of the Cause, *par excellence*, and that their words were the essence of poison upon poison.

Finally, I note that the National Spiritual Assembly should exert *every effort to reinforce* the confidence of the Bahais in my *ultimate downfall and complete obliteration*. Here we have entered the realm of prophecy. It would seem that the people should be left free to believe in certain prophecies, or to ignore them, or to disbelieve in them, according to their choice and aptitudes; and I do question the advisability of taking steps to induce the Bahais to accept forecasts of the future, especially when these forecasts apply to the obliteration of any soul. Such efforts are not conducive to the healthy development of a com-

munity; they simply bring to mind the dark practices of the past, when so-called sorcerers applied themselves to inserting pins into the waxen bodies of dolls shaped to portray their enemies. This did not do any harm to the bodies and souls of the alleged enemies, but I believe that it did a lot of harm to the bodies and souls of those who inserted the pins.

Oriental Exclusion Act

In a letter dated June 8, 1919, written during the lifetime of Abdul Baha, Shoghi Effendi, after giving a glowing account of the Mashriqu'l Azkar at Ishkabad, Russia, as described by a pilgrim, mentions the Master's instructions regarding fellowship and association. The following is an extract from this early communication:—

When Abdul Baha inquired the condition and the association of the friends, it was intimated that, unlike the days gone by, the friends are intimately associating with all the people of every shade and opinion, of every sect and social standing. He said:— “Such is the way that must be adopted, for only through intimate association will the friends be able to teach and sow the seed in the heart of a seeker. The flower must be brought close and near in order to inhale its scent and fragrance.”

**—*Star of the West*, Vol. XI, No. 1,
March 21, 1920, page 15.**

However, with his assumption of the guardianship, these ideas seem to have receded in the mind of Shoghi Effendi.

Although the Bahai Cause has appeared in the Orient

and its cardinal principle is union and harmony between the inhabitants of East and West; although Baha-O-Llah openly declares. *Oh people of the world! Ye are all the fruits of one tree and the leaves of one branch. Conduct yourselves with perfect love, friendship and understanding (Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, page 11)*; although Abdul Baha cries at the top of his voice: *We must exercise the utmost love toward each other. We must be loving to all the people of the world. We must not consider any people, the people of Satan, but know and recognize all as the servants of the One God (Promulgation of Universal Peace, Vol. II, page 264)*; yet, for some obscure reason, Shoghi Effendi instructs the American Bahais not to receive Orientals in their midst—even Oriental Bahais are barred out unless they can produce proper credentials from the right authorities.

Here are the instructions written by Shoghi Effendi himself:—

I wish to add a few lines and remind you of the necessity of refusing to admit to your assembly, or associate with, any Oriental who does not have proper credentials from a recognized spiritual Assembly. No excuse whatever is acceptable. I am sure that a few are trying to cause mischief and bring about a split in the ranks of the believers in these days of stress, and the utmost caution should be exercised, lest these mischief-makers succeed in undermining the foundations of the Cause.

—*Bahai News*, No. 52, pages 4-5, May, 1931.

Regarding association with Oriental travelers and residents in the United States and Canada, I desire

to emphasize afresh the vital necessity for the exercise in these days of the greatest vigilance and reserve, prudence and caution, on the part of the American believers in their dealings with them, either in an official or private capacity, whether in business transactions or for purely religious purposes. As the Movement grows in prestige, fame and influence, as the ambitions, malice and ill-will of strangers and enemies correspondingly wax greater, it becomes increasingly important for every individual and spiritual Assembly to be on their guard lest they fall innocent victims of the evil designs of the malevolent, the self-seeking and greedy.

—*Baha'i Administration*, page 92.

The matter of receiving Orientals is left entirely in the hands of the National Spiritual Assembly, whose special committee for this purpose will have to investigate all the questions arising in this connection in future.

—*Baha'i Administration*, page 41.

In this manner, the entire Eastern Hemisphere, the home of Revelation, is looked askance by the Bahai community, and one thousand million Orientals automatically become suspect.

Additional instructions regarding the above subjects are to be found in *Bahai News*:

The National Spiritual Assembly feels that Oriental believers visiting America should transmit their credentials to the Secretary of the National Assembly, so that proper credentials may be issued by the National Assembly for their use while in America. If therefore, a Baha'i from the Orient should hereafter present his

credentials to any local Assembly, that Assembly is requested to see that the credentials are transmitted.

—*Bahai News*, No. 131, page 7, November, 1939.

As regards those Persian or Oriental non-believers who become genuinely interested in the Cause in America, they can be admitted to study classes, but every care should be taken by the Assemblies to fully test their sincerity and the genuineness of their desire to join the Community before they are given the necessary facilities that will enable them eventually to be regarded as voting members of the faith.

—*Bahai News*, No. 118, page 2, August, 1938.

Thus, it is made most difficult for Eastern people of all faiths and creeds to come in contact with American Bahais and to learn of the Cause; and then to cap this gorgeous structure of exclusiveness and intolerance, a bar is made, preventing even the American Bahais, travelling from one city to another, from visiting local Assemblies or having a chat with individual believers, if these travellers happen to be unarmed with the proper *credentials*. Here is the fiat that proclaims this spiritual embargo to all the world:—

It has been voted to call attention once more to the fact that local Assemblies and individual believers should be careful in dealing with persons who claim to be Baha'is but have no proper credentials. This applies particularly to persons who come from other cities.

—*Bahai News*, No. 95, page 4, October, 1935.

Segregation! Thy name, indeed, is Bahai Organization!

Isolationists! Why not take a few leaves out of the text books of the Bahai Administration?

Irreconcilable Teachings

In bringing this chapter to a close, I venture to make the following comparison between the two points of view treated here; that of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha and that of Shoghi Effendi.

Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha banish the spectre of fear and enmity; Shoghi Effendi evokes them.

Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha teach association with all men; Shoghi Effendi commands the shunning of whomsoever we even *feel* to be an enemy.

Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha throw wide open the gates of the Kingdom of Heaven; Shoghi Effendi closes them to a crack lest any *mischief-makers* enter the Temple of the Cause.

Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha were the embodiments of courtesy and affability; Shoghi Effendi departs considerably from the path of even ordinary good manners, as is exemplified by his term *besotted woman* which he applies to an honorable lady, a Bahai of more than twenty years' standing, whose conclusions on certain matters may be incorrect, but who is intelligent, sincere and self-sacrificing beyond all shadow of doubt. It was no less a person than Baha-O-Llah who said:—

I declare by God that the sword of civility is keener than blades of steel.

—Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, page 23.

Baha-O-Llah tells his followers: *If in the presence of*

the Manifestation, the evil in some one is apparent, you must not make opposition, only turn to God (Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, page 84); Shoghi Effendi, instead of renouncing opposition, is much taken up with the flames of sedition, the pernicious elements, the machinations of an implacable and vigilant enemy and the invading forces of schism. He, likewise, is catapulted into an idyllic rapture when he contemplates the awful doom that will overtake these notorious exponents of corruption and heresy who succeed in protruding for a time their ugly features only to sink, as rapidly as they had arisen, into the mire of an ignominious end. There is a sentence for you! One fitted to strike terror into the hearts of many so-called heretics, and at the same time to produce unctuous satisfaction in the innermost being of those who are trained to hunt them.

Thus, we can see that Shoghi Effendi and the National Spiritual Assembly throughout these years have built a segregated community—a community, the members of which are taught to suspect the motives and actions of the most innocent—an isolated, self-centered, self-satisfied community, living behind the iron walls of a prison which Baha-O-Allah and Abdul Baha thought to destroy. Tragic? Yes. Unexpected? Of course; and as the Father and Son, from the Supreme Horizon, watch this process of rebuilding the fortress of alienation and proscription which they themselves had dismantled, can you guess the thoughts that occur in their Minds, can you imagine the conversation that is going on between them? Can you?



GATEWAY TO ACCA

CHAPTER XVII

EXCOMMUNICATION

An Ecclesiastical Law

Excommunication, as practiced by religious communities throughout the ages, is an ecclesiastical law adopted by the spiritual leaders of Judaism and Christianity, also Islam in modified form, to protect the faithful from contamination with those ideals and ideas that were considered harmful or heretical. Throughout the Middle Ages, the Roman Catholic Church resorted to this method in order to eject, and shut out from communion, those men and women who questioned her authority or her exclusive claim to salvation.

As an ecclesiastical law, whenever pronounced against a person or persons, it automatically deprived them of fellowship in things spiritual. The Roman Catholic Church perfected this engine of discipline and divided excommunication into two kinds: minor and major. Minor excommunication is separation or suspension from the sacraments. Major excommunication is absolute exclusion from the Church with all its rights and advantages and, in the case of very great offenders, even from social intercourse with the faithful.

In time, the church hierarchy created most rigorous methods of disciplinary constraint which culminated in the establishment of the Boards of Inquisition, which were empowered to excommunicate those found guilty of heresy, to imprison them and see to it that their houses were de-

stroyed, their goods confiscated and their bodies burned at the stake.

These severe measures reduced the church government to a mere contrivance for exacting explicit obedience to a system of ecclesiastical enactments; thus turning religion, which had been intended to be the very essence of mercy and love, into a machine of injustice and hate.

The practice of excommunication, as developed from the theories of the Schoolmen, was as follows: first: to reclaim the believer from error of doctrine and if possible to save his soul; second: in case the first act of mercy were unsuccessful, to cut him off, as a withered branch, from the body of Christ and all participation in the benefits thereof. Penalties of various degrees were legislated and enforced upon dissenters from the Church's formulated standard of doctrine. One most efficacious invention, fitted to strike terror into the heart of any rebel, was excommunication by inch or excommunication by candle, where the period allowed for repentance depended on the life of a burning candle. If the candle had died out before the apostate had recanted, no restoration could be expected in this world or in the world to come, and even Christ would not act as a pleader on the judgment day for such an accursed soul.

Now, I deny the temporal and spiritual right of excommunication as exercised in the past by the ecclesiastical institutions; and I reject claims to the same prerogatives which are maintained today by those who hold themselves as the shepherds of the flocks. Long enough has religion been defaced by this inhuman contraption, operated by so-called *holy men*! Long enough have these far-from-holy-men manipulated the conscience of mankind through

their demoniacal devices and, terming themselves the Vice-Gerents of the Most High, imposed their anti-spiritual and anti-social dogmas on a defenseless and innocent humanity!

The people of the world must awaken to the realization that God, who is the fountain-head of all blessings, was not, is not and will never be an excommunicator. He is no God of wrath and vengeance, but a God of understanding and compassion. All those who sat on the thrones of authority, expelling and anathematizing the *dissenters*, did not themselves know what faith meant and had no share in the truth that they pretended to promulgate.

The greatest service that could be rendered to religion is to lift from its brow the dark curse of excommunication and to demand, nay to insist, that this law be struck out from the creeds of all faiths. As long as it retains its place, even theoretically, in the Articles of the Confessions of various sects and denominations, the establishment of the principles of a Universal Religion and a Universal God will remain an impossibility. Therefore we, the people of the world, must eradicate from the pages of our spiritual consciousness the language of hate and denunciation, and obliterate from our religious books the rules of expulsion and anathema.

The Language of Love

It was certainly not an idle exhortation when Baha-O-Llah, from behind the prison walls of Acca, Palestine, announced that:—

The language of love is the touchstone of hearts and sustenance for the spirit; it is like unto the significances

behind the words, and a horizon for the dawn of the Sun of Wisdom and Knowledge.

—*Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, page 12.

Baha-O-Llah's aim was to purify all religions from the defects of cursing, execration and excommunication. His plan was to change the surface of the earth into the Paradise of Our Lord the Merciful; and in order that his followers might arise for the accomplishment of this mighty task, he addressed them saying:—

O people of Baha! Ye are the dawning-places of the Love and day-springs of the Favor of God. Defile not the tongues with cursing and execrating any one.

—*Tablets of Baha-O-Llah*, page 130.

Again he admonished them:—

I sincerely hope that my friends will not be contaminated by the dust of lies, and that the exaggerated things which they hear will not affect their state, their condition, their saintliness nor their purity.

—*Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, page 26.

The Bahais are therefore called upon, by the Revelator himself, to speak in the language of love and to protect themselves from the dust of lies; and the greatest lie of all the ages is that a compassionate God is the excommunicator of His own children or that He approves excommunication in His Name.

Baha-O-Llah, also says:—

The people of Baha must not refuse to discharge the reward of any one, and must respect possessors of

talents; and they must not stain their *tongues with slander* (or evil words) like unto the former community (i.e. Islamites).

—*Tablets of Baha-O-Llah*, page 10.

The Language of Hate

In this connection I cannot help but think of the excommunication pronounced by Clement VI (1346) against Louis the Bavarian. It surpasses anything that I have read on this subject. Compared to it, a cup of hemlock is heavenly nectar and prussic acid a life-imparting remedy. Through these words you can hear the hiss of the serpent and the whistling of the slave driver's scourge. It is a gem in the literature of the Curse:—

Let him be damned in his going out and his coming in! The Lord strike him with madness and blindness and mental insanity; may the heavens empty upon him their thunderbolts, and the Wrath of the Omnipotent burn itself into him in the present and the future world! May the universe fight against him, and the earth open to swallow him up alive!

Small wonder that emperors, kings, princes and the peoples of Europe quaked before this awesome power! When I, for the first time, read this majestic curse, a tremor ran through my spine and my pulse boiled as though caught in fire.

Presently, however, I realized more plainly than before what Baha-O-Llah really meant when he commanded us: *Defile not the tongues with cursing and execrating any one*; and when I had controlled my horror and regained my poise I remembered that I must not let myself be con-

taminated by the dust of lies—for these are indeed blasphemy against God, the Father, and the Christ, His Son, who on the cross prayed for his enemies. They are blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, attendant upon all men.

A Vast Difference

In carrying this new principle of a non-cursing, non-execrating and non-excommunicating religion to its logical conclusion, Abdul Baha, while traveling in the United States, repeatedly spoke on the subject. In the course of a sermon delivered before the Congregation of All Souls Unitarian Church, New York, on July 14, 1912, he said:—

All humanity must be looked upon with love, kindness and respect, for what we behold in them are none other than the signs and traces of God Himself. All are evidences of God; therefore, how shall we be justified in debasing and belittling them, uttering anathema and preventing them from drawing near unto His mercy. This is ignorance and injustice, displeasing to God, for in His sight all are His servants.

**—Promulgation of Universal Peace,
Vol. I, page 226.**

What a vast difference between the above utterances of Abdul Baha and those of Thomas Aquinas—the father of the rationalization of theology in the Roman Catholic Church—who, relying on the authority of St. Augustine, asserted that:—

Heretics were not only to be separated from the Church by excommunication, but from the world by death. As falsifiers of coins are put to death, much

more should they be put to death who are guilty of the more wicked act of corrupting the faith. The heretic, the Church delivers over to the secular tribunal to be put out of the world.

Heretic-Hunting

The Tribunal of Inquisition, established by Innocent III (1215), was intended to meet the peril of heresy and extirpate it. The heretics were compared to serpents concealing themselves in the grass, and princes were ordered to take an oath to support the Church in punishing them, and, on pain of forfeiting their dignities, to imprison them and confiscate their goods. Anyone who, in whatsoever way, supported heretics was himself excommunicated and denied his inheritance. Innocent III openly declared that even as treason was punished, so much more should punishments be meted out to those who committed the greater crime of blasphemy against God and His Son.

Abdul Baha must have been thinking on these and other such ungodly occurrences when on August 17, 1912, he spoke at Green Acre, Maine:—

From the beginning of human history down to the present time the various religions of the world have anathematized and accused each other of falsity. Each religion has considered the others bereft of the face of God, deprived of His mercy and in the direct line of divine wrath. Therefore, they have shunned each other most rigidly, exercising mutual animosity and rancour.

—*Promulgation of Universal Peace*,
Vol. II, page 259.

Universal Bounty

In the same speech, Abdul Baha develops this subject in a very striking and original manner:—

... How ignorant therefore the thought that God who created man, educated and nurtured him, surrounded him with all blessings, made the sun and all phenomenal existence for his benefit, bestowed upon him tenderness and kindness and then did not love him! This is palpable ignorance, for no matter to what religion a man belongs, even though he be an atheist or materialist, nevertheless God nurtures him, bestows his kindness and sheds upon him His light. How then can we believe God is wrathful and unloving? How can we even imagine this when as a matter of fact we are witnesses of the tenderness and mercy of God upon every hand? All about us we behold manifestations of the love of God. If therefore God be loving, what should we do? We have nothing else to do but to emulate Him. Just as God loves all and is kind to all, so must we really love and be kind to everybody. We must consider none bad, none worthy of detestation, no one as an enemy. We must love all; nay we must consider every one as related to us, for all are the servants of one God. All are under the instructions of one educator. We must strive day and night that love and amity may increase, that this bond of unity may be strengthened, that joy and happiness may more and more prevail, that in unity and solidarity, all mankind may gather beneath the shadow of God, that people may turn to God for their sustenance, finding in Him the life that is everlasting.

—*Promulgation of Universal Peace*,
Vol. II, page 261.

Inquisitorial Precepts

Let us contrast the above spiritual utterances of Abdul Baha with the writing of Pope Innocent III to the Inquisitorial Magistrates of Viterbo on the 25th of March, 1199:—

According to civil law, criminals convicted of treason are punished with death and their goods are confiscated; if even their children's lives are spared, it is simply out of pity. With how much more reason then should they who offend Jesus, the Son of the Lord God, by deserting the faith, be cut off from Christian communion and stripped of their goods, for it is infinitely more serious to offend against the Divine Majesty than to injure human majesty.

On another occasion the same Pope addressed the Princes of France:—

It is our wish that all the people take arms against the heretics whenever Brother Raynier and Brother Gui may deem advisable to give the command.

Bahai Administration Follows Suit

The few quotations from the writings of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that their central aim was the abolition of all exclusive acts and of every sectarian tendency. This one all-embracing spirit distinguishes their cause from all the past religions.

Yet, alas, *this limitation, this expulsion, this excommunication*, which Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha entreated their followers to renounce and cast away, these evil spirits of a by-gone age, these gibbering goblins of a lost generation

have been taken up by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada and incorporated in the fundamental laws of their ecclesiastical organization. The pity of it is that Shoghi Effendi falls in line with their medieval orthodoxy, with the result that today the Bahai world is witnessing religious persecution, heresy-hunting and excommunication according to standard pattern. In addition to this, the National Spiritual Assembly does not permit its *recognized* followers to join any organization, political or religious, and the Bahais are required to cancel any membership they may have in such bodies.

Thus, it seems to me that this is not at all *the New World Order of Baha-O-Allah* but the very old world order of intolerance, fanaticism, exclusion and spiritual isolation which Baha-O-Allah came to destroy. Thanks to the labor and ingenuity of the National Spiritual Assembly and Shoghi Effendi, these liabilities of the dark ages have been recaptured and embodied bag and baggage in this modern and one-time healthy movement.

Minor and Major Excommunication

According to its ruling, the National and Local Assemblies have the power to deprive a member of voting rights and suspend him from meetings and gatherings. These individuals are termed *recalcitrant*—not considered as expelled or excommunicated, but simply subsisting under a temporary ban.

This is very much like the *Minor Excommunication* in the Catholic Church; however, when the Guardian expels or excommunicates a person, this act has far-reaching spiritual implications *affecting the very soul of that be-*

liever. This is, of course the *Major Excommunication*, similar to that in the Roman Church. The triumphant edict of excommunication is laid down in *Bahai News*, No. 134, March 1940, page 2.

Concerning your question as to the status of those individuals whom the local Assembly or the National Spiritual Assembly have considered it necessary to deprive of the voting right and to suspend from local meetings and gatherings; such action which local and National Assemblies have been empowered to take against such recalcitrant members, however justified and no matter how severe, should under no circumstance be considered as implying the complete expulsion of the individuals affected from the Cause. The suspension of voting and other administrative rights of an individual, always conditional and therefore temporary, can never have such far-reaching implications, since it constitutes merely an administrative sanction; whereas his expulsion or excommunication from the Faith, which can be effected by the Guardian alone, in his capacity as the supreme spiritual head of the Community, has far-reaching spiritual implications affecting the very soul of that believer. The former, as already stated, is an administrative sanction, whereas the latter is essentially spiritual, involving not only the particular relationship of a believer to his local or National Assembly, but his very spiritual existence in the Cause. It follows, therefore, that a believer can continue calling himself a Bahai even though he may cease to be a voting member of the Community. But in case he is excluded from the body of the Cause by an act of the Guardian he ceases to be a believer, and cannot possibly identify himself even nominally with the Faith.



Group taken with Abdul Baha in Paris, in 1913.

From left to right:—A Persian statesman, Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, Dr. Lotfullah Hakim, Mirza Mahmud Zargani and Seyyed Assadollah.

The above quotation is from a letter addressed to Mr. Harlan Ober, a member of the National Spiritual Assembly. To my mind it raises a few fundamental issues, the discussion of which will be of vital importance.

The letter is written by the Guardian through his secretary and is published in *Bahai News with Shoghi Effendi's consent*; therefore to all intents and purposes it has the same validity as if he had written it personally.

A Staggering Claim

Shoghi Effendi claims for himself a power that is staggering in its implication; he assumes a spiritual dictatorship which is predictable of catastrophic results as regards the future of the Bahai Cause. This is a brand of Fascism much as that which has placed Europe under the heels of dictators accountable to no one, and which thus reduces Bahai membership to the level of spiritual serfdom. The exercise of this power is the more dangerous because, once Shoghi Effendi, as the Guardian, is entrenched in it and the precedent has become well established, all the succeeding Guardians will be liable to follow suit, appropriating it as their natural and inherited right.

It is an axiomatic fact that there is no man who, before the face of his Maker, can arrogate unto himself the power of excommunicating any person whatsoever from the religion of God or of controlling the spiritual destiny of that person. If it is proven that Shoghi Effendi really claims and actually practices this unwarranted right, then I say with all solemnity that it is the bounden duty of the liberal Bahais throughout the world to wage a continuous and vigorous war against such an assumption on his part.

For ages, the Christian world was crimsoned with the blood of innocent men, women and children, because the Popes claimed and exercised the power of excommunicating the so-called heretics and apostates. No record is more ghastly, no account more gruesome than are the records and accounts of the Inquisition and the *Autos-da-fe*; the very names suggest the worst horrors—lighted torches, towering flames, fierce-eyed hangmen, burning bodies, to say nothing of the faces of those who watched these spectacles with fiendish glee or, to say the least, with acquiescence. Now, do we want to bring into the Bahai Cause these relics of barbarism, these inventions of the devil? One may legitimately argue that such conditions will never return to our world. Yet I answer: So long as a single man claims this power and the right to exercise it, and a subservient group yields to his authority, the potential danger of a return to the practices of the Middle Ages exists. Some day there may be an eruption like unto a silent volcano which, at unforeseen times, floods the countryside with its rivers of lava and covers the face of the heavens with its clouds of smoke.

No one ever dreamed that in our lifetime Europe would be saddled with Nazism and Fascism with their attendant ideologies of regimentation, intolerance and barbarism, yet the impossible has happened and here we are, facing this terror!

On the other hand, it is not difficult to picture the establishment of a type of spiritual cruelty which would not necessitate the burning of heretics at the stake. This is the 20th Century, in spite of the European nightmare, and it is probable that we will content ourselves with more

refined methods of persecution. We are able to propagate, by subtle and *civilized* methods, rumors that in time will destroy the character of those whom we are pleased to point out as enemies. Just keep hammering at it, persistently, unremittingly, and, in time, men will be ready to call white black, and day night.

The Twin Swords

The Roman Catholic Church arrogated to herself the wielding of the *spiritual sword*; she *draws the sword which of God she hath received*, and the Princes of Europe were commanded to draw their *temporal* swords and support her in her doings. Another important chapter in the history of the Roman Catholic Church was the famous assertion of Boniface VIII (1302) that *both* swords were in the hands of the Pope. The Popes unsheathed these two swords and with their sharp blades struck at thousands. These acts of spiritual terrorism and devastation were the *fruits of seeds* sown in the early stages of Christianity, no doubt in some cases by sincere Christians whose sole aim it had been to protect the *deposit of Faith* handed down by the Apostles.

In Shoghi Effendi's letter, we find the statement: *But in case he is excluded from the body of the Cause by an act of the Guardian he ceases to be a believer, and cannot possibly identify himself even nominally with the Faith.* Being familiar with the development of the history of religions, we recognize in this statement the seed out of which will unquestionably grow the tree of a new Inquisition with its attendant cruelty and corruption. As you

sow so shall you reap, is the universal law of nature—cause and effect—no one can escape it.

The very worst calamity that could befall the Bahai Cause is that its members should supinely accept the principle that Shoghi Effendi, *in his capacity as the supreme spiritual head of the Community*, has the power to *expel* or to *excommunicate* a *believer* and that this act *has far-reaching spiritual implications affecting the very soul of that believer*. Shoghi Effendi has no such power! His excommunication cannot affect even the soul of an amocba; how much less the soul of a believer in Baha-O-Llah! My faith in the Bahai Cause would indeed be very superficial, should I come to believe that *any* human being could, by a mere gesture or a few mesmeric words, take it away from me or from any one else. Every soul, in accepting the Bahai Cause, makes a covenant with Baha-O-Llah, and that Covenant, neither Shoghi Effendi nor the National or Local Assemblies can ever break. Its foundation is in the depths of consciousness, and God alone knows its dwelling-place.

Scriptural Authority

The Pope, as we have seen, *in his capacity as the supreme head of the Community*, had the power to *expel* or *excommunicate* a *believer*, and that act was supposed to have *far-reaching spiritual implications affecting the very soul of that believer*. Now, how did the Pope find grounds on which to assert this power? Those who chose to invest him with this prerogative had to search the New Testament in order to find a verse that would support such a claim. Well, they found it. Here is the verse:—

And I say also unto thee, that, thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.

—*St. Matthew, Chapter 16, Verses 18-19.*

On the authority of these two verses the Roman Church built her universal, temporal and spiritual Empire!

Never, in the furthest stretch of his divine vision, could Christ have imagined the astounding repercussions of the above words, and if Peter, the humble fisherman, could have projected himself into coming centuries and witnessed what his so-called *successors* were perpetrating in his name, he would have opened his honest eyes in horror and disgust. Peter would have repudiated his successors, while it goes without saying that they, likewise, would have repudiated him, throwing him out of the Vatican as the *reprobate Jew* that he was.

The Doctrine of the Keys

From the very beginning, the doctrine of *the keys* was a topic of theological discussion, and for centuries controversy raged around this point. As an essential credo of the Church, it was related to the teaching which applied to the forgiveness of sin (John, Chapter 5: Verse 14 and Chapter 8: Verse 11). The Fathers wrote volumes of commentaries on this point, and indulged in varied and conflicting interpretations, all of which go to prove the

supreme importance that was attached to this doctrine, necessary to discipline and fundamental for the maintenance of religious uniformity.

Thus, the Church of Rome held up Peter as the steward of the House of God on earth, who possessed the keys to all the heavenly mansions and had therefore the power to open or to shut. This gift of the power to open or to shut, to bind or to loose, to permit or to forbid, was in time assumed by Bishops and Popes and exercised under all circumstances. Later, the claim was regularized by the Fathers and Schoolmen in the interests of the Church Order and of a Ministry that had become increasingly sacerdotal. Ambrose, in particular, asserted that the Church had the keys in her *own* possession and enjoyed the sole power both to *bind and to loose*.

Externalizing the Word of God

The resemblance between the Roman Catholic Church and the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada affords another striking parallel: All the spiritual ideals of Christ, originally metaphoric and uttered in the flowery language of Eastern symbology, became hardened by the Western Church into dogmas, thus changing the spring of spirituality into the winter of formalism. This externalizing process gained momentum from age to age, as the forces of orthodoxy found themselves in control of the State. The belief in the divine right of the hierarchy and the duty of imposing submission to it by force became the cardinal principle of the Church, with the result that a suffocating darkness descended upon the nations. The method which the succes-

sors of Peter adopted was not to *loose* the souls on earth but to *bind* them; it was one of violence, not of persuasion. The Church rested her rule on the sword rather than on the Cross. Thus, the primitive Christianity of the East was transformed into the elaborate and ritualistic Catholicism of the West with its vast jungle of rules, culminating in its official slogan: *No salvation without the Church.*

As a result of the doctrine of excommunication propounded by Shoghi Effendi and upheld by the National Spiritual Assembly, the Bahai Cause has taken up all the characteristics of the Church of Rome and, unless this doctrine is publicly repudiated, it will be subject to the same spiritual diseases, with gradual corruption and disintegration.

Contradictory Estimates

The claim made by Shoghi Effendi, regarding his right, *in his capacity as the supreme spiritual head*, to excommunicate the believers from the Faith, totally and fundamentally differs from a previous estimate of himself, written by him in the *World Order of Baha-U-Llah*. This estimate was published in 1934, while the new role which he now assumes was given out in 1939. There is quite a gap between the two statements and a distinct change of principle. In the earlier one, he does not think that he is a *co-sharer with Abdul Baha*; he can never claim to be a *perfect exemplar of the teachings of Baha-U-Llah* or the *stainless mirror that reflects His light*; he forbids the believers to pray to him, to seek his benediction or even to celebrate his birthday. He feels that he can exercise the right and perform the obligation imposed upon him as the

Guardian and yet remain infinitely inferior to both Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha *in rank, and different in nature.*

Here are his words:—

The Guardian of the Faith must not under any circumstances . . . be exalted to the rank that will make him a co-sharer with Abdul Baha in the unique position which the Center of the Covenant occupies—much less to the station exclusively ordained for the Manifestation of God. So grave a departure from the established tenets of our Faith is nothing short of open blasphemy. . . .

No Guardian of the Faith, I feel it my solemn duty to place on record, can ever claim to be the perfect exemplar of the teachings of Baha-U-Llah or the stainless mirror that reflects His light. . . . In the light of this truth to pray to the Guardian of the Faith, to address him as lord and master, to designate him as his holiness, to seek his benediction, to celebrate his birthday, or to commemorate any event associated with his life would be tantamount to a departure from those established truths that are enshrined within our beloved Faith.

Feb. 8, 1934, Haifa, Palestine.

—*The World Order of Baha-U-Llah*,
pages 150, 151.

Naturally, I am fully aware of the fact that by this time many *believers* in the organization have, in contradiction to the above statement, deified Shoghi Effendi. It is known that they look upon him as a reincarnation of the spirit of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha and that they have bedecked his shoulders with the mantle of infallibility.

This strange belief, wholly at variance with Shoghi Effendi's earlier concept of himself, is taught but orally from mouth to mouth, yet traces of it can be detected in some of the pronouncements of the National Spiritual Assembly and the reports of its various committees.

The Black Plague

The doctrine of excommunication, appropriated by Shoghi Effendi, is peculiarly the weapon of the Dark Ages of intolerance and ignorance. No other dogma is so distinctly the creation of an irreligious era. It is the black plague in the realm of the mind; it is religious assassination and spiritual murder; it is an abomination unto the Lord of Mercy and Truth. The spiritual and cultural manifestations of the Renaissance as well as the courage and sacrifice of thousands of lovers of freedom contributed to wrest (to all intents and purposes) the power of excommunication from the hands of the Roman Catholic Church and to establish in Europe and America the age of the liberty of Religion. Does it then seem credible that Shoghi Effendi is so unmindful of the history of the past that he has brought himself to believe that he can bring back into the Western world the doctrine of excommunication? Are the members of the National Spiritual Assembly so blind to the significant events in the United States during the last hundred and fifty years that they hope to succeed in establishing on these shores a religious tribunal, with authority to expel from the Cause those believers whom they are unable to brow-beat into submission? The following significant words of Baha-O-Llah are applicable to this subject:—

O people of Baha! The possessor of the Name says: Meditate upon these events that ye may really break the idols of superstitions and imaginations.

—*Bahai Scriptures*, page 230.

A Worthwhile Excommunication

If the Bahai Cause aspires to spread its teachings far and wide and gain the respect and devotion of mankind, now or in the future, it must purge itself of *all* the religious limitations of the past. It must submit to a process of complete self-purification and then dedicate itself to the progressive, spiritual, social and intellectual interests of our fellowmen.

The doctrine of excommunication has *not one* good thing in its favor. It has set men against men and class against class. It has made the leaders of religions suspicious and revengeful, leaving behind an accursed memory. It is beyond my comprehension why Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of a Universal Movement, wishes to revive this practically lifeless corpse and so inflict a mortal injury upon the Cause!

In the face of this overriding danger, which is embodied in Shoghi Effendi's claim that as the supreme head of the Cause he has the power to excommunicate or expel the believers, thereby depriving them of their spiritual heritage, no other choice is left to me but to sound the alarm. I have been impelled by motives beyond my control to present this problem before the Bahai world, before the public in general, and before the conscience of an awakening society which, little by little, is becoming aware of the mission of Baha-O-Llah.

Herewith I appeal to Shoghi Effendi, as the Guardian designated by the Master, to preserve the democracy of the Bahai Cause, to protect the vital dignity of man, to obliterate all the traces of negation, to herald the universality of the Message of Abdul Baha, and, in so doing, to *expel* expulsion and *excommunicate* excommunication. Such an excommunication would, indeed, be worthwhile!

A Little Bunch of Flowers

Before leaving this subject, I will recount a story, simple, human and very touching. It took place shortly after The New History Society had been cut from the Bahai Administration, at a time when I had suddenly become *untouchable* to my former Bahai companions. This intimate glimpse of a ship-wrecked life can serve as an example of what has occurred over the centuries, in instances without number.

One night, a few of us were gathered in Mrs. Chanler's house. It was late, and the household had retired, so, when a ring was heard at the front door, I went downstairs and answered it myself. No one was there but, at my feet, a little bunch of flowers was resting on the doormat. I picked it up and carried it to the library; and all of us knew that it was a message of love that could not be delivered in person.

A few evenings later, under exactly the same circumstances, we again heard a ring at the door and I went down to find one of our Bahai friends in the street. She had not run away this time. I brought her up to the library, and there we held her in our arms for a long time

while she sobbed most pitifully; and all the while she was moaning: *I have come home! I could not bear it any longer. I have come home!*

The reunion was only a temporary one, for this Bahai sister of mine had a great veneration for the Guardian and she could not withstand his commands. So, for a while, she came and went, trying to reconcile her conception of the Cause with the dealings of the Administration. Sometimes she would pace the streets half the night in the hope that a speeding taxicab would put an end to her agony. Finally, when body and mind could endure no more, she passed between the doors of a hospital and disappeared from the sight of all who knew her.

Some years later, she returned to her family, and that fact is the last news that I have had of her. Probably, we will never meet again in this life, but she has left behind her a memory of spiritual loveliness and warm, human susceptibilities as poignant as any that I have, and, although the period of our separation is long, I can still sense the perfume of that little bunch of flowers that lay on the doormat.

Such is the harvest of excommunication—broken hearts, broken lives, shattered confidence! Does Shoghi Effendi really wish to deck the altar of the Bahai Cause with these gruesome trophies?

PART SEVEN

POLITICS AND THE BAHAI CAUSE

- 18. Bahais and Persian Politics
- 19. "Da" and "Niet"—"Ja" and "Nein"
- 20. Bahai Non-participation in Politics

By the blessing of the upright, the city is exalted. . . . Where no counsel is, the people fall; but, in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.

—Proverbs, Chapter 11, Verses 11 & 14



Abbas Effendi, later known as Abdul Baha.
Photograph taken in Adrianople.

CHAPTER XVIII

BAHAIS AND PERSIAN POLITICS

A Marked Movement

From the year 1844, when the Bab declared his mission in Shiraz, up to the year 1909-10, the Babis, and the Bahais who succeeded them, lived under the autocratic rule of the Shahs of the Kadjar Dynasty; and, when in 1852 Baha-O-Llah was exiled to Turkey, he and those who accompanied him were subjected to another tyranny, that of the Ottoman Sultans.

In the dispensation of the Bab, his band of devoted followers met successive waves of persecution, during which thousands upon thousands were put to the sword by order of the Iranian government and the Islamic clergy. These blood-orgies were the result of loud and persistent accusations against the Babis, which were to the effect that this order planned to interfere with the political affairs of the nation and to overthrow the established order.

The encounters that took place between the small but fervent religious band and the armed forces of Iran make astounding reading. In several parts of the country, the Babis were attacked by the army and the populace, and were forced to take refuge in barracks where they were surrounded on all sides. Here, in many cases, protracted sieges set in, which, after months of heroic resistance, were terminated by promises of exemption and pardon which were never kept. When the exhausted Babis emerged from their refuge, they were massacred wholesale.

Precautionary Measures

Now, while these events were taking place, and in subsequent years when their recurrence was ever imminent, Baha-O-Llah from his place of exile strove to convey to the rulers of Iran and Turkey the fact that his people were, in no sense of the word, seditious; at the same time, he instructed the Bahais to concentrate on the improvement of their own characters and under no circumstances to engage in political pursuits. This step on the part of Baha-O-Llah was a most necessary one, for it prevented the wiping out of the entire movement. His stand was later adopted by Abdul Baha.

Baha-O-Llah Instructs the Bahais

The following words of Baha-O-Llah addressed to his followers very conclusively prove the point under discussion:—

Ye are forbidden sedition and strife in the books and epistles; and herein I desire nought save your exaltation and elevation, whereunto beareth witness the heaven and its stars, the sun and its radiance, the trees and their leaves, the seas and their waves and the earth and its treasures.

—A Traveller's Narrative, page 152.

This is what is intended by victory: Sedition hath never been nor is pleasing to God, and that which certain ignorant persons formerly wrought was never approved. If ye be slain for His good pleasure verily it is better for you than that ye should slay.

—A Traveller's Narrative, page 115.

The meaning of victory is not this, that any one should fight or strive with any one.

—*A Traveller's Narrative*, page 113.

Every one, then, who desireth victory must first subdue the city of his own heart with the sword of spiritual truth and of the Word.

—*A Traveller's Narrative*, page 114.

These lofty and definite statements of Baha-O-Llah induced the early Bahais to lay aside the more provocative attitude which had been held by the Babis and to turn their attention from the corrupt political systems of Iran and Turkey, which they were in no position to alter, to the spread of the teachings and the increase of their numbers. Thus in time they became a well-knit, disciplined minority, the model behavior of which had far-reaching influence.

Baha-O-Llah Pleads with the Shah

While Baha-O-Llah, on the one hand, was striving to restrain the dauntless Bahais from over-activity on dangerous terrain, he on the other hand laid their case before the Shah of Persia and did not hesitate to blame this sovereign in full for the part which he had taken in the long chapter of persecution.

Baha-O-Llah says:—

They have attacked a number of reformers of the world with the charge of seditiousness. As God liveth, these persons had and have no intent nor hope save the glory of the State and service to their nation! For God they spoke and for God they speak, and in the way of God do they journey.

—*A Traveller's Narrative*, pages 79-80.

It is twenty years and more that they (the Bahais) have been tormented by day and by night with the fierceness of the royal anger and that they have been cast each one into a different land by the blasts of the tempests of the king's wrath. How many children have been left fatherless! How many fathers have become childless! How many mothers have not dared, through fear and dread, to mourn over their slaughtered children!

—*A Traveller's Narrative*, pages 119-120.

And then Baha-O-Llah cries out from the depth of his heart:—

O King! The lamps of justice are extinguished and the fire of persecution is kindled on all sides, until that they have made my people captives.

—*A Traveller's Narrative*, page 139.

O King, I conjure thee by thy Lord the Merciful to regard His servants with the gaze of pitiful eyes, and to rule with justice in their midst, that God may award His Favor unto thee.

—*Bahai Scriptures*, page 69.

Verily those who surround thee, love thee for their own sakes, while this Servant loveth thee for thine own sake, nor doth He desire aught save that He may bring thee nigh unto the station of grace and turn thee unto the right hand of Justice.

—*Bahai Scriptures*, pages 70-71.

O God, this is a letter which I wish to send to the King; and Thou knowest that I have not desired aught of him save the display of his justice to Thy people, and the showing forth of his favors to the dwellers in Thy kingdom, and verily, for myself, I have not desired

aught save what Thou desirest. . . . Help, O God, his Majesty the King, to execute Thy laws amongst Thy servants and to show forth Thy Justice amidst Thy creatures, that he may rule over this sect as he ruleth over those who are beside them. Verily Thou art the Potent, the Mighty, the Wise.

—*Bahai Scriptures* page 74.

By God, I do not desire sedition, but the purification of God's servants from all that withholdeth them from approach to God.

—*Bahai Scriptures*, page 76.

We ask God . . . to assist the King in that which He liketh and approveth; and to help him unto that which shall bring him near to the Day-Spring of His Most Comely Names, that he may not shut his eyes to the wrong which he seeth, but may regard his subjects with the eye of favor and preserve them from violence. . . . And we ask Him to make thee a helper unto His religion and a regarder of His Justice, that thou mayest rule over His servants as thou rulest over those of thy kindred, and mayest choose for them what thou wouldst choose for thyself.

—*Bahai Scriptures*, page 80.

Baha-O-Llah Pleads with the Sultan

It is now the turn of the Sultan of Turkey to receive the reprimand of Baha-O-Llah:—

O, thou personage, who considerest thyself the greatest of all men, while looking upon the Divine Youth, (Baha-O-Llah) thinking him to be the lowest of men, yet through Him the eye of the Supreme Concourse is brightened. . . . From the beginning every one of the Manifestations of mercifulness . . . who have stepped

forth from the Realm of Immortality . . . men like thee have considered those sanctified souls . . . upon whom the reformation of the world depends, as the people of strife and wrong-doers. Verily, their names (the deniers) are forgotten and ere long thy name will also be forgotten and thou shalt find thyself in great loss.

According to thy opinion, this Quickener of the world and its Peace-maker is culpable and seditious. What crime have the women, children and suffering babes committed, to merit thy wrath, oppression and hate? In every religion and community the children are considered innocent, nor does the Pen of Divine Command hold them responsible, yet the reign of thy tyranny and despotism has surrounded them. If thou art the follower of any religion or sect, read thou the Heavenly Books . . . so that thou mayest realize the irresponsibility of children . . . even those people who do not believe in God, have never committed such crimes. . . .

You have persecuted a number of souls who have shown no opposition in your country and who have instigated no revolution against the government; nay rather, days and nights they have been peacefully engaged in the mentioning of God. You have pillaged their properties and through your tyrannical acts, all they had was taken from them. . . .

Before God, a handful of dust is greater than your kingdom, sovereignty, glory and dominion, and should He desire, He would scatter you as the sand of the desert, and ere long his wrath shall overtake you, revolutions shall appear in your midst and your countries will be divided! Then you will weep and lament and nowhere will you find help or protection. . . .

Be ye watchful, for the wrath of God is prepared and ere long ye shall behold that which is descended from the Pen of Command. Have ye thought that your glory is everlasting, or did ye dream that your kingdom would remain forever? No, by the life of God! Your glory is not eternal, and our humiliation will not last. . . .

The point is this, that thou mayest raise thy head from the bed of negligence and become mindful and not oppose the servants of God without reason. Bear in mind that so far as power and strength remain in the body, thou shouldst remove persecutions from the oppressed ones. . . . Be just! Then turn to God, perchance He may forgive the sins thou hast committed in this ephemeral life . . . Through thy tyranny the Fire of Sinai flamed forth, the Spirit wept, and the hearts of the angels bled. . . .

Do not think that thou hast made this Youth powerless, or that thou hast conquered him. Thou art defeated by one of the servants but thou knowest it not. The worst and lowest of creatures rules over thee, that is, thy passion and desire . . . Thou art weak, and knowest it not.

—Baha-O-Llah in his tablet to Sultan of Turkey,
Bahai Scriptures, pages 81-88.

Abdul Baha Takes up the Defense

Writing in about 1874, Abdul Baha continued along the same lines, pointing out to the then Shah of Iran the fact that the Bahais were not a rebellious people; that they did not manifest any signs of *sedition*; that they were *the loyal subjects of the king*, and all that they required

from the government was freedom of conscience, which he thought must be the established principle of monarchy. This is the way that Abdul Baha expresses himself:—

For thirty years there has been no rumour of disturbance or rebellion, nor any sign of sedition. Notwithstanding the duplication of adherents, and the increase and multiplication of this body, through many admonitions and encouragements to virtue this sect are all in the utmost repose and stability; they have made obedience their distinctive trait and in extreme submissiveness and subordination are the loyal subjects of the king.

On what lawful grounds can the government further molest them, or permit them to be slighted? Besides, this interference with the consciences and beliefs of peoples, and persecution of diverse denominations of men is . . . contrary to the established principles of monarchy.

—*A Traveller's Narrative*, page 160.

Abdul Baha as well as Baha-O-Llah never condoned the injustices of the Shah, and, after exposing the enormities that had been committed against his followers, he asserts that one of the functions of government is *to ensure freedom of conscience and tranquility of heart*. He reminds the Shah that other countries did not become civilized, nor did they attain to high degrees of influence and power, until they had come to the point of dealing with all classes according to *one standard*. He then ends his dissertation with the significant remark: *The common interest is complete equality*.

Let us read his words:—

The true nature and real doctrine of this sect have now become evident and well known: all their writings and tracts have repeatedly and frequently fallen into our hands and are to be found preserved in the possession of the government. If they be perused, the actual truth and inward verity will become clear and apparent. These pages are entirely taken up with prohibitions of sedition, recommendations of upright conduct among mankind, obedience, submission, loyalty, conformity and acquisition of laudable qualities and encouragements to become endowed with praiseworthy accomplishments and characteristics. They have absolutely no reference to political questions, nor do they treat of that which could cause disturbance or sedition.

Under these circumstances a just government can find no excuse, and possesses no pretext for further persecuting this sect, except a claim to the right of interference in thought and conscience, which are the private possessions of the heart and soul.

And, as regards this matter, there has already been much interference, and countless efforts have been made. What blood has been shed! What heads have been hung up! Thousands of persons have been slain; thousands of women and children have become wanderers or captives; many are the buildings which have been ruined; and how many noble races and families have become headless and homeless! Yet nought has been effected and no advantage has been gained; no remedy has been discovered for this ill, nor any easy salve for this wound.

To ensure freedom of conscience and tranquillity of heart and soul is one of the duties and functions of government, and is in all ages the cause of progress in development and ascendancy over other lands. Other

civilized countries acquired not this pre-eminence, nor attained unto these high degrees of influence and power, till such time as they put away the strife of sects out of their midst, and dealt with all classes according to one standard. All are one people, one nation, one species, one kind. The common interest is complete equality. —*A Traveller's Narrative*, pages 157-158.

The Bahais Hold to their Mission

Notwithstanding this aloof attitude from the *corrupt autocratic systems* of Iran and Turkey which had been adopted as a protective measure, we must not lose sight of the fact that the Bahais were far from indifferent to the social and political destiny of their native land. They did not stand on the sidelines, callous to injustices, but simply changed their tactics and worked along unprovocative constructive lines.

Abdul Baha, the incomparable statesman, had placed in their hands a mighty weapon, with which to fight the dark forces of political chicanery and corruption; and, through this means, his people gained unheralded victories in the highways and byways of society. What was this weapon? It simply was a book: *The Mysterious Forces of Civilization*, written anonymously by the Master himself.

As its name indicates, this work is a treatise on political philosophy, democracy and just government. It develops the theories of citizenship, national and international; it deals with civil and religious liberty, freedom of speech and other basic principles for a new world order. Written in eloquent Persian, it was circulated far and wide.

Like leaven, these ideas fermented in the minds of the

young leaders and would-be reformers of Iran and Turkey. According to the judgment of a number of competent witnesses, the unobtrusive and persistent passing of this book from hand to hand contributed a decisive blow toward the downfall of the Iranian and Turkish monarchies, during the fateful years 1909-10. The fly-leaf bears the words: *Written in Persian by an Eminent Bahai Philosopher.*

The Mysterious Forces of Civilization, as translated into English by Johanna Dawud, became available to the western world through its first London edition in 1910. A reprint was made in 1918 by the Bahai Publishing Society of Chicago, Ill. I submit it, to the interested student, as a most consummate exposition of the kind of political philosophy that must inevitably be practiced in the world of today and the world of tomorrow, also as a manual for the organization of national and international government based on justice, truth and fair dealing. Likewise, I take the liberty of submitting it to the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, for a careful reading of this document will, to their possible amazement and I hope to their enlightenment, reveal the fact that Abdul Baha, unlike his grandson Shoghi Effendi, did not express his *abhorrence of political affairs* (*Bahai News*, July 1933, No. 75, Page 3) but rather, that he was the most able statesman our age has produced, and that he stands a model of political enterprise for those who wish to emulate him.

Restrictions Lifted

When the decadent autocracies of Iran and Turkey col-



ABDUL BAHHA'S HOUSE AT ACCA.

lapsed under the impact of democratic uprisings, a new era was inaugurated in those countries, and the Bahais found themselves at liberty to take their legitimate part in the establishment of a humanitarian society. It was at this time that Abdul Baha advised his followers to enter the domain of clean politics, enjoining them to purify the poisonous atmosphere that was still clinging to the minds of their contemporaries and to help lay the stable foundations of a fellowship of nations. There is no doubt but that the Bahais tackled the work with vigor and enthusiasm.

If the reader needs any evidence to prove the above assertion, I can do no better than quote a statement made by Abdul Baha in Boston, Mass., on July 23, 1912. It is in answer to questions put to him by some American friends who no doubt remembered his past instructions regarding the non-participation of the believers in politics.

Abdul Baha said:—

The injunction to Bahais has been this:—They must not engage in matters of politics which lead to corruption. They must have nothing to do with corruption or sedition, but should interest themselves in clean politics. In Persia, at the present time, the Bahais have no part in the movements which have terminated in corruption; but on the other hand a Bahai may be a politician of the right type; even ministers in Persia are Bahais. We have Governor-Generals who are Bahais and there are many other Bahais who take part in politics, but not in corruption. It is evident they must have nothing to do with seditious movements. For example, if the

Americans should arise with the intention of reinstating despotism, the Bahais should take no part in it.

—*Star of the West*, Vol. IV, page 122, No. 7,
July 13, 1912.

The above statement of Abdul Baha demonstrates the pride which he took in the political achievements of his Iranian followers. We can, by reminding ourselves of certain rules and developments, appreciate more fully the significance of his words:—

(a) Up to 1909, his instructions to the Bahais in Iran regarding non-participation in political affairs was literally obeyed.

(b) Within the short space of four years from 1909, when the Iranian Revolution occurred and the despotic monarchy was overthrown, up to 1912, when Abdul Baha made the foregoing statement, there had appeared on the political scene of Iran Bahai Ministers, Bahai Governor-Generals and Bahai Statesmen who were wielding the sceptre of power, not for the purpose of filling their own purses, but for that of serving the best interests of their country, and in the most unselfish manner.

(c) Abdul Baha divided politics into two parts: *clean* politics and *corrupt* politics. The Bahais should interest themselves in the former and totally avoid the latter. This instruction applies to America as well as Persia, and to all other lands as well.

(d) A Bahai may be a statesman. This is to be desired.

So did Abdul Baha give to his native land, Iran, some very wise and able servants. The question is: how did

he do it; how did he make such a transformation in men who, for over half a century, had been trained to rigidly avoid everything political? The whole answer lies in the meaning which he intended to convey, and which his followers read between the lines and grasped from the very beginning. When they were told not to participate in politics, they looked at one another, exchanged a few words, and went after their business, which was on the upward trend. Likewise, when the Shah of Iran and the Sultan of Turkey and their ministers read the words of Abdul Baha, they were very well satisfied and also went after their business—a business which was on the brink of failure. Finally, when the crash came, the Bahais stepped onto the scene, fully equipped for the work that was to be done.

The result of all this? Abdul Baha himself reported it to the American Bahais. Unfortunately, they had ears, but heard not; eyes, but saw not, and minds that did not comprehend.

Church and State

Abdul Baha did not believe in the centralization of governmental or religious authorities into vast monopolistic corporations. He denounced this tendency as directly leading to despotism. At the close of an address delivered at the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Ascension on Sunday morning, June 2, 1912, in New York City, he was asked the question:—

Is it not a fact that Universal Peace cannot be accomplished until there is political democracy in all the countries of the world?

Answer:—It is very evident that in the future of all the countries of the world, be they constitutional in government or Republican or Democratic in form, there shall be no centralization. The United States may be held up as the example of government in time to come, that is to say, each Province will be independent in itself but there will be a union concerning the interests of the various independent states . . . To cast aside centralization which promotes despotism is the exigency of the time.

—*Star of the West*, Vol. III, No. 10, page 27,
Sept. 8, 1912.

In studying the principle of non-centralization in government and progressive democracy, it would be well to examine the thoughts of H. G. Wells on the subject of legislation in a free world. In his *Declaration of the Rights of Man*, he says:—

In matters of cooperative and collective action, man must abide by the majority decisions ascertained by electoral methods which give effective expression to individual choice. All legislation must be subject to repeal. No treaties or contracts shall be made secretly in the name of the community. The fount of legislation in a free world is the whole people, and since life flows on constantly to new citizens, no generation can, in whole or in part, surrender or delegate this legislative power which is inalienably inherent in mankind.

—*The Rotarian Magazine*, September, 1941, page 9.

Separation of Religion and Politics

In the teachings of Abdul Baha, as in the constitutional laws of the United States, politics is separated from re-

ligion. Neither should interfere with the other, for each has definite and essential services to render to society. Nevertheless, Abdul Baha expects the officials of the government, no matter what position they may occupy, to be conscious of religion and of the spiritual values. Their souls must be vibrant with the love of God, their services to the nation must be actuated by noble impulses; at the same time, the internal problems of religion as such do not enter their domain.

Similarly, religious teachers should be conscious of social and democratic values, and must cooperate with the State. However, their duties lie along the lines of education, and their responsibilities are toward the unfortunate and the poor. They must hold to their mission and abstain from political plans and schemes. They should trust the officers of their government to perform their duties in the political domain, even as they are performing their own in the religious field. To make the above cardinal Bahai principle plain let us listen to Abdul Baha:—

At the same time religious interests should not be brought into politics. Religions should treat of morals; politics of material circumstances. Those in authority should occupy themselves with the lives of men; they should teach ideas of service, good morals and develop the habit of Justice. "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's."

—*Star of the West*, Vol. III, No. 2, page 7,
April 9, 1912.

On another occasion the same thought is expressed in a slightly different way:—

In despotic Governments carried on by men without divine faith, where no fear of spiritual retribution exists, the execution of the laws is tyrannical and unjust. There is no greater prevention of oppression than these two sentiments, hope and fear. They have both political and spiritual consequences.

If Administrators of the law would take into consideration the spiritual consequences of their decisions, and follow the guidance of religion, they would be divine agents in the world of action, the representatives of God for those who are on earth, and they would defend, for the love of God, the interests of His servants as they would defend their own. If a Governor realizes his responsibility and fears to defy the Divine Law, his judgments will be just. Above all, if he believes that the consequences of his actions will follow him beyond his earthly life, and that "as he sows so must he reap," such a man will surely avoid injustice and tyranny.

Should an official, on the contrary, think that all responsibility for his actions must end with his earthly life, knowing and believing nothing of divine favors and a spiritual kingdom of joy, he will lack the incentive to just dealing, and the inspiration to destroy oppression and unrighteousness.

When a ruler knows that his judgments will be weighed in a balance by the Divine Judge, and that if he be not found wanting he will come into the Celestial Kingdom and that the light of the heavenly Bounty will shine upon him, then will he surely act with justice and equity. Behold how important it is that Ministers of State should be enlightened by Religion.

With political questions, the clergy, however, have nothing to do! Religious matters should not be con-

fused with Politics in the present state of the world (for their interests are not identical).

Religion concerns matters of the heart, of the Spirit and of morals. Politics are occupied with the material things of life. Religious teachers should not invade the realm of politics; they should concern themselves with the spiritual education of the people; they should ever give good counsel to men, trying to serve God and humankind; they should endeavor to awaken spiritual aspiration, and strive to enlarge the understanding and knowledge of humanity, to improve morals, and to increase the love for justice. . . .

In Persia there are some amongst the important Ministers of State who are religious, who are exemplary, who worship God, and who fear to disobey His laws, who judge justly and rule their people with equity.

Other Governors there are in this land who have no fear before their eyes, who think not of the consequences of their actions, working for their own desires, and these have brought Persia into great trouble and difficulty.

—*The Wisdom of Abdul Baha*—Addresses delivered in Paris 1910-11. Published by The Bahai Publishing Committee, New York, N. Y., 1924, pages 146-47-48.

Triumph of Democracy

In the era that is ahead of us, the development of governmental agencies along lines of Bahai thought is inevitable, but this must be orderly process of evolutionary laws. National adjustment through violence is a theory already discarded by the practical mind. It is true that

even in these modern days, the powers of brute force and of Democracy are ranged against each other; yet so long as there is one man in the world who can think and plan democratically, he is of the future and stands head and shoulders above those who cannot. His eventual success is assured.

The great despotic empires of Sumeria, Egypt, Assyria, Persia, Greece and Rome have left a tradition of violence, war and destruction; and are now no more.

Through the struggle of the European nations, the Catholic Church, in the sixteenth century, lost its claim to worldly and spiritual universal sovereignty.

The American and French Revolutions form the watershed which divides the autocratic form of government from the slowly evolving nation-states. Broadly regarded, the history of modern government, until the declaration of the First World War in 1914, has been the history of a steady widening of the basis of democratic powers.

The arrival on the political arena of the Communist, Fascist and Nazi totalitarian regimes, each with its own dictatorial ideology, has once more thrown our world into a convulsive revolution, and the democratic system is being attacked on all sides by the forces of disruption and anarchy.

However, as a student of the Bahai Cause, I retain a deep and abiding faith in Democracy and am confident that although its ideal is being subjected to a severe test by the present crisis, it will, sooner or later, emerge from confinement and, purified by adversity and torture, establish itself in all lands as the universal principle. Strength-

ened and ennobled, it will maintain supremacy, not with cannon and poison gas, bombers and submarines, but with shining hopes, liberal measures and humanitarian accomplishments, the whole actuated by high responsibility toward every form and expression of life.

EVERYBODY'S NATIVE LAND
THE EARTH

THE NEW

HISTORY



THE CARAVAN

1. **THESE** ARE THE
 2. **QUESTIONS** TO
 3. **BE ANSWERED** BY
 4. **THE CANDIDATE**

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Approach to The New History Society's Exhibit at the New York World's Fair—1939, showing the World Flag which symbolizes: "Everybody's native land—this green, round, rolling earth—created without frontiers."

CHAPTER XIX

"DA" AND "NIET"—"JA" AND "NEIN"

Injunctions to Iran and Turkey Only

Although Baha-O-Llah and later on Abdul Baha had enjoined their followers in Iran and Turkey to abstain from political affairs, this was but a temporary concession to the despotic rulers of those countries, made for the protection of a small minority. It was a measure taken, one may say, *under fire*. A close study of the dates when these orders were issued reveal this fact very plainly. Abdul Baha never would have given nor did he ever give any such advice to democratic countries, for if he had done so, the Bahai Cause would have been stigmatized as pro-autocratic and anti-social. He never would have commanded, as does the present-day Bahai Administration, the American and Canadian believers to refrain from all legitimate political activities, which are essential to the welfare of their nations. He never would have commanded, as does the present-day Bahai Administration, the American and Canadian believers to forego their voting prerogatives, when it is a case of candidates running on the fundamentally democratic two (or more) Party systems. He never would have forbidden, as does the present-day Bahai Administration, the American and Canadian believers to participate in the civic and national duties of their fellow countrymen; nor would he have accompanied these unpatriotic requirements with threats of expulsion from the Bahai community.

Abdul Baha never would have done such things, and he never did them. On the contrary, he advised the Americans most emphatically to take an active part in the politics of their country, and he told them that they should under no circumstances deprive themselves of the inestimable privilege of the vote.

Injunctions to the United States

As far back as 1907, about the time that the Turkish Investigation Committee had arrived in Acca from Constantinople (this being *before* the overthrow of the Ottoman Empire) Abdul Baha wrote to Mr. Thornton Chase, a prominent believer of Chicago:—

Thou hast asked regarding the political affairs. In the United States it is necessary that the citizens shall take part in elections. This is a necessary matter and no excuse from it is possible. . . . As the government of America is a republican form of government, it is necessary that all the citizens shall take part in the elections of officers and take part in the affairs of the Republic.

—*Tablets of Abdul Baha Abbas*, Vol. II, pages 342-343, Published by Bahai Publishing Socitey, Chicago, Ill., 1915.

The above statement is so simple that even a sixth grade child could grasp its meaning, and one would naturally think that there would never be occasion to misunderstand it. In each sentence, Abdul Baha repeats the word *necessary*:—

It is *necessary* that the citizens shall take part in elections.

This is a *necessary* matter and no excuse from it is possible.

As the government of America is a republican form of government, it is *necessary*, that *all* the citizens shall take part in the affairs of the Republic.

Evidently, Abdul Baha was trying to make his meaning as clear as crystal; he was stating, in so many words, that, inasmuch as the government of the United States was a Republic and not an Oriental Monarchy, free American *citizens* could not be compared to the enslaved *subjects* of the *Shadow of Allah* nor to the obedient *servants* of the *Holy Caliph*. Therefore, it was *necessary* for *all* of them to take part in the affairs of the nation.

No statement could be set forth more concretely, and yet the Bahai Administration, through culpable misinterpretation, has set aside the above clear injunction of Abdul Baha to the American Bahais, and has incorporated in its fundamental laws and applied to the citizens of the United States and Canada the concessions (temporary at that) made to the defunct empires of Iran and Turkey.

If the above quoted Tablet of Abdul Baha is not sufficient to prove that the Master made a clear distinction between Despotism and Democracy, the following report of a conversation that took place between him and a pilgrim, during the year 1907, makes the matter still more plain. Here, it is again significant to point out the fact that this note was recorded during the very year when the Turkish Investigation Committee was in Acca to interrogate Abdul Baha and to examine his affairs. Abdul Baha's remark shows that, however dangerous the circumstances, he did

not mince words when the question of a principle was involved.

Asked if it were ever right to rebel against an earthly ruler, Abdul Baha replied:—

Yes, if he deals unjustly and tyrannically with his people he forfeits the right to govern them.

—Notes taken by A. S. D., Acca, October 16, 1907
(In *Compilation of the Holy Utterances of Baha-O'llah and Abdul Baha*, page 69. Publication authorized by the tenth Annual Convention of the Bahais of America held in Chicago, April 29-30, 1918).

I accept the above report as authentic, because I myself, on countless occasions, have heard the Master make substantially the same statement.

Abdul Baha's Policy Set Aside

The foundation on which the present-day non-political character of the Bahai Cause is based are the writings of Shoghi Effendi and the declarations of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, published in *Bahai News*. These are our sources of authoritative information; so, in order to get an impartial and unbiased understanding of the subject, we must now explore the above documents and compare them with Abdul Baha's teachings, to the end that we may find out how far they agree and to what extent they resemble each other.

Back in March 1932, Shoghi Effendi, in writing to the *beloved of God and the hand-maids of the Merciful*

throughout the United States and Canada, says:—

I feel it, therefore, incumbent upon me to stress, now that the time is ripe, the importance of an instruction which, at the present stage of the evolution of our Faith, should be increasingly emphasized, irrespective of its application to the East or to the West. And this principle is no other than that which involves the non-participation by the adherents of the Faith of Baha-U-Llah, whether in their individual capacities or collectively as local or national Assemblies, in any form of activity that might be interpreted, either directly or indirectly, as an interference in the political affairs of any particular government. Whether it be in the publications which they initiate and supervise; or in their official and public deliberations; or in the posts they occupy and the services they render; or in the communications they address to their fellow-disciples; or in their dealings with men of eminence and authority; or in their affiliations with kindred societies and organizations, it is, I am firmly convinced, their first and sacred obligation to abstain from any word or deed that might be construed as a violation of this vital principle.

*—The World Order of Baha-U-Llah,
pages 63-64.*

This sweeping command of the Guardian was like a bomb-shell thrown into the midst of a peaceful community. In the estimation of practically every believer who was even superficially conversant with the Teachings, this order was in direct contradiction to the instructions of Abdul Baha, most especially to his statement written to Mr. Thornton Chase 25 years earlier.

Athwart the continent, the pot of controversy boiled, and questions such as these were asked on all sides: On what grounds could a non-American religious leader, from his almost cloistered headquarters, 5,000 miles away in Haifa, Palestine, take it upon himself to lay the command upon citizens of the United States and Canada that they abstain from taking part, *either directly or indirectly*, in the legitimate political obligations of their respective countries? Was not this action, in itself, a direct interference in the affairs of other nations? Did not these governments count on the co-operation of their citizens, and would they welcome a loyalty to a foreign power superimposed on the national loyalty? Why, and on what logical basis, should an American or a Canadian Bahai think that *his first and sacred obligation was to abstain from any word or deed that might be construed as a violation of this vital principle* of aloofness? Did not this principle mean that the Bahais must abstain from all political participation in the affairs of their democracies; keep away from the polling booths on election day and, if need be, allow gangsters and racketeers to control by their votes the destiny of the unoffending citizenry? The question was asked: How could crooks and shysters be driven out of national and state offices, if the people who were supposed to be straight were deprived of their only weapon—the ballot?

The order of Shoghi Effendi was written in March, 1932, and ere long, the detailed letter including this order which was circulated throughout the continent, became the storm-center of heated debate. Then, in December of the same year, *Bahai News* published a statement by the

National Spiritual Assembly under the title: *The Non-Political Character of the Bahai Faith*. After referring to the order of Shoghi Effendi the statement continues:—

This instruction raised among American believers the important question whether the act of voting, in the normal pursuance of the function of citizenship, should be construed as a participation in political matters.

Another letter written by his secretary gives the Guardian's view on the subject:—

He strongly feels that the friends should abstain from any election that is along party line.

Again, we have this statement addressed to the National Spiritual Assembly:—

This is the general and vital principle; it is for the National representatives to apply it with fidelity and vigor.

Then the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, feeling a great responsibility in applying the principle to all detailed situations that can arise among local communities, summarizes the Assembly's understanding of this new instruction in the following articles of Faith:—

1. Recognized Bahais of the United States and Canada shall not hereafter take part in any local, provincial or national election conducted by political parties, where votes are to be cast for one of two or more rival candidates.

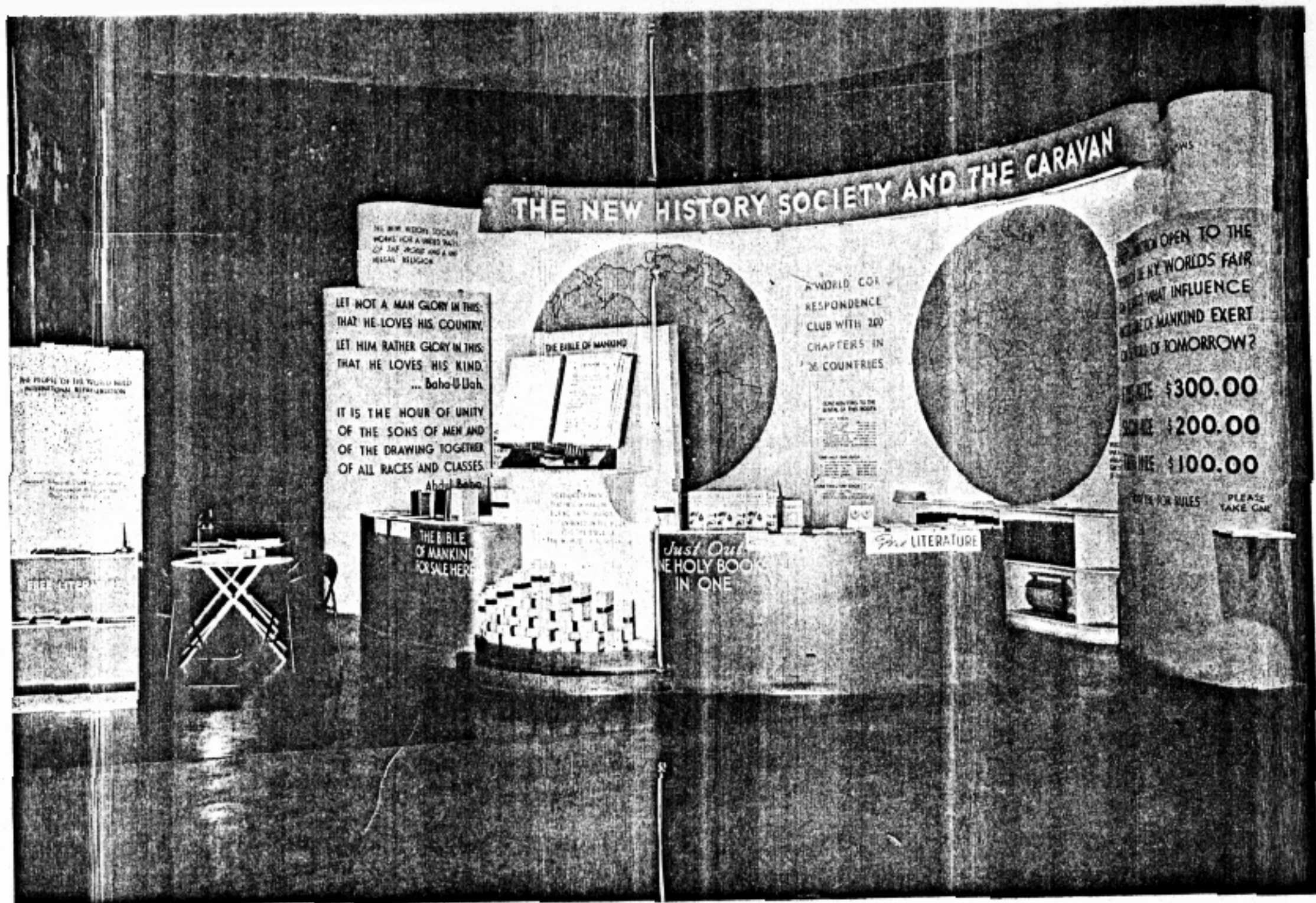


Exhibit of The New History Society at

the New York World's Fair, in 1939.

See page 488

2. Recognized Bahais shall not run for any public office as candidate of any political party, nor take part, directly or indirectly, in the promotion of any party or party platform.

3. Political issues of a partisan character shall not be discussed at Bahai meetings.

4. Recognized Bahais shall abstain from affiliation with movements . . . whether avowedly political in nature or, while non-political in name, advocating social changes that presume partisan political action.

5. Bahais who speak on Bahai platforms shall refrain from making . . . critical statements about any particular Government or National policy.

6. Every Local Spiritual Assembly shall be responsible for the carrying out of these instructions by the Bahais in their respective communities. Local membership lists shall include only the names of those believers who faithfully preserve the non-political character of the Faith.

—*Bahai News*, No. 69, December, 1932.

The above list of instructions makes startling reading to any citizen of the United States and Canada, but article 1, especially, gives us pause in these days when the idea of a one-candidate Party is far from unfamiliar.

One Ticket

Inasmuch as it is difficult to conceive of Democracy without Parties, the Bahais of the two great Democracies of North America are, by this act, automatically excluded from *all* participation in local, state and national elections.

On the other hand, there are two other important countries, Russia and Germany, which are known as totalitarian dictatorships, where political life is organized and conducted by means of a One Party system. Therefore the National Spiritual Assembly, in its provisions regarding the political set-up to be contemplated, must have taken a leaf out of the revolutionary chronicle of these countries, which enjoy the very questionable privilege of *One monopolistic Party and One Ticket*.

In Russia, the dictatorship of the Proletariat has removed the burden of political thinking from the minds of the *people*. The Parties are liquidated; the liberals either are taking a sojourn in Siberia or have sought refuge in foreign lands, leaving to the *comrades* all the privileges and rights of voting for the *One Communist Party*, on its single ticket headed by the perennial Joseph Stalin. Yes, the Russians of today have been able to vote *DA*, in all safety—or *niet*, at the risk of their heads.

In Germany, the National Socialist Party, in order to glorify the Fatherland, got rid of all the bothersome Parties; purged the country of all the democrats; sent the intellectuals to concentration camps and drove the Jews and non-Aryans out of the third Reich. Then to the sound of trumpets, martial music, mass-herding and the singing of Horst Wessel and Deutschland Ueber Alles, all the goose-stepping German folk and simon-pure Aryans gathered together in the one and only National Socialist Party, headed by Reichsfürer Adolf Hitler. Yes, the Germans of today can vote *JA* in all safety—or *nein*, at the peril of their lives.

Now, I venture to think that the Bahai Administration,

with its allowance for a one Party system and its principle of letting the country go to the dogs, or to the wolves, would have been welcomed in Russia yesterday; today we do not know; and in Germany, yesterday, today and unfortunately tomorrow too. The Bahais would be enrolled as members in good standing—models of regimentation, uniformity, obedience and subserviency. It is certain that no Dictator would find their presence irksome or disturbing.

Unrest in Bahai Household

The publication of the above listed articles on the non-participation of Bahais in politics caused great commotion among the followers of the Faith in the United States and Canada. Many sharply disagreed with these Draconian rules and totalitarian measures; some, with a good deal of bitterness, compared them to the teachings of Abdul Baha and, finally, a few wrote to Shoghi Effendi, expressing their surprise and bewilderment. The atmosphere was charged with electric arguments, pro and con.

Many liberal Bahais, honestly and sincerely, considered that the Cause had been betrayed and its principles pilloried on a totem-pole of misunderstanding. The future of the movement had been sold across the counter for a mess of improvident pottage and its ideals sacrificed and abandoned. For a few months, there was no rest in the Bahai household; the opinions expressed were wide apart, for some keenly felt their responsibility toward the Cause, while others, more concerned with keeping out of trouble, were therefore willing to confide both mind and conscience to the tender mercies of the Administration.

The dissatisfaction and remonstrances on the part of the Bahais at length forced the National Spiritual Assembly to publish an explanatory statement in the February 1933 issue, No. 71, of *Bahai News*. The writer of the article makes a weak attempt to assure the believers that no radical departure from the original teachings had been made, and is quite confident that the grave doubts which had arisen in the minds of the Bahais could, through local consultations, be removed, creating *not merely an occasion for blind obedience, but rather for conscious, grateful co-operation*. Finally, in order to pour oil over the troubled waters, he makes an utterly meaningless concession, presupposing a possible political situation in which the Bahais *could* vote; although, he must have known that such a situation has never existed, nor will it ever exist in a democratic or republican form of government. Here is the incredibly fatuous concession:—

The instruction not to take part in political elections leaves us free to vote in any election where the various political parties have combined upon one candidate or one ticket.

Here we are back again in Russia or Germany, or rather, we are being helped forward toward an equally sinister form of government to supplant our Democracy in this country; but whatever the details of this sad postulate, or whatever the name to be used, be it old or new, we can only say, and with all our hearts: *In America at least, God forbid!*

It is, indeed, a sad commentary on the lack of imagination and acumen on the part of a large percentage of the

Bahais, that during all these years the National Spiritual Assembly has been able to pull the wool over their eyes by means of such specious reasoning.

On the other hand, there were some who strove to retain their political rights; therefore, the National Spiritual Assembly once more had to go on record, not only to guard the inviolability of its own word but to protect Shoghi Effendi from further molestation. An elaborate communication, in the form of an open letter to the *Beloved Friends*, in the April 1933 issue, No. 72, of *Bahai News*, appealed to the emotional and religious ideals and convictions of the reader, so that the best possible construction might be allowed to a very precarious situation. The writer makes a heroic effort to defend a principle that is *indefensible and, whenever he finds himself in a tight corner, resorts to sanctimonious flourishes and undulations, such as may be noticed in the following passage:—*

The matter of the non-political character of the Bahai Faith has arisen this year for the purpose of stimulating deeper awareness of our privileges and responsibilities in the World Order of Baha-U-Llah. Only four years ago the Guardian first upheld that glorious conception of the goal toward which humanity is being so rapidly impelled by the power of the divine Will.

For many of us, the idea that we should no longer take any part in the normal political activities of our environment came as a distinct shock.

A distinct shock? That is a mild way of putting it! It was an earthquake, a head-on collision that threw many a sincere Bahai reeling toward the precipice of spiritual

collapse. Yet, listen to the pietistic interpretation of the *inspiring new attitude*:—

The need that we arise to a higher vision and a more universal loyalty was not at first easy to appreciate. But little by little, thanks to the guidance given us by Shoghi Effendi, we can assimilate and make part of ourselves this inspiring new attitude the *Guardian* wishes for the protection of the Cause and our own spiritual well-being.

Free as Air

And now once more the chimerical situation presented in the February (1933) issue of *Bahai News* is paraded before the bewildered eyes of the believers:—

We are all free to vote in such elections as are non-partisan—that is, where the parties have combined upon one set of candidates, and voting is not merely a choice between two or more party tickets.

We are all free to vote! Free as air! Isn't that generous? Isn't that wonderful? For a moment, we were nervous; but now we are relieved, indeed! Yet, on second thought, *where* shall we vote? Certainly not in the United States, nor in Canada, nor in England, nor in Australia, nor in New Zealand, nor in any of the Democracies; because in none of these countries do the Parties ever combine *upon one set of candidates*. Where shall it be then? Please, don't offer us Russia again, nor Germany; for, even if we do fit in with the regime of those countries, even if they are likely to consider us in every way desirable, we *do* have a sneaking feeling that, sooner or later,

the Democracies will come out on top. We remember that Abdul Baha also said so; but, probably that is one of his sayings that we are supposed to forget.

A Strange Local

To go back to the open letter. The writer proceeds, striking a cadence on the *calm peace and steadfast faith that marks the true Bahai*. This brand of talk is intended to divert the attention of the victim from the main topic and lull him into the mythical Sahara of a somnambulent, denaturalized idealism. Listen:—

In a world through which run so many conflicting torrents of popular passion and partisan struggle, the spirit of calm peace, of steadfast faith and unswerving assurance marks the true Bahai and sets off a Bahai community from every other type of human gathering. . . . In the establishment of Local, National and International Bahai communities, we have the most glorious field of service ever granted to man.

This seems to be a perfect description of a self-centered, self-satisfied, self-contained, self-opinionated, self-applauding community, useless in every sense of the word to the country that harbors, maintains and protects it. A community, *set off from every other type of human gathering*, bringing to mind but one thing—a cemetery, which also is *set off from every other type of human gathering*; in which all the *conflicting torrents of popular passion and partisan struggle* are eternally stilled, and where, among the tombs, there broods *the spirit of calm peace*. A strange local indeed for the successors of the Babis and early

Bahais, those intrepid, ever-wakeful men and women, who had the will to die and the nerve to live in order *that the principles of their Masters might become dominant in the affairs of men!*



Corner of speakers' table at a dinner given by "Friends of the Duke of Windsor in America" at the Town Hall Club, New York, on January 20, 1939.

From left to right:—Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler, the late Rev. Christian F. Reisner, D.D. and the late Dr. Har Dayal.

CHAPTER XX

BAHAI NON-PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS

A Vision of Eternity

Bahais must never forget that they are members of a community that extends beyond the borders of one country and the Guardian's instructions covering non-participation in politics are not based upon human representations in any given communities but upon his vision over cons of time and the results which would follow the actions of the present time.

The above statement, made by the National Spiritual Assembly, presents two points very clearly. *First*: the Bahais are members of an international community. *Second*: the Guardian's instructions to them are based upon the future which is discernible to him.

We gather then that the believers must forego local political activities because of their bearing, whether evident or not, upon the larger scene; also, that Shoghi Effendi's vision actually extends beyond the confines of the centuries (according to the dictionary, cons of time means an infinite space of time---eternity). This latter assertion is a stupendous one. It leaves us breathless; for if true, the Guardian emerges from the station of man, seer or prophet, and becomes a conscious part of the Godhead. The National Spiritual Assembly continues:—

The question is not one of interpretation of the instructions of the Guardian but rather one of strict

obedience to him in the assurance that the wisdom of the principle will become more and more apparent as time goes on.

And now:—

As the new consciousness is universal and not local, the believers cannot lower this standard by participation in divisional activities.

Once more:—

It was generally agreed that if the world cannot be saved, it matters not at all whether one or another is elected, whereas the Bahais are called by Shoghi Effendi to establish the new world order of Baha-U-Llah.

(The above four quotations are from *Bahai News*, No. 75, July, 1933, page 3).

Physician Heal Thyself!

These instructions give pause to the average citizen of the United States, and especially to the American Bahai who has been trained, through the teachings of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha, to co-operate with all systems that are tending toward a larger life for the human race. To these people, this type of reasoning applies to the man who, while neglecting his own character, thinks of improving the characters of others; to the community which, unconcerned with righteousness and justice, looks for these qualities in other communities. Physician, heal thyself! is an old maxim; and it would seem that it is the duty of every American to set himself to putting his own national house in order, before attempting to bring order to the

world. A person endowed with the Bahai ideal (whether or not he be a Bahai) could well expend his energies on both causes at the same time; but it is difficult to allow exemption from national responsibility to one who claims international citizenship.

Inclusion of a Larger Loyalty

If the National Spiritual Assembly had been consistent in the formulation of its policies, it would have realized the untenability of its position; because, on the one hand, it makes a point of exacting of the Bahais obedience to the ordinances of their government while, on the other hand, by denying them the right to perform their civic and national duties as law-abiding and progressive citizens, it prevents them from so doing. Obviously, Abdul Baha did not invite the Americans to accept the universal teachings of Baha-O-Llah, in order to divest them of their responsibilities as citizens of the United States. It is true that, on embracing the Cause, an American immediately becomes member of a world-wide community composed of Persians, Turks, Hindus, Frenchmen, Englishmen, Chinese, etc., but this larger loyalty does not curtail his loyalty to the United States. When individuals become Bahais, they lose their national *prejudices*, not their national *rights* and obligations. Like variegated flowers in a garden, they contribute their beauty to the general scene, while retaining their own distinctive color and fragrance. The sun of the New Day shines upon all, and the mercy of the Almighty envelops the first and the last. The Bahais will co-operate and learn from one another. They will not throw away their hard-won liberties, but will

share them with their new-found brethren; for Baha-O-Llah did not come to abrogate the cherished freedoms of humanity, but to enlarge and spread them over the wide expanse of the earth.

The Teachings of the Faith Must be Set Aside

At this point, it is interesting to note that the National Spiritual Assembly, while denying the Bahais rational and humane participation in the constructive civic and social affairs of their country, has urged these same Bahais to register their names for service in the military preparations of the United States; and this, regardless of the already quoted words: *the believers cannot lower this standard by participation in divisional activities*. I suppose that killing is not regarded as a *divisional activity*. The people are dead, and that is the end of them!

A letter written in 1939 by the Guardian's secretary to the National Spiritual Assembly of the British Isles reveals Shoghi Effendi's views on the subject of military service:—

It is still his firm conviction that the believers, while expressing their readiness to unreservedly obey any directions that the authorities may issue concerning national service in time of war, should also, and while there is yet no outbreak of hostilities, appeal to the government for exemption from active military service in a combatant capacity, stressing the fact that in doing so they are not prompted by any selfish considerations but by the sole and supreme motive of upholding the Teachings of their Faith, which make it a moral obligation for them to desist from any act that would in-

volve them in direct warfare with their fellow-humans of any other race or nation.

—*Bahai News*, No. 132, January, 1940, page 1.

Here we find that the believers should *appeal* to the government for exemption from active military service, *stressing the fact* that they are prompted by *the sole and supreme motive of upholding the Teachings of their Faith*. Nevertheless, they must express *their readiness to unreservedly obey any directions that the authorities may issue concerning national service in time of war*. Thus in order to be on good terms with the government, the *Teachings of the Faith* must, if necessary, be set aside.

In the Front Line or in Jail

According to my belief, it is good to stand by one's principles. If a man's conscience allows him to fight, and he steps forward to give his all, one cannot but respect him. On the other hand, if he has consecrated himself to the system of pacifism (as I myself have) neither displeasure of government nor the fear of punishment bears the slightest weight. At least, let us be clean-cut about it, taking the risks that are entailed in our conscientious choice; and may we never entreat for indulgence and special privileges when the question of moral obligation is involved!

In a book entitled *The Men I Killed* written by Brigadier General Frank Percy Crozier, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., published by Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc., New York, 1938, the following dedication appears on the fly-leaf:—

To the genuine fighters of all nations who stuck it



A BAHAI GROUP IN THE NEW HISTORY SOCIETY, TAKEN AT

Seated on floor. From left to right:—Mr. Solomon W. Leventhal, Miss May Carro, Miss Sarah Isaacs, Miss Harriet Meisler, Miss Geraldine Falk, Miss Serene Blake, Miss Ouise Vaupel, Mr. Alphonse Tonietti, Mrs. Adrienne Peabody Van Rossum.

Second Row. From left to right:—Dr. Leopold Kohr, Miss Mildred Goodman, Mr. H. Obadie, Mrs. H. Obadie, Mr. O. J. Hanko, Mrs. Robert Blake, Mrs. Mary Furgang, Mrs. Charles E. Boyd, Mrs. Elsa Tabrizi, Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler, Dr. Edwin F. Bowers, Mr. Charles E. Boyd.

Third Row. From left to right:—Mrs. Zahra Gemerd, Mr. Maurice Falk, Mrs. Maurice Falk, Mr. Kedar Nath DasGupta, Major Honoré Joseph Jaxon, Miss Janet Osterman, Miss Claire Osterman, Mr. Jacob Ferreira, Dr. Haridas T. Muzumdar, Mirza Ahmad

THE CARAVAN HALL, NEW YORK, ON OCTOBER 14, 1941.

Sohrab, Mr. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler, Mrs. Charles H. Clarke, Mrs. Frederick Allien, Miss Chancy Carro, Mr. Louis J. Meisler.

Fourth Row. From left to right:—Mrs. H. H. Oliver, Mr. H. H. Oliver, Miss Anne Gemerd, Miss Sofia Froberg, Mr. M. Remneck, Mr. John J. Fitzpatrick, Miss Margaret O'Connor, Miss Fannie Rudy, Prof. Georgia Dunn, Miss Florence Brownell, Mr. John Forster, Maestro Pasquale Mondrone, Mr. James Mott, Mr. Emanuel Larsen.

Top Row. From left to right:—Mr. Bhupesh Guha, Mr. Rudolph Lopez, Mrs. Rudolph Lopez, Mr. James Bland Tuohy, Mr. Robert Blake, Mr. Lew Von Harden, Mr. Walter Sloane, Mr. Jay E. Abbott, Mrs. Grace Kopman, Miss Lilyan Tannen, Miss Patricia Goode, Mr. Murray Furgang.

to the end in the front line, and to the genuine conscientious objectors of all nations who stuck it to the end in jail, this book is dedicated.

Now, I would like to see Bahais in either or both of these groups; but to imagine them, with their tails between their legs, begging the government for permission to uphold the *Teachings of the Faith* is pitiful, to put it mildly. Indeed, the picture is not in accord with their background, their calling nor their *name*.

Thus, in abstaining from *divisional activities* through the ballot (because of the fact that the Bahai movement is an international one), and in taking part in *divisional activities* through the bayonet and bomb (in spite of the fact that the Bahai movement is an international one), the Bahais have assumed a totally illogical position. They cannot maintain it by argument, because they have forsworn their principles, but can merely lower their eyes and feebly rattle their chains in explanation.

Protracted Discussion

To their credit, it can at least be said that the liberal elements in the Assemblies of the United States and Canada did not accept the ruling on non-participation in political affairs without protracted protest. As a consequence, the subject was brought up for discussion and debate before the 25th Annual Bahai Convention held in Chicago during the month of April, 1933.

The July issue of *Bahai News* (1933) gives us the following under the heading *The Story of the Convention*:—

Therefore, the first subject for consultation was "The Non-Political Character of the Bahai Faith."

In opening the discussion, the chairman pointed out that with the receipt of the Guardian's letter, "The Golden Age of the Cause of Baha'u'llah," the opposition of the Guardian to participation in party politics became apparent and that later individual Bahais as well as the National Spiritual Assembly received communications saying that Bahais must not vote in any election based upon personal allegiances or partisanship.

These instructions seem to have been misunderstood by a number of the friends and it was felt wise that they should be thoroughly discussed in order that some general understanding and action might be formulated by the Convention.

Mr. Holley in giving the highlights of the subject said that the first intimation that the National Spiritual Assembly had had that the Guardian did not desire the American believers to vote was on receipt of a letter to a believer containing this instruction from the Guardian.

About the same time another believer sent in a copy of a tablet from Abdul Baha to Thornton Chase in which Abdul Baha said American citizens must vote. With these apparently conflicting instructions before it, the National Spiritual Assembly wrote to the Guardian to inquire if he were now setting aside the tablet. In his reply the Guardian said that the instruction of Abdul Baha is not conclusive under present conditions *and expressed his abhorrence of political affairs, pointing out that the National Spiritual Assembly is obligated to carry out his instructions on the subject.* The National Spiritual Assembly therefore drafted the article which appeared in the Bahai News of December, 1932, and which was considered by some as somewhat

drastic. It resulted in the exchange of several communications between the National Spiritual Assembly and the Guardian. —*Bahai News*, No. 75, July 1933.

The Tablet to Mr. Thornton Chase, already quoted, may here be referred to, and I doubt if any reader, Bahai or otherwise, will find Abdul Baha's instructions on the necessity for voting in any way ambiguous or susceptible to any interpretation other than its plain surface meaning. Here then we have a revealing picture of the way in which the Guardian reaches conclusions.

1. He delivers the opinion that Abdul Baha's instruction is *not conclusive under present conditions*. Why? If it is inconclusive *now*, it must have been inconclusive in 1907 when it was written.

2. Shoghi Effendi expresses *his abhorrence* of political affairs. There is the point! The Guardian, living thousands of miles away, unfamiliar with the democratic processes of the New World, finds them distasteful, chooses to *abhor* them, and then expects all his followers to alter their palates so that they also may abhor them. I myself cannot help questioning the method of bringing personal taste into the problem at all.

3. Shoghi Effendi informs the National Spiritual Assembly that *it is obligated to carry out* his instructions on the subject. There is no attempt at reasoning; there is no necessity for it. It is a Caesarian order, pure and simple. In so many words, the Guardian says:—

**Yours not to make reply,
Yours not to reason why,
Yours but to do and die.**

Independent investigation! The least that can be said of this principle of Baha-O-Llah is that the very mention of it has, by this time, become *heresy*.

Tactful but Vigorous Handling

A subsequent letter from the Guardian published in *Bahai News*, No. 78, October 1933, contains a variety of instructions on the subject. Evidently, there was need for a more delicate treatment of the case, for Shoghi Effendi calls upon his lieutenants in the National Spiritual Assembly to handle the subject of the non-participation of *Bahais of East and West in political affairs* with the *utmost circumspection, tact and vigilance*. Let us read his new instructions:—

The handling of this delicate and vital problem regarding non-participation by Bahais of East and West in political affairs, calls for the utmost circumspection, tact, patience and vigilance on the part of those whose function and privilege is to guard, promote and administer the activities of a world-wide ever-advancing Cause. The misgivings and apprehensions of individual Bahais should be allayed and eventually completely dispelled. Any misconception of the sane and genuine patriotism that animates every Bahai heart, if it ever obscures or perplexes the minds of responsible government officials, should be instantly and courageously dissipated. Any deliberate misrepresentation by the enemies of the Cause of God, of the aim, the tenets and methods of the administrators of the Faith of Baha-U-Llah should be vigorously faced and its fallacy pitilessly exposed.

Here, I take the liberty of remarking that no *responsible government officials* in the United States would ever concern themselves with the non-participation of the Bahais in politics. One can take it into consideration that in the 1940 Presidential campaign, nearly fifty million Americans cast their votes; consequently, the absence or presence of 2,585 Bahais (the World Almanac 1941, Page 854) would be neither felt nor noticed. Thousands of others, on account of old age or infirmities, were unable to go to the polling booths; others again, disfranchised for a variety of reasons, did not make an appearance. Then, there always are some men and women who are too listless to take an interest in anything. The government expects to find a vast gap between its population and its voters, and will not inquire into reasons for absence at the polls.

In regard to *deliberate misrepresentations by enemies of the aim, the tenets and methods* of the Bahai Administration, I will state that because a few interested observers or a number of Bahais did not approve of the disfranchisement of this community and had sufficient concern to voice their opposition, this attitude on their part did not make of them *enemies of the Cause of God* who should be vigorously faced and their fallacy pitilessly exposed. These people were nothing of the sort. They were honest and sincere men and women, students of the Bahai teachings who couldn't adjust themselves to the new ordinances. Everybody cannot think alike, try as they will, and it would seem that the Bahai Cause is big enough to embrace different opinions, or at least respect them.

During 1932-33, this question was discussed at full

length, and some cases of heresy came to light; in a few instances, suspects were dropped from membership on various committees and their places filled with the *regulars*. Then, little by little, the smoke of the battle drifted from the horizon of the Administration; the day had been won, definitely and completely, and if a handful of *enemies of the Cause of God* managed to make their escape from the *vigorous and pitiless* attacks of the forces of organization, these were left to lick their wounds in hide-outs and faraway places, and their very existence was presently forgotten.

In order to mark its definite victory over the opposition, the National Spiritual Assembly sums up the whole struggle from beginning to end in the January 1934 issue, No. 80, of *Bahai News*. The communiqué is entitled:—

The Non-Political Character of the Bahai Faith. A Statement prepared by the National Spiritual Assembly in Response to the Request for clarification of the subject voiced by the 1933 Annual Convention.

The communiqué is a long one, reviewing the successive instructions of the Guardian and the steps taken on the various fronts to establish the non-political character of the Bahai Faith.

Non-Participation in Bahai Politics

Having, to all intents and purposes, silenced the *enemies of the Cause of God*, Shoghi Effendi, looking toward the future, legislates an order for the adequate punishment of all those who may ignore the rulings of the new regime—i.e.: non-participation of all Bahais in the

civic, social and political affairs of their countries.

This order is dated March 16, 1933, and published at the end of the above-mentioned communiqué:—

But if a certain person does enter into party politics and labors for the ascendancy of one party over another, and continues to do it against the expressed appeals and warnings of the Assembly, then the Assembly has the right to refuse him the right to vote in Bahai elections.

Bahai elections? Yes, my gentle reader! Although I admit that it is almost too quaint to be true; for the punishment meted out by Shoghi Effendi to the Bahais who do not accept his ruling of non-participation in the political affairs of the United States is—believe it, if you can—non-participation in the political affairs of the Bahai movement. Actually, the recalcitrant Bahais, who persist in co-operating with their government for the progress of the Democracy which their forefathers established on these shores, are deprived of membership in the Bahai political machine, an institution which has incorporated within itself all the stratagems, tricks and juggleries of Tammany Hall in its most flourishing days. Thus, the recalcitrant Bahai can no longer attend the Annual Bahai Conventions and sit behind closed doors in its secret sessions; he can no longer apply himself to electioneering, possibly for Tenth or Fifteenth Term candidates; he can no longer go to the Bahai polling booths nor take advantage of the Bahai absentee vote; he can no longer share in the little privileges that are allotted to members in good standing nor bask in the sunlight that is shed upon the humble by

those who sit in High Places. Alas! He must resign himself to non-participation in Bahai political affairs, now and for evermore, as the price for being a self-respecting citizen of the United States, and for having tried to make his country a better place to live in.



MIRZA AHMAD SOHRAB
in 1931.

PART EIGHT

A CONFESSION OF FAITH

21. I Believe in the Bahai Cause

*Not by might, nor by power, but by
my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.*

—Zechariah, Chapter 4, Verse 6

CHAPTER XXI

I BELIEVE IN THE BAHAI CAUSE

Religion and Theology

I believe in the Bahai Cause

for it has taught me

that religion is not dogma and creed; it is not metaphysics and speculation; it is not mystery and mystification; it is not a series of sanctified and mummified articles of faith and the performance of sacerdotal gymnastics. If we ever find sufficient courage to take our spiritual destiny into our hands, banishing these strange bedfellows to some lonely island from which they can never escape to molest us, we should have the chance of looking straight into the face of religion, and of discovering that, after all, it is not such an insidious enemy of mankind as it is represented by both its votaries and its adversaries. The Bahai Cause states that religion is truth, love, peace, beauty; it also is common sense, good humor and every-day helpfulness. It propounds the question: To what extent are you capable of serving your fellowmen, irrespective of race, color and creed? To what degree are you willing to forego your own so-called interests in the interests of others?

Thus, the Bahai Cause points to service as the highest commitment of religion—not service to your soul, not service to your religious group, but service to people and to principles. This emphasis on altruism is the approach to a humane, spiritual and scientific outlook upon life; it

carries with it enthusiasm, indomitable persistence, an all-consuming faith in the final victory of good over evil, of right over might, together with an unshakable belief in the oneness of the essence of religion.

In the Bahai Cause is pointed out the too often forgotten yet important truth that the Founders of the Great Religions were born in the East and that all the Sacred Books were there revealed through the Minds of Eastern Prophets. Hence, the East is the fountain-head of Spiritual Knowledge and the power-house of inspiration in the phenomenal world. Just as the sun rises from the East to flood the earth with its warm rays, so has the Sun of Truth ever dawned in the hearts of Eastern Sages to illumine the world with the splendors of God's Revelations.

While the East has given us spiritual aspirations and ethical concepts of life, the West, according to its materialistic tendency, has constructed vast factories of theology. For ages, prosperous industrial ecclesiastics and privileged barons and princes of monopolistic sects have controlled the minds and the purse-strings of the Occidental nations and, while enriching their corporations, have starved the souls of the people. To all intents and purposes, they have usurped the moral sanction of the Holy Scriptures and dominated the religious scene with the whips of inflexible creeds.

At this juncture in history, the Bahai Cause strives to make it plain that the West is in need of a new outpouring of the spirit of the Prophets, so that it may be enabled to destroy the strongholds of religious materialism and fanatical orthodoxy; and, while bringing to an end the

winter of religiosity, usher in the springtime of spiritual spontaneity.

This task once accomplished, it will not be at all difficult to think of religion, not as churches and synagogues, not as mosques and temples, not as theologies and ceremonial ritualism, but as *self-illumination* and *self-realization*; for it is an axiomatic fact that no one can lay a claim to the possession of religion before it is *realized* and *witnessed* in the inner recesses of the heart. We do not need priests, rabbis, mullahs, authoritarians and theologians to tell us what we should and what we should not believe insofar as religion is concerned. Religion is truth, and truth is religion; religion is love, and love is religion; religion is joy, and joy is religion. Religion is simple and not complex. Religion is caught and not taught. Religion is the whole of life, and not a segment of it. When theology is acquired, religion is lost.

We can dispense with theology and ecclesiasticism, but we cannot live without religion.

A Bahai does not subscribe to any separativeness. He does not believe in nationalism, in racialism, in sectarianism, in churchianism. The moment you imprison your religion within the four walls of a building, it is dead; and the best thing that you can do is to admit the fact and bury it quickly.

From time to time, man has changed the form of his theologies, even as he has changed his politics, his economics, his social life. He will continue to pass through these changes until the hour when the true, unchangeable *Form* of the Formless Religion is revealed to him in all its simplicity and majesty—the religion that is a good gift,

a perfect gift, and which has ever come down *from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.* (*James*, Chapter I, Verse 17.)

Unity

I believe in the Bahai Cause

for it has taught me

that religion in its etymological sense means to connect, to unite and to bring the people closer together. On the other hand, any system of thought, no matter under what name it parades itself, which isolates, divides, separates and segregates man from his fellows, is not and cannot be designated as religion. A study of the Bahai Teachings makes it plain that this is the fundamental approach to religion.

An *organized religion* is hard, dour, rigid, iron-handed and iron-hearted; it is stern, arrogant, coercive and merciless. An *administered religion* has been, is and ever shall remain an *arrested religion*; for the premise that a few individuals or a net-work of individuals are able to organize or administer the spiritual realities of God, is an assumption as false as it is impertinent, and as outlandish as it is sacrilegious."

Here is the test of the true religion: Does it unite the minds and hearts of the people in the task of developing a stable society and a humane civilization? Does it make us more tolerant, more sympathetic, more compassionate, more joyous, more sincere, more loving? If it accomplishes these things, then it is religion, indeed, and it comes straight from the Creator of the Universe.

If, on the other hand, self-seeking and self-assertive organizers and administrators place theological and artificial obstacles in the pathway of its followers, it is certain that such a system of thought, in spite of any regenerative powers which it may possess, will be not only limited but also nullified, and that ere long man will embalm it as a mummy and put it away in the museum of religious monstrosities.

Abdul Baha said:—

If religion be the cause of enmity and rancor, if it should prove the cause of alienating men, assuredly non-religion would be better. For religion and the teachings which appertain to it are as a course of treatment. What is the object of any course of treatment? It is cure and healing. But if the outcome of a course of treatment should be productive of mere diagnosis and discussion of symptoms, the abolition of it is evidently preferable. In this sense, abandoning religion would be a step toward unity.

—No. 9, page 5. A booklet published under the supervision of the American National Spiritual Assembly.

Universal Reconciliation

I believe in the Bahai Cause

for it has taught me

to keep the door of Bahai fellowship open wide to all humanity not excluding a single soul, no matter how sinister, how traitorous, how degraded or how inhuman! Hence, I have determined to associate in joy and fragrance

with all, in the task of the education and development of mankind, and to envelop every creature with the mantle of love and forgiveness. My Master has warned us against being dogmatic and self-opinionated; he has told us to put his Ideals into practice, and he has commanded us to go forth, relying on his help, into the wide world to deliver his message of goodwill and cordiality to all the children of men. I heard his voice in the long ago, and since that time, his ideas have reverberated through the corridors of my mind, even as the sound of an angel-choir descending from the upper sky:—

This is the day of international friendship!

This is the era of world-wide association!

This is the age of universal reconciliation!

This is the time of economic brotherhood!

This is the century of mutual helpfulness!

O men! O women! O leaders! Forget your religious differences! Set aside your theological squabbles! Cast to the winds your credal misunderstandings! Come, and sit around the banquet-table of harmony! Away with suspicion! Away with dogmatism! Away with fanaticism! Away with falsehood and accusations! Away with litigations and lawsuits! We are all *one*—not only behind the veil of glory, but in the open court of the earth!

Protectionism

I believe in the Bahai Cause

for it has taught me

a set of universal principles destined to regenerate the world of humanity. I am not the owner nor the proprietor

of these principles; they were not given to me for safe-keeping, but rather on the understanding that I should share them with others.

The Bahai Cause does not foster a High Tariff Party, striving to create a monopoly of its assets under the deceptive title of *Protection*. Firstly, the Cause is in no need of protection and, secondly, neither Baha-O-Llah nor Abdul Baha was a protectionist. Instead, both of them asserted that the more recklessly we disseminate their teachings, the more we own them. Truth is its best protection; generosity is the wisest investment, and if the Bahai Cause is the truth, as I believe it to be, then let us give it away, scatter its jewels to the four winds of heaven and establish its domain throughout the length and breadth of the land. We can do this joyously, freely, abundantly and without reserve, for we are aware of the fact that when we unlock the doors of our spiritual treasury, our treasure remains but the safer, showing manifold increase.

Do we want a religion that will forever keep us in a legal nursery? Will we not welcome a religion that will help us to win our intellectual and spiritual freedom? If so, let us realize without loss of energy, and without any further litigations and lawsuits, that the Kingdom of Baha-O-Llah and his Spirit will never be found behind high tariff walls as embodied in the National and State Constitutions and By-laws of the Bahai Administration; nor will they even faintly be detected in Deeds of Trust or Corporation Charters. The Kingdom of Baha-O-Llah and his Spirit are to be discovered *within us*, as we live, aspire and work in every community for the furtherance of his Cause.

Therefore, I most respectfully submit: Let the un-

daunted soldiers of Baha-O-Allah and Abdul Baha wage a fiery and uninterrupted war against all the religious protectionists, legalists, fundamentalists, canonists and codificationists of an old and impossible world; and, relying on the confirmation of their Supreme Generals, let them carry on the campaign, both within the Cause and outside of it, until the enemies of freedom fail—until they fall.

Cooperation

I believe in the Bahai Cause

for it has taught me

the fundamental doctrine of co-operation among the members of the human family, in religion, in politics, in science and in the arts. It emphasizes that in co-operation there is life; in isolation, there is death. As long as the cells of the body co-operate one with another, there is health; disease is lack of co-operation between the cells of one part and the cells of another part of the human anatomy.

A progressive Bahai cannot subscribe to an isolationist program; an enlightened Bahai cannot but be an internationalist.

It is an accepted fact that all the phenomena of life co-operate with one another. The sun co-operates with the mineral kingdom; the animal draws support from the mineral and vegetable worlds. Man is nothing less than the product of co-operation in all the lower kingdoms; then, how shall he refuse to co-operate with his own strata of existence, as expressed by the institutions of his age, through the civic, political and educational forces of his

community, through the religious societies and clubs of his country and the peace agencies and philanthropic associations of his world? My Bahai faith proclaims that the mandate of nature as well as of God is the universal law of co-operation, and that from this law there is no escape.

Whenever the leaders of any religious organization, Bahai or otherwise, prescribe for their followers, and put into effect, a plan of non-co-operation with human beings, either individually or collectively, they automatically prepare for the inevitable, if slow, disintegration of their religion; for association, according to Baha-O-Llah, leads to union and harmony; and isolation is synonymous with dissolution and extinction.

As a Bahai I have been taught the following, and I have deemed it wise and true: *Consort with all the people with joy and fragrance. Fellowship is the cause of unity, and unity is the source of order in the world.* It is indeed a sad commentary on the attitude of certain religious leaders who have lost sight of the teachings of their own Faith to such a degree as to substitute the principle of co-operation with orders spelling the exact reverse. It is a still sadder commentary that in this age, there can be found men and women who are willing to follow such blind leaders.

Has it not been said of yore:—*Blind leaders of the blind!*

My Bahai faith, as a universal religion, enjoins upon me to live up to its claim one hundred percent by sincerely and cordially inviting *all* the races, *all* the nations and *all* the tribes of men to enter the circle of its benign and

generous influence so that they may become part of its great destiny.

Initiative

I believe in the Bahai Cause

for it has taught me

a plan for the reconstruction of the human commonwealth—the most bold and, at the same time, the most practical ever conceived. In order to help in its fulfillment, every Bahai must, in his own right, become bold and practical. Through his innate power, he must open up new fields of action and, through self-reflection and self-perception, arrive at self-confidence. His heart must be as an ever-playing fountain, tossing high the life-giving waters of truth in order to irrigate the parched grounds of the world of humanity.

He must *become a lamp full of light*; he must be *active and fear not*; he must *go out from the solitary place like unto a shining star, blazing on its horizon*.

In countless ways, the Founders of the Bahai Cause have striven to evoke the original and creative faculties that are latent within us; they have told us not to belittle ourselves by being mere copyists and repeaters of ideas; they have encouraged us to rely on our mental and spiritual resources, for we cannot know the worth of these resources until we have drawn upon them.

Today the Cause requires self-possessed, independent workers. It needs leaders and not henchmen. Courtiers have never served their countries nor their kind, for the man of parts is unwilling to stand first on one foot and then on the other in the close atmosphere of the audience chamber.

It has been said that humility is a part of wisdom, but it also has been said that in the assurance of strength, there is strength. And strength comes from God.

Let us then move, as hollow puppets, on the great stage of life. Through ourselves, we can accomplish nothing, but the Lord holds the strings—we know that; and, if we are willing to respond to the deft workings of His hand, we will play our parts nobly and well, and bring the performance to a triumphant conclusion. Again, we may consider ourselves as actors, and in every scene listen closely to the voice of the Prompter—the still small voice that sounds in the secret shrines of our own hearts—the voice that never fails us, that never leaves us stranded.

Baha-O-Llah addressing each one of us declares:—

I have created thee rich; why dost thou make thyself poor? Noble have I made thee; why dost thou degrade thyself? Of the essence of Knowledge have I manifested thee; why searchest for another than Me?

—Hidden Words, page 7.

The rich resources of spiritual independence are within us; the essences of divine wisdom are implanted in our hearts; the honors of the world of freedom are hidden in our minds. Deaf, dumb and blind, we do not put these inherent treasures into use but instead, like beggars, look to others for spiritual support and moral confidence.

Great is the strength of the individual soul who, relying on the spiritual trust deposited within him by Baha-O-Llah, will arise to spread his Cause! Such a soul will shine forever from the horizon of eternity and will be accounted as among the companions of the White Way.

With wings outstretched, he will soar toward the Kingdom of Heaven; as a flame, he will enkindle the seekers with the fire of the Love of God. Girding up the loins of endeavor, he will display universal efforts, being constantly revitalized with the breaths of the Holy Spirit.

Such an intrepid and resourceful Bahai is a confirmed Bahai. He is the herald of the Cause of Baha-O-Llah, the proclaimer of his message, the producer of his drama, the distributor of his ideas, the interpreter of his dreams, the flagbearer of his army and the disciple at his Threshold.

As if realizing the difficulties that such an individual will have to encounter in his career of service to the Bahai Cause, Abdul Baha thus addresses him: — *Let not thy hands tremble nor thy heart be disturbed.* (*Tablets of Abdul Baha*, Vol. I, page 170.)

A Bahai

I believe in the Bahai Cause

for it has taught me

that a Bahai is a follower of Light, a diffuser of Light, a lover of Light from whatsoever globe it is shining.

He is baptized in the waters of Truth and emancipated from the superstitions of the past.

He is delivered from the sea of names; he does not use signs of discrimination.

A Bahai, not recognizing any racial, national, religious or political prejudices, looks upon all mankind as the children of one Father, as the sheep of one Shepherd, as the stars of one heaven, as the birds of one meadow and the fruits of one tree.

He is unafraid of the authority of Church and State—of Organization and Administration.

He does not sit in judgment upon his brothers, nor does he place stumbling-blocks of ignorance and hatred on the pathway of the marching pilgrims.

He is not occupied with himself, but is intent on the betterment of the world and the training of nations.

He turns his eyes from foreignness and gazes toward oneness.

He does not glory in the love of country, but in the love of humanity as a whole.

He is as an artery, pulsating in the body of the created world.

A Bahai does not attribute to another that which he would not attribute to himself.

He consorts with all the people with joy and fragrance, seeing in their faces the countenance of his Lord, the Merciful, the Clement, the Compassionate.

He does not choose his associates, for God has chosen them for him at the creation; and these associates are the members of his own family scattered over the expanse of the earth.

He is an optimist; he recognizes only the beautiful and the good, and works for the establishment of these virtues in all localities and in all regions.

A Bahai reverences all the spiritual Law-givers that have successively appeared in the East to act as connecting channels between the Supreme Power and Humanity.

He does not concern himself with theological rulings and priestly privileges; but, building his life on internal sanction and turning his sight unto himself, he finds the

Eternal Witness standing within him, powerful, mighty and supreme.

A Bahai is one who lives in the *Everlasting*.

What is a Bahai?

A Bahai is a torch in the darkness, a joy for grief, a sea for the thirsty, a refuge for the unfortunate, an arm for the oppressed. He is a home to the stranger, a remedy to the sick, a fortress to him who seeks protection. He is sight for the blind, a path for the strayed, dew for the earth of kindness, a bark for the sea of knowledge, a sun for the heaven of generosity—a white point upon the brow of the world.

Love of Liberty

I believe in the Bahai Cause

for it has taught me

that the mission of the Prophets and sages of the past was to assemble the scattered fragments of humanity into a whole and to establish the rule of spiritual democracy on the five continents and the islands of the seas.

This is the fiat of Providence, the concern of Heaven and the *will* of the supreme Architect of the New World Order—Baha-O-Llah.

There may be those within the Bahai Administration and outside of it who may claim that they can level to the surface of a smooth plain the towering Himalayas; they may pretend that they are able to turn backward the flow of the mighty Niagara; they may maintain that they can stop the sun from rising or the winds from blowing; they may announce that they can arrest the march of the spinning globes, hinder the law of universal evolution and

progress, damn to eternal perdition the children of the Almighty, or silence God in His Chamber of Melodies and imprison Him in their catacombs of death!

Well, they may lay claim to all these things, and indeed they yet may even have power to perform much weird jugglery and many a fantastic miracle; yet of one thing I entertain not the slightest doubt. It is this:—

They cannot and will never be able to stop, even for a second, the irresistible, uprushing and world-encircling power of BAHAI love and the love of liberty that surges and storms in the minds and hearts of the *freedmen of Baha-O-Llah*. Such religious technicians together with all the principalities, kingdoms and empires of the earth will be baffled before these individuals who have understood and suffered, who have fixed their eyes on the horizon lit by their Lord and cried out: *We have found Baha and we are his ransom.*

O freedmen of Baha-O-Llah! Possess daring, to dream the dreams of your Master; then coin these dreams into deeds of emancipation, so as to set their mark on the coming ages. Pave the pathways of your countryside with the accomplishments of intelligence and wisdom. Be compassionate to your enemies and ill-wishers. Seize life by never seizing it, and work unremittingly in this blood-drenched, hate-encircled world to the end that it may be transformed into a moonlit and dream-visited planet!

The Company of Free Individual Bahais

I believe in the Bahai Cause

for it has taught me

that it is the Way of God to man and the way of man

to God. It is the religion of Truth unveiled before the eyes of the seekers, and the truth of religion heralded from the house-tops. It is the source of all good and the origin of all honor. It is the principle of a Faith that *inspires men to lessen words and increase deeds*; for he whose words exceed his acts, his non-being is better than his being and his death better than his life. It is the root of knowledge, the mainspring of love and the power-house of endurance and self-sacrifice through which mankind shall be developed and exalted. It is freedom from the superstitions and imitations that have kept the people imprisoned in the dark jails of ignorance.

The Bahai Cause is not simply a religion or a faith; it is not simply a philosophy or a movement; it pre-eminently is a system of constructive thinking and a way of wholesome living that never can lend itself to rigid organization or arid regimentation. It is the assertion of man's immortal spirit, and a rallying cry for those unvanquished heroes who have dedicated themselves to the cause of the new civilization which is destined to emerge from the chaos of our time.

The Bahai Administration, on its part, has expended every effort to confine this limitless Ocean in a bottle and to reduce this glorious Light to a faint glow; and it might conceivably have succeeded in its destructive work, had it not been for the clear-cut decision of Justice Louis A. Valente, rendered in the Supreme Court of New York, which was sustained by the Appellate Division of the same county. That decision was based on a very simple theme—liberty of religious practice; yet, actually, it is packed with dynamite. It will become the cornerstone of developing

Bahai activity in this country and throughout the world. Indeed, *God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet* (*Psalms 47, Verse 5*), and reactionary leaders of all types would do well to hearken to that sound!

At this juncture in human history, when Democracy is meeting its crucial test before the embattled hosts of Totalitarianism, the Bahai Cause, as the spiritual Democracy of these times, was likewise forced to the encounter. It would seem that that struggle was inevitable in an epoch when the fundamental principle of Liberty is at stake everywhere, to be lost or won, to be blotted out in daily life or worn as a badge of honor, to be annihilated or set on the path of development and progress, where liberty as measured today will be slavery as measured tomorrow.

It is not an exaggeration to state that the aroused conscience of a considerable part of the Bahai world has expressed itself in the simple words of Justice Valente. Through this decision, and in spite of the theological barricades raised by the Bahai Administration, those who feel themselves called upon to serve the Cause independently will be strengthened in their resolve. Obviously, they would have preferred to please the representative of Abdul Baha by co-operating with the National Spiritual Assembly, even as I myself would have so preferred; but, sometimes a choice has to be made. In this case, the Cause of the Bab, Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha waits patiently on the one hand, while the Bahai Administration sits enthroned on the other. We cannot have them both; therefore, which shall it be? Abdul Baha once said that if, in the face of two important issues, it is incumbent upon us

to make a decision, we must choose the more important. Then, shall we take our places in the wake of the Glorious Dispossessed or shall we stand at attention before the monopolistic powers? This is a problem which each of us must answer for himself.

Baha-O-Llah's hammer-stroke of fate is sounding! Now is the time! Now is the accepted time! Let the disillusioned regimented Bahais, everywhere, arise and break the chains and fetters that are binding them to a despotic Administration! This is their opportunity to defy the tyrants within the Cause, even as Baha-O-Llah himself defied the tyrants that had subverted the former religions.

It is certain that, in that New World which we as Bahais have been taught to expect, which we in faith have anticipated, the followers of Baha-O-Llah will play no small part. Rising from each community, from each state, from each country, eager, determined children of the New Day shall form themselves into a formless Order—THE COMPANY OF FREE INDIVIDUAL BAHAIS; and these persons, known and unknown to one another, within organizations (even the Bahai organization) and outside of them, shall carry the name of their Lord to every region and take active part in the establishment of his Kingdom upon the earth.

May God be the support of the teachers who shall travel to these countries, and their helper!

Formerly they were as moths, but they shall become as royal falcons. Formerly they were as bubbles, but they shall become the sea!

Who was Baha-O-Llah?

He was the divine Advocate of man's emancipation

from the thralldom of former ages. His ideas were not static and temporary, but dynamic and eternal. He was a man of peace, but also he was a man of battle; and he led the army of New Ideas against the army of tradition. He was the personification of a spiritual and intensely human genius. He had daring and sublime self-confidence. While the enlightened religionists of his day gazed fearfully into the depths of prejudice and intolerance where their fellowmen were disporting themselves, he, with one stride, bridged the abyss and, in the face of the storm which rose about him on every side, he called on the kings and rulers of the earth, and on men and women in all walks of life, to arise, to move and to unite, in the name of freedom and in the cause of the oppressed and the downtrodden. Baha-O-Llah fought his battles without reserve.

Now, our time has arrived; our hour has struck! We, *THE COMPANY OF FREE INDIVIDUAL BAHAIS* must continue his work!

The Bounties of the Omnipotent are inexhaustible and they shall pour upon us! The Favors of the Merciful are boundless and they shall surround us! The Gifts of the King of Kings are numberless and they shall be given unto us! The Glories of the Father are resplendent and they shall encircle us! There is no cause for anxiety and no reason for backwardness. *THE COMPANY OF FREE INDIVIDUAL BAHAIS*, which always has been in existence, must now become vocal, active, imperative; and let us remember, let us constantly remember that Abdul Baha anticipated us and spoke of our coming. He said:—

The hosts of the Kingdom of Abha are drawn up and filed in battle array on the plain of the Supreme Concourse and are expecting that a band of volunteers will step upon the field of action with the intention of service, so that they may assist that band and make it victorious and triumphant.

—*Bahai Scriptures*, pages 490-491.

The attitude to be taken and the services to be rendered by this *band of volunteers*, *THE COMPANY OF FREE INDIVIDUAL BAHAIS*, are outlined and enumerated by Abdul Baha. Addressing them he says:—

Be not seated and silent. Diffuse the glad-tidings of the Kingdom far and wide to the ears; promulgate the Word of God. . . . Arise with such qualities and attributes that ye may continually bestow life on the body of the world, and nurse the infants of the universe up to the station of maturity and perfection. Enkindle with all your might, in every meeting the light of the love of God, gladden and cheer every heart with the utmost loving-kindness, show forth your love to the strangers just as you show to your relatives. If a soul is seeking a quarrel, ask ye reconciliation; if he blame ye, praise him; if he give you a deadly poison, bestow an all-healing antidote; if he createth death, administer ye eternal life; if he becometh a thorn, change ye into roses and hyacinths. Perchance, through such deeds and words, this darkened world will become illuminated; this terrestrial universe will become transformed into a heavenly realm, and this satanic prison become a divine court; warfare and bloodshed be annihilated and love and faithfulness hoist the tent of unity upon the apex of the world.

—*Tablets of Abdul Baha*, Vol. III, pages 503-504.

Therefore, let *THE COMPANY OF FREE INDIVIDUAL BAHAIS* step upon the field of action with the intention of service so that the Hosts of the Kingdom of Abha may make it victorious and triumphant!

PART NINE

ACTION AND REACTION

22. Out of the Mail Bag

And ye are witnesses of these things.

—St. Luke, Chapter 24, Verse 48



DR. JOHN HAYNES HOLMES
Pastor of the Community Church of New York City

CHAPTER XXII

OUT OF THE MAIL BAG

While the articles which constitute this book were appearing in *New History*, the mail bag was becoming heavier than usual. Friends, strangers, and especially Bahais felt called upon to express themselves on the problems which the legal action had brought to light. Therefore, a great deal of interesting correspondence was carried on. All the letters received have been placed for reference in the office files. There were hundreds of these letters coming from all parts of the country and from abroad, expressing, naturally, different angles and shades of thought. Indeed, they comprise a slice of life on subject-matter that is seldom dealt with! For this reason, it has been deemed advisable to make some extracts for publication.

Communications, reproduced herewith either in part or in whole, excepting the four historic letters from Dr. John Haynes Holmes as well as a letter from Palestine and one from India, are presented without identification—the matter of moment being the content of the statements, rather than the status of the writers.

April 1, 1940

Dear Mr. Sohrab:

I have read with the greatest interest and with seething indignation your complete Statement with correspondence as published in the April issue of **NEW HISTORY**.

It's all news to me that Mr. and Mrs. Chanler have been victims of such cruel persecution from the Bahai authorities. This latest attack seems incredible, and I would regard it as such did I not see the actual documents as you print them. Alas, it is the same old story of ecclesiasticism—the Church arrogating to itself all power, and persecuting the prophets and the saints.

I have always known that Mr. and Mrs. Chanler were utterly devoted persons, the unselfish and self-sacrificing servants of a great cause which has become central in their lives; but I never realized at what a price they were standing firm by their ideals. You have done us all a great service in making public the details of this story. Please convey to Mr. and Mrs. Chanler my sympathy and reverent regard, which I share with you as their devoted associate.

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) *John Haynes Holmes.*

April 7, 1941

Dear Mrs. Chanler:

Thank you for letting me know the great victory you have won in the courts. I feel that this is a victory for us all, since it involves the great principle of freedom in religion. Imagine any group arrogantly claiming a monopoly in this great field. I congratulate you with all my heart, for I can realize what this long fight must have involved.

Believe me,

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) *John Haynes Holmes.*

April 21, 1941

Dear Mr. Sohrab:

I have read with absorbing interest your account of the famous lawsuit and the victory which has been won. More than ever do I feel that this is a victory for us all—a vindication in this country, in a trying circumstance, of our basic principle of religious liberty. There isn't one of us who doesn't owe an immeasurable debt to Mrs. Chanler and yourself. I hope this issue of *NEW HISTORY* together with the next issue containing your account of this affair, will be widely distributed in the libraries, for it is a document of genuine historical importance.

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) *John Haynes Holmes.*

Sept. 30, 1941

Dear Mr. Sohrab:

I am mighty glad that this book is in hand, for this Bahai lawsuit is a chapter in the history of religious freedom in America. . . .

We have trying and difficult days ahead, and must close up our ranks tighter than ever.

(Signed) *John Haynes Holmes.*

* * * * *

The wise ones in the Bahai Cause will arise and say: "Praise be to God that Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha have opened our eyes to truth."

Those of opposite mind will either come forward with co-operative endeavor, or thrust our beloved Cause into chaos and confusion. They *cannot* refute the Word, which is absolute authority in your wonderful treatise.

* * * * *

Your little magazine *New History*, containing reference to the trade-marking of the name *Bahai*, etc., came today, and I have read the same very carefully. Allow me to say that I agree with every word of it. I have no brief for or against any individual or group. However, I have watched for years conditions going from bad to worse without meddling, because I see the end of it all.

* * * * *

My sympathies are entirely with Mr. and Mrs. Chanler's great work—what does it matter which way the Light is spread.

* * * * *

I am stirred to surprise and regret by the information you have conveyed to me concerning the strangely inconsistent effort of some Bahai representatives, to appropriate to private use the truly world-universal name and beauty of the Bahai faith.

This narrow, and, it seems to me, fundamentally selfish attempt, is surely directly contrary to all that the Bahai fellowship and devotion stand for. One need only try to imagine, today, a single body of Christians seeking to *copyright* the name itself of *Christian*. The error and narrowness of this other effort is, by such comparison, made to appear in its real aspect.

With earnest hope and prayer that such attempts will be withdrawn voluntarily, or, if not, will be defeated in their purpose, and assuring you that we feel that such noble-hearted and pure-spirited loyalty and labor as you and Mrs. Chanler have devoted to the Bahai faith for many notable years of service, should be sufficient to convince any but the sadly bigoted, of the wrong of

trying to hamper your great self-sacrifice and witness of divine truth. . . .

* * * * *

I received your small booklet and have read it. You do not say anything about the Guardian of the Bahai Cause, Shoghi Effendi. The National Assembly do just as he suggests in all matters. I am surprised that Ahmad Sohrab, with his background, will not work with the main body of the Bahais.

* * * * *

I have never heard of it—I am re-reading and studying thoughtfully No. 7 issue (April). It has cleared up some subjects that were “foggy” to my way of thinking. I thank you.

* * * * *

I have just finished reading your statement in the April issue of the little magazine, *New History*, and am simply dumbfounded. The action described seems diametrically opposite to the fundamental teachings of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha, so far as I have learned from your compendium of their writings and teachings in your *Bible of Mankind*, *I Heard Him Say* and pamphlets.

* * * * *

Thank you for the April issue of *New History*. My reaction is twofold: interest in your side of the case as presented by you, which has all the earmarks of sincerity, genuineness and soundness, and bewilderment at the past and present action of the Chicago *authorities* in seeking and securing a patent on Bahai literature and trying to enforce their alleged rights. It is astounding. The legal aspects baffle my layman's mind. But,

the whole world seems to have gone *cuckoo*, and from this you and Mr. and Mrs. Chanler may draw some comfort.

* * * * *

I read with great interest your statement regarding: Horace Holley. It is an impeachment equal to that of Warren Hastings.

* * * * *

Just a word to encourage you in your fight against the orthodoxy which wants to copyright and nullify the words of the Prophet. It has always been that way. Those who can only travel with a collar around their necks have to have some place to go—the others who can think and act for themselves will follow you.

* * * * *

I have read your pamphlets and will say that they are very well written, and no doubt do much good. I am sure however, that a man with your attainments could do much more for the Cause if you would join up with them and become one of the gang.

* * * * *

After reading from cover to cover the recently written statement by your pen regarding the trade-mark, Bahai, I felt so touched by the spiritual tone and the profound declaration of your conviction for the truth to be proclaimed for the Unification of the people of the World and their Emancipation. I read carefully every line of this most explicit article. I pray that this article will bring a peaceful solution for the difficulties in the path of the Followers of the Divine Teachings, who see the *blood clot* in religious freedom that is

forming; an operation is necessary in order that the *Will and Testament* of Abdul Baha be obeyed.

* * * * *

Now Ahmad, I am speaking to you as a brother. I am for the underdog, but I want the Truth only. Mr. . . . and others stated that you denied the station and authority of the Guardian, and thus the Will of the Master. I defended you on the grounds that your present writing did not indicate it and that I had too much confidence in your loyalty to the Master to reject his specific command. The National Spiritual Assembly is determined to smash you on this rock alone.

* * * * *

I have read with interest the pamphlet you sent me concerning a very unusual court proceeding against The New History Society.

You have justice on your side, and I hope you will also have the law. I know comparatively little about trade-mark law, but my impression is that your contentions are sound. You evidently have good counsel.

* * * * *

Thanks, so much, for New History! It answers so many questions which I have been asked in regard to you and your connection with the National Bahai Organization so much better than I was able to answer them at the time. I have passed it on, to make the *crooked thoughts straight*.

Personally, I extend both hands to you both in understanding—understanding too deep for words.

* * * * *

I am praying that you will be vindicated in New York,

as I feel that Shoghi Effendi, were he in possession of all the things necessary in the case, would feel a debt of gratitude is due any soul who tries to spread the Teachings, whether through book shop, temples, churches or schools.

* * * * *

I have wanted to tell you ever since the April number of the magazine when the great *Silence* was broken, as I had never heard *one* word of *your side* of the story.

I want to tell you how much I appreciate the little magazine, and when it comes every month, I just have to stop whatever I am doing and read it from cover to cover. It just strikes the nail on the head, for me. It clears my mentality, and I can see the *whole Truth* as you have it, that never can be adulterated, or organized.

God bless you. I am with you heart and hand, and have been from the very beginning. Yours is the sense of universal justice that lifts my heart to where it soars and sings. We need a consciousness as high as heaven to see all life as Love, all men as kings.

* * * * *

I was dumbfounded when I read about what the so-called Bahais are doing. Baha-O-Llah in the *Hidden Words* says, "I made you free, why are you a slave?" I take the same view as John Haynes Holmes, who so well expressed himself in the Oct. issue of *New History*. It is a deplorable condition at this time and age to confiscate the Word of God.

* * * * *

I read your magazine from cover to cover—because I had a tired moment—and I kept going, because the subject matter proved interesting.

Do you mean to say that a certain *Bahai Cause* pursues you because you *independently* branch out to teach its principles and axioms? *Legally pursued!* (altho' you use your own money). You're *teaching* it right—aren't you?

* * * * *

Most Bahai followers are very much of the dilettante order—you know this as well as I. But I will not quarrel with them. Let each soul travel the pathway of his choice. The worst trouble makers are generally the *leaders*.

* * * * *

And you Sohrab, don't send me your magazines no more. They are thrown into a waste paper basket. I am very particular what I read, and I have no time for your stuff.

* * * * *

I greatly sympathize with you in your troubles with personalities. But, this is beside the mark. Personalities have no importance in the *Cause!* We are striving to build an organization that will stand intact throughout the future ages—and it will be done. And even though the material that we start with is only one degree above the baboon, we must accomplish this mighty task of consolidating the Baha'i forces for posterity. It may be that you are on the negative side in order to show the rest of the Bahais that *this divine cause cannot be divided*. There has of necessity to be an opposite in all things.

* * * * *

Just as soon as a soul accepts Baha'u'llah as the prophet of his age, and obeys His teachings, I think that person is as much a Bahai as he could ever be. Some

of the organized believers do this only in a very slight degree. The reward for following Baha'u'llah comes from a realm far removed from the world of man.

* * * * *

Your little magazine is very helpful and often has some valuable information in it. I can see your standpoint, and yet I do not approve of it for this reason: The people of the earth are not strong enough to walk alone in the world of spiritual thoughts. It is too foreign and contrary to that which they have been trained so far. You have been given the privilege of living with some of the highest Spirits that have manifested on the earth. Abdul Baha certainly was one of the greatest; Janabe Fazel was like Him in a lesser degree. Through the help of such souls you became free from the world of nature and the struggle for existence. Your life shows this.

* * * * *

We might say that most of the Bahai followers are like unto creatures shut up in an animal house—the world of nature is this animal dwelling. They have far to go before they can be free, soaring high in the sky of spiritual understanding. The freedom that you now have is unknown to these people, and they have no power to live and do as yourself.

* * * * *

I am not at all interested in your publication and must ask you . . . not to waste your postage by sending it to me. Should I ever want anything that you possess (which God forbid!) I shall quite cheerfully let you know.

* * * * *

Their stand was ridiculous. I am afraid many Christian denominations have hugged their good news to their hearts and kept others out. High fences are falling down.

* * * * *

Congratulations on bright victory achieved for humanity the American way.

* * * * *

Of course, I am *delighted*, but *not* surprised, that Mr. Shorab and you won the court decision. It seemed ridiculous to bring such a suit in a country *founded* at least on the principle, that men might worship in their own way. I should give it the utmost publicity.

* * * * *

I congratulate you and Mr. Sohrab upon your great victory. This world can never be a world of peace and happy brotherhood of mankind until cruelty to helpless creatures both human and dumb animals is controlled by righteous laws.

* * * * *

To you and to Mirza Sohrab my heartfelt congratulations for the successful defense of your case—which is a rare triumph indeed of tolerant, all-embracing, loving and warm-blooded religious spirit over narrow-minded formalism. Let us be generous in victory and concede to those forces which want to monopolize a living Creed that they mean well, but are victims of their own jealousy and fanaticism.

You, however, who have carried the torch without pretense, self-effacing and patient, and with such loving insight even into the hearts of your adversaries,

you have won the triple award: the outward recognition, the inward justification, and finally the spreading of your methods to settle conflicts, namely to conquer by Love; to prevail by Humbleness.

You might not be aware of the far-reaching effects which your example might cause in a world which needs must be convinced soon that war and riots and violence breed naught but injustice, hatred and despair.

With more than usual interest I have followed your articles in *New History* since you revealed for the first time the intimate growth of your movement. And you revealed much more. Unknowingly perhaps, you showed us the advantages of taking a higher, impersonal and unimpassioned perspective, even on matters which are closest to our hearts. There was not a single instance of over-enthusiasm, of artificial fervor in those accounts of your religious struggles. On the contrary, everything was told as if it all had happened centuries ago. (And indeed it seemed to me a brilliant mirror of the period when Christianity changed from being a Faith to becoming a Church.)

And again, what impressed me most was your sympathy with your very adversaries; not a single instance of anger, of contempt or even of what is called righteous indignation. Only now and then some subtle humor which so delightfully relieved the tenseness of the situation; some gentle way of poking fun at your adversaries as is the custom amongst good friends. But a greater amount still of self-irony as if to say: "We're all sinners and each of us the worst of all." There was a tenderness, a charm, a serene wisdom in those essays;—so that our souls were captured at once and our minds were calmed with the knowledge that your cause shall prevail. * * * *

Warm congratulations and felicitations upon the thorough and decisive vindication of your entire position, from the Court! The dignity and courage with which you have conducted your part in this debate are worthy of all praise and of this complete verdict.

* * * * *

With greatest satisfaction I got the news, that at last you won a full victory in the case you so valiantly fought for.

Let me congratulate you and Mr. Sohrab for this success. I know how much this means to both of you, and how much it must mean to you to fight for a just cause.

* * * * *

Congratulations! Thank you for the Press Comments on your success in winning the suit that the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the U. S. and Canada brought against you. It delighted me beyond words.

You have rendered a great service to mankind in unmasking the members of the National Spiritual Assembly as the prototypes of the bigots of the dark ages. Their utter lack of wisdom in bringing this suit to prohibit your using the name *Bahai*, is the strongest evidence of their lack of the Spirit of the Bahai Religion. It has hastened the day hinted at by Abdul Baha when he said:

" . . . If we are not the instruments in spreading this Cause, others will be chosen. . . . God will raise up a people who will hoist the standard of God, who will ignite the Lamp of God, who will conquer the cities of the hearts, who will show forth the potency of the Word of God."—(*Bahai Scriptures*, Page 374)

* * * * *

Heartfelt congratulations to you and to Mrs. Chanler on your Victory! . . . May your work now go forward with greater joy and greater achievement.

We are so happy that you have overcome the obstacles put in your pathway—but such has ever been the experience of the constructive peoples of the earth.

May the forces of evil grow a million times weaker each day and the forces of good a million times stronger until the victory of Light for the world is won.

* * * * *

I wish to acknowledge your faithful promise to send me a leaflet on the Court procedure, for which I thank you. The verdict is what I predicted to our Local Spiritual Assembly sometime ago.

Religious freedom has been the inheritance of every creature on the American soil. Surely it would not be denied a believer in Baha'u'llah and Abdul Baha and Shoghi Effendi.

* * * * *

I am grateful to you both for the good news you sent me. It was the best news I have had in a long time. Truth sure was mightier than the sword of Excommunication. I don't understand where Mr. Holley and Co. got their ideas from, except from the Roman hierarchy. Baha-O-Llah says, "Why are you a slave when I made you free?" We have been slaves long enough. I hope some of the folks that made up the parties in your house will return back again and enjoy your hospitality and not be afraid of Excommunication.

* * * * *

Please accept and convey to Mrs. Chanler my congratulations on the verdict, about which there was no doubt from the very beginning.

* * * * *

My heartiest congratulations. This news made my heart get into my throat. It was the best I have had for a long time.

Oh what shameless creatures, waiting in the ambush like wild cats for their prey, to devour it.

I am rejoiced over the way the Judge handled the case, putting on them the water hose. How they belittled themselves, walking out like wet rats. . . . So there's where some of the Temple money goes. . . .

Now, I hope and pray that the true believers will wake up,—shake the shackles off our necks. You broke those horrid links. Praise God. . . . How we innocently had suffered. . . .

Now, more than ever, I wish I could be in Chicago and hear what they have to say. Perhaps many will be glad that this happened. Is Shoghi Effendi getting this report? I hope he gets the newspaper clippings and sees that the Cause is in the hands of non-Bahais, and that he was deceived by the sweet tongue of Satan.

* * * * *

Most sincerely I offer my hearty congratulations upon your success in the full establishment of your claims:—

“To draw the thing as you see it.

For the God of things as they are.”

I enjoy the little magazine and read it carefully, and delight in the decision the Court has given you. I do not know all the reasons for the controversy, but I believe in you both; that is quite enough. If I ever return to New York City to reside, I shall follow your phase of the Call most earnestly.

* * * * *

Above all let me felicitate you and Mrs. Chanler on

the outcome of the court action which was so unjustly brought against you and your cause. Though I did not write to you for a long time, I have followed everything very closely in the writings you always send to me and which I always enjoy. Through them I never get out of touch with you, at least on my part.

* * * * *

You will forgive any undue delay in congratulating you and Mrs. Chanler on your victory for retention of individual freedom of conscience in religion as guaranteed by the Federal Constitution.

* * * * *

Congratulations. I have only just opened the Press Comments on April 1st and 2nd you so kindly forwarded. I am indeed rejoiced to know that religious freedom is still preserved, that formalism and tyranny are again defeated. The right to learn and spread Truth is the most precious part of Freedom and is the only right worth striving for. True religion is the only remedy for our war-torn world.

* * * * *

I spoke to some of the delegates about a girl who got married, and for a long time cooked steak, so her husband said, "Dearie, why do you not use your brain and cook up something else?" "I am trying," she said, "but it is always steak." So I said the same is with the election. They do not try to get someone else on the board of the National Spiritual Assembly.

* * * * *

What a glorious privilege was yours to vindicate the Truth of the Bahai Cause. "Justice is to be desired

above all things." You cannot organize the Bahai Cause, Abdul Baha told us in the very beginning of the Cause. So many things have crept into the method of teaching the Cause; but I have been thankful I heard, and was taught from the source, so I kept quiet, but I knew what Abdul Baha had said—so rested on His words. . . . God is not to be mocked nor hindered by man's interpretation, for He rules mighty and supreme.

* * * * *

It will give me the greatest pleasure if you will no longer send me your publication: in fact I request you to cross my name off your list entirely and oblige.

* * * * *

As the road is now clear to carry on with your teaching efforts, let every effort be given to the spreading of the Bahai Cause. The differences between a few people must be forgotten.

* * * * *

Grand too of you and Mr. Shorab to send me the copies of your periodicals that tell of your glorious victory for **FREEDOM OF RELIGION**. We congratulate you both.

Our best wishes in your great work for **TRUTH** and **FREEDOM**.

* * * * *

I was really happy when I read, the other day, in your magazine about the decision given by Justice Valente in your favor. It is really a triumph of Truth and Freedom over selfishness and bigotry. More Power to you! Please extend my heartiest congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Chanler also. Now, I am glad, you can

spread your message with more freedom and power than ever.

* * * * *

I want to register my satisfaction at the decision reached by Justice Valente in the long-drawn suit conducted to harass and hinder Mr. Sohrab and Mrs. Chauler. Any other decision would have struck a vital blow at the religious freedom guaranteed under the U. S. Constitution.

* * * * *

Permit me to congratulate you on your great victory. Although I have never doubted for a moment that the New History Society was in its rights and that this ugly controversy must be decided in your favor, I could not help feeling relieved when I received the printed announcement of the Court Decision and thus saw my expectation confirmed.

I read the May issue of your little magazine over and over; I was in my thoughts with you all, back in the New History office at 132 East 65th Street, and lived with you through the breathtaking minutes which you so masterfully described.

* * * * *

It seems incredible that the N. S. A. should appeal the case after such a clear cut decision made by Judge Louis A. Valente, and repeat the same mistake again in regard to the telephone book listing. It only goes to prove how veiled they are. Too bad you have to go all over the case again. They evidently cannot see that they are wrong. I think, perhaps after 5 judges give the same decision they will believe it.

* * * * *

a moment of great enthusiasm, tried to join the Bahai Administration.

In fact, since I have tried to live according to the teachings of the Great Masters, Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha, my heart has been lighter and happier, and I have—I am quite sure—led a more useful life than before contacting them.

As for the *Philosophy of Fear*—the fruits of which the world is witnessing in the horrible War that now rages—there can be no place for this most destructive of all forces in *any* religious movement. If the Bahais' idea of keeping their Cause clean and pure is to use Voodoo methods and shun the sinners of the world, for fear of contamination, it might be well for them all—no matter how exalted they have become—to go back to the First Source of their religion and read again and again the words of the Masters.

For in no single instance can I find any such threats against a so-called sinner—which seems to be the title bestowed upon someone who does not agree with them—in these teachings. Mind, I'm not speaking of things *written by others* than the Masters.

Religious vanity, the temptation to aggrandizement, spiritual pride, self-righteousness, the superiority complex, are all likely to be part of the ego, when one feels that *they alone* have any monopoly on the spiritual concept—and that *they alone* have the *right to interpret*, and, if you please, enforce the teachings of this spiritual idea.

We are all limited by our frail human nature. But even if we cannot be Gods we can *emulate* them, and try to be something better than we are. No one can

frighten any intelligent individual into *his* particular way of thinking.

There is only *one path* to spiritual growth:—The path of tolerance and love. Every man, woman and child alive has an inalienable right to seek God according to his or her findings and convictions.

It is my sincere hope that the Bahais will grow into this consciousness, until there is no longer room in their hearts for anything but the tolerance and love that was the keynote of the lives of their great teachers, Baha-O-Llah and his beloved son, Abdul Baha.

* * * * *

Many thanks to your kindness in mailing me a copy of the Bible of Mankind which reached me last evening. I appreciate your generous gift more than I can tell you. I know I shall find it a mine of inspiration for future messages I hope to deliver. It ought to broaden my intellectual and spiritual horizon and quicken my interest in the messages God has given through the prophets of other races.

I was greatly interested in the Quarterly *The Children's Caravan*.

I was amazed to learn of the lawsuit which you and Mrs. Chanler were compelled to face. How preposterous for any group to claim a monopoly on Religion! Truly their suit was the negative of all they pretended to teach.

* * * * *

My heart rejoices that justice has been done in the work of Baha'u'llah of which you are both such loving representatives.

You were sweet to let me hear at once—but my heart

knew it, Peace came like the ringing of a bell and I said—"The decision has been given and Justice has triumphed over lust and greed!"

* * * * *

I want to congratulate you because of your wonderful and well-directed opportunity regarding the Bab, Baha-U-Llah and Abdul Baha—and because of the wonderful *Bible* that you have given the world. I have read all the *Bible* carefully. I was reading it to a man (organist) nearly blind, who was deeply interested. We rejoiced over the wisdom of your just judge. And to-day, the paper came from you—and I am glad for you and with you. When the man afflicted with blindness, comes to me again, the news will make him rejoice.

* * * * *

This is all tommy rot. Jealousy is at the bottom of it. Ahmad Sohrab is not spiritually mature or he would never have caused friction. This is the Day of Judgment, heed ye foolish people, you are gloating now, the time is short, instead of co-operating you are tearing down. Shame on you all. Baha'u'llah suffered martyrdom to spread this message and you want to rest on your laurels. Pettiness, wake up and grow up.

* * * * *

Congratulations and many thanks for sending us the Press Comments on your success in the matter on the Decision of the Supreme Court against the National Spiritual Assembly.

This decision could not have been otherwise, else it would be an evidence that there was no sanity left in the world.

All success to you both and again with many thanks

for helping to free the Bahai Religion from its arch enemies, the Bahai organization.

* * * * *

In one of your articles you said something about being willing to do "for a Persian Cause" what you would not do "for an American Corporation." . . .

In your June article on 'The Name' I found the closest approach to My thinking I have met for some time, yet I wish you had developed the subject matter. . . .

We have reached the final division in your Bible of Mankind. I read aloud to . . . as opportunity permits. We are enjoying the Bahai section very much. I blame Bahais for hiding their light under a bushel. In the movement in Australia I found the writings closely guarded, reserved for initiates only, instead of being broadcast so that he who runs may read. I am confiding this to you, because you and Julie Chanler have done so much to break down the barriers and get the message through to the world. I bless you for what you have done and I trust you will go on to complete the good work to which you have put your hand.

* * * * *

I want to thank you for sending me the magazines and newspaper items in regard to the case. I shall have to ask you to stop sending the magazines. . . . I assure you that not one copy of your magazine has gone into the waste-basket and I am very glad to know your side—it seems to be what Abdul Baha taught—yet He also said we must be obedient, and if we do obey the majority patiently, everything would be made right in time.

* * * * *

God works in mysterious ways, His wonders to perform.

And so you see, Ahmad, you were trained and prepared by Abdul Baha to vindicate the Truth of the Bahai message.

All must come under the Banner of Truth, Righteousness, Justice and Unity; all nations into one family of God. The Master warned us, if Bahais, so-called, did not fulfill the teachings of Unity, Justice, Peace and severance from all save God they would fail; others would arise, who would carry on,—so the Day of Revealing and Restitution is at hand. Only praise God you were chosen to vindicate the Truth. It was a shock and a revelation to me to find how the Cause had been misunderstood and dominated, until the vision was lost sight of. But the Cause is not lost.

* * * * *

Please discontinue sending me your magazine *New History*. Thank you!

* * * * *

My heartiest congratulations to you both upon the decision of the Supreme Court. You have nobly served the Cause of freedom of worship and the Cause of freedom of investigation and expression.

* * * * *

The mighty Excalibur has again been unsheathed, and consigned to the dark shades of Erebus at least one petty, selfish and hypocritical ego where inanely it now dazedly wanders about "unwept, unhonored and unsung." *Sela*. I tender both you and Mrs. Chanler my heartfelt congratulations for your valorous and successful fight over those who would strain at a gnat

as if it were a camel trying to throw into discard all fraternal and humanitarian principles not according with their peculiar whimsical ideas.

* * * * *

Please know that I am more than mildly interested in the Bahai movement. I do not know enough of its origin and prestige to fight for it as you are doing, but from my meager knowledge of world religions, I consider your own as the most fitting to human needs, extant today. Furthermore, I believe that transgression of the tenets of your faith is what has brought the world into its present horrible alternatives and actions. . . . In method also you are doing much to work out its problems in human progress. . . . I wish we might have a branch of your faith here, and believe the same could easily be organized.

* * * * *

Thank you for placing my name on your subscription list. I received your last two issues and today the June issue, just when I had begun to think you had forgotten, so thank you again.

I can only say I echo John Haynes Holmes and congratulate you and Julie Chanler (lovely name) on your victory. You know it's queer the answers I received to my inquiries about all this, as if I were a child and broaching something taboo. I am certain you will win the suit when it comes up before the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court.

Also I want to express my admiration of the next to the last paragraph in this issue, the English is exquisite poetry fit to express your feelings of the Most Holy Name.

* * * * *

Spoke to a small Bahai group in . . . 2 weeks ago.
Congratulations on your victory over the orthodox.

* * * * *

Months ago when I was in San Francisco I met a Bahai, not one of your friends, I regret to state. She gave me your address, I wrote to you and received literature from you. Thanks, and please pardon the long delay, I intended to write to you before this.

I first learned about the controversy between "New History" and the Bahai Administration from a Bahai in San Francisco, one not friendly as I said; later, after receiving New History, October, 1940, I learned about your case, and immediately favored you, for I am an Independent myself, and I am most friendly toward you and all other Independents who affirm their Divine right to disregard "authorities" and carry on their own Spiritual Work in their own way. I wish you all success, I hope you have been or will be victorious. I hope that you and Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler have won or will win the right to give to the world the Bahai Teachings and the right to use the name Bahai.

I have read your magnificent paper "My Faith" and find myself in accord with you. . . .

I have met and known many teachers and "so-called" teachers. I have had many spiritual adventures in my Quest for Truth. I feel that I know you and it affords me joy. I hope to hear from you.

* * * * *

Kindly do not send any longer your publication "New History" to me. My husband and I regret so very much the course that you have taken and hope from the depth of our hearts you may not stay in it much

longer but come back to us very soon. The Guardian is your true brother and will help you, not hinder you.

* * * * *

The one thing in particular that is forbidden among the followers of Baha'u'llah is *contention*. If those who claim to follow His teachings engage in continual contention, then they are not His followers, but fakers. As long as humans cultivate the spirit of a mad dog there cannot be any unity among the human race. To strive and contend in the name of a religion, even the Bahai religion, will not exonerate anyone from this crime. I will say that your little magazine does some good teaching work, but why not let the personal disagreement drop into the background.

* * * * *

As far as the written word is concerned the Bahai Religion is complete. The mass of humanity will not have a true comprehension of much of that which has been revealed, for centuries yet to come. But it is necessary to promulgate all those parts of our teaching which can be understood by the mass of the people of the world. And to accomplish this great task we must discover the lowest common denominator of ordinary human intelligence. And that is quite low indeed. The organized Bahais, with the help of Shoghi Effendi, are doing just that—dealing with the lowest common denominator of understanding in the Bahai religion. When you undertake to teach a large number, it is certainly practical to offer only that which the greatest number of souls can follow and comprehend. Such being the case, the more advanced souls should not complain that the curriculum is not up to the standard

of their particular intelligence. The greater a soul's understanding the less need he will have for any human aid as regards the knowledge of spiritual things. . . .

The person of mystic knowledge is vastly impatient with the stock variety of human intelligence because he knows that it is only a stupid squirrel spinning around in its exercise-cage and then bragging about how great a distance it has traveled. This is a perfect simile of the world of nature-mind. Most of the things about which it thinks have no importance and really lead nowhere—except in an endless circle. Now just as the mystic mind is hostile to the operations of the earth-bound minds, so they are hostile to the condition of the mystic; they cannot understand anything of that world and therefore disapprove of everything related to it.

At the time that Christ questioned His followers as to what they thought about Him, Peter was the only one who said that he knew that Christ was the Son of the living God. Christ thereupon honored Peter above all the others, saying, "Blessed art thou, for flesh and blood have not revealed this to you." In other words, this kind of understanding could not be conveyed from one man to another, it was given by the Spirit of God to a man who was fit to receive it.

Long, long ago I read a little story titled, "In the Country of the Blind the One-Eyed Man is King." The setting of this story was in the Andes mountains in South America . . . I wish you would ask some of the literary searchers to hunt this up for you as it is really quite a little classic story and well worth reading. I am sure you can get something that you can use from it. The author certainly understood human nature.

The human race can never be led into the Kingdom of Heaven unless and until they gain a certain understanding of the universal divine spirit by themselves. And to accomplish this important matter they must first learn to do their *own thinking and understanding*. Everything in the teachings of Baha'u'llah points to and leads to this necessary power of the human soul—to *understand for himself and not blindly follow the dictates of human leaders*. . . .

Baha'u'llah did not encourage His followers to contend with each other in courts, or to curse one another or that a small handful should strive to prevent all the others from making use of their own reasoning powers. This idea is only a repetition of methods and systems that have been a curse to mankind throughout the ages past. This does not belong to the Cause of Baha'u'llah! Nay! Nay! . . . Let us beware that this enemy does not destroy the good that Baha'u'llah has brought to the people of the world today.

“Verily, God hath made it incumbent upon every soul to deliver His Cause, according to his ability. Thus hath the command been recorded by the Finger of Might and Power upon the Tablet of Majesty and Greatness.”—Baha'u'llah.

Who shall deprive me of this right and privilege?

* * * * *

All the suffering you endured . . . so long ago was too much for you. But it had to be, and belongs to the crucible of tests in the life of every chosen one to be graced with honors from on high—not the honors that you now have—but the everlasting honors which I hope you will obtain.

I hope that nothing too serious has already happened through your attitude toward the National Spiritual Assembly that could not be rectified . . . It is of course a very serious thing to differ with the Guardian. If there were something radically wrong with the National Spiritual Assembly the Guardian would know it and would correct it. He would not let it stand.

At any rate, it is forbidden in the teachings to feel offended, that is to say, you must not let it be known that you are offended; let God alone know it, and God will be your Advocate. You have the power to transform your sentiments toward the National Spiritual Assembly—there is a point of mystery in our teachings that you have never yet seen, and that is the cause of our differences.

What excuse will you make in the other world when the Judge will ask you, why you did not believe that the National Spiritual Assembly should be obeyed? Your love for Abdul Baha will help you nothing after your making a break in the Cause which is about the last thing you should have done and which now makes it very hard for the 4,000 believers in this country, and very hard for the National Spiritual Assembly and very hard for Shoghi Effendi. Even here in . . . , the non-believers are telling us that a division and split had come into our Cause and that this Cause was therefore not the truth. The Minister of the Christian Church here has received your literature from a Minister of another church. Do you want this damage to the Cause? In the end you will regret having taken so much vengeance on the National Spiritual Assembly.

Do you not read and study the Testament of Abdul Baha? Everything is so clear there. For a believer like

you to differ with Shoghi Effendi is a great sin, an unpardonable sin; therefore turn to God to help you in the rectification of this sin. He will help you if you pray for it, but do it before it is too late.

* * * * *

What would be the price for New History for year 1941?

I would especially like to have copies of it beginning with March of this year and back numbers if possible. . . .

I see that the Bahais here in . . . are all split up (I am not a Bahai but am interested in all faiths). It seems that there is some dissension among the Bahais here but I do not know the reason. . . .

* * * * *

Some of the Bahai followers have on occasions told me that I had no right whatever to do any thinking for myself; that the National Spiritual Assembly would do all this for me. But as I remarked before, this idea is the very essence of hell and damnation as far as I am concerned and to bow down to such rot would be worse than death, a thousand times. How can a group of animalistic bodies and brains be a guide to any soul living in the kingdom. Why do they seek to take the place of God, and, furthermore what right have they to be greater than God, for such seemingly is their claim and desire?

* * * * *

To a certain extent you are justified in feeling the way you do. Being spiritual-minded you naturally think that the rank and file of the people should become the same way. But this is entirely beyond their power, the

animal propensities have full dominion over most of them. Even among the Bahai leaders of this time you find the main concern is simply gold and physical well being. They are not to be blamed over much because they do not know any better. They understand the work of organizing or gathering together in a crowd but the purpose for which they organize is a secondary concern with most of them. The average human has a mad desire to follow a human leader, Shoghi taking the place of a priest with many of them. Baha-O-Llah wrote often that one of the greatest failures with the human creatures was that they would not think for themselves. It is thus that we find the average Bahai follower today. . . .

Conditions are just as you have written in your magazine and some of the things that the Bahai leaders are doing are quite offensive to any person of real comprehension, but I would not venture to oppose or offend them. . . .

Shoghi is a human the same as the rest of us. . . . You must also consider that most of his impressions come to him from people who for various reasons color their communications to him and give their own particular slants and ideas. In other words, he is working under great difficulties and is able to see things only in part. . . .

Just as you write, the hodge-podge of stuff that is now given them to study is more or less clap-trap as far as the teachings of Baha-O-Llah are concerned and personally I consider it to be a lot of rot harmful to the mind of any soul. . . . As you are a free lance, it is possible for you to present the higher viewpoint of the teachings and I am sure this is just what you are

attempting to accomplish. The real acceptance of the Bahai spirit makes any soul a little sun or centre of power and these are the ones who will save the day in the end.

I really think that the vast verbosity in this so-called teaching of the Bahais originally came from legal profession in the ranks of the followers—I know some of them!!! They are always witch hunting and looking for some one to bounce out of the gathering.

* * * * *

If you confine your work to the purely spiritual phase of the Bahai teachings you can have a good effect but to try to make them (the Bahais) believe that they have no right to be organized is a waste of time. They certainly are now organized and strongly so, and will stand because it is in the nature of the earthly people to be organized.

* * * * *

I have been among the organized Bahais enough to know very well that a large number have their fingers crossed, even while associating in the ranks. Their God is not always the Bahai God.

* * * * *

I read with the greatest interest in the August issue of **THE NEW HISTORY MAGAZINE** the details of the decision, in your favor, of the Appellate Court against the *National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the U. S. and Canada.*

Again I congratulate you both on your triumph over the organized Baha'is in their attempts to restrain the followers of the Baha'i Religion from practicing their

beliefs, except through the channel of the organization of the Spiritual Assembly.

You have both rendered a great and lasting service to mankind, the effects of which will become more apparent as time passes.

Do not permit the attempts of Shoghi Effendi to black magic you (as recounted on Page 12 of the September issue of the NEW HISTORY Magazine), or affect you in the least. Such language, as he uses, belongs to the bigots of the dark ages, and not to the teachings of Baha'o'llah and Abdul Baha.

* * * * *

It will give me a sense of real spiritual exaltation to be included in your list of the faithful. Seldom indeed have I encountered an occasion on which I would be so delighted to stand up and be counted as in this courageous movement inaugurated by Mirza Sohrab and yourself for the counteracting of the forces of disruption and degeneracy that has been set in motion, through a long term of years, against a noble movement, by the vain and stupid misconduct of a few misguided souls, who seem to have completely missed or forgotten the essential tenets of the Bahai Message.

I regard Sohrab's articles in New History as masterpieces of restrained but incisive arguments. They contain phrases that illumine their subjects like a flash of lightning. That a man not born to the English tongue should have produced such gems of English literature is to me nothing short of a miracle. Such articles constitute a strong confirmation of the Faith, proving that the Bahai Cause is under the special protection of the Supreme Concurrence.

Abdul Baha still lives!

* * * * *

Kindly refrain from sending your magazine "New History" and other publications to my mother. It would be better to use your postage on some one who appreciates your point of view. We do not.

* * * * *

I have had the opportunity to read several back numbers of New History, and I am so pleased to find such a marvelous magazine is in existence. In my opinion this publication will certainly establish the wonderful cause of Baha-O-Llah, firmly in the Western Hemisphere.

* * * * *

Please send with all possible haste your free literature to . . . I have had a long time with these Bahais. Like myself they have been very unhappy and bewildered in this beautiful cause and like myself they believe that you are the one who will lead us back to the teachings. . . . The world needs these teachings now, and I think that it is almost a crime that they are not widely known and correctly interpreted.

* * * * *

The literature that you promised me has just this minute arrived, and I cannot wait a second in sitting down to the typewriter and thanking you for same.

I cannot begin to tell you how happy I am. I have studied this cause for three years, and last March under pressure, I joined the Bahai Organization. But I have never been satisfied. In April, I attempted to break away and join the . . ., but this so disturbed my teachers, who had worked so hard and so lovingly with me that I did not do it. I knew too, that it would be wrong to join the . . . when I was so in love with the teachings of Abdul Baha and Baha-O-Llah. All I could

do was to simply "sit tight" and hope that I could somehow persuade my instructors and other Bahai friends to come around to my way of thinking, which seemed like an impossibility. If ever a person was unhappy and miserable, it was I.

Now that I have joined your New History Society, I feel as if I have come home after wandering in desolate and foreign lands. To be truthful with you, I have concealed the fact that I was a Bahai—yes I have been ashamed of it, but **NOW I AM PROUD** and so, so happy. Everything is going to come out all right now, I know it!

Now I am going to work for the Bahai Cause with all my heart. I am so pleased that you are a Pacifist. So am I!

* * * * *

Baha'u'llah explains in the *Ighan* that the worst single shortcoming that the human creatures have is: "That they will not try to understand things for themselves." Always they appoint some human creature to do *all their thinking for them*. Now I ask you, friends, are the organized Baha'is of America doing anything to help their followers to overcome this greatest of all handicaps? It seems they are doing just the opposite! My wish is to point out practices that are highly injurious to the seeking souls. The pure spiritual teachings of Baha'u'llah and Abdul Baha have simply gone to pot and been replaced by a system somewhat like unto dirty politics.

I have good will towards Shoghi as a fellow follower of the teachings of Baha'u'llah, but the man is young, immature and certainly liable to mistakes. He will overcome all this in time. God is a spirit and unless

we make every effort to get in touch with this Spirit—then we can never attain to a conscious realization of the nature of it. After a soul has attuned himself to the divine spirit, he comes under its guidance, which of course appears in the mind. Baha'u'llah writes in the *Ighan* that to reach to the understanding of the Spirit of God is a *step of the soul*, and is not a step of the body. Unless one will strive for the *Goal* which Baha'u'llah has marked out for us, we are just creatures running along the shores of a salty lake, getting no place and doing no act except running.

I write to so-called Baha'is and make every effort to point out the really worthwhile features in the teachings, but they all turn their backs upon it. The illuminated man who taught me said that if I were able to bring one single soul into the Kingdom, I will have accomplished the greatest deed possible in this life.

The organized Baha'is have put a checkrein on all their membership, and as far as I can perceive will not tolerate any spirituality. Prayer is a thing of the past, looked upon as something not needed or wanted. Two features only are enlarged, the worship of Shoghi and the giving of all their money to the Cause. The brains of most of the leaders simply boil if you venture to travel the spiritual pathway contrary to their desire. I realize that this is just a natural shortcoming of the natural man, a manifestation of the *carnal mind*, and we cannot place much blame on them.

I believe that the organized aspect should continue because it is suitable to a *certain type of mentality*, but I also believe that there should be an unrestricted body of the teachings open to a *much more advanced type of minds*. I believe that you are able to carry this along.

writings to be a real Bahai. . . . Have you ever read the *Surat-ul-Hykal*? It tells you in that book that many of the attained ones walk the earth and "their number is known only to God." Shoghi hopes to locate some of them but he could not recognize them even when they stood before him!

* * * * *

Your September issue of *New History* is very good indeed. Since the advent of Shoghi, the Bahai teachings have been allowed to descend to a low level—that is, as far as the spiritual teachings are concerned. This is the main reason that I can find but little in common with the membership. I surely hope that you will bring back the teachings of Abdul Baha so that they will not be entirely lost to view.

The talk is always about a *world order*, but how can a world order be established if the Bahais will not obey the teachings of Abdul Baha and Baha'u'llah? If they allow these teachings to entirely die out of their minds they will go from bad to worse. As you have said, they are training their minds to behold enemies on every hand; in other words using a very harmful line of thought which can only poison their minds. I can no longer find many Bahai followers with whom I can enjoy talking, because they do not have much interest in the original teachings and in many cases are not very familiar with them.

Does the influence of Shoghi help them to look upon their fellowmen with kindness and friendliness? It certainly does not appear so to me. A Bahai who looks out upon the world of men with suspicion certainly is a very poor grade of a Bahai. Abdul Baha has had nothing to do with this attitude. I am sure, it is not

conveyed in His teachings. Certainly there is something radically wrong at this time. Also must all followers stop thinking and understanding for themselves—they have been so commanded by the present order. Why is this so?

Far be it from me to quarrel with anyone because of a difference of opinion, but I certainly will not allow anyone to prevent me from thinking for myself, seeing for myself and understanding for myself. Life would not be worth living if this came to pass. And really I consider that all others believe the same thing deep down in their hearts.

The aim of the Bahai Cause is to bring about the unity of all mankind. God the Father, revealed by His chosen teacher, Baha'u'llah, has given us all the information that we can possibly make use of in this day. Let us begin to use some of the most important of this great teaching. The most vital is certainly to keep in mind that humanity is all one family, regardless of the defects which may appear in the human creature. Not one of them is our *ENEMY*. There are plenty of humans who have gross defects, all will admit, but we must take it for granted that this is so because they do not know or understand any better. The punishment for wrong doing is absolutely certain to follow misdeeds, and surely no man likes to suffer. The Bahai teachings tell us that after we find our way into the Kingdom we will be free from error and affliction. This is the only condition wherein the human creature may find or have any peace, either on the earth or afterwards.

"The training of the people of the country of *thought* . . ." Baha'u'llah has written in the "Words of

Wisdom"—old *Hidden Words* and *Seven Valleys*! People seldom consider that they are creatures of thought and do not try to discipline their thinking activity; just allow it to run wild without any attempt at direction and pay the penalty for all which is not good. Pure thoughts keep us in contact with the higher planes, and then the spiritual forces are always near at hand to assist us; then they are able to work through us. But when we are dominated by negative thoughts, the forces of the higher planes cannot operate through us and we can get no help from them. The only difference between the spiritual masters and the ordinary person is that the spiritual masters or divine servants have attained the power to direct their thoughts and hold them within the field to which Baha'u'llah has directed all of us. Abdul Baha said that His mind was *always* in a state of prayer. This is the key. If we wish to gain first hand knowledge of this state, then, we likewise must pray until our defective human consciousness can rise above the world of nature in which nearly all are held prisoners. When we really make an effort, someone will contact us, who really knows and understands this matter. This is explained in the Bahai teachings and can be readily found by all. This is the master key. The rest is only trimmings.

* * * * *

The November 1941 issue of *New History* is Okay. Any and all Bahai ideas will act as a leaven in the world of thought, and as God has commanded that each soul promulgate these teachings to the best of his ability, I am sure that no collection of common humans can prevent us in this work. No one can successfully corrupt the teachings, because they are all in print and

broadcast to the world. Some day the present leaders will be replaced by spiritually evolved people and then the Cause will really expand as it should.

* * * * *

The *real teacher* of any soul is the divine spirit—holy spirit, or spirit of God. Call it what you will, it is the same. Until one has made a contact with this spirit, he is unable to really comprehend spiritual subjects of any kind. There is as wide a difference between material-minded people and the spiritual-minded type, as between darkness and light. The natural forces of the material-minded person are negative, while the forces of the spiritually enlightened soul are positive. Let me offer a simile easily understood. If one grasp a soft sponge in his hand and submerge it in a basin of water, it cannot absorb its full capacity of liquid as long as it is held in a contracted condition. But as soon as the pressure of the hand is relaxed, it immediately absorbs its full capacity of water. Now, you and I and all the rest are like unto this sponge; we are all submerged in an ocean of spirit which has always existed. Some, like the whale swimming in the sea, are continually asking: "Where is this ocean they talk about so much?" Until some of this water (spirit) penetrates into our consciousness, we remain in ignorance of its existence.

After a soul reaches the highest roadway he does not have much interest in the rag-bag concerns of souls still living in that which Baha'u'llah termed *the primary existence*. After a soul has learned to absorb this "water of spiritual life" he ceases to be concerned over the quarrels of those who do not know about the *spiritual ocean*, and do not wish to know.

When you say *Baha'i*, it really does not have any par-

ticular meaning as regards the station of any soul. I meet Christians who are as highly advanced as any *Bahai could be*. They have established themselves firmly on the true pathway. The Cause of God today is in the hands of earthly minded men and women and for this reason they must be bound and ruled by an earth-like organization—they are *entirely unfit for anything else*. . . .

One word of these new teachings of God has more value to the human race than all that has gone before, and they will lead humanity to maturity. Men will master the divine art of prayer and meditation, pass through a door within themselves and behold the Kingdom of God about them. Once the spirit is able to enter the reality of any soul, they have the power to direct it where they desire. Then, they are servants, and the ones Baha'u'llah writes about in the Surat-ul-Hyakal. The modern Baha'is dislike these people very much, because a divine servant is the killer of the human ego; it cannot function while exposed to positive spiritual power. As long as you promote the religion of Baha'u'llah, nothing can stop you.

* * * * *

Jerusalem, Palestine

Sept. 7, 1941

For three years I had the pleasure and the honour to share the work of the "New History Society." At the time being I am enjoying the great privilege of defending its founders against attacks. The 2 clippings enclosed originate from the only newspaper in this country that is being printed in English. You may believe me that my reply was written more fully and

BAHA'I VERSUS BAHA'I

Supreme Court in N.Y. Dismisses Suit

HAIFA — A suit brought by the organized Bahais in the U.S.A. against a Baha'i group in New York calling itself the New History Society was dismissed by the Supreme Court in New York recently.

The organized Baha'i sect complained that the unorganized Bahais were giving the erroneous impression that they were authoritative Bahais by conducting — what purported to be Baha'i meetings, lectures, classes and social gatherings. They also solicited contributions through the use of the name of Baha'i and listed the Baha'i Bookshop in the telephone directory over the name of the Baha'i Centre which is the office and bookshop of the organized Bahais.

The Court held that "the complaint fails to state a good cause of action. The plaintiffs have no right to a monopoly of the name of a religion." The ruling then dealt in detail with the complaints brought against the New History Society and pointed out that the defendants had the absolute right to practice Bahaism.

With this ruling, the New History Movement has launched an intensive propaganda campaign both in the United States and abroad.

Concord and Harmony

The Central seat of the organized Baha'i is Haifa, the home of Shoghi Effendi, who is the recognized "Guardian of the Baha'i Faith" and a direct descendant (grandson) of the founder of the religion, the sage Baha'u'llah who died in Acre in 1892. In the words of Shoghi Effendi, "the Revelation proclaimed by Baha'u'llah, his followers believe, is divine in origin, all-embracing in scope, broad in its outlook, scientific in its method, humanitar-

ian in its principles and dynamic in the influence it exerts on the hearts and minds of men. The Baha'i Faith recognizes the unity of God and of His Prophets, upholds the principle of an unfettered search after the truth, condemns all forms of superstition and prejudice, teaches that the fundamental purpose of religion is to promote concord and harmony, that it must go hand-in-hand with science and that it constitutes the sole and ultimate basis of a peaceful, an ordered and progressive society."

Asked about the "New History Movement" Shoghi Effendi informed *The Palestine Post* that the "Movement" was started by a Persian named Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, supported by funds provided by Mrs. Julie Chanler of New York. The main difference between Sohrab and the Bahais was rooted in a conflict with the Baha'i administration and, according to Shoghi Effendi, the "Movement" had no support in the U.S.A. except that of Mrs. Chanler and a few isolated followers.

From Cook to Divine

The career of Sohrab, who is about fifty years old, was described as that of an ambitious self-made man. He was formerly a servant of Shoghi Effendi's uncle in Port Said, and was later sent to America as the cook of Mirza Abu Faz, one of the Baha'i teachers. Later he went to Hollywood, where he wrote cinema scenarios.

According to Shoghi Effendi, the New History Movement, started by Sohrab, abused the Baha'i name, and to stop this, the suit was brought against him and Mrs. Chanler.

The dismissal of the suit by the Court, it was stated, has been appealed.

NEW HISTORY SOCIETY

To the Editor of The Palestine Post

Sir, - Please permit us to add somewhat to your information on the 'New History Society' in New York referred to in your issue of August 22, under the heading 'Bahai vs. Bahai', in which the amazing statement was made that this movement had 'no support in the U.S.A. except Mrs. Chanler and a few isolated followers'.

Anyone who knows the work of this Society, as we, the undersigned, who frequently heard the Society's speakers at the crowded 'Caravan Hall', will know that this statement is inaccurate. Among these speakers have been some of the most prominent personalities of American religious, scientific and political life. Among lecturers you could have heard there were Albert Einstein, Norman Thomas, a former German M.P., Gerhard Seger, who escaped from a German concentration camp, and John O'Neill, scientific editor of the 'Herald-Tribune'.

During the past ten years the 'New History Society' has gained a world-wide reputation as a forum open to all working for the betterment of human relationships. It has friends and followers all over the world.

The biographical data on the founder of the Society, Mirza Ahmed Sohrab, is likewise inaccurate and the description 'From Cook to Divine' is accurate concerning neither his origins nor his career. Sohrab came of an aristocratic Bahai family in Persia, and graduated at the Imperial University in Teheran. In 1908 he was sent to Washington as interpreter to Mirza Abdul Fazi by the Bahai leader Abdul Baha, and it is not particularly relevant whether he also cooked for him or not. Later Sohrab served for some time as Secretary to the Minister at the Persian Legation in Washington. From 1912 to 1918 he was closely associated with Abdul Baha and became a member of his household at Acre.

In 1929 Sohrab founded the 'New History Society' with the support of Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler and Mr. Chanler, a great-grandson of John Jacob Astor and former Lieut.-Governor of the State of New York.

The importance of Sohrab as a religious thinker is fully appreciated in the U.S.A. by such outstanding religious leaders of Christian, Jewish and Moslem communities as the Rev. Eliot White, Rabbi Louis I. Newman and Dr. Edward J. Uurji, who gave him their support for his work 'The Bible of Mankind'.

Yours etc.

Mrs. Erna Straus

H. W. Loewenthal

Jerusalem Sept 2

Reply by Mrs. Erna Straus and Mr. H. W. Loewenthal to article dated August 22, 1941, in 'Palestine Post.'

detailed. The editor, however, shortened it. Maybe this was a necessity. . . .

Next month I shall be speaking on the "Bible of Mankind" in the best bookshop of the city.

Erna Straus.

* * * * *

I have received your magazine and the article published in Palestine Post. It is astonishing. The article *stupefied me and stopped my brain from thinking*, my heart from breathing. I was paralyzed. I could not believe my eyes in reading such false statements! . . .

The statement that Shoghi Effendi made to the Palestine Post regarding Ahmad Sohrab is not based on his knowledge. I am sure of that; for he, by his own free will, will never stoop to make such a statement, that The New History Society has no support. . . .

I believe that Shoghi Effendi is not told the truth. I do not believe that Shoghi Effendi will do anything contrary to the teachings of Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha. . . .

The Guardian does not know the true facts and therefore he believes in what is being written to him by the National Spiritual Assembly. He should come to America; that is, if they let him out and do not keep him a prisoner. Then he can see and hear everything with his own eyes and ears. So far as I am concerned I am ready to offer up my life to Baha-O-Llah, Abdul Baha and Shoghi Effendi, and I am sorry that he puts so much confidence in the National Spiritual Assembly. . . .

I have known Sohrab for many years and I have found him trustworthy, honest. If Mrs. Julie Chanler has seen in Sohrab the good that others were blind to;

and if she, being spiritual and full of love for the Cause, discovered the same qualities in him—then blessed be the pure in heart, for they shall inherit the kingdom. . . .

Well, maybe, the members of the National Spiritual Assembly will become the substitutes for Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha and in time, if possible, they will push out the Guardian. It seems the Cause is in danger. The newcomers do not realize this, for they have not lived in the glorious days of the Master. The old believers are discarded, in order that they may not inform the new ones.

* * * * *

Your magazine and writings are instructive and interesting to an unbiased mind. I was saddened to read the Palestine Post and I was dumbfounded at such foolish statements. I know that God would right the wrongs done to his true and sincere servants. He will not forsake those that love him. I put my trust in him. I cannot believe that Shoghi Effendi would stoop to misrepresent and humiliate you. I am sorry to see that the Guardian places such confidence in the National Spiritual Assembly and yet he cannot see that they are undermining him by misinforming him regarding the true facts.

I can clearly see why they instituted this lawsuit. This false propaganda was hatched by the bosses in the National Spiritual Assembly to discredit Shoghi Effendi, in order that the true and well-informed Bahais may rise against him on account of his making such a statement about you. The Guardian is well-informed regarding your services to Abdul Baha. You were with him for many years, serving as secretary and interpre-

would make such a statement. If he did, it would be *contrary* to the wishes of the Master who appointed him in his Will and Testament as the Guardian of the Cause and also guardian of every individual believer. He should uphold and protect them impartially and without any favoritism. If he failed in doing this and neglects the rights of one believer, because of slander and calumny, then he has failed to carry out the wishes of the Great Masters.

I still believe the guardian is not guilty.

* * * * *

FOREIGN COMMUNICATIONS

England.

Am so glad your law case is satisfactorily ended—that is *another* *shackle* loosened in the fight against those who want to pin down truth with the limitations of human minds. Truth can only be itself when it is free as the winds to express the divine urge of the moment.

* * * * *

England.

You are doing a great work and I am tremendously pleased by the very satisfactory decision of Justice Louis A. Valente. This constitutes another milestone in the journey to freedom and true civilization: and truly makes *New History*.

I will shortly be submitting to you an article for publication in the monthly, showing how the Unitarians in England ensure freedom of worship while they build and establish churches to worship in. I feel sure it will interest you.

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Canada.

I am just now in receipt of the April issue of *New History* and learn for the first time of the division in the Bahai ranks. I am very much interested in knowing this, as I can now whole-heartedly express my sympathy for, and participate in your kindly and inspiring movement, knowing that it is broad and liberal and leaves me quite free to also join in other liberal and humanitarian causes.

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Australia.

Last week, I received the monthly publication of your society together with printed copy of ruling Justice Louis A. Valente has recorded upon your momentous case at Law, which has such farflung results for people allied to your Cause. Need I, a veritable Bushman far from the seething chiaroscuro of New York, comment upon a verdict so close to your heart?

This would be idle, for my part; but I may at least offer *sincere felicitations* to those who, with you, have suffered so long torture.

* * * * *

Australia.

Your two recent publications have reached my hand together with reproductions of press cuttings announcing the award of civil justice in favor of Mrs. Chanler and your society.

The decisions are momentous in your New York life and circle of adherents, so that, while I am unable to comment fittingly, I can assure you personally that I esteem the spirit which impels you to resist the impositions of greater organizations upon you and at the

same time find space for "outsiders" like myself in so wide an outer circle of the inhabited world.

* * * * *

Sweden.

You can imagine my joy when I read your news about the jurisdiction of your process with the Bahai Administration.

It is very indicative that, even in this time, when only rough force and falsehood everywhere is winning ground, your case still could find JUSTICE.

I think your efforts in writing so very detailed about the Bahai movement *en grande*, and with your authority, as a man who lived so close to Abdul Baha many years, had its good effect and the Justice could really see and feel WHERE TRUTH is to be found.

The old history is repeating itself always, and after the passing away of the Master, the disciples, in most cases, are tempted to create a NEW CHURCH, and to be themselves the new chosen bishops.

You are surely not one of them, this I felt since I first read your paper and accepted that *New History Society* is not going to start a *new religion* and you not the *bishop* of it.

Freedom is the condition *sine qua non* of Love and also for a true RELIGION, and I feel so well you are the real GUARD of this Freedom and do not try to create new dogmas and fix anything.

* * * * *

Guatemala.

I have received your magazines and I was very surprised to read all these things which happen between The Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United

States of America and Canada and you; it is ridiculous and absurd, because between real, true, sincere and spiritual people, these things never hapen; much less taking it to the court. In my humble point of view, all this only proves to me once more the kind of people who call themselves spiritual; and they are not. The Truth and God has nothing to do with all those societies which only exploit the ignorance of the people. There is only One Truth, veracity and verity, and it is not limited by a group nor by any organization or any orders. There is Only One Lord, and One Law. But what most of the societies do, is business and they are based on interest created. They don't do what they say, and they call themselves spiritual, and brothers, only by name, but not in facts. I don't believe in them, only I believe in the Truth, and what I see they do. I say it of any societies, by the fruit you know the tree, by the facts you know the man, so don't worry for what they may say, because if you live a real and true life you are on the way to the Great Truth, and you will help others, without those societies who are only exploiting the *ignorance of the people*. The Truth is in you, the Light is in you too, but you must look into yourself deeply, and you will find it in yourself.

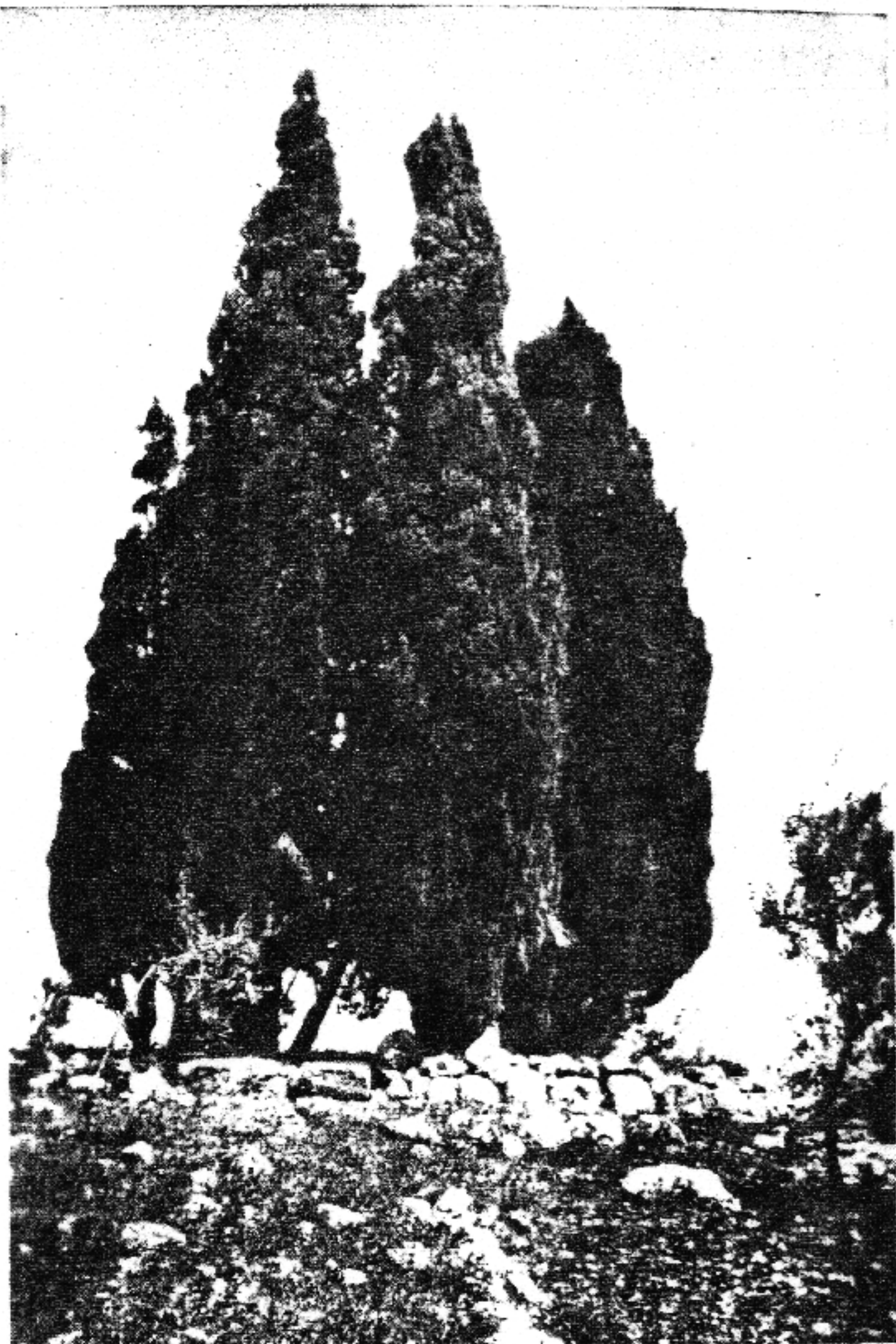
* * * * *

Haiti.

We note in your last issue of your magazine that you will be willing to remove from your list the names of those who do not wish to appear thereon.

Will you kindly remove our names and we thank you for this favor.

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Cluster of cypress trees on the slope of Mount Carmel, in the shade of which some of their great teachings were first given to the world by Baha-O-Llah and Abdul Baha.

Calabar, Nigeria, West Africa.

I thank God that the Cause through His justice is made free from the thralldom of limited minds in the National Spiritual Assembly and the Supreme Court of New York County decided the case in your favor. May God who is the very Cause of New History take upon Himself all the affairs!

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Palestine.

I wanted to answer your kind letter immediately in order to tell you that I feel awfully sorry that your activity—I am admiring so much—got you into trouble, initiated by Bahai Organization. I really cannot understand this. It is evident they do not understand the Cause at all. If they did, they simply could not act like this. But I doubt, they will ever go to court. It would be too ridiculous.

* * * * *

Palestine.

I am watching your discussion with the Bahai Organization with great interest; disagreeable as it may seem to you, it is instructive to the observer. It seems so difficult to mankind to behold great ideas in their genuine purity.

* * * * *

Philippine Islands.

I noticed in one of the *New History* copies, April 1940, an article *Regarding the Trade-mark*. It was of great interest to me. Ever this play of opposites! When a constructive movement is launched upon the world, pushing forward, right beside it—in its wake rather—rises, and wrathfully so, its opposite. . . . In fact, the

cause of Baha-O-Llah thrives on these opposite stirrings—to a great extent, dont you think? As we say in English: "Persecute a thing if you want it to live."

* * * * *

Tokyo, Japan.

I thank you for the printed sheet which brought the news of your victory in the court. I congratulate you and your colleagues! Indeed, it is said that those days would mean the end of the world when religion would be set for sale! In other words, an age ends and another starts when the spiritual belief is so much degraded that it becomes just a commodity to make profit! I hope, this trade in religion ends, and that a New Era starts, making heaven of this earth. Let us do out duty in the great transformation.

* * * * *

India.

The attitude of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada is deplorable; yet one may pour one's blessings and sympathies on those misled brothers and sisters who are mentioned, no doubt under provocation, as sorcerers, necromancers, etc., in the statement. They will need a great help and prolonged guidance before they can turn back from the path which they are unfortunately treading.

* * * * *

India.

It was with great relief and joy that I read your notice of the outcome of the long controversy. I have waited so far, preferring to wait till the allotted ten (I believe it was ten) days had elapsed and I might have other news from you; but I cannot wait longer to hear. I am

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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2, 1941

Court Rules Against Monopoly Of the Name of Any Religion

Justice Valente Rejects Suit of Organized Baha'is Against Baha'i Group Headed by Persian Poet; Says Purported Members Can Practice Faith

Justice Louis A. Valente ruled yesterday in Supreme Court that no one had a right to monopolize the name of a religion and that followers of a religion could not be restrained from practicing their beliefs because of the objections of organized practitioners of the same faith.

Justice Valente's decision dismissed a complaint brought by organized Baha'is, who brought suit as members of the National Spiritual Assembly and Trustees of the United States and Canada, and members of the Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is in New York, against Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, Persian poet, who is director of the New History Society, and his group.

The organized Baha'is contended that they were the truly authorized followers of Baha-O-Llah, Persian prophet who founded an order nearly a century ago with international peace as its principal aim. They asserted that Mr. Sohrab's group was conveying an erroneous impression to the public by conducting meetings, lectures and other activities in a bona fide Baha'i setting and soliciting contributions as organized Baha'is.

Moreover, the so-called authorized Baha'is complained that the others opened a book store under the name of Bahai (without the apostrophe) Book Shop, and that the listing of the shop in the telephone directory was immediately over that of the Baha'i Center, the office and book shop of the organized Baha'is.

Justice Valente held, however, that "in the court's opinion, the complaint fails to state a good cause of action."

"The plaintiffs have no right to a monopoly of the name of a religion," his opinion continued. "The defendants, who purport to be members of the same religion, have an

equal right to use the name of the religion in connection with their own meetings, lectures and other activities.

"No facts are alleged in the complaint to indicate that the defendants have been guilty of any act intended or calculated to deceive the public into believing that their meetings, lectures or book shop are identified or affiliated with the meetings, lectures and book shop of the plaintiff."

Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler, wife of the former Lieutenant Governor of New York under Charles Evans Hughes, and founder and sponsor of the New History Society, said last night that Justice Valente's decision "upholds our guarantee of religious freedom." Mrs. Chanler formed the society after she broke with the organized Baha'is twelve years ago.

"Mr. Sohrab and I started our group after we parted from the other Baha'is on good terms," Mrs. Chanler explained. "We broke away because we felt that they were limiting the movement. But time was short and we felt that the world should hear the principles laid down by Baha-O-Llah."

Mrs. Chanler expanded on her theme, saying that according to the teachings of Baha-O-Llah, "there shouldn't be any organization." However, she added, "Americans love organizations, and little by little the teachings of Baha-O-Llah were being restricted to a choice few." Baha-O-Llah, she said, espoused the principle of "unity pervading all things."

Mrs. Chanler also explained that the organized Baha'is took out a trademark on the name "Baha'i," but that she felt that Baha'is "should not be restricted by a trademark."

The organized Baha'is have ten days to serve an amended complaint.

TUESDAY, APRIL 1, 1941

Monopoly on Name Denied to Baha'i Group

Can't Keep Religion From Rivals, Court Rules, Dismissing Complaint

In a decision handed down in the Supreme Court today Justice A. Valente ruled that he could not grant a monopoly of the name of a religion. He also held that he couldn't stop anyone from practicing a religion merely because the organized practitioners of the religion objected.

The decision delighted Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanled, the society woman who has been a leader of a group of Baha'i followers in New York and a sponsor of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, a Persian poet, who inspired her to take up the work.

'Erroneous Impression.'

Justice Valente's decision dismissed a complaint brought against Mr. Sohrab and his group, which was a little formal organization, by the organized Baha'is, who sued as members of the National Spiritual Assembly and Trustees of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada in the Spiritual Assembly of Baha's of the City of New York.

The organized Baha'is complained that the unorganized Baha'is were giving an erroneous impression that they were authoritative Baha'is by conducting what purported to be Baha's meetings, lectures, classes, social gatherings, etc., by soliciting contributions with use of the Baha'i name and by listing the Baha'i Book Shop in the telephone book directory over the name of the Baha'i Center, which is the office and book shop of the organized Baha'is.

Equal Rights Upheld.

"In the court's opinion," said Justice Valente, "the complaint

fails to state a good cause of action. The plaintiffs have no right to a monopoly of the name of a religion.

"The defendants, who purport to be members of the same religion, have an equal right to use the name of the religion in connection with their own meetings, lectures, classes and other activities. No facts are alleged in the complaint to indicate that the defendants have been guilty of any act intended or calculated to deceive the public into believing that their meetings, lectures or book shop are identified with the meetings, lectures, etc., and the book shop of the plaintiffs.

Listing Doesn't Enter.

"Defendants have the absolute right to practice Baha'ism, to conduct meetings, collect funds and sell literature in connection therewith, and to conduct a book shop under the title 'Baha'i Book Shop.'"

As far as the listing of the book shop in the telephone directory was concerned, the justice said, that was merely an alphabetical and not a legal matter, for it was a well accepted fact that the letter "B" preceded the letter "C" in the alphabet and therefore the telephone company was quite right in listing the "Baha'i Book Shop" ahead of the "Baha'i Center."



1. The first step in the process of creating a new product is to identify the market need. This involves conducting market research to determine the size and nature of the market, the competitive landscape, and the potential for growth. Once the market need has been identified, the next step is to develop a business plan. This plan should outline the company's mission, vision, and goals, as well as the strategies for achieving them. It should also include a detailed financial forecast, including projected revenue, expenses, and profit margins. The business plan is a critical document that will be used to secure financing and guide the company's operations.

2. The third step in the process is to develop a prototype of the product. This involves creating a physical model of the product that can be used to test its functionality and appeal to potential customers. The prototype should be designed to be as close to the final product as possible, while still being cost-effective and easy to modify. Once the prototype has been developed, the next step is to conduct a series of tests to evaluate its performance and reliability. These tests should include both functional and user acceptance testing, as well as a series of stress tests to determine the product's limits.

3. The fourth step in the process is to launch the product into the market. This involves developing a marketing and sales strategy that will promote the product and generate sales. The strategy should include a mix of traditional and digital marketing techniques, as well as a series of sales and distribution channels. Once the product has been launched, the company should continue to monitor its performance and make any necessary adjustments to its strategy. This may include revising the business plan, updating the prototype, or launching new marketing campaigns.

4. The fifth and final step in the process is to evaluate the success of the product launch. This involves conducting a series of metrics that will measure the product's performance in the market. These metrics should include sales volume, revenue, profit margins, and customer satisfaction. The company should also conduct a series of interviews and surveys to gather feedback from customers and stakeholders. This feedback will be used to identify areas for improvement and to guide the company's future product development efforts.

Lack of official Baha'i support for the Rwanda Genocide victims of 1994

Baha'ism has declined in Rwanda while the number of Muslims has skyrocketed- after the genocide of 1994.

The Universal House of Justice and its UN office never issued any public statement denouncing the horrendous genocide of Rwanda 1994. To make matters worse, the UHJ and NSA of various countries NEVER contributed a penny towards the hungry African orphans of Rwanda. The UHJ does not even contribute enough to the budget of the Rwanda NSA for its correct functioning.

Compare that to the \$100,000.00 full page add placed in the New York newspaper by the US NSA in 2001 following the attack on the Twin Towers. There were about 2800 victims in Sept.11, 2001 attack- now in Rwanda, there were 1000,000 Africans murdered. Why was there such a great outpouring of "love" by the Baha'i Administration for the victims of the US attack and NONE for the Murdered Blacks of Rwanda?

In fact, Baha'ism does not even come close to emulate the qualities of true Muslims (from which it derives) or NOT even close to emulate the values of Christians-Buddhists-and even Pagans!!!

Amen, Henry

Here is the article in NY Times April 6, 2004:

LINK: <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/04/07/international/africa/07RWAN.html?hp>

Was Teymour Bakhtiar assassinated with Bahai money?

<http://www.iranian.com/main/blog/faryarm/did-shahs-savak-offer-covert-aid-shia-cleric-establishment-against-iranian-bahai-commun>

One of the most outstanding business figures in the last two decades of the Shah's reign was Hojbr Yazdani. There are sources who attest to Yazdani's faith as Baha'ism but then again there are sources who suggest he was being backed by powerful Baha'i figures no less than the Shah's personal physician, General Dr Ayadi (<http://www.centralclubs.com/topic-t61696.html>). As the question of state-sponsored terror was mentioned on this very blog, I thought it may be of interest to the readers to know that Teymour Bakhtiar's assassination in Iraq was allegedly linked to the Baha'i backed Hojabr Yazdani (<http://www.encyclopaediaislamica.com/madkhal2.php?sid=651>). As the author of this blog is basing his allegations on the IRI-disclosed documents and sources we are safe to use similar IRI-approved sources to dig deeper in to this story. Here is an excerpt from the above source on the Yazdani-Bakhtiar case:

سرانجام ، به ابتکار ساواک ، در 21 مرداد 1349 ، بختیار ترور شد و پس از مدتی درگذشت . درباره قتل او روایات متناقضی هست (ثابتی) . در این که قاتل او عامل ساواک بود شکی نیست . ظاهراً در شکارگاهی نزدیک مرز ایران ، نخست فرزندان او را از او جدا می کنند و سپس مأمور قتل ، که از نزدیکان او بوده ، کار را به انجام می رساند. نام علاءالدین لجمی ، منوچهر خسروداد ، ایلگون میتاسوییان (اطلاعات ، 29 بهمن 1359 ، ص 1-2) و هژبر یزدانی به عنوان دست اندرکاران قتل بختیار مطرح شده است (آل احمد ، ص 91). همچنین به دلیل همزمانی ربوده شدن هواپیمای ایرانی از سوی مخالفان رژیم ایران و بردن آن به بغداد ، چنین شایع شد که ربایندگان در واقع عوامل ساواک و مأمور ترور بختیار بودند (دعائی ، ص 3). صدام حسین نخست وزیر وقت عراق که از دوستان نزدیک بختیار و هنگام قتل وی در مسکو بود ، از قتل بختیار بشدت ناراحت شد (اطلاعات ، 29 بهمن 1359 ، ص 1-2). شاه سالها بعد مسئولیت ترور بختیار را بر عهده خود و ساواک نهاد (ویلیه ، ص 322).

Book on Quratul Ain Tahera published in Pakistan

Qurat Ulain Tahira Qurratu'l-'Ayn Tahirih قرۃ العین طاہرہ Author/Translator: Shahid

Mukhtar Price: \$ 3.99 Format: Hard Cover, 160Pages, Weight: 300 gm Product-Id: 1011161 Publisher:

Shahid Book Depot Publish date: 2006 Productid:1011161

طاہرہ اک مسلمان شیعہ گھرانہ میں پیدا ہونے کے باوجود جوانی میں جس مذہب میں رنگی گئی وہ بابی مذہب تھا۔ علامہ اقبال اپنے ڈاکٹریٹ کے مقالہ فلسفہ عجم میں بابیت پر بحث کرتے ہوئے لکھتے ہیں ”باب کی تعلیمات کا بنیادی ماخذ ملاصد رہ کا فلسفہ ہے جسے شیخ احسانی نے اپنایا اور اسکی تشریحات لکھیں۔ بابی افکار میں یہودیت، پارسیت، باطنیت اور قدیم ایرانی موبدیت کے واضح عناصر موجود ہیں یہ مذہب کے نام پر سیاسی اقدار کے حصول کی عجمی سازش تھی جو سیاسی ناکامی کے بعد مذہبی دنیا میں بہانیت کے نام سے ایک نئے روپ میں جلوہ گر ہے اور اس وقت اسلام دشمن طاقتوں کے ہاتھوں کا کھلونا ہے۔“

شیخ احسانی سنی گھرانے میں پیدا ہونے کے باوجود شیعہ مسلک سے تعلق رکھتے تھے لیکن شیعہ مسلک اس عقیدہ سے اختلاف رکھتے تھے کہ ”مہدی پیدا ہو چکے ہیں لیکن انھیں ڈھائی سال کی عمر میں ہی فرشتوں نے ایک غار میں چھپا رکھا ہے اور جب دنیا ختم ہونے کو ہو گی تو انکا ظہور ہو گا اور وہ دنیا کو عدل و انصاف سے بھر دیں گے“ انکا کہنا تھا کہ امام غائب اس دنیا میں آئیں گے لیکن وہ امام غائب کے مثیل ہونگے۔

امام مہدی کے ظہور کے بارے میں جو مختلف نظریات پائے جاتے ہیں انکا خلاصہ یہ ہے۔

مہدی کے ظہور کی کوئی پیشنگوئی نہیں کی گئی صحاح ستہ میں نامعتبر راویوں کی احادیث صرف خلافت کے حصول کی حکمت عملی کے تحت شامل کی گئی تھیں۔

طاہرہ کی ازدواجی زندگی

مرزا کاظم بیگ کے مطابق قرۃ العین کی نسبت پہلے برگن کے مجتہد آخوند محمد تقی سے ٹھہری تھی جبکہ دیگر مورخین کا کہنا ہے کہ اسکی نسبت بچپن سے ہی اسکے چچا ملا محمد تقی کے بیٹے ملا محمد سے طے پا چکی تھی اور اسی باعث 1831ء میں تیرہ سال کی عمر میں اسکی شادی ملا محمد سے کی گئی جس کا شمار اس وقت کے اچھے قابل علماء میں ہوتا تھا۔ یہ شادی بڑی دھوم دھام سے ہوئی تھی طاہرہ کے ایک گاؤں کے علاوہ بیش بہا قیمتی تحفے تحائف ملے جو ایک خزانہ کی حیثیت رکھتے تھے لیکن یہ شادی مذہبی نظریات کی بھینٹ چڑھ گئی طاہرہ اکڑ کہا کرتی تھی کہ یہ شادی اسکی مرضی سے نہیں ہوئی تھی ورنہ اسکا شوہر سفرو حضر میں اسکا ساتھ دیتا۔ 23 یا 26 سال کی عمر میں وہ دو بیٹیوں اور ایک بیٹی کی ماں تھی۔ بڑے بیٹے کا نام محمد ابراہیم اور چھوٹے بیٹے کا نام محمد اسماعیل تھا۔ بیٹی اور بڑے بیٹے محمد ابراہیم کے حالات زندگی تاریخ کے اوراق پر محفوظ نہیں ہیں البتہ محمد اسماعیل کے نواسہ نعمت ورثا نے بہائی تحریک کی شاعری میں شہرت حاصل کی۔

طاہرہ کی ازدواجی زندگی بابیت کی نذر رہی جسے اسکے خسر اور خاوند نے قبول نہیں کیا۔ یہ دونوں بابی تحریک کے زبردست مخالف تھے۔ اسکے خسر نے اسکے روحانی پیشوا شیخ احسانی کے ساتھ قیامت کے مسئلہ پر مناظرہ کرتے ہوئے اسے کافر قرار دیا اور قزوین سے نکال دیا تھا جب قرۃ العین طاہرہ سید علی محمد باب کے اٹھارہ حروف حی میں شامل ہوئی تو اسکے خسر نے نہ صرف باب پر لعنت بھیجی بلکہ طاہرہ کے ساتھ بھی تلخ رویہ اختیار کرتے ہوئے کہا۔

[Purchase this book from Here](#)

Bahai Under the Provisions of Covenant getting followers in India

<http://india.bupc.org>

<http://bupcindia.blogspot.com/2013/02/new-bupc-book-published-from-india.html>

Free Bahai Faith (Baha'is of Thailand)

Courtesy : <http://freebahai19.wordpress.com/>

Since the establishment of Universal House of Justice in 1963 at Baha'i World Centre, at Haifa the Baha'is cannot make any departure from the norms and the procedures lay down by the UHJ. No amount of failure or development of progressive ideals can supersede whatever is written in the Messages/letters of UHJ.

There is a wide divide between the democratic ideals of equality and freedom, rights of citizens, individual liberty and pluralism cherished by Baha'u'llah, Abdul Baha and the rigid format of governance envisaged by the Self centric and anti-pluralistic Universal House of Justice.

As a result, most of the Baha'is have remained isolated from the Baha'i Holy writings of Central figures of the Faith. The widespread and disproportionately higher level of intolerance shown by Universal House of Justice for all other ideas and thinking and fear of excommunication have made the Baha'is to examine the claims of other Sects of Baha'is and to take solace in them especially the one having Universal House of Justice.

The terrible failure of Ruhi books curriculum and humiliating court case defeats resulting into NSA attorney Mr. Christopher Dolan begging the Sects leader to have a compromise and to find a way out for such a humiliating situation has put further question mark on the UHJ's claim of infallibility.

The dissatisfaction amongst the Baha'is is brewing up against the policies of UHJ. The Baha'is worldwide are thinking that Ruhi system has arrested the growth of Baha'i community worldwide because of its useless Ruhi Books and Ana's presentation. The Baha'is think that the world requires Holy writings as the mean to affect the hearts of the people rather than a jumble box prepared by a former NSA member and counselor of Columbia. In fact Dr. Arbab did not resign but he was sacked by UHJ for forming a group inside UHJ to control and manipulate it. Lately this group is given the name of Ruhi brigade comprising of Arbab himself Faredon Jawaheri, Payman Mohajir second seeded Mr. Sheriyar Razavi, Paul Lample and Gustav correa.

In this system a highly successful Professor in a University or a Baha'i from a respected Family who served the Faith with distinction for the whole of his life whose two family members have served as Counselor are supposed to go through the rigorous courses of Ruhi Book where a 15 year Old girl appointed as Teacher will teach you the tenets of Baha'i Faith. Any disagreement from this system will make you a recipient of a warning letter from the House of JUSTICE. The language used in the letter will make you further reflect that whether the letter is written by the custodians of the Faith or an international Terrorist organization threatening you to come in line with the UHJ or get ready to be declared as Covenant

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARIAT

Baha'i World Centre • P.O. Box 155 • 31001 Haifa, Israel
Tel: 972 (4) 835 8358 • Fax: 972 (4) 835 8280 • Email:
secretariat@bwc.org

2 February 2010
The Spiritual Assembly of
the Baha'is of Thailand

Dear Baha'i Friends,

Your email letter of 7 January 2010, enclosing a letter addressed to you by the law firm representing Mr. Jamshed Fozdar and another letter sent to you by Dr. Firooz Anaraki, has been received by the Universal House of Justice. We have been asked to convey the following.

Having considered Dr. Anaraki's recent conduct, in particular the manner in which he has chosen to respond to the question put to him about the disclosure of confidential information, the House of Justice has concluded that he has shown gross failure to fulfil the basic spiritual obligations of a Baha'i serving on an institution of the Faith. On that basis, you are instructed to deprive him of his administrative privileges forthwith, a sanction that will, of course, require his immediate removal from membership on the Spiritual Assembly of Bangkok. You should notify the Assembly accordingly, in a manner that you deem appropriate. Dr. Anaraki should be informed of the reason for this decision, and he should also be told that if consideration is to be given to lifting the sanction now imposed upon him he will first need to demonstrate a pronounced change in attitude towards the institutions of the Faith over an extended period of time.

With regard to the latest communication you have received from Mr. Fozdar's legal representatives, you are advised to ignore it; there would seem to be nothing to add to the letter you previously sent to the law firm, dated 13 December 2009.

With loving Baha'i greetings,
Department of the Secretariat
cc: International Teaching Centre
Board of Counsellors in Asia
Counsellor Irene Chung

breaker.

Who is a Covenant Breaker ? – Orthodox Baha'i Faith Views

<http://mybahaifaith.blogspot.com/search/label/covenant%20breakers>

[YOU ARE NOT A BAHAI IF...](#)

What Baha'i Youths want from 95 Baha'i Youth Conferences !!

Sir Abbas Effendi the first Covenant Breaker after passing of Baha'u'llah

As all my fellow Baha'i friends are aware of law of Ex-communication now a days it is threat from Baha'i administration whosoever try to raise his voice on any miss-administration or miss-handling of Huqoqulah or any objection or question which our beloved Universal House of Justice fails in reply we get a warning of weapon of ex-communication. My Independent Investigation of Truth has reveal the fact that the first covenant breaker was Sir Abbas Effendi who has disobeyed his father Baha'u'llah and contradicted his teachings and promoted himself in many station and disrespecting Aghsan (lineage of Baha'u'llah) and ex-communicating entire family members of Mahde Uliya (wife of Baha'u'llah) for sure by this he is spiritually ex-communicated and he was epic center of covenant breaker in dispensation of Baha'u'llah.

Here I am bringing few pages of a loyal Baha'i and companion of Baha'u'llah Mirza Jawad Qazvini who has witness rise and spread of Baha'i faith, he has written a book as his memories

"Brief History of Behaullah The founder of Beha'i Religion" By Mirza Jawad Qazvini, author was with Baha'u'llah in 1862-63 in Baghdad; was arrested in Tabriz in 1867 but let go with a fine; went to Edirne midway through 1867; went to Akka with Baha'u'llah and spent the rest of his life there. A partial translation is available in "Material for the study of Babi religion" by the noted Historian Edward Browne translation is under the title "Epitome of Mirza Jawad of Qazvini" the original book is in Arabic I would like to bring few pages of his memories from Page 62-67

From Page 62-67

The first difference which happened after the death of His Holiness our Great Master Baha'u'llah within this Community was that 'Abbas Effendi concealed some part of the book of [Baha'u'llah's] Testament entitled "the Book of my Testament, which book was given to him by Baha'u'llah in his own holy writing. The detail of this is that on the ninth day after the Ascension [i.e. the death of Baha'u'llah] 'Abbas Effendi chose nine persons from amongst the Companions, one of whom was the author [of this book] and disclosed to them this document, concealing, however, a portion of it with a blue leaf [of paper] without any reason or justification, and gave it to them that they might enjoy the blessing of its perusal. One of them, named Aqa Riza of Shiraz, read it at a sign from him down to the place concealed by the blue leaf, whereupon 'Abbas Effendi said to the persons above mentioned, "Verily a portion of this book is concealed for a good reason, because the time doth not admit of its full disclosure." On the afternoon of that day Majdu'd-Din Effendi read it again, by command of (Abbas Effendi, in the Holy Place, before a company of the Aghsan (sons of Baha'u'llah), Afnan (kinsmen of the Bab), Muhajirin (Exiles), Mujawirin (settlers in 'Akka) and Musafarin (temporary visitors), down to the afore-mentioned passage, as narrated above.

Let it not be hidden from persons of discernment that the injunctions set forth in the above-mentioned book all refer to this community generally; how then could it be right for Abbas Effendi to disclose what he wished and conceal a portion thereof? For there is no doubt that if what was so concealed had not been suitable [for general publication] His Holiness Baha'u'llah would not have written it in His august writing. The duty of sons is to carry out the testamentary instructions of their father, not to reveal a portion and conceal a portion thereof, according to their private ideas and opinions or personal inclinations, for His

Holiness Baha'u'llah says:

"O [Divine Beauty! Verily I have spent my soul and my spirit for the glorification of the Word and the exalting of the Dispensation of thy Glorious and Beneficent Lord. If we see one of the 'Branches' (Aqsan, that is sons) otherwise than as God willeth, we will rightfully drive him away: verily I am the Mighty, the All-powerful."

No Further Manifestation to Take Place for 1000 Years The second difference was that His Holiness our Great Master hath said in numerous places in his Holy Scriptures, plainly and explicitly, that no fresh Manifestation shall take place until a full thousand years shall have passed from this wrong doer and that if anyone advances a claim to any such position before the completion of the above-mentioned period, whosoever he be, and from whatsoever place he be, he is a vain pretender worthy of rejection; as when he says in the "Most Holy Book" (Kitab-i-Aqdas):

"Whosoever claim to a [new] Dispensation before the completion of a full thousand years is a liar and prevaricator... And whosoever construes this verse or Interprets it otherwise than as it hath been obviously revealed is deprived of the Spirit of God, and of His Mercy which encompasses all the worlds

But 'Abbas Effendi, after he had attained to supremacy, clearly and explicitly adopted the position of originality, and claimed such lofty stations and high degrees as belong exclusively to Divine Theophanies, and even proclaimed in public in America that he was the Messiah and the son of God, and in India that he was the promised Bahram

And again he says: "Whosoever calls on men in my Name, verily he is from me."

[But] His Holiness our Great Master Baha'u'llah says: "Whosoever lays claim to any station, rapture, ecstasy or craving otherwise than in this [my] Name, verily he is of [the number of] the most lost, though he speak with all utterance, and cause rivers to burst forth from rocks, and control the winds, and cause the clouds to rain.

"And 'Abbas Effendi says in Persian: " Say, 'the Goal and Sum of all are the products of this Pen (he himself), and the Proof is that which this tongue utters."

[But] His Holiness our Great Master Baha'u'llah says in Persian: "What this Oppressed One desireth of all is Justice and Equity. Let them not be

satisfied with listening, but let them ponder on what hath been manifested by this servant.

By the Sun of the Bayan arising from the horizon of the heaven of the Kingdom of [God] the All merciful, had there been found anyone [else] to explain or to speak, we would not have made ourselves the object of men's reviling and calumnies."

And again, in the "Chapter of the Pen" (Suratu'l-Qalam) : "Say, 'Into the heart of whomsoever it entereth to rival this Pen, or to associate himself therewith, or to approach it, or to know what is revealed by it, let it be surely known that the Devil hath whispered into his soul: thus hath the matter been revealed, if ye would know it.' "

Abbas Effendi says in Persian: "This servant is the expositor of the perspicuous Book, and whatever of God's writings is not confirmed by this servant (i.e he himself) is not worthy of credence."

His Holiness our Great Master Baha'u'llah says: "The Covenant was taken at the time of the Dawn from those who believe that they should not worship [aught] save God, nor work mischief in the earth."

'Abbas Effendi ascribes all the covenants and vows mentioned in the Sacred Books to himself, as his words prove. Thus he says in Persian:

"In short, verily from the beginning of Creation until now there hath not happened or appeared any plain covenant or clear promise like unto this. Yea, there have been promises, but they were not beneath the shadow of the Tree of Prophecy and the Lote-tree of the Limit, but were only suggested by allegories. But in this great Cycle and luminous Epoch the Object of the Covenant is visible in the horizons and the Centre of the Promise is known amongst the people of the world."

His Holiness our Great Master Baha'u'llah says in Persian:

"Though one should adduce all the Scriptures in the world, yet speak otherwise than as God willeth, he is mentioned in God's Book as of the Fire, and is [so] inscribed by the Supreme Pen."

'Abbas Effendi says in Persian: "The dispensation in its entirety reverts to the recognized and acknowledged place, and this Station is distinguished, witnessed and explicitly differentiated, like the Sun in all its phases, from all that is on the earth."

His Holiness our Great Master Baha'u'llah in many passages of his writings, as also in the Book of his [last] testament, commanded this community to do away with discord, to extinguish the fire of sectarian hatred, and to consort with all religions with kindness and friendliness, as he says in a tablet

"O people, speak well of [God's] servants, and speak not of them evil, or that whereby their souls may be troubled.' The mention of evil hath also been forbidden in this Law, because the tongue is for the commemoration of the Truth, and it is pitiful that it should be defiled by backbiting or uttering words which cause sadness and grief to [God's] servants."

And again in the same Book: "O people of the world ! God's religion exists for love and Concord: do not make it a means to enmity and discord !" Enmity And Dissension Fostered by 'Abbas Effendi

Alas! Abbas Effendi destroyed these Great principles and Supreme purpose because of his special and personal aims and desires, and thus he laid the foundation of hatred and discord among the people of Baha and created this dissension and caused separation between brother and sister, parents and children, husband and wife, and between the friends of long standing. Furthermore, whosoever did not yield and agree to his ideas and doctrines and did not speak evil against his brother Mohammed Ali Effendi, and against the sacred Family of Baha, he was named by different names as Nakiz (Violater), Motazelzil (Doubter) and Kafir (Infidel). Also Abbas Effendi ordered his followers to abstain from meeting, speaking, dealing with, or accompanying the Violators (Nakizeen).

"respect and heed for the 'Branches' (Aghsan, i.e sons) is incumbent upon all for The glorifying of the Dispensation and the uplifting of the word".

Even today if you notice that the teaching and tablets of Sir Abbas Effendi are preferred more than Baha'u'llah in our gatherings, if you dare to ask this question that why teachings of Baha'u'llah are kept aside, you will come under the radar of Universal House of Justice who now a days has exclusive franchise of Ex-communication.

There are many such misdeeds of Sir Abbas Effendi is mentioned in this book because of space I have just mentioned few deeds and disobedience of him, the author was Baha'i who was present at the time of Bab and Baha'u'llah it is one of the authentic history book after Nuqtatul Kaaf, reader can find this book on internet and can read and decide that Sir Abbas Effendi was real and first Covenant breaker.

Gamal Naseer.

Courtesy : <http://bahaileaders9.blogspot.com>

James Taylor perfectly describes the purpose of the Baha'i Faith, by accident

Courtesy : http://fruittreeblog.com/2013/03/30/another_day/

This post has nothing to do with economics, governance, business, finance, etc. So if you arrived at this site hoping for some discussion about that sort of thing, don't feel bad if you end up closing this window and going [here](#).

Instead, I wanted to break the routine and share some personal reflections on what I think the Baha'i Faith truly is and its purpose. I don't plan to provide a discussion of its teachings, a supremely useful exercise but one that has been done impeccably well already by many others. (If you're looking for that, a great website that does this simply and eloquently is [here](#).) Rather, I thought I'd share a song that on its surface might seem completely unrelated to the Faith, but in my opinion captures its essence better than anything I've encountered.

A few years ago some Baha'is I knew were hosting a fireside discussion with friends about the Faith in their home on Cape Cod, and invited me to come along. I can't remember much about that evening, including what was said or even the general topic of discussion. All I can really remember is the warmth and friendliness of the atmosphere, and the song they played on the CD player to kick off the evening and set the mood. That song turned out to be [Another Day by James Taylor](#), which is now easily one of my favorite songs ever. To this day, I own no James Taylor albums and have little interest in listening to his other music. But I remain obsessed with *Another Day*.

My poor wife has endured hours of my gushing about this song, and has handled it (mostly) with class. That's what they don't tell you about marriage before you tie the knot: get ready to hear the same stories over and over for the next half century until you die. So thank you, wife whose name will not be mentioned for personal privacy reasons.

Another Day is kind of a remake of an older hit song called *Wake Up, Little Susie*. Kind of. The original is about a girl and boy who accidentally fall asleep together at a drive-in movie, and upon waking up in the early morning, comically panic about what people will assume. This was a mega-hit in the late '50s and has been remade countless times. In one of the most random factoids you will ever hear, *Wake Up, Little Susie* is George W Bush's favorite song.

James Taylor turns the story told in *Wake Up Little Susie* into a metaphor. In *Another Day*, a male voice sings to his female companion, asking her to join him as he bravely faces a new world and a new dawn:

Later he sings

I really don't know what James Taylor is intending to sing about, but the song perfectly describes, in my view, the whole point of the Baha'i Faith.

Baha'u'llah made the audacious claim that his coming — and very importantly, the teachings he left behind — were the fulfillment of the prophecies of ancient religions that looked forward to a time of tumult, sweeping change, and resurrection that would bring forth an unrecognizably better world. In the Old Testament we hear about the coming of the "New Heaven and the new earth". The Qur'an talks about the "Qiyameh", when the dead will be resurrected. The Baghavad Gita talks about the return of Lord Krishna at a time when corruption and immorality will become rampant. And so on.

The audacity of Baha'u'llah's message was that he claimed to be God's appointed agent to fulfill the promises of these ancient religions. But Baha'is don't believe these prophecies are literal. There will be no physical reanimation of long-dead human corpses, and the saintly will not magically elevate "up" to heaven.

If not literal, then, how do Baha'is understand these prophecies of complete destruction followed by resurrection and renewal? According to Baha'u'llah's teachings, we are living in a time of unprecedented corruption, materialism, spiritual malaise, and unnecessary suffering. Only by collectively turning towards God's guidance for this day and age can the human race overcome these causes of misery and turn the earth into something truly beautiful. That is Baha'u'llah's message and the purpose of his life on earth, as I understand it.

OK, back to the song. Let me try and actually spell out what it actually contains, and why it so artfully captures what I just described above. Here are some of the lyrics, what they mean to me, and some passages from Baha'u'llah's writings. Note that all of the Baha'i passages below are from the book [Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah](#).

1)

Lyric: "It was a hell of a night"

My translation: "We've all been through something terrible as a human race"

Baha'u'llah's words: "Consider the multitude of lives that have been, and are still being, sacrificed in a world deluded by a mere phantom which the vain imaginations of its peoples have conceived."

"So blind hath become the human heart that neither the disruption of the city, nor the reduction of the mountain in dust, nor even the cleaving of the earth, can shake off its torpor."

2)

Lyrics: “Another dawn is breaking” “The world outside is waking” “The promise of another day”

My translation: Good things are stirring, and you can see the beginnings of a resurrection of human society.

Baha’u’llah’s words: **“Soon will the present-day order be rolled up, and a new one spread out in its stead.”**

“Take heed lest anything deter thee from extolling the greatness of this Day—the Day whereon the Finger of majesty and power hath opened the seal of the Wine of Reunion, and called all who are in the heavens and all who are on the earth.”

3)

Lyrics: “Morning light has driven away / All the shadows that hide your way” “The sun has begun / To melt all our fears away”

My translation: It’s only through God’s power and grace that the earth can become radiant as we’ve been promised

Baha’u’llah’s words: **“It is incumbent in this Day, upon every man to place his whole trust in the manifold bounties of God, and arise to disseminate, with the utmost wisdom, the verities of His Cause. Then, and only then, will the whole earth be enveloped with the morning light of His Revelation.”**

4)

Lyrics: “Wake up Susie / Put your shoes on / Walk with me into this light” “Just to be with you by my side” “Turn and face the sun / One by one”

My translation: The resurrection of the world is not going to be accomplished without great effort on the part of human beings, acting and working together, united.

Baha’u’llah’s words: **“Speed out of your sepulchers. How long will ye sleep?”**

“Exert yourselves that ye may attain this transcendent and most sublime station, the station that can ensure the protection and security of all mankind. This goal excelleth every other goal, and this aspiration is the monarch of all aspirations.”

“So powerful is the light of unity that it can illumine the whole earth.”

I almost certainly am getting carried away here. I’m pretty sure James Taylor didn’t write this song with the Baha’i Faith in mind. But boy, would I love to meet him one day and tell him about all of this.

A commentary on the differences between Hindu Religions and the Baha'i Faith

A Comment by Julian on a YouTube thread:

Indian people should not give up their natural and ancient religions for the Baha'i faith. The Baha'i faith is very different from Indian religion. And it lacks a great deal by comparison.

Response by an Indian who is adopting and promoting the Baha'i Faith:

"Hi friend, thank you for sharing your views. My background is Hindu and I consider myself to uphold the Hindu religion where ever I go."

Julian: This is clearly because you are unfamiliar with your own religion.

The Indian: "Allow me to give you some insight, perhaps you have been misguided or miss understood the Baha'i Faith."

Julian: I was a very involved Baha'i for 12 years. I know full well about the shallow, religion-reductive Baha'i Faith.

"Baha'i Faith is a beautiful religion you just need to investigate what it truly means. Being a Baha'i"

It means ignoring and being clueless about the contents of other religions but acting like you know. It also means world-obsession and a fetish for mixing bodies of different types together; getting thrills from that. That is, verily, an embarrassment to religion.

"Baha'u'llah says 'you are upholding all the divine religions of the past.'" This means i am Muslim, a Jew, a Christian, a Buddhist, a Hindu, a Sikh, a Babi, and so on. How can a Baha'i stay away from Indian people when Indian people like myself are Baha'is. Peace, light and love :-)"

Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh even. That's a typical Baha'i mouthful. The Sikhs are centered on listening to the enrapturing inner divine sound of God that they call Shabd. Do Baha'is have a take on that? Not last time I checked.

In brief: Do you even know what's in these religions? Baha'is have no concept of the contents of the Bhagavad-Gita, Upanishads, Yoga-Sutras, etc. That content is far beyond Baha'i conceptions of religion. Most basic concepts of Hinduism — such as meditation and meditation techniques, analysis of the mind, analysis of the problem of samsara/duality, or the divine efficacy of austerities (tapas) — do not exist in the Baha'i Faith. And yet these are fundamental conceptions — and religious realities — that bear on mankind's fundamental problem as beings trapped in dualistic external existence. That last profound concept of man's problem — a central starting point in Hinduism and Buddhism — has no conceptual development in the Baha'i Faith; it cannot even be found on their mental radar.

"My Friend, change is the only constant thing in life, as civilization progresses then so does mankind progress and evolve, it is inevitable. We must embrace change and embrace new religions as one. It does not mean you should throw away your culture or heritage."

Whether the simplistic and primitive Baha'i Faith represents cultural progress or evolution is a question I'll leave for later. But you are throwing away your magnificent religious heritage by embracing the Baha'i Faith. I know both religions, and of this there can be no doubt. Baha'is alternately clueless or phobic towards most of your profound religious heritage. If they don't ignore it and trivialize it with ersatz posturing toward meditation (a subject beyond them) they outright reject it. For example they discredit the spiritual value of austerities/tapas. (Though none have tried it, I am sure.) Baha'u'llah calls your saints and ascetics deluded "creatures." Baha'u'llah had a clueless disdain for all your yogis, rishis, and saints who sought and found God within. In fact, the very idea of a God that is personally realizable within — the central and choicest aspect of Hinduism — is utterly undeveloped in the Baha'i Faith! They even consider discussion of such subjects taboo and shun whatever content speaks to it in their own writings. Baha'u'llah's simplistic Islamic, exterior-focused religious viewpoint in no way encompasses the vast spiritual understanding of the Hindu religious heritage. May as well try to invite an elephant into a mouse's hole.

So Hindus worship "change" now, do they? An educated Hindu would say that Brahman — the immutable Pure Consciousness — is the only constant in life, and that it must be found. Clearly you don't understand that the purpose of religion, in Hinduism and other great religions, is to get beyond the tyranny of change and find the Changeless God, the Immutable. You were sadly not educated in your own religion, thus how can you know that the Baha'i Faith fulfills it or improves it? Constant change is a basic feature of unsatisfactory samsara. Bringing more "change" to the ever-changing world is no attainment for a group to crow about. Change happens anyway, the inevitable quality of samsara or repetitive dualistic existence. Even Obama sold "change" to get elected — and he's nothing but a dishonest politician. Change is nothing new, and all change is dualistic — featuring good and bad.

Real religion leads a man to become established in the eternally satisfactory Changeless, fulfilling desires, giving contentment, and making him a true benefit to others because he can now lead them to the same imperishable Brahman.

Which brings me to another subject. There is no "saving the world" without a worthy analysis of what the world is. Hinduism has made this analysis; Baha'i scriptures fail here. Hinduism is far more profound & effective in their analysis of world-problems. They analyzed the exterior world as the self-projection of the viewer.

Are you even aware of the magnificent contribution your own religion has made to understanding of the world phenomena? That the outer material world is has all the characteristics of nightly ephemeral dreams which are self-projected? Are you not aware of the spectacular contributions of your sage Sankara to the understanding of exterior reality? Believe me, the Baha'i Faith is not aware and can't hold a candle to it. But you should

be.

Your religion makes a flawless analysis of the world and all its problems/flaws as one's self-mind, projecting outward. Flaws in it are one's own impurities. Thus by self-purification the exterior projected world-dream upgrades and improves of itself; without that self-purification no world-improvement is possible. This was the same conclusion of Buddha! Thus as a Baha'i you block out the profound understanding of your own multiplicitous religious heritage, but Buddhism as well. Beyond an occasional reference to "the world of dust" which Baha'is take no guidance from and never develop, the Baha'i culture lacks all these recognitions of the transitory world, as well as the elegant failsafe solution founded in personal purification. Baha'is are, in my experience, not even able to answer these ideas much less entertain them significantly as a religious system!

Related to this, your religion has a profound, hard-edged concept of the significance of austerities or "tapas." Austerities are undertaken, in your religion, to burn out impurities which block the perception of God and are the basis for outer flaws in the projected world-dream. This insight into the value of asceticism for uncovering God plus changing the nature of the world-projection is deeply resonant with Christian ideas and the life of Christ. The Baha'i Faith lacks any of this understanding. The one place where Baha'is make some gesture towards austerities is once per year in their so-called fast which is not a fast at all. (They still eat, just during the dark 12 hours instead of the daylight. Big deal.) Your religion's understanding of tapas and austerities is of immortal value in the development of God-knowledge. Why trade it for a religion where this concept has no development and no place? From the Hindu, Buddhist, and even Christian point of view, asceticism is used to conquer life's existential personal problems: lust, the small ego, and the mind. Baha'is say, "We reject asceticism." That means the Baha'i Faith rejects any practical tools for conquering these three mortal problems.

As to "progress," do you really believe the primitive, harsh contents of the Baha'i "Most Holy Book" represents positive cultural progress? With its complete lack of metaphysical sophistication present in the Vedas and Upanishads? The vision of human life presented in the Kitab-i-Aqdas is primitive compared to the rarefied and refined cultural ages of India's past. If you want real progress for your people, embrace the values and ways of your own ancient religion — far superior to the Baha'i Faith.

"Being a Baha'i — Baha'u'llah says "you are upholding all the divine religions of the past."

This is a simple lie. To uphold the Divine Religion of Hinduism one does this:

— He practices austerities

— He seeks God within through the stilling of the mind (in meditation or chanting technique) or devotional practices such as concentrated rituals

— He practices brahmacharya

All 3 above are central to the God-realizing religions of Hinduism. And all 3 are ignored — or even condemned — by the Baha'i Faith. There is another principle in Hinduism, and that is guru-devotion. But this principle is ignored in mainstream Baha'i life, and they have no conscious consideration of it as a principle at all. And how can you blame them? Baha'u'llah was an angry gnome with a thoroughly Islamic religious mind and can't hold a candle to the Vedic rishis. How can you prefer him, as a guru, over your own luminous saints like Swami Sivananda? Ramakrishna? Or even a modern living saint such as Karunamayi?

To be a Hindu is to renounce the world and seek God-within instead. Baha'is do not even have a concept of these two; and don't even truly respect the ideas in their actual daily culture. It is far better to be a God-seeker — and a true Hindu — than be "every religion" in a false, inauthentic, way. Why would you want to be "every religion." What is the point of that? Especially if while pretending to be that, you have no concept of God Himself or the tools to find God within. That is the situation with Baha'is. While pretending to be "every religion" (pretending because they do not even comprehend the contents of other religions), they dispense with the central value of religion: Inner God-search and solving of the problem of the dualistic outer world-projection (samsara). Beyond Baha'u'llah's occasional references to "this world of dust," words Baha'is ignore and find no guidance from, Baha'is have no evaluation or analysis of the problem of samsara. What a naive concept to think that samsaric duality dissolves by obsessing on the world's problems or getting people to agree on a few shallow concepts.

These are fundamental Hinduism:

— Austerities

— Brahmacharya

— Meditation for experiencing God within.

These concepts are barely present in the Baha'i Faith; that is, in the actual culture and mindset of Baha'is. Though austerities is a core principle in development of Hindu religious life, the Baha'i faith disparages austerities, saying "We don't believe in asceticism." Then say goodbye to the most spiritually effective aspect of most of the great religions!

As to brahmacharya and the spiritual significance of continence, Baha'is simply do not possess this in their material or in the religious culture that produced Baha'is texts.

As to meditation, Baha'is are phobic toward the very word "meditation." Perhaps they try to humor Hindus in India around their temple with some entertainment of the meditation concept. It would be like Baha'is to at least humor it. But Baha'is themselves lack any catalog of knowledge regarding meditation, the pursuit of God within, or the inner territory. Although their Holy Book obviously specifies a mantra (outloud or japa) Baha'is don't even recognize it as a mantra, or as japa, or have any conception of its significance. By contrast, the science of concentrating the

mind for God-perception within is highly developed in Hinduism, having an extraordinarily elaborate lexicon. Hindus have words and basic concepts like *manas* (mind), *dharana* (concentration), *dhyana* (steady concentration), *vrittis* (movements of the mind), with all aspects of the breath analyzed. This is significant because the moving mind, in Hindu metaphysics, is identified as the producer of the moving outer world-samsara. None of this knowledge exists in the Baha'i Faith. They ask that Hindus give it all up — not even understanding its value themselves — to be replaced by a material world-obsession. The Hindu rishis have identified man's fundamental problem: His mind. They have also mapped the inner territory for the God-seeker — territory encountered by all who grapple with the mind. None of this knowledge exists in Baha'i culture, and is only hinted at in the Sufi language of texts like "The Seven Valleys." But such texts never intrude, in any significant way, into the Baha'i world-view which is externally-oriented. Truly, spiritual and metaphysical knowledge in the Baha'i Faith is comparable to a deaf mule with a basket standing beside the most advanced flying car.

Hinduism/Yoga renounces the world and the unreal in preference for God and the Real. But Baha'is are world-focused, world-obsessed, and material. Don't be a fool and reject or devalue your more genuine religious heritage that is far more profound and effective than Baha'i world-obsession.

Certain traditions in many countries are not improving or evolving society but are negating the well being of society. Its important to reflect on such issues.

At core the problems of societies are founded in man's attachment to the world and the flesh; and his lack of the state-of-grace. The state-of-grace dawns for a man by self-purification, which is the purpose of Hindu yoga and austerities, and samadhi. Hinduism-Yoga addresses this deep metaphysical root of the problem; the Baha'i faith does not.

The Baha'is even suppressed what little yoga (spiritual technique) that they had — their own "Most Holy Book" and it's chanting procedures, considering them unimportant. You cannot "organize the world into happiness." Human happiness is only secured by contact with the faultless, blissful *sat-chit-ananda* within. Hindu religion specializes in showing men the way to that. The Baha'i Faith lacks even a concept of it. And in practical daily Baha'i life, they shun discussion of such matters. Happiness also is not secured by watching various different colored, or different shaped bodies mixing it up. For certain psychological dispositions, this is a transient thrill or pleasure, only. Later boredom sets in. "The thrill is gone." Or differences or tensions arise. Or you miss your own people — or the distinct peoples — and what they once were. Body obsessions and world obsessions — the warp and woof of Baha'i life — can never secure man's happiness.

Our vision should be global and united.

No, your vision should be of God. "Globe" means world. You are telling me that you should be world-focused. Do you know how many material worlds there are in this *samsara*? Do you know how many globes? No creditable religion can be constructed from a "vision" or focus on the tired, *samsaric*, inert world.

No man can have another man's same vision. The only way you can share another man's exact vision is to attain *samadhi* — alone explored by Hinduism and Buddhism — and get at least temporary oneness with him and all things. As to your Baha'i buzzword "unity," in well-trained Baha'i fashion I see you are learning to throw around a vague concept begging for analysis.

There is no such thing as "unity" in material terms. Each soul remains separate. (Do you want us all to gel into one ball of protoplasm?) Nobody wants such "unity."

But Hinduism understands unity in authentic terms: It is the experience of at-one-ment known by the religious seeker in God-meditation. When Baha'is speak of "unity" they really mean transient pleasurable experiences in which this group is "cooperating" with this group and having transient, pleasant experiences of human interaction.

It is what we need in this world, lets put our egos aside and unite and respect all.

The Vedic rishis had a profounder insight into what we need in this world: Detachment from the *samsara*, spiritual practices, and actual destruction of the ego through God-union. Even utmost "respect for all" does not guarantee your happiness. Utmost "respect all" does not end the problems of duality and *samsara* that the individual faces: Constant change, impermanence, and all karmic situations mixed with good/bad. You can remain quite unhappy, and still immersed in duality, while you "respect all." Now, though the Baha'i Faith has "prayers for detachment" in practice they are a highly world-attached and world-focused religion. Meanwhile, the Baha'i Faith lacks any techniques or practices — at least in conscious presentation — for the development of world-detachment.

Start to independently investigate about other religions and start to open your minds to love and accept all as one. To me when someone asks me what religion I am I simply except the faith they are following as mine, because being a Baha'i is a platform for me respect and love all religions as one. To me someone who believes and respects all religion as one, humanity as one and God as one is a Baha'i, unknowingly they just don't know it, they have to investigate it themselves.

"We must embrace change and embrace new religions as one."

Sad to hear an Indian having this concept of religion! A genuine Hindu — and a genuine religious person — says: "We must embrace God, the changeless, the ever-Satisfactory. And take our minds off the transitory world-miasm to solve the problem of how it arises."

All people at all times are swept away with the changing world miasm; merging with it or "embracing" it; considering it important; considering it real, fully mixed with the continuous change of both mind and world. To be in full embrace with the transitory *samsara* is the ordinary state of the suffering human being!

There is no point in saying “there is one religion” if the religion you embrace— the Baha’i Faith — is conceptually shallow with no address to the fundamental problem of yourself and all men. That problem is mankind’s immersion in unsatisfactory dualistic phenomena; inevitability of death, and repetition of sorrows (caused by karmic vasanas). Better to embrace one religion, from among a thousand, that is authentic and solves that problem, than construct a “one world religion” that merely pretends to be “all religions” and does not address the fundamental problem of man.

“being a Baha’i is a platform for me respect and love all religions as one.”

The typical thing with Baha’is is that they do not even know the contents of the other religions, or wish to know them. You are not “embracing” a thing when you don’t know what it is. You need to ask: Is this a real platform? Do Baha’is truly “respect” or “love” other religions that they do not even understand or wish to learn about? Baha’is do not truly respect the other religions, have no answers for them, and fear them. I have never met a Baha’i who understood most of the concepts in the Bhagavad-Gita. In fact, they reject many of its concepts, and have disinterest for the rest. Better to embrace one religion that gives you God-knowledge than falsely “embrace” “all religions” for the pleasure of a soft-focused pink cloud.

The Hindu rishis get a genuine platform for respecting other religions because they have analyzed them aright: In Non-Dualistic Vedanta (of the Mandukya and G. Karika Upanishads) all exterior religions are understood to be one’s own transient karmic mind-projections, like the rest of the daily world-dream. They all arise from Pure Consciousness behind the mind and are products of individual karma, like the rest of the external world-dream. In other words, all religions just like all other externals are emanations of Brahman or Pure Consciousness. They are one’s own karmic mental projections based on conditioning and vasanas as he evolves over incarnations. This is a profounder understanding of the “oneness of religion.” And it’s in Hinduism. And the better karmic erections (religions) direct you to God within. The Baha’i Faith is not one of those better religions from this point-of-view. Speaking of “incarnations,” the Baha’i Faith rejects reincarnation, so basic to Hinduism and Buddhism, with no convincing demonstration of proof. (Even though the Bab apparently believed in it.) The Baha’i Faith has a vision only for this one life; only the material world. The vision of the Hindu spans beyond lifetimes, ages, and embraces All Time.

It has long been a trait of the Hindu sages to not argue with other religions, not deny their validity, and not attack them. Hindus excel at this in true depth; not Baha’is. It has long been the view of the Vedic seers and yogis that all saints have the same basic attainment, reaching the same mountaintop but by alternate routes, and that all God-realized saints salute each other from their mountain peaks, and finally seeing the essence behind all nomenclature and even all forms. However, the Baha’i faith does not even have the concept of the sage, the yogi, or the saint in the first place, nor the tools that allow men and women to become such. Who wants to adopt the Baha’i worldview in which yogis, bhaktas, siddhas, adepts, rishis, and saints — don’t exist? And one is not allowed to look upon their pictures. But the one picture of their little scowling gnome which is hidden away for PR purposes?

The Baha’i approach is a stealth destruction of other religions. They present themselves as “the new replacement and upgrade” for religions, without even understanding the contents of the other religions. In reality the Baha’i Faith is far more crude and primitive than Hindu scriptural philosophy and historical Hindu periods. And the true religion of the Baha’i Faith can be summed up in this phrase: “Thrills from external experiences of bodily ethnic mixing.”

“To me someone who believes and respects all religion as one, humanity as one and God as one is a Baha’i. “

Sounds boring and insensate. There is not much “oneness” between Baha’i doctrine and Hindu conceptions, and even littler common ground in terms of religious technique. Certainly there is common ground between them. For example, both contain the profound technique of chanting. However, Baha’is tend to disavow the value of their own chanting rules, and there is no knowledge or even discussion concerning them. Hinduism, on the other hand, has a spectacularly well-developed and ancient lore — even a science — relative to chanting, japa, and mantra. The Baha’i Faith is not even on the platform by comparison. The Baha’i Faith ignores most of the riches that Hinduism brings to the table, yet says it is superior and should supplant Hindu knowledge. Supplant it with what? Baha’i offers so little knowledge compared to just a few verses of the Katha Upanishad!

We get enough “oneness” in the state of prajna, or deep dreamless sleep, nightly. (This is pointed out by the Upanishads.) Nobody wants life to be One Blob. The mind prefers differences, distances, familiar/foreign, close-far. The mind will continually generate differences in the external world-dream. That’s what the mind does; and prefers it. Many religions is best. Many religions and many paths is best for the great University of the human world. Many religions — or paths to the mountaintop — is part of the diversity God created. The sad thing is that Baha’is don’t even have a conception for “a mountaintop” or what that means.

Real “oneness” is only truly experienced in samadhi (God-union). Because the external world is mind-generated, the duality and transitoriness inherent in the mind — inherent in the very phenomenon of mental “movement” — will always show up in the external mind-projected world. Only by understanding the external world as your own mind-created dream-projection, powered by Brahma, as taught in Hinduism, does one experience true “oneness” with it. The concept of samadhi (blissful God-union) does not even exist in the Baha’i Faith! To even discuss it would disturb sadly limited Baha’is.

“Unity” is a big concept. The sages of India considered “unities” in a much more intelligent manner. Their metaphysics includes the concept of prakriti, a primordial field of nature. Also space or akasa, the first creation of the Creator God (Isvara/Brahma) in which He then placed dualistic creations. There is the concept of Aum — the divine sound heard by Hindu adepts — in which all knowables exist. Then there is the final “unity” Nirguna Brahman, or “Pure Consciousness” — out of which all of these arise. (Though Nirguna Brahman, the ‘uncarved block,’ transcends concepts like “unity.”)

Baha’i scriptures don’t conceive of these things. In fact, the Baha’i Faith lacks what could be called any coherent metaphysics at all, much less an elaborate metaphysics. There is no analysis of God’s nature or the processes of his creation, or unities such as prakriti, pradhana, Aum, or Light.

What a Baha'i actually means when he speaks of "unity"

But Baha'is always talk about "unity" as if they want everything to coalesce into a giant ball or blob. Unity is a pretty high-falootin' word. So we have to ask ourselves: What do Baha'is really mean when they talk about "unity"? Is it some cosmic static state that, once arrived at, never again changes? And only able to move or change with the introduction of disunity?

People don't like a static state. Does it really mean "harmony"? Lack of significant conflict? But that is not the same thing as some kind of metaphysical unity. A "relative lack of conflict" only references a relative condition, and another dualistic state. (Some conflict is present.) And a profound lack of conflict, should that transitory condition be seen for any length of time, is uncreative and becomes boring. In music a bit of dissonance is required to give it life and interest. Like, say a change from the major 3rd to the minor. Or the use of a diminished 5th note, etc. Nobody enjoys a play or story that contains no conflict or opposing forces. Would the ideal world of the Baha'i be one in which everybody would die of boredom?

Does their "unity" really refer, perhaps, to prosperity? Growth? Is it like the concept of coherence? What? Let's analyze it...

It's easy to find out what Baha'is mean by unity. I know, I used to be one. I knew what it meant to me, and others were like me. Let's say you are talking to a Baha'i. You say, "Why do you like this religion." They may say, "I like the unity ideal."

Now you ask them: "What do you mean by unity? Have you ever experienced this unity?"

The Baha'i will say, "Oh, most certainly!"

Now ask the Baha'i to tell you how and when they experienced "unity." They will proceed to describe a pleasurable experience that they had. Likely it was at some human gathering, where "this colored" people smiled at "that" colored people and shook hands, etc. And this experience gave the Baha'i pleasant, happy, and transient feelings, for psychological reasons. The Baha'i goal of "unity" turns out to be nothing but the pursuit of pleasurable outer experiences in the material and social human world.

The Baha'i, due to his particular psychological conditioning (including notions about "what's been wrong with the world") — gets a pleasurable experience when he sees "this type" smile at "that type," and shake hands at their meeting, or a certain mix of bodies/genes all together, or a group saying "We all declare the same thought" (for the moment). This experience gives the Baha'i psychological pleasure, and he describes that as an experience of "unity." In reality it's just a fleeting pleasure.

So in reality, Baha'is are a people who pursue pleasurable experiences. "Oh look, this one is getting along with that one and they are smiling." "Oh look, I never knew blacks before, but now I am hanging around with black bodies. What a thrill." "Oh look, these islanders are dancing their special samba and we are being all kindly and enjoying the interesting performance. I enjoy these differences and this 'diversity.' And I feel good about myself because I am so righteous and welcoming."

These are experiences of external and psychological pleasures only. They are transitory. It is quite easy, also, to analyze their goals as nothing but desires for thrills in the external material world. The desire to enjoy "differences" (because you are bored or jaded) is not a spiritual desire. It is, according to Buddha and others, the central fault of man's mind. Lust for "diversity" — different shapes and types of bodies — is just that: Worldly and material lust.

The great religions such as Buddhism and Hinduism have to laugh at a religion that considers the pursuit of transitory human or social pleasures, and pursuit of thrills from "diversity" and different bodies — as a religious goal! The prospect of turning such impulses into a religion — how much more the "one religion" to replace all others — is absurd to any perceptive man.

The core teaching of Buddhism is that the external transitory world is unsatisfactory and in fact pure suffering; that this ends when one withdraws from the False Outer, stops craving worldly experiences, and turns toward The Real. (Such as "this group smiling at that group.") Hinduism is similar: True religion begins when the aspirant realizes the pointlessness and unsatisfactoriness of material existence. (See Yoga-Sutras, Yoga-Vasistha.)

Although Baha'u'llah, in his writings, did have a strong world-renouncing attitude (always calling it the "world of dust") and always admonished to turn to God (him, in this case — he didn't direct them to find God elsewhere) — the Baha'i Faith as a religious culture ignores these ideas. It is, in practice, a completely world-oriented religion, obsessed with "world problems," buildings, and watching new amalgams of people mix it up. Sort of like those who enjoy interracial sex, really.

Their religion does not point them to "God within" and such mystical ideas are, in fact, shunned by the Baha'i leadership notwithstanding statements like those found in the "Hidden Words." The official religion points Baha'is continually to the external world, and away from the inner. Their pursuit of "unity" is easily analyzed as nothing but the pursuit of human pleasures through seeing types mix together. They don't seek "unity" in any cosmic sense; but an endless round of "happy parties."

And did you think that "unity" was a new concept in religion? Not at all. The Hindu rishis have been pursuing — and attaining — unitive consciousness for millennia. But when the Hindu offers "unity" he is offering something much more personal, real, and fundamental — than Baha'is conceive of.

There are two areas where use of the term "unity" has legitimacy in Hinduism, and both of them are areas beyond the ken of Baha'i religion. One is the state of Samadhi pursued by the pious, ascetic Hindu. In that state one knows God directly and merges with Him as pure Bliss-Consciousness while in a conscious state. He then knows his oneness with all things. Yet the Baha'i Faith shuns this mystical knowledge. The other is the state of

deep, dreamless sleep, which Hinduism calls “prajna.”

The Vedic rishis taught that all of us nightly become “in unity” with God during the state of deep dreamless sleep, though we are not conscious and a thin layer of nescience or unknowing is there. But we actually wake, and re-manifest “a world” out of desire for differences, drama, diversity, and changes. Thus the mind itself, though it gets comfort and strength from merging in God, is inclined to differences & fragmentation. The world itself is nothing other than one’s mind-created fragmentation.

Any such metaphysics analyzing the world-problem, especially what the world actually IS — as a phenomenon — are completely lacking in the primitive, childlike, and world-obsessed Baha’i faith. Baha’is see the world as separate from themselves, and as real and important (though Baha’u’llah spurned it as “dust.”) They have no understanding. Hinduism identified the mind as the generator of the world-miasm, and developed an approach to taming the mind. Baha’i grotesquely lacks this knowledge.

In a sense the Hindu devotee is trying to come into the deep-sleep knowledge while still awake. This is what is attained in the state of samadhi through assiduous work at concentrating the mind plus developing the devotional attitude.

If a religion has no insight into the fundamental laws of the outer world-erection, and offers no techniques for mastering that world-projection, it is an impoverished religion. In Hinduism, with or without “pleasant experiences” (such as Baha’is seek) — the devotee becomes happy. He becomes established in happiness from a causeless bliss not dependent on outer conditions. Baha’i happiness is tied to outer conditions and a constantly desired repetition of pleasant social & human experiences.

Courtesy http://bahaiface.com/Bahai_Faith_Compared_To_Hinduism_Julian_Lee.html

Why I am No Longer a Baha'i -Timothy Casey

Preamble

This is not an attack on the Baha'i Faith as some might be prone to suggest. This is an exposition of the experiences that initiated, conflagrated, and concluded my crisis of faith with the conviction that the Baha'i Writings are a testament to the profoundly beautiful, albeit imperfect creativity and wisdom of human beings; but that no more credit is due God for these writings than for any other penned expression of love.

Some Core Beliefs in Review

My closest and dearest friend has been a part of my spiritual journey for many years now, leading me back in my darkest hours to my core belief that God is love and reinforcing the ideal to which I hold that judgement is not of God. She has been my inspiration to explore the questions of spirituality and is the sole reason I have any belief in God at all.

My spiritual journey began with the question, "How would you like it if someone did that to you?". Not even the words of the most holy manifestation of God could match the power and directness of a question uttered by one of many somewhat frustrated fathers albeit the one in question being my own. This was reinforced with the beautiful Christian concept that God is love, but not before I was taught the Old Testament doctrine that all should "fear God". What is there to fear of one who loves you? Indeed, what is there to fear of love? You see, the evident disparity in religious dialogue always made me keenly aware of the gulf between spirituality and pseudo-spirituality, between practical reciprocity and the devaluation of the human being before such idols as are used to justify the unconscionable. This speaks to the great question I believe divides the "armies of Armageddon", as to whether religion was given Creation by the Creator to benefit the Creator even at the expense of Creation or religion was given unto Creation by the Creator to benefit Creation even at the expense of the Creator (Who by definition has infinite capacity to endure expense!). One ideology makes God in man's image to be the ultimate idol, whereas the other sets God beyond human frailties as would befit the Mother of Creation. One ideology is extensively materialistic, manipulative, judgemental, and exoteric; whereas the other ideology is profoundly spiritual, reciprocal, understanding, and prone to be esoteric – even if unnecessarily so.

I believe that any theology that alludes to the Creation being the plaything of the Creator as opposed to something more serious and sophisticated makes a mockery of everything that is purported to be "holy" by reducing the Creator to little more than a neurotic monster of great power. In the absence of any measurable evidence of explicitly divine temper tantrums, such allusions impose redundant and therefore unnecessary complexity on theological models and belief systems. Such impositions are excessively unreasonable in the absence of supporting evidence.

One of the realities to which both sides of "Armageddon" are prone is that interpretation is necessarily fluid in the formation of any consistent theology having philosophical integrity (IE internal congruency). This essentially gives the appearance of "shifting the goalposts". However, fluidity of interpretation is necessitated by the metaphorical nature of primitive languages that engage the use of allegories when communicating the numerous concepts beyond the native vocabulary. This also leads to the shifting of interpretation when demonstrating divine "infallibility" or prophetic fulfilment. As such, neither are valid proofs of divinity because such shifts whether necessary or not, still "shift the goalposts" without allowing falsifiability. This forces the seeker to dig deeper – in search of that ever elusive philosophical integrity.

Philosophical integrity describes the state in which an induced maxim is the source of deduced axioms and major or first principles from which are derived laws with similarly derived scope. Most often, you need to connect the dots for yourself – and if you can, this provides a good reason to join the troop. However, continued involvement requires continued rationality making the ["independent search for truth"](#) a never ending investigation. This becomes problematic if the emphasis of consensus with ever shifting group interpretations and priorities increases.

Why become a Baha'i?

I became a member of the Baha'i Faith on ISO:1993-March-27 when I reached the realisation that God is big enough to embrace all peoples in infinite mercy and understanding and likewise, that God is intelligent enough to know, understand, and accept the reality of individual belief based in uniquely individual experience. I had come to the realisation that the "Divine Judge" was the "Great Deception" in that God is love whereas judgement is original sin and not love, and therefore not of God. This is because judgement can be the only fruit of the tree of knowledge of "good" and "evil"; the forbidden fruit that ruined "Adam" as surely as it ruins any other community (cf. Genesis 5:1). Thus, I joined the Baha'i Faith embracing the beautiful axioms which made so much sense in terms of many modern problems:

1. Unity of humanity
2. Independent investigation of truth
3. The foundation of all religions is one
4. Religion by definition is the cause of love and unity
5. The essential harmony of science and religion
6. The equal rights of men and women
7. Abolition of all forms of prejudice and bigotry
8. The obligation to universal peace
9. The necessity of universal education
10. A spiritual solution to economic problems
11. The necessity of a universal auxiliary language
12. The necessity of an international tribunal and government

These twelve principles or objectives can find origin with the empathic principle included vaguely in the maxim enshrined in the Covenant of Baha'u'llah as "The religion of God is for love and unity; make it not the cause of enmity and dissension." I didn't join the Baha'i Faith to have these primary expectations rationalised away for "more important" concepts like "obedience" and "faith". I certainly didn't join the Baha'i Faith to shun covenant-breakers or apologise for the numerous logical and contextual errors of key figures such as Shoghi Effendi, 'Abdu'l-Baha, and even Baha'u'llah – especially in regard to the defamation of temperament groups simply because they were unanticipated by Baha'u'llah! I joined the Baha'i Faith to take a stand against submission rituals in the guise of irrational faith, which rituals are used to justify practices such as demonisation of inconvenient minorities and attempts to gain financial advantage by deception. I joined to show that social spirituality can and does exist without resort to fallacy and fraud.

Ninth Year Misgivings & Six Years of Spiritual Angst

My ninth year as a Baha'i proved to be one hell of a crisis of religion for me. Firstly it was pointed out that according to the Kitab-i-Aqdas ("The Most Holy Book"), accepting Baha'u'llah and obeying him were more important than any "good" including love and/or unity. This was a disappointing experience as I'd entered the Baha'i Faith on the understanding that "The religion of God is for love and unity" and not for purely solipsistic agendas such as recognition and obedience to the messenger of God for this day. The statement in the opening paragraph of the Kitab-i-Aqdas is quite clear, but I had a lot of trouble accepting this because "Most Holy" or not, the Aqdas is trumped by the Covenant in the scriptural hierarchy, is it not? Furthermore, it constitutes a clear example of the kind of "all or nothing" thinking that typifies cults (Tobias & Lalic, 1994):

Moreover, this statement denies the conscientiousness and by induction the conscience of those who find the evidence offered by the Baha'i case insufficient to their experience. This is not the fault of the seeker, but of the Baha'i Faith as an institution, which institution was successively granted by Baha'u'llah and his successors, sufficient administrative authority to be self-correcting. Yet the translation of this passage clearly blames the seeker for not being convinced and furthermore claims the existence of a duty for which there is no experiential evidence. The fact that I cannot remember being given the opportunity to decline my birth in the event that I did not agree to this prenatal contract means that there is no just basis upon which to enforce such a condition.

Baha'u'llah's "first duty" as it is portrayed in this particular translation, is an insult to the sanity, intelligence, and conscience of the human soul to which I took deep offence. It is the reason why I first found reason to seriously doubt and question the station of Baha'u'llah.

I now observed the Baha'i Faith through the eyes of one who has seen the subject contradict itself, and a troubling pattern of attenuation began to emerge. "Deeperings", in which the *diversity* of understanding of Baha'i literature was focal, were replaced by "Ruhi Classes" in which certain points of doctrine became focal – much like the virtues programme. The misdeeds of a few individuals did not help things, but I soldiered on certain that this was just a passing phase. Six years of soldiering on is meagrely a testament to how stubborn I can be!

The Trigger for the "Great Unravelling"

This year, my fifteenth as a Baha'i, I came across something I'd either missed or glossed over in my values based assessment of the Baha'i Faith:

Shame is a purely social emotion relating exclusively to one's self-perceived status. Its usage by Baha'u'llah (the author) and/or Shoghi Effendi (the translator) in this sense to the exclusion of empathic concepts such as remorse, guilt, compunction, qualm, or even empathy speaks to a purely materialistic viewpoint at best and may indicate the confusion of shame and remorse in either the author or the translator. Lack of backing for interpretation in the form of translator's notes makes this question impossible to resolve without Middle-Eastern language fluency and access to the original source texts. This statement, existing as it does in isolation from an analogous reference to remorse anywhere within the Baha'i writings, is truly more damaging to Baha'u'llah's credibility than just about anything else I can imagine because of the potential implications about the author or a key figure in the administration, **his infallibly** decreed administration, in whose hands rest the translation of nearly all the Baha'i Writings. Sociopaths (eg. all cult leaders & many abusive partners) replace their moral compass with a social compass that allows them to exploit loopholes in social conventions that allow the perpetration of anti-social behaviour for the "greater" social good. While this makes them very hard to detect, their substitution of remorse with shame dictates that they only feel bad about something when they get caught. This extends itself in the purview of the sociopath to the confusion of shame and remorse such that socially acceptable ends are always believed to justify anti-social means. The significance of "The First Leaf of Paradise" is that it appears to confuse shame and remorse, especially in view of the fact that the author neglects to discuss remorse in what is purportedly literature of a spiritual nature.

To be fair, this proves nothing with respect to mental illness but for the meagre likelihood of such inasmuch as the "First Leaf of Paradise" renders Baha'i literature suspect, in terms of its scriptural authority. However, from the recognition of this particularly obvious spiritual faux pas, I returned to my original study of Baha'i Law as the relevance, equity, and integrity of internal philosophy reflected by rules of membership are the crucial test of any organisation. Not only the passage of Baha'i Authority, but also the decisions of Baha'i authorities are considered legally infallible. Legal infallibility is taken in the Baha'i case as above question and correction as per the implications of the official phrase used in explanation of infallibility as being "freed from all error" (Abbas, Will & Testament). Although this is in itself erroneous in terms of real human beings whose humanity includes the limitations by which they will always err at some stage in their execution of duties, it has legal implications that go beyond logical considerations.

A Re-Visitation of Baha'i Law in Search of Essential Infallibility

While infallibility may well serve its purpose in adjudicating affairs that are not ongoing, such as the execution of a will; with laws that must change in response to social evolution, infallibility ultimately renders jurisprudence infallible, making it impossible to mould the law to the current social conditions without "correcting" the "infallible" foresight of previous administrators, thereby calling into question their "infallibility"; legal or otherwise. The end result is that infallibility as a legal characteristic of a legislative system prevents that system from being able to correct itself in

view of present injustice to which particular aspects of past legislation and/or jurisprudence are a party.

One particular example is the emergence just last century of the recognition of temperament diversity by Western academics. This was by no means an original discovery. According to Gurdjieff, the Sufis discovered temperament diversity several hundred years earlier. The system, now known as the “Enneagram”, actually constrains the characteristics of study to products of dominant neural recursion and excludes purely genetic biases such as extraversion/introversion and intuition/sense used in both the Myer-Briggs Type Index (MBTI), and Socionics. Although the Enneagram was not directly compatible with modern psychoendocrinology in spite of being based on dominant emotional response, Gurdjieff documented it as an example of a Middle Eastern study of temperament diversity whose extent must have been at least in part contemporary with both the Bab and Baha’u’llah. The entry of Middle Eastern understanding of temperament diversity into Western society is contemporary with Shoghi Effendi’s education and ministry while the development and widespread acceptance of the Myer/Briggs scale, the Western study of temperament diversity, is contemporary with the emergence of the Universal House of Justice. However, in spite of the widely available evidence for temperament diversity, issues such as the tailoring of marital conditions (Eg. closed vs. open marriages) to temperament are simply not discussed and when raised are not addressed without attempting to label a given temperament (eg. Enneagram type 7 & to a lesser extent type 2) as “psychologically aberrant”, “deviant”, or “immoral”. It is noteworthy that the same studies by Palmer, Myer & Briggs, Kiersey & Bates, Gulenko, & Novichkov & Varabyova, have also determined by repeatable empirical study that no temperament is abnormal, and thus the needs of all temperament groups are equally important. This fact is neither acknowledged nor addressed by the likes of the Bab or Baha’u’llah despite their claim to essential infallibility and their access to a broad spectrum of Middle East literature; and neither has it been addressed by their successors, ‘Abdu’l-Baha, Shoghi Effendi, nor the Universal House of Justice in respect of equitable execution of Baha’i Law (IE without undue advantage or disadvantage to any given temperament demographic).

Another example of legislative inflexibility lies with the emergence of experimental data showing that moderate consumption of red wine with a meal is good for digestion, boosts anti-oxidant levels, and correlates with above average life expectancy. Official interpretation (Aqdas Notes 2, 144, & 170) of the relevant Kitab-i-Aqdas Sections (119 & 155) effectively places all alcoholic beverages, irrespective of the amount consumed, in a class of substances that “steal away reason” and/or damage the body (Aqdas, Section 119 cf 155). Yet a scientific study has shown otherwise for moderate consumption of red wine. As anti-oxidants improve circulation which in turn reduces heart disease and improves brain function, such absolute generalisation is demonstrably false. This speaks directly to the “infallible” decisions of Baha’u’llah’s successors and the fact that their abject lack of infallibility extends back to a lack of infallibility on the part of Baha’u’llah. Furthermore, neither Baha’u’llah nor ‘Abdu’l-Baha demonstrate any knowledge whatsoever that due to the more frequently fatal nature of the harm cigarette smoking causes the body, tobacco belongs to the category described by Kitab-i-Aqdas Section 155 to a far greater degree than alcoholic beverages. This speaks far more directly to the question of Baha’u’llah’s essential infallibility, an attribute essential to the manifestation of God.

However, this point highlights another area of legislative deficiency. Namely the question of whether Baha’u’llah demonstrated adequate qualification to put forward such laws and due diligence in doing so. Attached to the Kitab-i-Aqdas, there is no mathematical proof of temperament equity, as one would expect from a truly Godly legislator. Of itself, the prohibition of alcohol consumption is not explicitly in the parts of the Aqdas attributed to Baha’u’llah, but is nonetheless attributed implicitly to those parts by ‘Abdu’l-Baha. Did Baha’u’llah actually outlaw alcohol consumption in his own writings? Neither alcohol nor wine appear in this context in any other authenticated translations of Baha’u’llah’s writings other than a mysteriously and strangely unspecified tablet attributed to Baha’u’llah mentioned by Aqdas Note 144. If we assume no error in Aqdas Note 144...

The proscription of alcohol consumption is particularly conspicuous in this regard, because Baha’u’llah fails to demonstrate any understanding of the many reasons why people consume alcoholic beverages other than to get drunk. In London, contemporary to the Bab and Baha’u’llah, mead and beer were the only safe sources of fluid available to the working class. Outbreaks of disease due to the contamination of local water supply were not uncommon. In Europe, red wine is consumed in small quantities during a meal as a source of anti-oxidants that actually improve digestion, circulation and by extension intellectual capability – contrary to Baha’i doctrine. Digestives such as Amaro, and France’s answer to Calabria’s Amaro del Capo in the form of Grand Marnier are consumed in even smaller quantities after the meal to further aid digestion. Nowhere in association with the prohibition of alcohol are mentioned any viable alternatives such as clean drinking water for the nineteenth century Londoners; Gingko Biloba, Brahni, or Gin Seng for anti-oxidants and better brain function; nor any non-alcoholic digestives such as Ranitidine {(E)-N-(2-((5-((dimethylaminomethyl)furan-2-yl)methylthio)ethyl)-N'-methyl-2-nitroethene-1,1-diamine)}, Esomeprazole {(S)-5-methoxy-2-[(4-methoxy-3,5-dimethylpyridin-2-yl)methylsulfonyl]-3H-benzimidazole}, Nizatidine {N-[2-(2-dimethylaminomethylthiazol-4-ylmethylthio)ethyl]-N'-methyl-2-nitrovinylidenediamine} or even a humble espresso! One would expect a Godly legislator to take some responsibility when banning practices that are beneficial for so many. The act of denying such benefits even by generalisation, is deceptive in putatively holy literature given the apparently divine access to the sum of all knowledge that is claimed of such literature. If Aqdas Note 144 is correct, Baha’u’llah legislated negligently by not providing advice on the necessary dietary alternatives, disproving his own essential infallibility. If not, the apparent collapse of the Administrative Order is indicated by interpretive error and moreover disproves the essential infallibility of its founder, Baha’u’llah.

Another area of legislative authenticity in terms of divine origin is the absence of proof of equity in divine law. If the Law is God’s, surely God can provide the mathematical proof that the law is indeed equitable across a broad range of customs and temperament demographics. Nowhere in litigious religions of any stripe is this proof furnished. Even in the laws of the Baha’i Faith whose founders had to know something of temperament diversity studies, one of which according to Gurdjieff began in the Middle East, and so had to be available to those founders at the time of “revelation”. While the Baha’i Writings acknowledge the uniqueness of the individual, there is no acknowledgement of temperament diversity and the fact that a law favouring one temperament group will in all probability disadvantage another temperament group. The success of Alfred Kinsey’s (and others’) open marriage(s) raises questions about the advantages of legislating all marriages as closed affairs. In fact, too common is the experience of the anecdote, “too many of the people I know personally are better suited to open marriage arrangements” to simply discard open marriages with no better explanation than the entirely unsupported application of the label, “immoral”. It remains a fact that the closed marriage has an 80% failure rate in the first two years.

Returning to the opening statement of the Kitab-i-Aqdas, that attributes no good to any but whosoever recognises *Him Who is the Dayspring of His Revelation and the Fountain of His laws*, it is clear to me that this is a denial of the conscientious derivation of belief from unique human experience. On this point, the experiential and necessarily subjective nature of belief is sufficient to totally refute the authorised rendition of the Kitab-i-Aqdas, and by extension the “prophethood” of its author.

A Re-Examination of Baha’i Maxim

As if this is not enough, neither is there any attempt to derive Baha’i Law from first principles, in turn deduced from a maxim, itself the product of inductive proof. Once again, this is not a big ask of any school of philosophical thought, especially if the author really is God! After reconsideration of the preceding points, the apparent double-maxim that follows is what creates an intolerable level of cognitive dissonance for me. The next paragraph describes an apparent contradiction at the highest level of Baha’i Literature that ultimately denied any possibility in my eyes that Baha’u’llah could have “essential infallibility” much less be a “Manifestation of God”...

Although generally it is fairly common for an author to contradict him/herself in seeking the specific expression of two lines of belief, contradictory maxims only coexist in works whose authors are

1. Insane (A high degree of fallibility here)
2. Abnormally prone to exaggerate or otherwise overstate their case
3. Evolving (something that speaks not to infallibility)
4. Multiple in person (IE the works are not by the same author – one or more are incorrectly attributed to their credited author)

Baha’u’llah asserts as Holy Law, the institutionally solipsistic maxim that recognition and obedience defines all good in the opening paragraph of the Aqdas (Section 1), IE:

This statement contradicts the maxim stated in the Covenant that

And is confirmed by the Ninth Ishraq:

And confirmed again in the third of the Persian Hidden Words with explicit reference to the inner compass of conscience via the symbol of the [compass] rose:

In theology and maxim of the Baha’i Faith, God is love; but it seems that in Baha’i Law, God is meagrely recognition and obedience. The fact that maxim and theology are used to attract seekers who are only later to be indoctrinated in law, is known in this context by some as the “Apple-Cucumber” and by others as “Bait & Switch”.

What speaks to intolerance however, is that the Kitab-i-Aqdas neglects to consider the outcome of an isolated human being who never having heard of Baha’u’llah nonetheless makes choices consistent with Baha’i Law simply because the sum of her/his experience has lead to these choices. On the other hand, s/he whose experience contradicts the claims of Baha’u’llah surely cannot be blamed for failing to recognise he who has failed to prove himself? Yet this recognition alone, according to the explicit translation of Section 1 of the Kitab-i-Aqdas, is said to define all good and this definition is confirmed with the complimentary statement that no amount of righteousness counts for anything in lieu of this condition.

Perhaps it can be argued that the Kitab-i-Aqdas is a parody of the claimed “divinity” of unalterable religious law. However, were this the case, Baha’u’llah could not confirm the direct literal meaning of passages within the Kitab-i-Aqdas (eg. Aqdas Section 37 cf. Gleanings CLXVI) without mentioning it lest his own pen should lead some astray. Never mind the fact that because fixed laws cannot evolve with society, they ultimately hold back the process of social evolution; something the Baha’i Dispensation is claimed to accelerate. Eg:

Seen here, the Baha’i literature is said to be intended for naught else but exultation and advancement contradicting the historically verifiable outcome of such laws as Kitab-i-Aqdas Section 37 and the consequent Opening Paragraph of “Other Sections” in the Kitab-i-Aqdas described therein as:

On this evidence however, it is clear that no parody whatsoever is putatively intended by the Kitab-i-Aqdas nor can this book be alternatively authored given explicit repetition of key errors in other works of Baha’u’llah. This renders the internal confirmation by complimentary statement in and of Section 1 of the Kitab-i-Aqdas, in irreconcilable conflict with the maxim of love as stated in the third of the Persian Hidden Words, the Ninth Ishraq, and the Covenant of Baha’u’llah. An irreconcilable contradiction at such a high level in the literary hierarchy excludes any possibility of essential infallibility nor for that matter any more divine intervention than was necessary to write this exposition of my spiritual birth and death in Baha.

On ISO: 2008-May-16 I recanted my belief in Baha’u’llah as essentially infallible “Manifestation of God”, in the presence of my dearest and closest friend, and I did so on this day, being the 36th anniversary of my late brother Patrick’s birthday, in commemoration of Pat’s courageous insistence on the strict individuality of faith. My faith in Baha’u’llah is described at <http://feldcraft.biz/topics/bahai/index.shtml> however, my renewed faith in Love as She speaks to all human beings via their cognitive sense of empathy; is told here at <http://timothycasey.info>

New York Times December 1921 : Bahai Cult leader expires in Syria

[Bahai Cult Leader expires in Syria](#)

BAHAI CULT LEADER EXPIRES IN SYRIA

**Abdul Baha Abbas Had Spent
Last Twenty Years on
Mount Carmel.**

VISITED AMERICA IN 1912

**Persian Was Advocate of League of
Nations and Believer in
Equality of Sexes.**

LONDON, Nov. 30.—Abdul Baha Abbas, leader of the Bahai movement, died at Haifar, Syria, Monday, according to a dispatch to The London Times.

Abdul Baha Abbas, as the third prophet of Bahalism always signed his name, although he has sometimes been called Abbas Effendi (Mr. Abbas) or Abdul Baha, was born in Shiraz, Persia, May 23, 1844. It was on that day that Mirza Ali Mohammed, also a Persian, and presently to be called the Bab, preached the first revelation of Bahalism, or, as it has been called, "the Wisdom of the East"—a practical idealism of thought and conduct. It claims not to be a religion, but the root of all constructive religions before, the disciples of the cult assert, they became corrupted by theology, dogmas, and politics. It is supposed to be a cult of harmony, of brotherhood, of infinite charity. It is said that Mirza received his first inspiration to found the cult in the words of Achmet the Turk: "Religion means the various ways in which God is worshipped." The late Prophet spent his life in seeking to have the various religions return to their ideal root which was to be obtained by harmonizing them.

There is an almond tree-shaded villa on Mount Carmel, which rises above the town overlooking the Bay of Acre, where Abdul Baha Abbas spent the last twenty years of his life. At the time of the World War, which he had several times foretold with uncanny detail, he had, to use his own words, "outlived persecution."

In 1912 he had visited the United States and was received not only by the societies of Bahalism, which had gradually grown up here, but also by several universities, notably Leland Stanford University, whose guest he was for several days.

During the worldwide debate over the League of Nations his messages from Mount Carmel were frequent and eloquent in favor of the League.

He also believed in the equality of the sexes.

When he visited New York the local adepts of Bahalism numbered 100, 80 of whom were women.

The New York Times

Published: December 1, 1921

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Maitreya Mission emerged out from the Baha'i Faith !!

This new cult is an offshoot of Baha'ism. Now its missionaries (also Iranian) denounce the Baha'i faith. They say that they don't have any direct relationship with Baha'ism but they have written letters to the Baha'i Organizations to join them. They consider Baha'u'llah as one of the true prophet. The founder of Maitreya Cult was also born in Iran in 1944 (1844 is a significant year for Baha'is) and claims to be the one promised by Baha'u'llah. They have their reasoning, more powerful than what the Baha'is have. They also speak the language of Baha'is (Unity, Equality, Peace and stuff like that). Many Baha'is have accepted this new cult that originated in Iran but flourished in the West.

How Baha'is Converted so many Zoroastrians in India ??!!

At first some Zoroastrians of Iran and later Iranian Zoroastrians settled in India accepted Baháism. The secret movement of this new religion had misled us in the past. We have been misguided by their deceptions up to this day. The Baháis have no churches, they have no priests, they are free to marry non-Baháis. The President or Secretary of an association takes the place of a priest in their marriage ceremonies. Some such prominent person recites a short prayer. Thereafter the couple, their guardians and leading men of the assembly sign the document. At the time of the wedding an 'Alvaha' chosen from the Alvaha composed in Arabic by Baháullah is recited. Under the canopy of their faith it is permissible to retain the 'sudre' and 'kusti' when necessary, to pass as Zoroastrians when need arises, to derive benefit from communal funds and its institutions. The corpse of the deceased they bury in their own separate cemetery.

After the death of Baha'u'llah and the inauguration of the ministry of Abdu'l-Baha, the Baha'i community in Bombay was split as a consequence of the activities of the followers of Mirza Muhammad Ali who had challenged his half-brother's right to legitimate leadership. As a result, Abdu'l-Baha directed a number of prominent emissaries to India, both Persian and Western, to guide the community and encourage teaching. Among these were Mirza Mahmud Zargani, Aqa Mirza Mahram, Mirza Hasan Adib, Ibin-i-Asdaq, Lua Getsinger, Mrs. H. Stanndard, Sidney Sprague Hooper Harris and Harlan Ober. By 1908 the work of these individuals along with a small group of local converts had produced functioning communities in Bombay, Calcutta, Aligarh and Lahore. Of these, the Bombay community took the forefront in both teaching and translation work. Its advancements in the area of translation marked the first time any of Baha'u'llah's writings had been translated into one of the native languages of India. Bombay also managed to acquire the first Baha'i cemetery in India, and Abdu'l-Baha designed the layout of the site. The activities of the Bombay community were commented upon by Sydney Sprague who in 1908 reported: "There are three meetings a week held in Bombay and there are as a rule eighty to a hundred men present. He also noted that it was not easy to become a Baha'i: "It often means a great sacrifice on the part of a believer, a loss of friends, money and position."

During this period, a number of Indian Zoroastrians ("Parsis") were converted to the Baha'i Faith, thereby forming a nucleus of future Baha'i leadership in India. The conversions came about as a result of the work of agents who had originally been sent abroad by the Indian Zoroastrian community to help their coreligionists in Iran. There they came into contact with the Baha'i Faith and supported its activities. Later, several Iranian Zoroastrian converts to the Faith traveled to Bombay (notably Mulla Bahram Akhtar-Khavari) and actively promulgated their new religion among local Zoroastrians. Although they were met with opposition by some of the conservative dasturs, these missionary converts were quite successful in opening the Zoroastrian community to Baha'i concepts and teachings.

In following this tack the Baha'is were in many ways mirroring the attitudes of the reform movements with which they came into contact. Reform was primarily the prerogative of the upper classes who often looked to English liberal ideas and institutions for inspiration. There was little thought of speaking to the masses. Even in the secular Indian political arena it was English educated Indians in the professions who came to form, in effect, a new class, which prior to the arrival of Gandhi on the national scene was virtually cut off from the mass of the population. Moreover, the fact that for the most part the Baha'i message was presented in Persian, Arabic, Urdu, or English added to the sense of exclusivity, as these languages were generally associated with cultural elites.

Also of considerable importance was the establishment of the Afnan's printing press in Bombay which not only resulted in greater contact with other Baha'i communities in the Middle East but also gave to that city a unique Baha'i cultural identity. Extensive telegraph, rail and steamship networks, initially established by European entrepreneurs and colonial governments for their own purposes, now linked the Middle East and British India and were key technological prerequisites for this greater integration of the community, as well.

For more details refer : <http://bahaicult.blogspot.com>

Baha'i publicly admits to proselytizing former CIA director



<http://bahaicia.blogspot.com>

About the Bahai Faith

The roots of the Baha'i faith lie in the Shi'ite sect of Islam which was led by 12 successive Imams, descendants of Muhammad's son-in-law, Ali. The 12th Imam, as a child, withdrew from society to escape assassination, the inevitable fate of his 12 predecessors. He would make contact with the faithful through "Gates," individuals through whom he would give his teachings.

In 1844, Mirza Ali Muhammad (1819-1850) declared himself to be the "Gate," the "Bab" (pronounced Bob). He claimed he was not just a "Gate," but rather the "Gate" of God, a major Manifestation of God equal to the prophet Muhammad. For six years he gathered the faithful around him, proclaimed a new revelation and the eventual appearance of the final Manifestation for this cycle of human history. After numerous armed conflicts with Muslim authorities, the Bab was martyred in 1850 and his followers scattered.

Before his death the Bab designated Mirza Yahya, a son of nobility, as a caretaker to follow him. Another devoted follower of the Bab, Yahya's half brother Mirza Husayn Ali, proclaimed himself to be "He-Whom-God-Will-Manifest," the major Manifestation of God prophesied by the Bab. He also changed his name to Baha'u'llah, "Glory of God," and proclaimed that the Bab was his forerunner. Mirza Yahya strenuously opposed this and both sides appear to have been involved in assassination plots.

The original followers of the Bab who gave their allegiance to Baha'u'llah became known as Baha'is. Baha'u'llah, a dynamic personality with great force of will, wrote over 100 volumes of Baha'i scripture, entertained dignitaries and maintained a large correspondence while under virtual house arrest for decades.

A troubled period of transition followed Baha'u'llah's death in 1892. He had designated his eldest son, Abdu'l Baha ("Slave of Baha"), as his successor. Abdu'l Baha's brother, Mirza Muhammad Ali, challenged the extent of his authority. Abdu'l Baha retaliated by "excommunicating" practically all his closest relatives and depriving them of their income from Baha'u'llah's estate.

The Baha'i Faith became worldwide under Abdu'l Baha's leadership, and his mission trips to the West. However, upon his death in 1921, the transition of power was once again very troubled. Shoghi Effendi, Abdu'l Baha's grandson, was designated the successor, the First Guardian of the Faith. With this position "his decisions were absolute and final and his words authoritative" (The Baha'i Faith: Its History and Teaching, p.251). This brought him into conflict with other family members and he soon excommunicated every living relative, including his own parents. However, under Shoghi Effendi's administrative skills the Baha'i Faith continued to grow until his death in 1957. He left no designated successor and the Faith is now under the administration of the Universal House of Justice, a group of nine people who are elected democratically and oversee the Cause internationally.

Baha'i historians and authorities have suppressed & the earliest source materials and rewritten the early years of the Faith. One of the earliest and most important historical documents of the time, the Nuqtatu'l-Kaf, was written by the Babi, Mirza Jani. It clearly states that the Bab declared Mirza Yahya as his successor.

Persecution and prejudice by Universal House of Justice

Are Baha'is the only 'persecuted' people on the Earth??

Let us first read these extracts from wikipedia.com

"...In the two thousand years of the Christian faith, about 70 million believers have been killed for their faith, of whom 45.5 million or 65% were in the twentieth century according to "The New Persecuted" ("I Nuovi Perseguitati")"

"..Atheists have experienced persecution throughout history. Persecution may refer to unwarranted arrest, imprisonment, beating, torture, or execution."

"With the Missouri extermination order Mormons became the only religious group to have a state of the United States legalize the extermination of their religion."

"The persecution of Jews occurred many times in Jewish history."

"The Sunni rulers under the Umayyads sought to marginalize the Shia minority and later the Abbasids turned on their Shia allies and further imprisoned, persecuted, and killed Shias. The persecution of Shias throughout history by Sunni co-coreligionists has often been characterized by brutal and genocidal acts."

"The Ahmadiyya regard themselves as Muslims, but are seen by many other Muslims as non-Muslims and "heretics". In 1984, the Government of Pakistan, under General Zia-ul-Haq, passed Ordinance XX,[6] which banned proselytizing by Ahmadis and also banned Ahmadis from referring to themselves as Muslims."

"Hindus have been historically persecuted during Islamic rule of the Indian subcontinent and during Portuguese rule of Goa. In modern times, Hindus in Pakistan and Bangladesh have also suffered persecution."

"Hazara people of central Afghanistan have been persecuted by Afghan rulers at various times in the history. Since the tragedy of 9/11, Sunni Muslim terrorists have been attacking the Hazara community in southwestern Pakistani town of Quetta, home to some 500000 Hazara who fled persecution in neighbouring Afghanistan. Some 2400 men, women and children have been killed or wounded with Lashkar-e-Jhangvi claiming responsibility for most of the attacks against the community."

"..Along with Jews, Homosexuals and others, the Roma Gypsies were rounded by the Nazi Regime of Germany and sent to the death camps."



Bahais speaks volumes about their 'Persecution' in Iran. They always talk about human rights and human values and big things like world peace and world government and bla bla bla .. When so many people around the world were and are persecuted for one or the other reason, Baha'is are busy only in highlighting the plight of 9 bahais arrested in Iran. Where are these 7 million bahais ?? Cant a single voice be raised against those who are involved in these crime against humanity. What is UHJ- Universal House of Justice, Is it really so?? Those stupid 9 persons are dumb, deaf and blind. They are only concerned about those 9 NSA members in Iran. Cant they see other crimes being committed on other people in other parts of the world?? If they are really concerned about humanity they must feel the pain. How are they going to bring world peace when they are so selfish and eccentric?? Such are the people who are going to establish world order of Baha'ullah ?? I doubt and I have every right to say that these people are not working for humanity. They are working to increase their number in whatever way possible whether devotional, children classes, junior youth programme etc.

People are not fools. They have now understood the meaning of Card declaration and Ruhi books. Bahais, go and search for some other method of fooling the people. Your Pseudo religion is not working any more. People are now exiting in troops from your organization and social club. Humans feels the pain and suffering of others humans. They are not qualified to call themselves even human being.

Prof. Juan Cole on Baha'i Faith

Professor Juan Cole, February 23, 1999:

“There is nothing to be puzzled by. Right wing Baha’is only like to hear the sound of their own voices (which are the only voices they will admit to being “Baha’i” at all). Obviously, the world is so constructed that they cannot in fact only hear their own voices. They are forced to hear other voices that differ from theirs. This most disturbs them when the voices come from enrolled Baha’is or when the voices speak of the Baha’i faith. The way they sometimes deal with the enrolled Baha’is is to summon them to a heresy inquiry and threaten them with being shunned if they do not fall silent. With non-Baha’is or with ex-Baha’is, they deal with their speech about the faith by backbiting, slandering and libelling the speaker. You will note that since I’ve been on this list I have been accused of long-term heresy, of “claiming authority,” of out and out lying (though that was retracted, twice), of misrepresentation, of ‘playing fast and loose with the facts,’ and even of being ‘delusional.’ I have been accused of all these falsehoods by *Baha’is*, by prominent Baha’is. I have been backbitten by them. This shows that all the talk about the danger a sharp tongue can do, all the talk about the need for harmony, for returning poison with honey, for a sin-covering eye, is just *talk* among right wing Baha’is. No one fights dirtier than they when they discover a voice they cannot silence and cannot refute....”

<http://www.fglaysheer.com/bahaicensorship/Cole71.htm>

Debate between Baha'is and Christains

John Ankerberg Show Debate. Dr Walter Martin defends the orthodox Christian position against two representatives of the Bahai religion.

A Reward in Service of Baha'i Faith.

Haifan Baha'is lied about the late Ayatollah Montazeri's 2008 fatwa

Extracted from: <http://montazerifatwabahai.blogspot.com/2010/02/bahais-lied-about-late-ayatollah.html>



In mid-2008 the world press was abuzz with a media campaign initiated by the Haifan Baha'is claiming that then dissident (and now deceased) Grand Ayatollah Hossein-'Ali Montazeri had issued a fatwa (legal jurisprudential ruling) arguing for full recognition, and tangentially full citizenship rights, to be granted the Haifan Baha'i creed under the Islamic Republic of Iran. On the basis of the Baha'i campaign, the following text was offered by the world media as proof of the claim:



The ruling and subsequent statements about it all came from Montazeri's website, [here](#). The initial claim by the world press as prompted by the Haifan Baha'is was that Montazeri had argued for a full official recognition of Baha'ism in Iran, and not simply rights of citizenship to be respected irrespective of creed. On closer examination it appears that the initial unqualified ruling and explanation offered by the Baha'i media to the world press was not exactly what Montazeri had actually ruled or stated. Here I offer the full text of Montazeri's statement in the original (which can be found on the same page of the website linked above) together with an English translation. To wit,

Translation

In His Name, the Most High!

With salutations and blessings. The opinion of this person (nazar-i-een jenab) regarding the misled cult of Bahaism (firqe-ye zale-ye baha'iye) is the same opinion as the one held during the years before the Revolution, and so has not changed. However [the case of] those who in most cases are not followers of any of the religions sent by heaven (adyan-i-asimani) [i.e. Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam] are referable to the ruling wisdom of the illustrious verse, "Allah forbideth thee from dealing unkindly and unjustly with those who do not fight against thee in the faith nor are ones driving thee out of thy homes, for Allah loveth those who are just" (Qur'an. 60:8); as well as per the letter of the Commander of the Faithful ['Ali] to Malik Ashtar, "You must kindle in thy heart kindness, compassion and love for thy subjects. Do not behave towards them as if you are a voracious and ravenous beast and as if your success lies in devouring them... they are brothers to you, and those who have a religion [other than yours], they are human beings like you (The Peak of Eloquence/Nahju'l-Balagha, Letter 53). [As such] their human rights should be respected. [Now] citizenship rights are also in one particular respect universal and its limits should [therefore] be specified in that respect on the

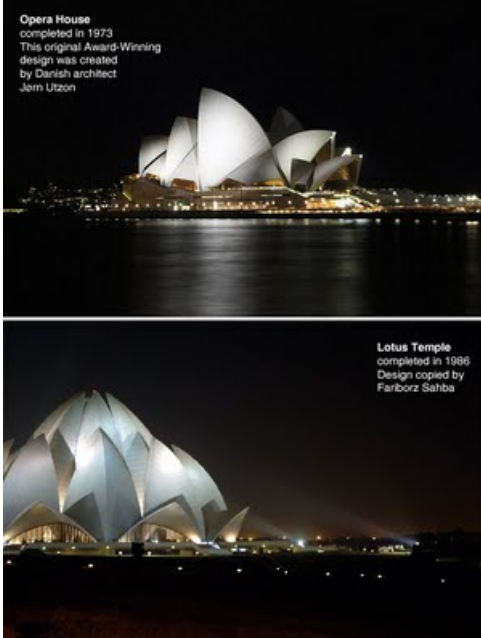
basis of the customary ['or' canon] law ('urfi) and the Constitution [of the Islamic Republic] by the [will of the] majority of the people. However if certain persons are [determined in] pursuing [the path of] enmity against the people of the nation and are abetting foreign enemies, and if their association [with these foreign enemies] be established for the court(s) pursuant to the laws of the nation, they should be punished according to the law(s). Their citizenship [rights] (shahrbandi-i-iran) does not impede [or 'obstruct'] the body of the law [to act] (mani' az ajza'-i-qanun nemishavad). [Yet] it is also necessary that precautions be taken (lazim ast morraqibat shavad) so that the youth of the nation (javanan-i-keshvar) do not become embroiled in their evil propaganda (tablighat-i-su'-i-iran); and if such dealings and association with them will only give cause to their [cultivation and] strength (mu'amileh va mu'asherat mujib-i-taghviyat-i-iran shavad), it is essential to disassociate from ['or' shun] them (lazim ast az an ijtinab gardad).

Posted by Wahid Azal

The ‘Unique’ feature of Baha’i Architecture

The Sydney Opera House is a multi-venue performing arts centre in the Australian city of Sydney. It was conceived and largely built by Danish architect Jørn Utzon, finally opening in 1973 after a long gestation starting with his competition-winning design in 1957. Utzon received the Pritzker Prize, architecture’s highest honour, in 2003.

The Pritzker Prize citation stated: “There is no doubt that the Sydney Opera House is his masterpiece. It is one of the great iconic buildings of the 20th century, an image of great beauty that has become known throughout the world – a symbol for not only a city, but a whole country and continent.”



The design of Lotus Temple is copied from the design of Opera House, Sydney.

More can be found here : <http://totallylookslike.icanhascheezburger.com/2009/10/22/lotus-temple-totally-looks-like-sydney-opera-house/>



In the middle of the Market Square is Helsinki’s oldest public monument, the Tsarina’s Stone. It is an obelisk of red granite topped by a globe and an eagle, the emblem used by the Tsars of Russia. The eagle’s breastplate shows a lion, the coat of arms of Finland. The monument was erected in 1835 in honour of the visit by Tsar Nikolai I and the Tsarina Alexandra, who stepped ashore here. In 1917, the year of the Russian Revolution and Finland’s independence, Russian seamen took down the globe and eagle, but the Finns kept them safe and they were put back in 1971. There are few places anywhere else where original monuments to the old Russian royal family still exist.

Somebody asked this question to Ruhiyyih Khanum the widow of Shoghi :

Down on Princes Street [in Edinburgh], going down the hill towards Holyrood Castle; in that direction, on the left hand side, there was a very very famous antique shop, run by a woman who somebody yesterday in an antique shop told me they knew very well. I thought she was Scottish; she was Jewish, and she was Mrs something-or-other, I don’t remember the name, and she’s since passed away, and the shop doesn’t exist any more.

Email from an ex-student of New Era School, Panchgani(INDIA)

Extracted from: <http://panchgani-bahais.blogspot.com>

manner.



Praveen

Bahai Internet Agency Monitoring use of the social networking site Facebook

In February, 2008, [Matthew Weinberg](#), Program Director for the Baha'i Internet Agency, released the following email letter on behalf of the Haifan Baha'i administration (see [Baha'i Faith](#)). The letter refers to the activities of the "Covenant-breaker Martin Lavalée", a member of the schismatic and warns members of the Haifan Baha'i community against possible 'exposure' to this individual arising from contact on the social networking site, [Facebook](#). "Covenant breaking" is a term employed by the Haifan Baha'is to refer to groups and individuals who challenge "the authority of the center of the [Baha'i Faith](#)", which in this context refers to the authority of the [Universal House of Justice](#) and is considered "the most serious spiritual offence that a Bahá'í can commit. It's called Covenant-Breaking and is considered to be a spiritual disease and is punished by expulsion from the community."

"28 February 2008

To All National Spiritual Assemblies

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

We have been requested by the World Centre to alert you to the current activities of the Covenant-breaker Martin Lavalée on Facebook.com. This individual administers the "Orthodox Bahá'is" page on Facebook and also has a personal page on the site. There have been recent instances where Bahá'í youth with accounts on Facebook have unwittingly accepted invitations from Lavalée to be a "friend" or to become "members" of the Covenant-breaker page. Further, as a consequence of the Facebook networking scheme, if an individual accepts a direct invitation from Lavalée or any other member of his group, the "Friends" list (with e-mail addresses) of that individual becomes exposed. In this way, those with insincere intentions have the potential to directly contact an increasing number of Bahá'is, interactions that could pose a threat to the spiritual well-being of youth and other believers who are not deepened in the Covenant.

Each National Assembly will need to determine the necessity and most appropriate manner of discreetly informing believers of this situation in consultation and with the assistance of the Counsellors. In doing so it will of course be important to avoid creating undue anxiety or curiosity about the nature of Covenant-breaker material on the Internet.

It is our intention to provide more general guidance in the near future about how online social networks can be constructively and safely used by Bahá'is.

With loving greetings,

Matt Weinberg Program Director Bahá'í Internet Agency

cc: Members of the Continental Boards of Counsellors"

1. <http://www.truebahai.com/2008/03/bahai-internet.html>

Lessons for Christians in the history of the Bahai faith

By Adrian Worsfold

When I was confirmed into the Church of England in 1984 I asked some Baha'is I met at their firesides to come along. None did. In the end I fell out with the Baha'is as I discovered academic material that presented their history differently from their own. They are very committed to the preservation of their history as monitored by the Universal House of Justice, the nine seater male-only assembly meant to be a combined secular and religious decision making body for the world, elected without campaigns by the National Spiritual Assemblies below them, these elected by delegates from the Local Spiritual Assemblies below them. It is a very conserving system, a sort of democratic centralism: what the top level says goes.

Very quickly summarising: the origins of the Baha'i Faith are in the Babi faith that developed out of Shia Islam in Iran and Iraq. They were waiting for the return of the Hidden Twelfth Imam and a Holy War for the victory of Islam. In 1844 Sayyid Ali Muhammed Shirazi claimed to be the Bab, the Gateway to the returning Imam. When he didn't appear at Karbala, Sayyid Ali Muhammed escalated his status in stages to the Imam, then the Prophet and then superseding to a new Manifestation of God. The movement was surrounded by violence, and started much of it themselves. The Bab appointed Mirza Yahya (or Sub-i-Azal) to be his successor, but after the Bab was killed by the authorities the violence continued and the movement was in severe decline. Sub-i-Azal's half brother, Mirza Husayn Ali, an elite Persian convert, built up his own faction and in 1863 he, Baha'u'llah (Glory of God) announced himself as the Bab's next Manifestation of God. The authorities never left either faction alone, and the Azalis ended up in Cyprus and the Baha'is at Palestine. However, Baha'u'llah, in the course of the compulsory travels and his declaration to the few and then the world of his status, read Sufi and New Testament material, and completely remodelled the faith as it came into the Western orbit, making itself syncretistic in character, peaceful and expecting the unification of the world.

Baha'u'llah died in 1892, and Abbas Effendi, his eldest son, or Abdul-Baha, became the leader and only interpreter or "Centre of the Covenant". Here there was factionalism, as a group known as the Unitarians (people of the Book, not Abdul-Baha's interpretations) broke out and were excommunicated. The Young Turks' victory meant an end to imprisonment, and Abdul Baha became a traveller around the West even more spiritualising and Westernising the movement, and was a charismatic figure as he attended mosques, Christian and Unitarian (the other sort) churches and synagogues.

After he died Shoghi Effendi became the first Guardian. Some Germans did not accept the validity of Abdul Baha's will appointing him and so the Free Baha'is emerged for a time. Shoghi Effendi should have had a serving Universal House of Justice under him, but he did not set it up. He should have left a will, but either he didn't or it never appeared. So when he died in 1957 there was a crisis of leadership, after which in 1963 the Universal House of Justice was formed and took to itself powers of the Guardian, most importantly the sole power to interpret and the power to excommunicate.

The chief of Hands of the Cause, a forerunner to the UHJ, Mason Remey, thought he should be the new Guardian. Factions have arisen ever since from that branch, including one that now thinks the second Guardian was presumptive, but so was the Universal House of Justice taking power to itself.

The UHJ produces plans for growth. The millennial nature of the Bahai Faith is that it expects the Most Great Peace to arrive (instead we had George Bush) and a tipping point where "troops" of people convert to the Bahai Faith. Unfortunately, the Bahai Faith has been born in a rather irreligious age in Europe, and other than some growth in developing countries, Europe has been slow and with a high turnover of members. Plus, the UHJ in Haifa has a habit of turning members who don't submit to censorship panels into covenant breakers. There are also quite a few people who find themselves mysteriously removed from the rolls of membership, but in the age of the Internet they continue the faith themselves with new freedom, the name Baha'i being in the public realm. A problem for the Haifa Baha'is is that only they can raise money for themselves, and members who can participate in Feasts as well as Firesides find themselves locked into administration details: the Baha'i Faith is an "Administrative Order" after all.

So at each stage of leadership transition elite groups have competed and been excluded, and it is reasonable to say that the quest for unity has been a failure because of its high cost in factions and breakaways, and now there is a more relaxed Bahaism emerging of excluded or driftier individuals. It matters not that the Universal House of Justice only recognises itself as legitimate, because anyone can read the Kitab-i-Iqan and Kitab-i-Aqdas and the published materials that Shoghi Effendi translated into his strained olde-worlde English. Even infallibility is being questioned by individuals let loose.

The Bahai Faith is useful for Christians and Christian theology in a number of ways.

First of all we see something of a parallel in the Bab as a kind of announcer of a new manifestation, although he became what he expected. He gets positioned like a John the Baptist, and probably John the Baptist was his own man too. Then we have the central manifestation (Incarnation) figure, Baha'u'llah. Then we have the very important St. Paul figure, who becomes such an important interpreter and spreader into new cultures and giving a further twist to the faith.

Then we have the issue of authority. There is something of the Pope in the Guardian, of course, but the UHJ is like Orthodoxy or Roman Catholic centralism – with knobs on. In fact it is very Weberian-bureaucratic, and very pyramidal. Weber regarded such with great pessimism: it was anti the life-giving enchantment that he thought religion supplied.

The other lesson is that of allowing theology to grow organically and in diversity. There is a distinct double identity problem of Baha'i member scholarship in secular institutions including that of religious studies departments. It does the Baha'i Faith no favours. We see similar with some

Roman Catholics. If Christians become more subject to such pressures of membership conformity, then there is a distortion to both the academic sphere and to the representational sphere.

I also suggest that Christians should express the truth as they find it even when it conflicts with doctrines or interpretations of the Bible. If there is some compelling finding about, say, the Jesus of history as an endtime Jewish rabbi, then this should come first, or at least people should be honest about the layer-cake nature of doctrines or how people interpret the Bible.

Older faiths have developed more maturity with time. They can sit light and worry less about how their faiths are represented. Or at least this is what we thought, as the Christian world gave rise to a secular and plural world.

There are pressures to go along a road of such as the Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans. There is a narrowing of what is legitimate expression of a faith, and there are calls for excluding those who are not biblical enough. An Anglican Communion, properly understood, would become a World Wide Anglican Church with authoritative statements handed down, with again distant high-up forms of selection of those with centralised power.

Who knows how these developments will work out. The Baha'is could not predict their own future, despite the claimed infallibility of the words of both their Manifestation of God and Centre of the Covenant. So Anglicans cannot predict theirs! Nevertheless, if secularisation and plurality lead down the road to authoritarianism and centralisation, there are going to be quite a few Anglican Communion Covenant Breakers who will continue to define the faith in a broad way, however they organise, meet and link up together.

Adrian Worsfold (Pluralist), has a doctorate in sociology and a masters degree in contemporary theology. He lives near Hull, in northeast England and keeps the blog Pluralist Speaks.

Baha'i History in Short – By an Ex-Baha'i Scholar

[Summarized-Baha-i-History-by-an-Ex-Bahai-scholar](#)

Baha'i Texts and Pictures

Baha'is pride themselves on having an authentic religion unchanged by man. Not much point to that if you don't even let people read the original texts. Then after hiding it for 120 years, altering its content with mendacious translation and "this can't be so" abrogations and nullifications.

*you and the women are to sit
ahid) 2 and say eighteen times*

Finally when the "authorized" translation came out, it was mostly man-made filler and apologetics. They turned a short work -- only 74 pages in the Elder-Miller translation even with all their notes -- into a 320 page behemoth of bureaucratic spin-doctoring and distractions. But the Elder/Miller version shows what the simple text originally said.

BahaiFace.com



Baha'u'llah

The "Glory of God"

*“This writing is to the Exalted Leaf, who hath tasted
My Most Holy and Wonderful Saliva.
We have given thee to drink from My Sweetest Mouth...
We have bestowed upon thee such a station as
no woman had who preceded thee.”*

The Baha'i Founder, Addressing his Wife in "Prayers, Tablets, and Instructions"

*Above: Baha'u'llah communicates to one of his wives in the bizarre Baha'i scriptures.
Perhaps they had had a fight and he's trying to 'make up.'*



*Keepin' it in the family:
Baha'u'llah's full brother, a tough customer who helped his
glorious Lil' Bro to get control of the Babi movement. One of the
Saints of the Baha'i Faith. It's likely he had a hand in Baha'i
poisonings.*

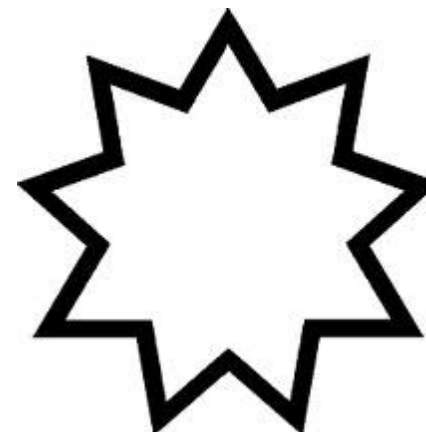
Kitab-i-Aqdas.info



[Baha'i Most Holy Book](#)



KaliYuga.info



An Authentic Summary of the Baha'i Faith

That scary-looking fellow is the founder of the Baha'i Faith, who they call "Baha'u'llah." He gave himself the name. It means "The Glory of God."

It's work to pronounce it correctly, and "*bu-HOO-luh*" will do. The Baha'i leadership successfully hid this photo from its members for around 150 years. Then along came the internet.

He was a member of an Islamic sect in the 1800s known as the "Babis" led by a charismatic, rapturous, Sufi-oriented mystic called "The Bab" who wrote plans for a 2,000-year Babi dynasty. Based on photographs of Baha'u'llah and some of his sons he appears to have had dwarfism. (See one of his sons, below left.) It is strange that nothing has ever been written in the Baha'i literature about his or his sons' unusually small stature even though physical characteristics of other Baha'i figures are sometimes mentioned in their literature. But he turned out to be a dwarf with a fiery and princely attitude. As we shall see, I think Baha'u'llah had a Napoleon complex to beat the band...

The Babis ended up in armed battle with the Persian authorities, at one point holed up in a fort at Tabriz for months. They tried to kill the Shah. The king finally had the Bab shot. The Babis then scattered.

The Bab had appointed the spiritual, gentle Mirza Yahya as his successor (search "Mirza Yahya" online) calling him "Dawn of Eternity." (*Sometimes rendered as "Everlasting Dawn." See him lower down in the left column at age 80.*) The Bab had great affection for this young follower and considered him to be one who deeply grasped his (the Bab's) revelation. Mirza Yahya seemed to be a gentle soul by all reports, highly religious in the Babi way, and inclined to seclusion. By now he had seen many of his fellow Babis put to death, often in horrible ways. When Mirza Yahya was given the weight of leadership for a highly controversial sect -- one hunted by all the forces of the Shah -- he was only nineteen years old.

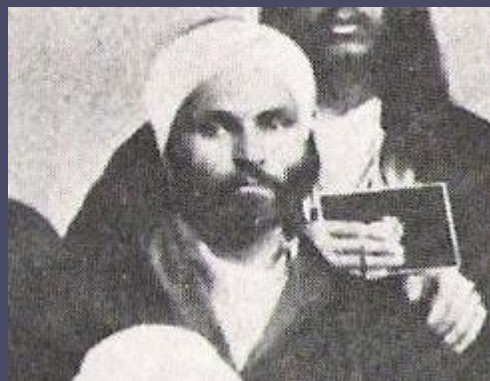
The fellow at the top of this page, Mirza Husayn Ali, was a high-status follower of the Bab who's daddy had been the Vizier or overseer for the household of an Imam and governor, so he was like a royal insider. Importantly, he was the half-brother of the Bab-appointed Everlasting Dawn.

☼
[Baha'i Faith Compared to
Hinduism](#)

☼
[Krishnamurti.info](#)

☼
[Baha'i Laws](#)
||||
[Baha'i Marriage Laws](#)

||||
[Wives of Baha'u'llah](#)
||||
[Baha'i Men Must Tell Wives When They Will Return
From Abroad!](#)
||||



One of Mirza Husayn's (Baha'u'llah's) henchmen, Mirza Aqa Jan. A tough customer and the closest associate to Glory Man (his secretary), he ended up declared a "Covenant Breaker" too. It seems whoever knew Baha'u'llah well turned against him -- even his own family.

Mirza Husayn Ali was 13 years older than the newly anointed *Dawn of Eternity*, and had been his brother's tutor. In those times an older brother was a natural, lifelong authority over a younger brother. And there was typically competition and some animosity between half-brothers in polygamous Muslim society. Even in monogamous Gentile, post-patriarchal society we observe that older brothers typically do not respect their younger brothers and do not wish to be subservient to them. It likely annoyed Husayn Ali that his younger half-brother had acquired his lofty station in the movement he was a part of. But obviously having his half-brother as leader of the spectacular movement obviously raised his own status, and he used it to his advantage during tumultuous times. (I have seen, and more than once, the phenomenon of a male taking on guru status, with a wife or family member rendering him a guru's respect in front of others while not really buying it personally, only paying obeisance because the elevation of her husband elevates her. This is all humanly understandable.) But Yahya's appointment to lead the movement was, in the end, a terrible test for Husayn Ali.

The movement was in disarray after the Shah shot the Bab, and Mirza Yahya was more of a mystic than an organizer. Thinking that his half-brother was doing a desultory job of leading the movement he cared about, the fierce Mirza Husayn Ali began challenging the authority of Everlasting Dawn for leadership. The Bab had prophesied about "Him Whom God will Make Manifest," a future divine manifestation understood to be far in the future, likely two thousand years away based on the Bab's statements.

Mirza Husayn had apparently experienced a *kundalini* awakening during his imprisonment, probably due to the devotional attitude and the Sufi-esque chanting that was part of Babi life. (He reported a few phenomena associated with kundalini later in his writings -- sleeplessness, head flows, etc.) This gave him the impression that he was a prophet. In any case whether for the practical purpose of providing better leadership for the scattered movement, or a naive belief that he his spiritual experiences made him an avatar -- Mirza Husayn began saying 'I'm the promised one.'

Being steeped in the portentous "voice" associated with Mohammed and Muslim religious writings, he was easily able to start writing a good jag of "revelations," basically grandiose pronouncements about himself. These simple men tended to compete with each other over the idea of who could write, and whose verbiage was more impressive, and Baha'u'llah said his fulminating "verses" were so astounding that it proved he was the Promised One. Two samples from his brief "Most Holy Book":

"By God he is certainly in the lowest hell-fire! Say: O assembly of the learned, do you not hear the scratching of my Most High Pen?"

"Say: O liar, by God, what thou hast is husks. We have left it for you as bones are left for the dogs. By God, the Truth, if one were to wash the feet of everybody in the world and worship God in thickets and in green valleys, on mountains, hill-tops, and summits, and at every stone, and tree, and clod, and yet the fragrance of My good pleasure be not diffused from him, he would never be accepted. This is what the Master of Mankind has ruled."

Al-Kitab Al-Aqdas, "The Most Holy Book," Elder & Miller, 1961



This is Baha'u'llah's first son by his 2nd wife, Mohammed Ali, who quite apparently was a dwarf. Somehow in the oceans of Baha'i propaganda about him the past 160 years this interesting fact about Baha'u'llah's dwarfism has been hidden. (It can be noticed in Baha'u'llah's present Wikipedia picture. He must have been about 4 feet tall.) It's always image, image with Baha'is. Now, this little fellow was appointed as the Second-in-Command to succeed his kingly father. However, he was excommunicated as a "Covenant Breaker" -- like almost all of Baha'u'llah's descendants. There was not a lot of family unity in Baha'i history!

BahaiAwareness.com



SectsOfBahais.com



BahaiFact



Baha'i Digest

Some stuff, huh? In both of the above verses Baha is, it is believed, haranguing his hapless half-brother, the Bab's appointee Mirza Yahya. Older brother calls him a "liar" and compares him to a dog. The "Say" business is Baha'u'llah syncing up with the Koran.

Muslim tradition has it that Mohammed had an angel standing over his shoulder dictating what to say -- "*Say [this]!*" -- and that Mohammed simply wrote what he was told. It is not likely that Baha'u'llah was hearing a voice telling him what to say, and Baha never claimed that was the case unlike Mohammed who did say it was. Apparently Baha'u'llah's "Say!" was just a cheeky bit of theater. But it helped give his "verses" storied atmosphere for any Babis inclined to consider him as their divine prophet. In the second quotation Baha'u'llah is saying that Mirza Yahya's divine knowledge is like "husks" and dog bones compared to his. (Truth be told, the writings of Mirza Yahya are every bit as mystically fantastical as those of Baha'u'llah -- and a good sight more pleasant not-to-mention beautiful.) Baha'u'llah ends with a poetic meander that trashes and makes worthless anything a man might do -- even worship of God -- if not done in his graces, and with his "good pleasure."

So you can see that Baha wrote mighty impressive verses indeed. Baha's state that we here in the west just can't see it; that Mirza Husayn used really clever rhymes and mathematically interesting sentence construction. In any case, as the new claimant to avatarhood he began to crank out a blue streak of mighty verses to prove himself avatar.

At this new claim those standing with the new would-be boss fought with the Babis over who was the true leader. There were murders of varied variety. Sort of like a crime family the Babis from the start -- and Baha'u'llah was an early leader in the movement -- were highly creative in murder. An inconvenient Babi was thrown in the river to drown by the Baha'is. In one anecdote related by Wilson (1905) one of the wives of the Mirza Yahya, Rukayya, after deserting her husband, had to break up household again after Baha'is murdered the followers of "Dawn" who she was living with. But the higher-ups preferred poisonings. It is said that Babis tried to poison Mirza Husayn, and his people tried to poison Babis. In one rather funny account, "Glory" at his dinner table tried to poison his little half-brother when "Dawn" was visiting Glory's home. One side of a dish had been poisoned, not the other. When Dawn took no interest in the plate offered by Glory, Glory tried to allay any fears by eating some from the unpoisoned side.

But the dish had sat there long enough that the poison had suffused slightly to Baha's side, and Glory ended up becoming immediately violently ill. This is the Babi and 3rd-party account. The Baha'is, of course, claim it was little brother trying to poison big brother. However, the event took place in Glory's house, and the dish was prepared by Baha's harem. ('Abdu'l-Baha, son of Glory, was also suspected of using poison when the competitor for the woman he'd long sought died of strange causes eight months after marrying her. Then 'Abdu'l-Baha immediately wed her.)

Whatever the Babi-Baha'i cloak-and-dagger details during this period, tensions and competition of leadership ratcheted up between the mystic and the glaring and imp-like older brother thus that Husayn and Mirza Yahya had to watch what they ate.

But Baha's grandiose statements about himself continually outdid anything Everlasting Dawn was willing to write, and these "verses" impressed Mirza Husayn's partisans muchly. Wilson (Baha'ism and Its Claims, 1905) comments on a poem written about Baha by a follower:

*"The Temple of God's glory is none other than Baha;
If one seeks God, let him seek Him in Baha."*

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VIDEOS

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BLOG

☼
Who Are the Baha'is Really?

Mirza Yahya or "Everlasting Dawn" who was appointed by "The Bab" as successor. The Babi Mirza Husayn Ali turned out to be a more aggressive organizer than the gentle Mirza Yahya and ended up with control of the movement.

The Baha'is continually falsified their own history, especially the history of the Bab and Mirza Yahya. Though claiming to be the successorship of the Bab, they extirpated all copies of the Bab's writings including his main book "The Bayan." 'Adbu'l-Baha, the son of Baha'u'llah and his successor, continued to falsify the past in his history called "A Traveler's Narrative," and the omissions and distortions were remarked upon by the orientalist E.G. Browne of Cambridge, who had studied the Babis and early Baha'is right in their own locales, including a meeting with Baha'u'llah.

Mirza Yahya:

*Thou art the King of the Realm of the everlasting,
Thou art the Manifestation of the essence of the Lord of Glory,
The Creator of Creation."*

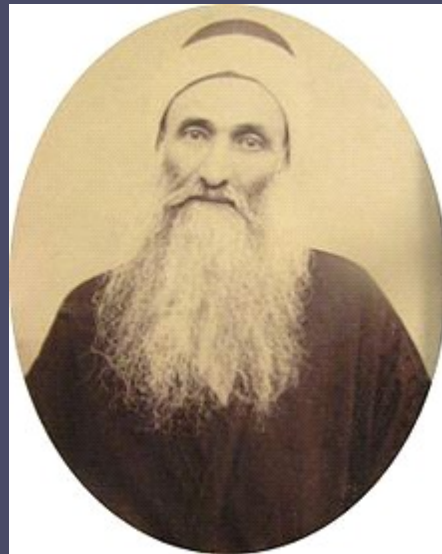
Wilson comments:

"Such are some of the "great swelling words" with which his followers exalt Baha. Yet when we examine his life we find nothing to justify such extravagance. He was simply a man of like passions as others. It may seem invidious to refer to scandalous stories of Baha's youth in Tehran. But does not truth demand that it be stated that his reputation in Persia is sullied by definite accusations of vice and immorality? I have heard such narratives with statements of the time, place, and associates who were partakers of his guilt. His family in riper years exhibits no higher example than a bigamous household. According to the narrative of Abdul Baha in the "Traveler's Narrative," he planned in duplicity to reach the headship of the Babis; for while purposing all the while to set forth a claim for himself, he put forward his half-brother, Subh-i-Azal, as the successor of the Bab -- to protect himself and to insure his own safety during times of danger, He outwardly supported Azal for many years, while secretly planning to supplant him. While acting as Azal's trusted minister, he was drawing the people to himself. We pass over the attempts of these brothers to poison each other."

Everywhere these remnants of the Babi movement went they brought trouble. Thus governments cooperated to isolate them by moving them around like a difficult prisoner in the State Penn, trying to keep the Baha'is separated from the Babis. This worked in Mirza Husayn's favor: He started to cultivate his own following in the "*prison city of Acca*." Baha'u'llah had no known skill, profession, or work. Mirza Husayn's daddy had been a Vizier before the Shah chased them out of Persia. Having good family connections and an income from Persia, he began to get influence in the city as a new leader for the Babis. He even had a welfare payment coming to him from the governor of Acca. Who knows how.

Though steadily bemoaning his status as a prisoner in Acca, using it to make dramatic 3rd-person wailings about "This Prisoner," Baha'u'llah seemed to live pretty well. He seemed to have connections, and even had a pension from the governor. There is no record of what his income may have been from family connections back in Persia, but he was clearly set. For he would have immediately begun to receive a monthly (every 19 days) income from any Babi who took his side and became a "Baha'i." Babis had always tithed, giving 19 percent of their income to the Bab. (About 20 percent!) You can understand the stakes, then when it comes to "Who's the Avatar" back in these lands. Big money was involved.

After a disease outbreak a lot of people cleared out of the area. His able son 'Adbu'l-Baha -- the tall one -- swung a



An astounding photograph of Mirza Yahya, the Bab-appointed mystic, who Mirza Husayn beat in the struggle for leadership. He is 80 years old in this photo! Notice the serenity of his face compared to Boss Man Baha. A picture's worth a thousand words. A righteous, God-focused life shows on one's face and reduces the effects of aging. Note his lucid, calm eyes.

One reason for the suppression of the Bab's writings was that it contained doctrines like reincarnation which were now being denied by the Baha'is. Another was that the Bab's writings made it seem unlikely or impossible that Baha'u'llah could be his successor or that the new Baha'i Faith could be legitimate.

This falsification of history then extended to the complete suppression of the Baha'i Faith's central scripture in the west, the "Kitab-i-Aqdas" or "Book of Laws," touted by Baha'is as their most important scripture and the blueprint and laws to guide mankind for the next "thousand years." Baha'is have long dismissed the value of other religions by stating, disingenuously, that "they don't have their original texts, we have the original texts." Or, they state that distortions have

deal to live in a very fancy place, a large and stately mansion abandoned by a pasha and his family. This was the beginning of great things for the diminutive new "manifestation."

He used his residence in the mansion to boost his nimbus as a Divine Personage. The kingly digs served all the more to draw Babis to his side. After all, he had the mansion, it must be a sign of God. Around this time, likely as a theme to go along with the mansion and color-match to his glorious surroundings for effect, he openly began calling himself "*The Glory of God*" (Baha'u'llah). He changed the movement's name to "Baha'i" (after himself) instead of "Bab'i. ('of the Bab').

He finally stripped the Bab's appointee Mirza Yahya of many followers, which meant that soon he was getting the serious income (tithe) from former Babis and Baha'is, that is to say, a substantial income that used to go to Mirza Yahya. There in his posh digs the stern-faced, "Worship My Beauty" midget began to interact with curious westerners and, looking westward, honing his message based on the wide-eyed hipsters he was meeting.

In the earlier transitions of leadership there was bloodshed and murder. But at every stage in the religion's development there was conflict. Appropriately, their World Center is now located in a genocidal state that was created by violence and still carries out ethnic cleansing against the natives.

Each leader's death resulted in confusion and division. Thus its first 150 years produced more major controversies -- and even sects -- than other religions. (See [Sects of the Baha'is](#).) Baha'is early on had terms for various kinds of apostates and black sheep: *Covenant Breaker*, *Enemy of the Faith*, etc. Conflict over leadership was so rife that 'Abdu'l-Baha, the successor and son of Baha, excommunicated most members of his own family and shunned them as Covenant Breakers.

They're still producing fresh crops of Covenant Breakers still today! That is appropriate, since Baha'u'llah rejected the rightly appointed successor to the Bab, he was a Covenant Breaker himself. The religion was moved forward only by Covenant-breaking since then.

Baha'u'llah's religious project, presented in his "Book of Laws" (Kitab-i-Aqdas) is like a strain of Islam -- with the

crept into the old religious texts. But Baha'is did that up 10 times better by simply suppressing the text (along with the photo of Baha'u'llah) and not allowing anybody to read it.

Then, when finally obligated to offer up some sort of translation of embarrassing scriptures, the Baha'i authorities regularly introduce their own distortions to doctor the text.



Something Went Wrong
when they killed the Bab by firing squad. The modest Mirza Yahya looks down in this sad photo. If his older brother had not commandeered the religion, might the Baha'i Faith still be a true mystical, God-oriented religion of world-renouncing devotees instead of a religion of world domination and race-fetishism?

harshness characteristic of Islam --along with major helpings of mysticism characteristic of Sufism. This includes his command to chant a mantra daily ("Allah'u'abha"). Women must say a certain chant during their periods. Men are required to keep short hair but can have more than one wife. "Glory" was a Persian prince. He gives instructions about falcon hunting, tells his followers to "wear sable," silk and squirrel skin. There are dowry laws for marriage. He stressed devotion to God (himself), calling himself the "*Blessed Beauty*" and many other superlative terms. As in Islam, obedience was highly emphasized. In a sense, the religion revealed in the Kitab-i-Aqdas looks like any religion you'd be able to construct from any Islamic Religion Toy Construction Kit, and it really boils down mostly to a message of "*I'm the promised one, not that guy; you worship me, not that guy.*"

Like most amateur philosophers (including my mother), Baha'u'llah uttered a few universalist statements. Not any more, or any better, than the average mystic. But these morphed into Baha'i bromides like "mankind is one" and "all religions are one" which were brought forward as the prime Baha'i message. In religious annals there was nothing new about these ideas. The essential oneness of all external religions was enunciated by the rishis of India thousands of years ago in the Upanishads far more elaborately and profoundly than anything Baha'u'llah wrote. And of course, the brotherhood of man is a perennial platitude across philosophers, mystics and avatars. In reality, Baha'u'llah had advised his followers to '*consort with the followers of all religions in a spirit of friendliness*' for good and practical reasons: The Baha'is and Bab'is had been at war with each other, and it placed him and his movement into trouble with their host governments.

It developed that those westerners first attracted to the movement, mostly out of London and New York, were Marxist type progressives. As many Marxist ideas eventually spread through the west under the influence of Jewish media ownership, a more moderate type, the intellectual progressive, became the main fodder for Baha'i recruitment.

To attract these over-influenced progressives the Baha'is created a "Ten Basic Principles" list that bore no real resemblance to the content of their scriptures. (Hire ten scholars to survey Baha'i scriptures and offer up "Ten Basic Principles" -- they'd never come up with the list that Baha'i promoters use.)

As Baha'i promoters shaped their talking points to appeal to cultural progressives, a difference developed between the Baha'i sales package and the founding literature, particularly the "Most Holy book" or "Book of Laws." Its content was increasingly alien, an unwelcome stranger to the developing program. To deal with this problem the leadership



Lives of the Idle Rich:

Another one of Glory-man's sons, the brute-mouthed, dwarfish Mirza Mihdi fell through a skylight on the roof of one of his father's pads and died. Perhaps because he was drunk. Or perhaps because, like his father, his eyes couldn't focus properly. Or perhaps because of evil acts by Baha'u'llah which gave him immediate fruits of bad karma.

This son had not had time yet to become alienated from his father and be declared a "Covenant Breaker." Thus Baha'u'llah turned him into a saint-martyr and built up a big legend about him so he could moan all the more about his Trials. In photos the Baha'is place a nimbus around his head. Now formerly sane White people in the Baha'i Faith worship this rich man's son for falling through the roof.

Physical notes for a physically-oriented religion:

This son of Baha'u'llah had a rather large mouth in which the lower lip jutted out slightly more than the upper lip, giving a loutish appearance. Sensual, his lower portion was raised up in a permanent pout -- an upside-down smile. A smaller version of it can be seen in the imp-like son Mohammed Ali (and an apparently misshapen left ear):

simply suppressed it. They effectively hid the text from western eyes for 120 years, telling the believers "It's not been translated yet" so as to assure continued recruitment of the naive. Only recently have American Baha'is been able to read it. (And now it's contents get regularly mooted, explained away, or annulled by the Baha'i explainers.) This suppression of their central scripture played a critical role in enabling the religion's teachings to diverge greatly from its original nature.

Was the Baha'i Faith Originally a Feminist Religion?

In the religion's early development in the west, Baha'u'llah's successor, son 'Abdu'l-Baha, came to the Communist hotbed of New York City. There he encountered Suffragettes. (Feminism is one of the planks of Communism for the weakening of the family.) He developed an approach to these Marxist women by emphasizing "equality of men and women" as a religious teaching, though this is little-present in the founding scriptures. Samuel Graham Wilson in "Baha'is And It's Claims" (1915) *comments on the complete lack of any feminist teaching in the entire body of Baha'i scriptures:*

"Examination of the chief books, the "Kitab-ul-Akdas," the "Ikan" and the "Surat-ul-Haykal" disclose no such teaching. Neither the 155 paragraphs of the "Hidden Words," nor the "Seven Valleys" have any such delectable thoughts for Oriental women. Neither the six "Ornaments" of the faith nor the four "Rays," nor the nine "Effulgences," nor the eleven "Leaves of the Words of Paradise," nor the nine precepts of the "Tablet of the World," nor the fifteen "Glad Tidings" --though they announce many blessings, from freedom to cut the beard as you please to constitutional monarchy as the best form of government--give the teaching of the equality of woman with man. Neither Mirza Abul Fazl in his "Bahai Proofs," representing the new Bahais of Abdul Baha, nor Doctor Kheiralla in his ponderous volume on Beha Ullah, representing the old Behais, in this bitter and rancorous schism; nor Myron Phelps in his "Life of Abbas Effendi," nor Professor Browne of Cambridge University in his learned and impartial investigations regarding the religion makes the statement that Baha Ullah teaches the equality of man and woman. On the contrary, investigation confirmed my previous conviction that the position of woman under Bahai laws and customs is inferior to that she holds in Western lands and that her lot is far less desirable and less blest than in Christian civilization. I reached the conclusion that this doctrine as enunciated by the "Interpreter" is a late addition to Bahaism, intended to attract the attention and tickle the ears of audiences in Europe and America."

"Equality of men and women" was never a teaching of Baha'u'llah. 'Adbu'l-Baha created it after consorting with charming and curious western women of New York City.

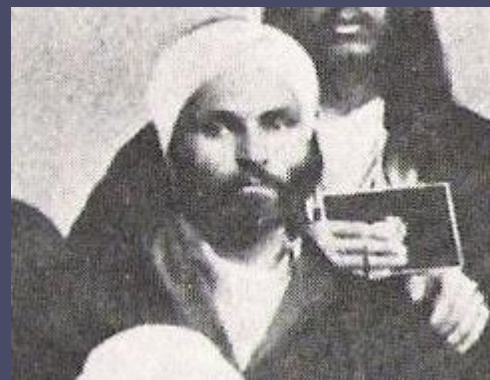
In Baha'i scripture women are barred from membership on the Baha'i Faith's highest body, the "Universal House of



This upside down smile was a trait of Baha'u'llah's whole family, and one can discern it in the bearded photo of Baha above. The same mouth is suggested under the beard of Baha'u'llah's brute-like little brother below (who looks like the perfect enforcer and heavy for getting rid of Babis):



It seems merely hanging out with Baha'u'llah and his crew put a pout on your face. The same dour reverse-smile is even seen on the face of Baha'u'llah's secretary Mirza Aqa Jan:



Justice" in Israel. One Baha'i law states that a husband should send his wife home (and pay for her expenses) if they fight while traveling. The entire Baha'i "Book of Laws" (Kitab-i-Aqdas) is clearly addressed to men. This is obvious, for example, in Baha'u'llah's dictums regarding marriage. In that instruction (below) two wives is assumed as normative; 3 or more wives receives a "warning" but it's not actually forbidden. Baha'u'llah often referred to women as "handmaidens." This is his simple statement in the Baha'i "Book of Laws" (Most Holy Book):

"God has ordained marriage for you. Beware lest you go beyond two, and whoever is satisfied with one of the handmaidens, his soul is at rest and so is hers, and one does no harm in taking a virgin into his service."

Al-Kitab Al-Aqdas, Translation of Earl Elder and William Miller, Royal Asiatic Society, 1961

Note that he merely warns "Beware" as in "Be careful!" It's a warning that any man who's had more than one wife might give to a man considering it, and probably good advice. "Beware lest you go beyond two" -- literally means: "Be cautious or you'll end up with more than two." Then it merely praises the fellow satisfied with one-wife and opines that it's likely to yield more peace. (Not necessarily true.) Baha'u'llah had no problem articulating unambiguous don'ts and "do nots" elsewhere in his text. Remember he was speaking to supporters who had 2-and-more wives, and he himself is reported to have had at least three by the time he wrote this. And this somehow was massaged into a Feminist religion?

The Kitab-i-Aqdas has been especially problematic for Baha'i promoters. On one hand Baha'is touted the Kitab -i-Aqdas as mankind's new, flawless message for our "new age," one uncorrupted by translations or time. On the other hand, it contained things strangely at odds with the "Baha'i Faith" being constructed by Baha'i marketers. So to keep the religion from dying off in the west, the Baha'i promoters needed to corrupt the text themselves.

But the first strategy, which they pursued for 120 years, was to simply suppress the text and keep it away from western eyes for well over a century. The standard line was, "It's not been translated yet." (As if all possible Arab translators had died.) Yet its contents began to leak out, especially in a sop thrown to the believers in the form of a "Synopsis and Codification." In that "Synopsis," in the footnotes and "explanatory" paragraphs, the Baha'i Administration began to do their intellectual gymnastics to explain away and nullify the content of their Holy Book.

One early gambit was to say that a polygamy allowance, though apparently present in Baha'u'llah's sacred text, 'couldn't be so' because the Baha'i Faith emphasized justice. Justice couldn't obtain if a man could have more than one wife, etc. (Is there ever perfect justice in any family?) When the Baha'is finally released the contents of the Kitab-

The downturned smile can be seen on the face of the grim-and-wan wife of 'Adbu'l-Baha, Baha'u'llah's best son:



Note the deep-set eyes from a life of stress with a harsh husband too busy to care about the children. (When informed of the death, from long fever, of one of his daughters 'Adbu'l-Baha had not even been aware she was sick. Supportive husband! Baha'is take this as evidence of his saintliness, since he was busy caring about 'everybody else' instead of his family.) I can understand why his wife looks sad. But did no one in the Baha'i camp ever smile? (Creepily, the woman who married Baha'u'llah's son has the same strange V-shaped lower face -- plus eyes -- of Baha'u'llah's midget son Mohammed Ali. Was she actually her husband's half-sister?)

We can surmise that beneath Baha'u'llah's woolly beard lay a similar erp-like mouth: One fish-like, as if you'd expect it to make the sound "erp," with the lower portion jutting upwards in permanent dour judgment. But a smaller mouth like his impish son Mohammed -- a shrew-like mouth often found on those who speak many sharp words and who are ungenerous, and on creatures that have a sharp bite.

i-Aqdas the verse above was translated in clever ways to make it sound as if polygamy was being forbidden. (See: ["The Miller-Elder Translation of the Baha'i Book of Laws"](#) for comparative translation commentary.)

The Baha'is are chronically riven with controversy as the ostensible "equality of the sexes" jams up against realities like females barred from the UH and the Most Holy Book's apparent allowance of polygamy for men. The answer is that the Baha'i Faith, at it's foundation, was never feminist nor did it it teach "equality of the sexes" per se. There is no explicit feminist teaching contained in the Baha'i Faith's three important scriptures, much less any radical ones. These are [The Kitab-i-Aqdas](#), [the Hidden Words](#), and [the Kitab-i-Iqan](#). Certainly the phrase "equality of men and women" does not occur in any of these foundational texts, nor any similar phrase.

The original Baha'i Faith is as patriarchal as Islam; as patriarchal as its founders. Feminism -- a version much tamer than what the founders could have conceived of -- was added later. This was apparently because some of the westerners first attracted to it, charmed by 'Adbu'l-Baha and charming to him and having money, were feminists. 'Adbu'l-Baha was a practical man. (He made deals with the British government during WWII and functioned as a spy for them.) What would you do if you had a few suffragettes willing to be your foot soldiers?

Though Baha'u'llah considered it virtuous for a man to "satisfy himself" with one wife but assumed 2 as normative, as the Alpha Male of his milieu it seems he had at least 4 wives. Two were early reported by the traveling English orientalist E.G. Browne, Nawwab and Mahd-i-'Ulya.(Mahd-i-'Ulya was his cousin.) "It has been stated by other authorities who were in a position to know." (Kitab-i-Aqdas, Elder/Miller, p. 41) that Baha'u'llah married a 3rd wife in 1867, Gohar, bore him a daughter named Faruqiyya, then a 4th wife in old age, Jamaliyya who was the niece of one of his favorite followers. It is said that all wives survived him, thus Baha'u'llah himself had at least 4 wives. (And six children.)

The most that can be said is that Baha'u'llah moderated the Islamic rules regarding women a bit, such as freeing Baha'i women of the requirement to wear a veil, something that was radical for the time. There is no question that the highly patriarchal and traditional founders of the Baha'i Faith would have been appalled to see the state of society today, the collapse of sexual identity and sexual roles, and the destruction of the family wrought by radical feminism.

They would have wanted no part of it.

The roof-falling son of Baha'u'llah was also walleyed like his father (had one eye pointing a slightly different direction.)

You cannot see it in the first photo. (It may have been doctored, like many Baha'i photos are. Baha'is regularly Photoshop the eyes of 'Adbu'l-Baha to make them beautiful and mystical, a look they do not have in the actual photos.)

But you can see Mirza Mihdi's eye defect in other photos easily, such as here:



Just like his daddy Glory Man, it's the right eye that's askew.

Even in my early years as a Baha'i I heard Baha'is who had gone on pilgrimage processing their experience of seeing, at long last, the photo of their founder in Haifa, Israel. To account for Baha'u'llah's wild-and-crazy looking eyes, one said: *"Baha'u'llah's eyes were affected when Everlasting Dawn tried to poison him."* This is one of many lines that Baha'is memorize and repeat to each other. (Babis and other observers make a solid case it was the other way around: Baha'u'llah's harem had prepared the food, which was eaten at Baha'u'llah's table. Baha accidentally poisoned himself when, trying to assure Dawn that the food was safe, he ate a bit from the side he believed was free of poison. Poisonings by Baha'is of Babis, Bahas competitor group, are documented and "Dawn" was the leader of the Babis having an uneasy dinner with his half-brother.) Since hearing those fresh-returned pilgrims rationalize Baha's look, I have read the same stuff from Baha'is promoting their fake religion online. They want

But 'Adbu'l-Baha's strategy was canny and paid off: The Baha'i Faith basically got established in the west through the interest of suffragettes and feminist women. Wilson remarks:

"Of the two or three thousand Americans who are following the cult of Bahaism, most are women. Concerning this Abdul Baha says in a tablet: "Today the women of the West lead the men in the service of the cause (Bahaism) and loosen their tongues in eloquent lectures." [1][2] Hence it is timely to consider the teaching and practice of Baha Ullah with regard to women. The editor adds, "Nine-tenths of the active workers in the cause are women."

By now the mystical, spiritual, and austere teachings of the Baha'i Faith have been largely supplanted by externalist and worldly Marxist goals like world government, feminism, deracination, and elimination of nations. Baha'u'llah regularly dissed the world, calling it "the world of dust." But like Marxism, the Baha'i Faith became a world-focused religion. The founders had a negative view of science and technology (both the Bab and Baha'u'llah) and taught that science should be subject to religious values and not exceed them. But Baha'is became technology-worshippers; science can do no wrong. (This is also a value of Marxism, which believes mankind's problems can be solved by materialistic science.) Compared to religions like Buddhism or Hinduism, the metaphysics of the Baha'i Faith are very sketchy. Yet there is a strong Sufi-like element of mysticism. Notwithstanding that content the Baha'i Faith became anti-mystical. The administration's attitude, and life in the ranks of the Baha'is, demonstrates an aversion to the mystical. For example, the Baha'is are given a mantra to say in their "Book of Laws" (as is common to the three other great world religions) but Baha'is are uncomfortable with the word "mantra" and refuse to view it as such. This very easy-to-do practice, typical of Islam and mystical Sufism, was apparently considered "too exotic" by western Baha'i promoters. Though easy to do, the western Baha'is were not even asked to perform it for their first 120 years! This is because image and hope of enrollment growth was always more important to the Baha'i promoters than the real religion itself.

In Buddhism and Hinduism one "saves himself" here-now by encountering and merging with God within, which also alters the nature of the projected external world. They focus on freedom from a dualistic, ephemeral samsara. In Christianity, there is a focus on the afterlife. But in the Baha'i Faith of today, the other-worldly and God-focused content of their own texts is abandoned for a wholly rational, materialistic focus and questionable worldly goals like deracination, race-mixing, salvation via technology, and one all-controlling world government. For this reason I say that the Baha'i Faith is a Sufic movement that was hijacked by Marxist types as a vehicle for Marxist goals, manned and fueled largely by idealistic, well-meaning White people who have been afflicted with White-guilt syndrome.

The Baha'i Faith was built substantially by Jews, and Whites with magnified ideas about a "race problem." They flee to it as a way to "be good" and expiate falsely-induced "White." "Glory" claimed he was "the return of the promised one" -- of "all religions" at once. The Canadian William Sears interpreted a few arcane Biblical factoids to to create a rather tenuous rationale for the idea that 'Glory' was the Return of Christ.

you to believe that their "manifestation of God" to rule mankind the next thousand years was not a wild-looking midget with one eye pointing off to the side.

But based on his son's eyes, this is age old Baha'i history-fabrication and reality-distortion. Baha'u'llah's Marty-Feldman eyes, which he transmitted to a son, were his own lifelong karma, the body he was born with, and as with all bodily traits, a sign of his true inner nature.

This is a bodily defect that gives problems with vision. Did his vision defect play a role in his falling through a skylight on the roof of his father's house?

Note how Mirza Midhi, in the frontal undoctored photo, has a peculiarly sharp V-shaped facial structure. His face is the shape of a wedge, with his chin the point. The first chair-sitting photo, an obviously doctored one, uses a side-view to obscure this. Based on the one above it has also been redrawn to give him a much fuller lower face. A strong chin and full lower face is, after all, one of the timeless masculine ideals in faces.



The same sharply narrow V-face is seen in his dwarfish full

Though non-scriptural, racial intermarriage (miscegenation) is now a tacit high sacrament for some Baha'is, an extra measure to expiate White 'guilt' and show they are true believers in the "oneness of mankind" ideal against all psychological naturalness or respect for nature and Time's heritage.

In a nutshell, the Baha'i Faith started as a sect of Islam, became Sufism-writ-large under "Glory," then was transformed into a materialistic and humanist program pursuing Communist goals and lacks the profound analysis of reality, or focus on inner development, characteristic of Buddhism and Hinduism while functioning as an affront to the traditionalism of Islam.

As a longtime student of religions and religious practices, my view is that the devotional content and attitudes in the Baha'i writings are its best content and the best influence on its believers. In Hinduism/Yoga this is termed "bhakti-yoga" and is considered to be itself a religious technique. (And the best one.) The significant fact is that Baha'is do not even have a valuation for this fact and lack a lexicon for it. For example, the average Baha'is would not be able to tell you that their religion is, at the textual level, heavily "bhakti-oriented." This blindness and unawareness exists in the Baha'i Faith because, notwithstanding their pretensions to unite all religions and show us their common ground, Baha'is have little interest in learning about what the other religions teach.

Notwithstanding, the cultivation of devotional attitudes toward God is a valuable and positive aspect of membership in the religion; the very best aspect. Baha'is should be discouraged from having race-mixing fetishes, encouraged to be loyal to their own families and ethnic people, learn that words like "family" and "country" actually mean something, and encouraged in their devotional attitude and love of the God found within. Perhaps then maybe they will end up doing less harm to the world.

In fact, Baha'is should finally take their "Most Holy Book" seriously, discover the good things that are in it, and give up their obsession with the world, worldly power, and give up their fetish for different colored human bodies.

-- J. Curtis Lee Mickunas

brother Mohammad Ali (Again, above). Note in this son also the oddly narrow lower face and the smallness of his chin compared to the neck behind it. His look is highly unnatural. There's not much chin there at all. And this is with the head raised up and back a bit, which widens the look and increases the apparentness of chins.

We can gather from the photos of his sons that beneath the full beard Baha'u'llah had a strange, narrow, V-shaped face -- the sort of face artists and cartoonists use when drawing a male who is a "geek" or "nerd."

Baha'u'llah was a physically unattractive man. Without the beard, maybe even ridiculously unattractive. Baha'is realized this, and they hid both his face and body from us.

Nabil's history of the Bab and the Babis called "The Dawnbreakers" is an important text to Baha'is. They use it to establish a divine validity for Baha'u'llah by documenting the attractive personality and mystical atmosphere surrounding the Bab, things lacking in their own founder. (While miracles are associated with the Bab and all other religious founders -- even advanced devotees and yogic adepts -- these divine signs did not take place around Baha'u'llah.) In the text the Bab is found stating to his first prospective disciple that one sign of a "manifestation of God" is perfection of the body. The official Baha'i text takes pains to point out the physical beauty, symmetry, and grace of the Bab.

This idea comports with present Baha'i notions of the "attributes of God," presented without much explanation by official Bahaidom, which are said to include "beauty," "perfection," "grandeur" and "loftiness." The idea is that a divine thing would have these Godly attributes of beauty, perfection, etc. This also fits with Hindu ideas. Krsna in the Bhavagad-Gita is found listing similar divine attributes in its 10th chapter. They include beauty. In one case Krsna describes himself as chief among the *ghandarvas*, which are celestial beings of great physical beauty.

Thus it is understandable that Baha'is have been energetic and firm in hiding available photographs of their founder, this even though Baha'u'llah posed for photographs that he apparently intended to be seen. The photo of him beside a table is obviously set up carefully and he is showing his "best

side."

Baha'is explain that they hide their photo because they revere Baha'u'llah so much that any display of his photo -- except in the most reverent of circumstances -- is disrespectful to it. This flies against Hindu concepts of the guru (and Hinduism is a religion Baha'i hopes to supplant.) In their view, the guru represents God -indeed and in truth. Thus there is nothing that should be more attractive or comforting than the image of one's guru. All Hindu homes feature photographs of a guru plus images of divine characters like Ganesh or Visnu. And these are very pious, religious people. They even use "meditation on the guru's form" as a divinely effective meditation technique and develop great "bhakti" (felt devotion) toward it, the feeling of bhakti itself being a high and auspicious spiritual state. Does having photos of their guru harm them? No, they can't feast their eyes on their guru enough.

Quite different from the devotional delight Hindus get from images of their eminently adorable divine incarnations -- the satvic-faced Anandamayima ma, the noble and radiant Swami Shivananda, or the endearing bhakta Ramakrishna -- a Baha'i recoils upon seeing his guru. He explains that he is terribly offended by seeing it. You ask him why, and he'll say "it's in "the wrong place." And yet he never wants to see it at any time or at any place. Except perhaps once, at near the end of life, in Haifa, Israel briefly while on pilgrimage.

How many must be the shocked moments by westerners in the cloistered place where the photo is viewed! Many, in a state of very heightened emotions associated with the pilgrimage, probably view it through the benign distortion of devotionally misty eyes. But I have long noticed that Baha'is, if going on pilgrimage early in life and seeing the photograph, afterwards draw away from the faith.

Their lineage-holder Shoghi Effendi did not have the temerity in the 1940's to ban the use of Baha'u'llah's photo throughout the Baha'i world. I think he saw how absurd that would be, and what an obvious ploy. He wrote to the Baha'is that it could be used, if in reverent settings. Yet you never see it in any Baha'i setting. Not even in their beautiful temples! Not even "just for Feast" or spiritual services! In practice, no Baha'i sees it unless he goes on pilgrimage to Israel, usually in

older age, in a cloistered viewing room.

Unlike Hindus, somehow Baha'is have no attraction for the form of their guru and do not desire to see his form. Because Baha'is, being natural promoters, understand that the photograph is not good for the Faith. Thus the umbrage they take on accidentally seeing it (such as on the internet) is one-part devotee-disappointment, another part Baha'i management concerns. As in: 'Don't show our founder. It hurts our movement.'

Because this religion threatens to destroy the White European peoples (and in fact all distinctive peoples) I am quite happy to let Baha'is see their guru earlier in their deluded membership, haply, before they misspend any more years.

Now, the very idea of the "manifestation of God," indeed, is that God "manifests" himself -- makes himself visible -- for us to see. And in a human form, one that is human yet has divine signs and *attractiveness*. (Since the divine is attractive.) And Baha'is have all kinds of patter addressing this theory; that we can't handle God directly so he attenuates and downgrades His signal, as it were, by taking a human form that we can "relate to." So Baha'is have ended up with a "manifestation of God" who can't be manifest, i.e. seen, and does not seem to "manifest" divine qualities in his physical form at all. Thus the very idea of divine "manifestation" and "incarnation" is itself neutralized; turned in on itself, in the Baha'i experience. Baha'u'llah is a "manifestation" with two dire problems: 1) He does not manifest divinity in his person, and 2) Baha'i managers are hellbent for leather that he must not be manifested to us at all!

But Baha'is do their cultural control covertly, silently. Somehow Baha'is have not found situations -- whether at their spiritual "Feast" gatherings or in their vaunted temples -- sufficiently "reverent" for the display of the photo.

Now to be sure, they can't hoist "enough" photos of their lineage holders 'Abdu'l-Baha, who was much more charming and photogenic. Have they no proper "reverence" for him?

Baha'i mendacity then takes another leap and they cite Islamic ideas for hiding the picture. They say that the "manifestation

of God" should not be depicted bodily in art. They say that Muslims consider any physical depiction of Mohammed to be disrespectful, even sacrilegious, and that's where they get this idea of hiding Baha'u'llah's photo. But one has to point out that Baha'is have dispensed with every other Islamic idea and standard but that one.

Baha'u'llah himself dispensed with most rules of Islam in his "Most Holy Book." And curious to note, in his book containing many sundry prohibitions he did *not* list any prohibition against photographs of himself or of prophets, while he did pose for a stately photograph in which he clearly intended to be seen.

Meanwhile even if this prohibition *did exist* in the Baha'i "Most Holy Book" it would hardly matter, since Baha'is have long dispensed with even their own laws -- or staved them off saying they are for some "future time" when mankind is "ready."

So we have the phenomenon of Baha'is dispensing with all Islamic laws *en toto*, plus ignoring most of their own laws -- yet hewing scrupulously to an arcane Islamic prohibition not even present in their texts.

That's funny. And that's typical Baha'i mendacity. Because the real reason they do it is transparent. This religion is all about promotion and has already invented itself outside of its own scriptures. They knew that the photo of their founder would not be good for the Faith's progress.

The Hindus have observed that the voice takes on a beautiful tone due to chastity, personal virtue, and God-meditation. This can be experienced and seen in the voices of meditative sages. Further, their scriptures and srutis state that physical beauty is an inevitable product of good karma; of past-life virtue and that physical flaws in this birth are the outcome of sin, especially moral sin.

The Baha'is have a founder who's look and physical nature contravenes the Bab's teaching that a "manifestation of God" displays beauty and perfection of form. And contravenes the teachings of other religions associating physical beauty with spiritual and moral virtue. Certainly within his own cultural context, his unusually small stature and wild off-pointing eyes

were regarded by others and by himself as defects. That's why he wore rather outlandishly tall hats and posed sitting in a low-backed chair to obscure his size. I note that in the "passport photo" (shown above) Baha'u'llah was obligated to face the camera. But in the "posed" formal photo we have of him he chose to face slightly turned to the right side. Was this to de-emphasize his off-kilter right eye?

Certainly clever western Baha'is early on, the consummate promoters then and now, understood that these matters would have an impact on the mind of prospective seekers and their natural human instincts. Jesus Christ has long been shown as noble and handsome because the human intuition demands that an incarnation of God would have humanly attractive qualities, and Baha'is knew they had to cope with these innate sensibilities of the Christian public. So this attempt to cover up Baha'u'llah's physical appearance probably goes all the way back to the beginning.

It is astounding, indeed, that though physical traits -- even of early believers such as Quddus and Tahirih -- have been cataloged in their texts, no word has ever come from Baha'i writers about Baha'u'llah's physical traits - even though they were highly unusual! Only a deliberate campaign to hide these matters can explain it.

In their promotional work, Baha'is have relied heavily on one sentence by E.G. Browne, the English orientalist who once met Baha'u'llah, to address his physical features. It is a statement that creates an impression that Baha'u'llah had, at least, an 'impressive' look. Baha'is frequently use Browne's "ample brow" quote:

"Those piercing eyes seemed to read one's very soul; power and authority sat on that ample brow."

No doubt this meeting with an important western scholar was considered important by Baha'u'llah and he was decked out as royally as possible, be-robed to hide the position of his feet, and probably sitting on a raised chair. Based on the photos we have of Baha'u'llah, he indeed did not seem shy to stare or even glare. Charles Manson, too, was said to have "piercing" eyes.

It is very interesting that the only reference to

Baha'u'llah's physical features by Browne involves two items that refined western eyes would find problematic or off putting: His bushy eyebrows, and his eyes. (Notice the photo of Baha'u'llah's little brother at top, who had even bushier brows than Baha -- a veritable uni-brow. I guess even more power and authority rested on them. I am going to take a guess that Baha'u'llah possessed a uni-brow also, but that he plucked out the middle.)

Was Browne, in a momentary good disposition toward Baha'is, striving on their behalf to come up with some kind of compliment? Reaching for something to say about both his brows and his eyes? Was he trying to finesse the situation on behalf of Baha'is by taking two unattractive traits and spinning them in the most positive way? Was he covertly trying to assist the Baha'is by omitting any other physical references and distracting from Baha's personal oddities such as unusually small stature? It seems then that Baha'u'llah's brows, which were apparently in a permanent furrow as if perpetually angry, set over eyes that were odd and disturbing -- were two items needing immediate spin-doctoring by this early friend of the religion. Being friendly to them at that point, he was a good sport for the Baha'is and ministered to two of Baha'u'llah's most problematic features. But I wonder if Browne said other things about his appearance now sunk in the vaults as with other texts. (Like his apparently first translation of the Baha'i Kitab-i-Aqdas, somehow lost to time.)

It is very telling that Baha'is continually quote these few words of Browne, yet cover up and vilify most of his other writings. (Because E.G. Browne, who was there, states things about the Faith's origins that are inconvenient to Baha'is, including decrying Baha'i falsification of their own history.) As disinfo artists, it is obvious that Baha'is have pounced on this one sentence by Browne to spin and direct prospective seekers in a particular mental direction and pre-empt any discussion of the reality of Baha'u'llah's physical persona.

Recently I found a photograph of a cabinet at the Baha'i World Center (Haifa, Israel) that features two of Baha'u'llah's robes, seen through glass. The photo contained many other objects. I saw it as a possible opportunity to gage his height by measuring the robes against the size of other objects. But clearly, Baha'i managers had long ago considered this

possibility. The photo did not contain a single item having a reliable size or predictable length. (Any object with a definite, known size -- even one of his turbans.)

There were candles and candelabras, but they could have been very small. I also have not been able to find one photograph of an individual standing in front of this cabinet, which is there to be seen by pilgrims. Normally, pilgrims would delight to take photos of themselves standing in front of these things. So the Baha'is must have a strict rule against pilgrims taking any photos of these items, especially standing within the photo. Thus I believe that Baha'i concern about Baha'u'llah's physical nature goes way back to the beginning, and they are practiced in it.

A final note is that Baha'u'llah never chose to be photographed with any other man -- not even any of his sons, including his most important son 'Adbu'l-Baha, who was of normal stature. (Shoghi Effendi inherited Baha'u'llah's shortness, though probably ameliorated through his mother. A photo exists of a full grown Shoghi Effendi standing next to 'Adbu'l-Baha, and S.E.'s shortness is remarkable.)

So it is that the Baha'i Faith was created by an impish man of very small stature with wild, ill-pointed eyes and a coldly stern visage. Yet we don't know, because Baha'is are obfuscation and disinfo artists, like their founder. For just as Baha'u'llah says *"God is the compassionate"* after directing us to mark the foreheads of thieves with scars or tattoos; or says *"He has no need of the worlds"* just after specifying that his "House of Justice" would get all your possessions at death -- the Big Player and manipulator Mirza Husayn, knowing he had a reputation as an ugly man, had the brazen chutzpah to name himself "The Blessed Beauty."

The disappointing visage of their Mansonesque founder, who could stand in as the frightening leader of a Bakersfield, California biker gang circa 1965, must hurt for Baha'is. Because after all, this is nothing if not an outer-focused, material oriented religion. Sometimes I have pointed out these things to Baha'is. I have confronted them with their hiding of the photograph, and raised the real reasons they have done it. I point out that most people would instinctively consider Baha'u'llah's visage to fail in signaling divinity. I have also mocked it. They have often replied saying *"The physical isn't important. I don't care what he looks like."*

But we must then note how important the physical really is to Baha'is. They erect beautiful temples (and other buildings) of the greatest majesty they can afford, with a full focus on physical beauty. They continually point to these pretty buildings as evidence for the validity of their religion. I know that is why they point to them; I used to be a Baha'i, and that's why they point to their buildings: To demonstrate power and divine validity. Yet the very face and body of their founder lacked any correlative beauty or majesty.

So, just as their teachings are now disconnected from Baha'u'llah's texts which have long been ignored and hidden, their great and beautiful buildings also are disconnected from their usurper-founder who was a small, ugly and frightening man.

||||

Incest

The wife of 'Abdu'l-'Baha is also walleyed like Baha'u'llah. This trait is a genetic flaw that is sometimes associated with early poor diet, or with incest.



Eerily, note also the same sharp-bottomed, wedge-shaped face and pointy chin seen on two of Baha'u'llah's sons (and probably present on the Blessed Beauty himself.) Was the wife of Baha'u'llah's son a relation of her father-in-law? Perhaps Abdu'l-Baha's cousin or even half-sister? The Baha'is were exactly like a mafia headed by a Don, with all the murders and deaths associated with crime families. Such power cadres like to keep things "in the family." With all the secrets Baha'is hide, I would not be at all surprised if 'Abdu'l-Baha married a cousin or even a half-sister.

Baha'i Distortion of their own "Most Holy Book"

An example would be the "wear sable" instruction of the Kitab-i-Aqdas. The unbiased, impartial Arabic scholars Miller & Elder translated it this way:

"Wear sable (sammur) just as you wear silk and squirrel-skin and other things."

The Miller/Ender translations contains cases of mere suggestion by Baha'u'llah as contrasted to explicit commands. They are easily distinguished from each other in their text. Baha'u'llah makes explicit commands regarding hair-length for men. He was a royal, and wanted his people to come off nicely to make him proud. Elsewhere he tells them to use perfume and rose water and renew their furnishings every 9 years. (He also enjoins upon Baha'is very fancy and pricey coffins.) But the "official translation" (when it finally came out) renders the line this way:

"Ye are free to wear the fur of the sable as ye would that of the beaver, the squirrel, and other animals."

...changing what was evidently a command into a mere option.

Who needs textual distortions brought by time and history to mess up your religion if you can simply suppress the text? Then, when obligated to come up with something, when you can create your own distortions yourself?

Bahai-Faith-Bahauddin.info



*Love your People.
Preserve your people and nation.
Reject multiculturalism, race-mixing, and the Baha'i Faith.*

On Fake Baha'i Membership Statistics

I think I can give some insight into the question of Baha'i membership statistics and their inflation by the Baha'is

from a microspheric level; with some slices of Baha'i administrative life at the local and state level.

I was the secretary of a Baha'i "state committee" for Iowa in the 1980s called the "District Teaching Committee." In Soviet style, the Baha'i Administration in Wilmette was trying to turn the United States into renamed regions. Each unique American state became nothing more than a Baha'i "District."

At the time I was living in a small southern town of Lamoni, a R.L.D.S. (Mormon) stronghold, as a "homefront pioneer." I was recommended for the D.T.C., then formally asked onto it in a portentous letter. (The Baha'i Faith is a religion that specializes in generating portentous-sounding letters written by faceless powertripping world-controllers in anonymous offices with good English.) My appointment was obviously due to my close friendship with a fellow already serving on the committee who I'll call "Chad" who was truly my best friend. It was called an appointed position. I think the appointment happened because I knew him well and he knew me (connections), and because of my basic avidness as a Baha'i and maybe my verbal ability. The cranking engines of the Baha'i Faith are faceless men, and perhaps women, who can talk in a certain educated, elegant voice -- the "Baha'i administrative voice" you might say. I could pull that off, and I soon was the Secretary of the committee, a position with a lot of de facto influence because one basically composes letters while harried fellow members nod approval or not.

Once a month I would travel to a set location somewhere in Iowa with Chad in his beat up old Datsun B210 for a meeting with the other 2-3 members. Ostensibly we were supposed to concentrate on "teaching" (think evangelism) projects, but we ended up being mostly bogged down by so-called "administrative" minutia and "enrollment" issues, and the meetings were long and draining. I ended up with a file cabinet full of files and the membership roll. I remember dragging around the floppy, side punched dot-matrix printout with me many places. By the time it got bent and frayed and flappy the "administration" in Wilmette would send another fresh printout each year. It never seemed to get

much fatter.

In a sense this committee functioned as a "Local Assembly" for all of the Baha'is statewide who were not under the auspices of a "Local Spiritual Assembly" of nine members, the Baha'is' ideal administrative unit. That is, all Baha'is in groups made of less than nine, which was probably two-thirds of the the Baha'i population. We were only 4-5 members, so we had an important role in the state, trying to nurse along little groups of Baha'is -- from singles to groups of 2-8 -- until they became the magical number nine at which time they could create a "Local Spiritual Assembly." I had already been on the Local Spiritual Assembly of the capital city, Des Moines, before moving to Lamoni. DTC membership was a heavier load than an average member of a Local Assembly, especially for the traditionally overworked Secretary, and that position soon fell to me.

I had traveled already to many Iowa towns as a Baha'i teacher and knew quite a few of the Iowa Baha'is. I noticed there were many names on the list I'd never met. I found that Baha'is had their jargon on the cursed "administrative" side: There were the "active" believers and the "inactives." Part of our duties as D.T.C. members was to stay in touch with members and keep them interested in being active or revive them from inactivity. Activity meant attending meetings, basically. Or we might go "check them out" to see if they were in "violation" of Baha'i laws and required administrative rights removal. (Oh, what little Puritans we were. It was a novel undertaking.) Or to see whether they had improved and mended their ways. In any case, I remember it was commonplace -- whether for myself or another committee member -- to check in on some long inactive member and find them very distant in attitude to the religion, and sometimes hostile. The hard hostiles might be reported as a lost case at the next DTC meeting. I vaguely recall that the secretary who served before me might write a letter to "National" recommending that the person's name be removed, perhaps with National taking over from there and pestering the poor backslider with a "recanting" form. But I myself, when Secretary, never wrote any such

reports. My tendency was to think I, or Chad, or somebody we dreamed up -- might be able to warm a problem inactive up somehow, and occasionally we tried, with phone calls, letters, or personal visits. Only a few of these did we ever draw back, through our affectionate encouragement, into attending Baha'i meetings again. But we had a lot of heart. (Certainly the Administration never knows what avid footsoldiers labor selflessly in their trenches, especially when new and bright-eyed, and they specialize in finally killing out all impulses for leadership and action among Baha'is. One reason they're perpetually dying. But that's another story.)

Based on my being in the loop of the Iowa State committee, and my much personal travel to the small Baha'i "communities" in the state (really just little clusters of families) I would say that of the 350 names on the list maybe 100-120 were active at all, with at most 30-40 true stalwarts state-wide.

In the hallowed days of Christian small town life 120 people was like one small church congregation out of perhaps several local churches. (Oh, how I long for those days of the White Europeans now.) I recall that our annual state convention would stay at around 100 attendees year after year. 120 or more was a healthy year. I had been disappointed at the number "350" in the first place when coming onto the committee. But I remember it was all the more discouraging, as an avid Baha'i full of dreams for the religion, to realize how many of those 350 were like deadwood.

I saw this principle then expand rather grotesquely in the aftermath of "mass teaching" events, a couple of which I helped put on. Baha'is would get thrilled by, say, even 3 sudden enrollments. This was around 1980. Five, and it was Big Statewide News in the state DTC Newsletter. Ten or 15 -- and Baha'is would hyperventilate! It was as if angels had filled the sky. Glorious, majestic, and ringing phrases of impending victorious world conquest would fill our newsletter, just like the patter of Glenford Mitchell in a "Feast" letter. (Because I got the "Administrative Voice" down, you see. It was now I who got to be the faceless Baha'i Wizard-of-Oz, writing the

heart-pumping prose Baha'is live on, another hidden little 'Glenford Mitchell' for the state of Iowa.) Yet these enrollments were often problematic. These people "came in" through a hard-sell taking place over a weekend, and their commitment was tenuous. It turned out that Baha'is usually failed to work with these people and stay in contact with them. It turned out that these "mass teaching" enrollees, pressured into a life-change by bliss-faced and affectionate Baha'i teachers one weekend then forgotten, when finally contacted later, turned out to be a particularly bitter type of disaffected "Baha'i." (Oh, how I wish I could go back in time and NOT spend an hour with another Baha'i trying to pressure an old farm wife to leave her Christian Faith and join our absurd race-fetishizing religion -- pressuring her until she began to cry. I never did a "teaching project" again.)

I was also on the "Local Spiritual Assembly" of Des Moines, Iowa. Though the capital of the state, our membership roll was never more than thirty until somebody got the brilliant idea to hook up to a bunch of Cambodian would-be immigrants as sponsors. Then "voila!" our community "doubled in size." None of the needy and supplicant refugees -- some with tuberculosis -- were going to refuse the nice man Bill Brown who became their Father Christmas plus "taught them to the Faith" when Bill invited them all to sign some fun little cards. This was no doubt like the future India in miniature. Back in more normal times, before committing the crime of helping change the European ethnic makeup of Des Moines into Hideous Diversity -- even that number "30" was misleading. We only saw about half that number on a regular basis. Just as with the State membership, certain members were like spiders who holed up. One became afraid to ask about those names you never saw, wondering what the trouble was. I still remember some of them to this very day -- inactive names we'd print up on lists for years -- yet never met them once.

Certainly the admin enjoys membership inflation from the fact of cold, disaffected members retaining place on their lists. Some commentators on the blog (see link below) talked about the matter of Baha'i withdrawals. I

think it's much worse than these posts suppose, because I believe that MOST disaffected members never do formally withdraw or take their names off of the membership roll. I'm just one example. I'm still part of the numbers they claim.

The organization has this sort of trick in which you must do a formal "recanting" in order to have your name removed. You have to sign a statement repudiating the founder. Something to the affect of "I declare that I no longer believe Baha'u'llah is the manifestation of God for this day" -- is what I heard it was. Anyway, I think the vast majority of Baha'is who become disaffected or alienated do not want to bother with this process.

One reason: It's unpleasant or painful. They don't want to be talked out of it, get any pressure, or argue. Maybe they don't relish facing some cold-blooded Baha'i inquisitor in Wilmette even for a moment. (The women who congregated around the Wilmette Temple for very long were, I found, to be a particularly cold-blooded type. It's as if they've imbibed too much of the distant, grandiose tone of too many Feast letters. Utterly power-striving, Baha'is who cluster around the Wilmette "National Center" are Buddha's perfect picture of an "asura" or "jealous god." After a few experiences, one becomes frightened to even converse with them.) I know that with me, as I became disaffected, I simply didn't want to bring them down. I knew how bad it made Baha'is feel when they heard of anybody becoming negative or "withdrawing." That was especially true for a formerly positive and stalwart member. I cared about the Baha'is. I did not want to hurt them and I knew how much it would hurt to see me turn away.

Now, my animus toward the official religion ("The Baha'i Faith") became great. (That was after I discovered the "marketing package" sold as "The Baha'i Faith" was so different than the original religion.) I felt I'd been deceived and misled by shallow men. So you'd have thought I would have taken pleasure in doing the formal "recanting" paperwork. But to do so didn't even fit my beliefs or have any metaphysical validity to me. I simply didn't see that such a statement was necessary. All the vocabulary itself, such as "Manifestation of God" or "for

this Day" -- had become silly to me since broadening my mind with books like "Autobiography of a Yogi," "The Yoga Sutra," and the Upanishads. My understanding of religion had become different. Those terms were meaningless or altered in my new, broader view. There was no need to "renounce" Baha'u'llah. First, I had never developed a felt, personal, or genuine "relationship" with him anyway (as is so possible with a guru figure). And there had been some good in the Baha'i Faith. A lot, in fact, for me in the end. The devotional aspect of the Baha'i Faith, seen in the prayers and writings, had a huge impact on my spiritual life forever to come. And I didn't want anybody to feel bad. Even the Baha'is I disliked, I didn't want them to have to feel that blow. And to some extent I still feel bad about having to abandon them still today. Having a heart for them I left quietly with no display, statements, or checking out. I just happily and hummily faded away, fascinated with the new knowledge and new paths I was finding as I continued to be a God-seeker.

I think that, indeed, the majority of disaffected Baha'is never do formally take their names off the rolls. Baha'i membership is a churning affair. The Baha'i Faith is for most like a way-station they pass through in their process of religious search and exploration. I can't even find a trace of most of my favorite Baha'i associates from the 1970s and 80s. (With one notable exception, the Baha'is who "matchmade" me into a horribly mismatched marriage.) The religion lives by new members and their enthusiasm, and I think the pass-through or attrition rate is far higher than anybody conceives.

That had to be true. When you hide and suppress your own central scripture for 120 years -- you make of your religion a joke. Few people can process the chutzpah and absurdity of that. The beginning of my exit was when I found a copy of the full text of the Kitab-i-Aqdas (Elder/Miller) just after being told by an "Assistant" once more that "it hasn't been translated yet." A glance at a few pages of that book and I saw immediately that the religion I had been sold was not what the religion originally was. Eighty percent of what is promoted as "the Baha'i Faith" is really the thoughts of

clever men overly influenced by White guilt and Marxist deracination and nation-killing ideals. Simply reading the Kitab-i-Aqdas straight and unadulterated makes it very clear that the Baha'i Faith is now, in many dimensions, an invented, man-made religion.

J. Curtis Lee Mickunas

[A Chat Thread on this subject](#)

Bahai-Faith-Bahauallah.com



A Letter From a Dismayed Baha'i to Maitreya's Followers

Extracted from : http://www.maitreya.org/english/Letters/Bahais/dismayed_bahai.htm

Ok, I've been bothered by this site, and how ignorant the creators and followers of this thing are. There is no third prophet. What 'Abdu'l-Bahá meant by the seventh angel will bring order and worldly peace, wasn't that the seventh angel is a prophet of God, but what he means by the seventh angel, is that the entire world will realize Bahá'u'lláh has come, and the spirit of God will unite in everyone and create world order and peace. The seventh angel is a spirit. Not a person. You have to remember, never take the Bible literally. The bible is always symbolic. From Genesis down to Revelation. The Bible is symbolism, with added truth. You mustn't forget this. I believe that I have made myself perfectly clear in saying that Bahá'u'lláh is the true prophet for this 1000 years.

Answer to the Dismayed Baha'i Sal-Om . . . ,

As a former Bahá'í I can understand the frustration you might have about all the claims you may hear from time to time. However, if you remember, when you became a Bahá'í, you felt a certainty, a feeling of peace, and discovery. This is the same feeling that I had when I had looked at the Mission of Maitreya site and as I heard Maitreya speak on Saturday mornings. Also, I looked at the answers on the site itself given to Bahais which you may have seen. It boils down to "He doeth whatsoever He willeth."

In the first lines in your letter you mention "how ignorant the creators and followers of this thing are." Sometimes I have felt that too in discussions, but we have to remember that the Bab wrote that the person who wrote the book to people in Iran at that time to "the ignorant" as part of its title was in fact not wise at all. Of course anger and frustration often color our feelings and word choices, but in essence Bahais are usually people of loving kindness even in disagreements which should be discussed with utmost respect and kindness in the words of Abdu'l-Baha. So let's agree to treat each other with dignity and love the essence of that spark of God, the soul, within each of us.

Now the crux of your statement is that there can be no third prophet at this time, and that we are in error. Also, you question the seventh angel statement. You mention that the Bible is symbolism with added truth which is partly valid, I think. Remember, however, that God sends a prophet" as soon as the human race is ready for him." Also Bahauallah stated to the Babis after he declared his mission, that "Whether too soon or too late," He was who He said he was and it was up to us to respond or not. God doeth whatever He willeth. Even today it is seen that the Bab did not choose Bahauallah for his successor, but another. Bahauallah assumed the reigns of authority on his own as he became aware of his mission. It is obvious that the Bab knew this. And had not Bahauallah appeared, the Bábi cause, already in disarray, would have ended. God knew it was needed to send a second manifestation. Some would say that the Bab was somewhat violent in his attitude toward non believers. Whether true or not, or whether his words were under duress or in response to certain situations, Bahauallah immediately abrogated this law.

There is a mystery here which I think lies in the knowledge of God that people will react in certain ways, so he sends his messengers with the chance for us to respond immediately, and when we do not, he sends another sometimes in a short time and so on. It is not that HE changes His mind, it is that We do not rise to the challenge that a manifestation gives to us. The mystery of a prophets timing and coming are usually in scripture, BUT require careful ,detached from dogma, thought and openness arising from our hearts.

When questioned as to why he came so quickly after Christ, Mohammed said it was due to the fact that the Christians had so corrupted their teachings beginning even with disagreements between Peter and Paul and the councils and various groups over hundreds of years which caused violence and sectarianism. The Roman emperor, Constantine, made matters worse by his rulings on which doctrines were to remain in the church. The bible and the doctrines of Christianity have likewise been somewhat obscured by the divines, that is, the leaders of these faiths.

Bahauallah stated that he was concerned for "He who was to be sent down after Me." I do not think that was referring to Abdul Baha as some have said, but for the next prophet. Notice, that He expected resistance from the Bahais themselves. There have been many prophecies that the Sun would rise in the West, and that the East would not always be the rising point of Revelation. Bahauallah stated that ONLY after the tribulations of these days would the "Divine Standard" be raised. Shoghi Effendi even stated that Gods plan may change the plans of the followers of his prophets, and that there would be "another manifestation" before world unity was achieved. Yet, even in the Bahai writings there is disagreement. The Universal House of Justice is obviously NOT the one envisioned by Shoghi Effendi. The idea of Bada is dangerous. First, no one can interpret the writings with infallibility aside from THE GUARDIAN. The Hands in using Bada were not infallible and few Bahais questioned them. The House does NOT have the Guardian as its head. If God employs Bada on such an important institution as the Guardianship, than what else in the Faith is BADA?

Go to the Orthodox Bahá'í Faith site to peruse their concepts. Unfortunately, they are seen as covenant breakers, a term with very specific meaning by Shoghi Effendi and Abdul Baha. Now many Bahais are leaving the organization or becoming non active due to the feelings of oppression they sense enveloping the Faith. It is only you who can ascertain the relative validity of all these positions and ideas. Abdul Baha said that in times of non growth and low energy in the Cause, it meant that the Bahais were on the wrong tract. The growth of the Faith has been stagnant and in decline since the early 80's. Why is that? Where are the troops? As to the protection of the faith against schism, why is the Orthodox Bahá'í faith growing in India, Africa, and in the Americas?

All these questions were in my mind for years as I studied as much of the writings that I could. There is much beauty in the writings, but above beauty is even more truth and higher consciousness, a more subtle level of awareness. I could not commit myself to any of the Bahá'í groups, for I saw only discussion of the covenant. I love the gardens in Haifa, but could not that quarter billion dollars have been spent on teaching, humanitarian action, temples and so on in the world? In short, I saw more and more evidence of error in SOME of the interpretations since Shoghi Effendi's death. I urge you to read the sites of other Bahá'í groups and then with an open mind read and listen to Maitreya and this mission. There is, in my

opinion, massive failure in the Cause, and so there are. I think, five options. First, stay in the Faith as it is, Second, become inactive, Third, join another Bahá'í group, fourth state that the faith is totally false and rejoin one of the other religions, fifth, realize that a new prophet is needed and seriously study the mission of Maitreya.

Eric, is now a born again Christian. Only he knows his own motives and fears, but the ego of being as good as Bahaullah in writings is obvious, yet a weakness we all have. But Eric knows something is wrong, Joel Marengella, "the third guardian" of the Orthodox Bahais knows something is wrong, many of those excommunicated by the House which does not in the writings have the power to do so, know that something is wrong. The errors of the House in so many decisions, however well intentioned they are, show that something is wrong. This mission shows that only with these conditions of world wide safe access to the people of the planet has the time come where every eye can see and hear him. The mission of Maitreya has many answers to your questions if you sincerely look with an open mind. In the end, IF this mission is false, then it is a great test for the Bahais, and IF this mission is true, then it is a great test for the Bahais as well. The choice, of course as in all things, is yours, and that of all the peoples of the planet.

I think of the time immediately ahead, and I see that in the future after the bad times, communities of light will arise, and the religion of Bahaullah Shall be glorified by Maitreya in His temples and communities and laws. The human race will be unified and share the combined beauty of all the revelations of God. No one will be left out. We will read the Hidden Words, Gleanings, and other Bahá'í and Bábi writings along with those of Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, the native faiths, and the writings of Maitreya all in one center, all equally respected and ecstatically internalized, and we shall have the world order commanded by Bahaullah and developed in detail by Maitreya. There will be a true Universal House of Justice, elders (Hands) and wise interpreters, (Guardians). We will know a new way of thinking and interacting with ourselves, each other, other peoples, and even in time when, as Mohammed states, "at a time WHEN Allah chooses", we will interact with other beings in all the vast universes of GOD. What we have will be what we need, and what we have will be very good, the highest quality we can imagine. No person will go hungry or without shelter. We will be citizens of a united planet as Bahaullah intended.

In the meantime, I wish to give you this link written by a Bahai who I believe has since been forced out of the faith. In his work, he discusses in depth, in a much better way than I can write, the entire idea of the third prophet. Between his work, and the logical and sensible writings of the Orthodox Bahai Guardian, and Abdul Baha, and Shoghi Effendi, you may make your own decision in peace, dignity, privacy, and compassion. You have, if you wish, the five choices I suggested. I know that God forgives error, mine or yours, if it is sincere. In any event we shall all know the truth soon enough. Pray the remover of difficulties, chant the greatest name and read this link and the other suggestions I have made as in the Orthodox Bahai group writings. You are not forbidden to read the writings. How you react to what you read is your own affair unconditioned by no person but in the context of a loving relationship with God, and no one else. There are many subtle clues in this Mission for you to see, and there will be coincidences in your life to draw you to this Mission if it is what you are open to do.

Here is the link: http://www.maitreya.org/english/NEWS_files/Other%20Evidences/Bahai/greatest_name.htm

Please read it carefully as it was written by a Bahá'í. The other writings by Stetson, The Orthodox Bahais, and others, as well as, of course, writings of the present Bahai institutions, read in privacy in your own time and at your own speed.

Thank you for the chance to write to you about the Mission of Maitreya. Once you have read the suggested links, please also read the vast site of the Mission of Maitreya. Meanwhile, look into the eyes of Bahaullah and Maitreya in your meditations and ask what you will. "IN HIM LET TH TRUSTING TRUST."

Sal-Om

Name

Here is one paragraph from the link I have given you.

"Also, Baha'is should take into consideration the following excerpts from Haifa Notes taken during the last year in the life of Shoghi Effendi. "One evening the Guardian mentioned there had been 6000 years of prophetic revelation to announce the coming of Baha'u'llah and to prepare the world for it – that there would be 500,000 years of revelation under His shadow. He stated that world civilization will not be inaugurated before another revelation or prophet appears. " Notes of Alice Dudley, 1957"

Hypocrisy of Bahai Faith exposed.

Mrs Gloria Javed a high ranking official and a member of continental board of counsellor of Bahai Faith in India who reports directly to the Universal House of Justice in Israel in a recent interview about the teaching of Bahai Faith in India agreed that Bahais are involved in conversion of Indian in a deceptive manner. She said that we have now become more straight forward in making Indian people as Bahais because

She said that after a certain time we ask from our seeker (Children and Jr. Youth) that would they like to become Bahais:



Regarding the conversion of the parents of these children and Jr. Youth, she said that, "We call the parents of the children and Jr. Youth and ask them to become Bahais:"

On the other hand we see that the member of Universal House of Justice, Mr. Payman Mohajer saying that.

: So Gloria you come from New Delhi we heard about lot of success is there using Annas presentation there so please tell about what had happen in new Delhi

Actually we started using Anna presentation in Januray of 2007 and the main purpose of using flip chart is to go thorough sequence of it in sir quotation of writing of Bahullah.

India very big problem of teaching is that people didn't mentioned that Bahai Faith is religion in the begining and the bahullah is the manifestation of God just like Lord Krishna and Jeses christ and that he is the promised one of all and if you look at that of anna presentation all these things is writing of first page so than you are not hiding anything from the seeker being bold being assertive you have been audacious as the HOUSE OF JUSTICE ask to do than you are teaching them directly so when they accept the Bahai faith they are accepting as a religion and accepting Bahullah as the manifestation of the God and not as the organization that does good thing and lotus temple that accept all the religions being unity of all religion because I think Bahai faith in India is known as force that unites all religion but they don't know about Bahullah and Bahai faith as religion. I think that made us very bold and we were very afraid to do it first time in January but I think that when you make your self do something that you have never done before and you do it for Baha'u'llah it works.

In we didn't go into controversial topics in annas presentation and you explain them and

:Directly as that and what stage of presentation did you ask them

Well actually we realize that we cannot go through the whole album and seekers will get tired and loose their interest so went through various Indian concept of covenant and manifestation of God of Bahullah being most latest and unity of mankind. We stop at the quotation of Abdul Baha and thought of more coming from their side but if they are sitting and they have more time than we are also going to the life of Baha'u'llah because in India there are many Gurus people are following gurus and they think Bahullah is just another guru than we talk about how manifestation of god are different how they suffer from mankind and how yet they are so victorious and we compare it lives of many of gurus in India and how wealthy and prosperous living comfortable life and than compare him so that they don't put him on same level various gurus so if we have time we go to victory of Bahullah

And the two quotes is use that we have produce over here yes we hold it in our hand that was also challenge first time i took it out from my bag I extremely conscious and than I relaise that they don't know that this is first time i am holding in my hand and I am very uncomfortable and nervous they think I am always do it and this is what how we teach our faith and actually ask the seeker to read and it really effects them and we don't realize that we if we explain to them they will more touched but they read the words they have their side so we went ahead just using annas presentation and direct teaching approach and inviting to bahais and its not that we all afraid do it but think that they will feel that we are pressurizing them and making them something they don't want to do but it is not like that we have experience over and over that people are ready to accept Bahullah and we are the person who need to ask them and this was in suburban and central in Delhi In the beginning it was suburban there were receptive population reside they are not wealthy but they are not jobless they all have jobs the workers at different stages but in the last two cycle we have also started affluent of neighborhood of Delhi and we have smaller population there but then to we use annas presentation we have bank managers, executives, young professional working in call center and these the Indian that are educated in various field we guess we consider them materialistic and think that they won't listen but they do they do mainly it was devotional in the home followed by annas presentation and actually divide them to smaller groups and talk to them

How you involve children parents to do the class and involve them and would you explain little about that

it is the neighborhood where we have junior youth classes, children classes we consider their parents to be community of interest so then every cycle we hold devotional in neighborhood at large scale and infact we print thousand invitation we give to youth and children of our classes to give

parents, neighbors, relatives, and their friends and performed what they learned in their classes during their 3 months. Small sketch stories and confirmation based on what they learned and after junior youth performance we see the total change in their parents both the mothers and their fathers you can see the expressions on their faces and right after performances of junior youth we announce to them that we would now like to talk to you about what is the force behind us working with your children over this long period and why we are working with them so that you can support us and you can help us and we immediately divide the parents into small groups and each of us sits with them with the album and

What are you are doing in JB tell us something about that?

Gloria My understanding that Johannesburg we have good activities that inviting seekers to core activity. They have large number of seekers in their devotionals children and junior youth but they have not able to teach their parents directly so we just came here to teach them with annas presentation people think that we have to complete the whole book but that's what we basically did we approach the parents of junior youth the seekers who are coming to the devotional of bahai homes they have never been taught the faith directly so we went and taught them the faith so we did here the same thing that we did in new delhi but here was more tiring as we go home to home and sometime only person. Ok great we look forward to result.

Independent Investigation of Truth and its Consequences

I am Gamal Naseer an Egyptian, having 23 years of association with Baha'is, a Teacher for long time ,active as a core group member for few years. I attended many Baha'i programmes inside and outside Egypt. Having read many times, it was a question in my mind that why Shoghi Effendi has not left any Will appointing another Guardian, while says that "It is incumbent upon a Guardian to appoint another Guardian during his life time". Shoghi did not nominate any successor after him because of which many divisions occurred in Baha'i faith.

I asked few of senior Baha'is like Bassa Mousa but could not get any satisfactory answer. I started my own investigation, as Baha'i faith which takes pride in Principle of "Independent Investigation of Truth", started reading history which made for me more and more questions. I asked to one of counselor (who happened to be in Egypt as teacher for the core group) that who was Badiullah and titled as Ghusn Noor, to my surprise he turned speechless and started asking me, From where you got such questions? It looks somebody is poisoning your mind. As a good Baha'i you should not ask anything about the family of Bahauallah. I said very politely to him that I read history of Baha'i Faith and found out about him.

He said as a Baha'i you should learn about what the Universal House of Justice requires of you, and what the required objectives and goals of the current five year plan. You should learn about the various institutions and their role in society and in the Baha'i world, and your role in obeying them, and to devote your time for teaching the Baha'i Faith.

He said that you should know that "The expansion and consolidation are twin processes that complete one another, and this understanding will definitely help you conducting children's classes, junior youth circles, devotionals meetings. The UHJ does not want you to know why Abdul Baha said in the Will and Testament "That Guardianship and Universal House of Justice are twin Institution."

You should know the sacrifices of Persian Baha'is in Iran and always be humble in front of them. Remember that Baha'i Faith originated from their Country. Baha'i Faith is the Gift of Iran to the world. Today you see in the UHJ in the ITC and CBC a majority of the Baha'is are Persians

He said that asking such questions will force UHJ of depriving you of your voting Rights or declare you a Covenant Breaker.

Suddenly I realized my meeting with Mr. Hasan Sabri after his second marriage to Ms Isabel in UK. He was absolutely against the Persian Baha'is and their behavior:

They told me that the Persian Baha'is while talking amongst them calls other Baha'is as (Means donkey in Persian). Mr. Sabri went on to say these Persians are very very clever.

They always have a secret meeting amongst themselves they discuss about the agenda and then try to implement the same .Other members have just to approve it.

He was very critical about the Persian UHJ members like Mr. Fatheazam and Ali Nakhjawani whom he believed dominated the UHJ proceedings and is in private contact with the Secretary of NSA of every country.

Mr. Sabri had been hurt quite strongly during his tenure as the HEAD of Socio-Economic Development Project of the UHJ. He said the UHJ us to instruct me one thing and when I wanted to implement it the NSA members of that country use to say that Mr. Fataheazam or Nakhjawani has instructed us to do certain other things on Telephonic Message.

Mrs. Sabri narrated an incident where a few Baha'is from UK came to India for training and when they went back. They were different because of the Persians running the Academy in India.

In August 2010, I attended the 10 day ISGP in Hurghada. I realized that these programmes have a very specific aims planned by UHJ and implemented by the Core group members of that Country

In these programmes both the sexes are allowed to mix freely in the name of equality of sexes. The participants are instructed, How to go about spreading of the Baha'i Faith in those countries where the Baha'i Faith is Banned like Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Yemen Bahrain etc..

I took some of my close friends in confidence and discussed with them these issues and showed them proof from history, two of them said they are aware of these facts, but as they said they are Baha'i now and are denounced by family and relatives in process, and have no where to turn back, so they let go this and moved ahead. But for me it was not a satisfactory answer.

By chance I meet another traveler teacher who was Egyptian by birth but change his nationality to one of middle east country, I asked him same things, he was learned scholar and said it is good work keep it up, He said another Baha'i Scholar in the name of Ahan Rabbani went from UK to House for doing Research .There he discovered some manuscript where he got confused. He started asking questions related to them and as a result the UHJ asked him to leave immediately.

The Counselor guided me to some more academic websites, from where I got many histories rare and unpublished books few of which I would like to put on my blogs, the readers can them self decide. At least I will feel no responsibility on my soul by hiding the truth, rest they them self can do "Independent Investigation of Truth".

An Interesting Comment on Baha'i Faith by our reader

I made friends with a number of Bahais awhile back. After some investigation of the faith, I concluded that it was logically inconsistent and falsely advertised. This is NOT a universal faith, and contradicts science and reason, despite the insistence that it is a faith for modern times. Also, Bahais are quick to be your friend upon learning of your interest in the faith, but will quickly withdraw that friendship should you decide it's not for you. This is not love.

Also, very few people have ever heard of the faith. Seriously, it's been around for a century at least. There are more people on this planet who have heard of those who believe in the "flying spaghetti monster" than they have of the Bahais. With all the communication available to the masses, surely if this was part of God's Divine Plan, there would be more converts, right?

There is no place in the modern world for a faith that:

- will not allow women in the highest echelons of power
- rejects homosexuality
- shuns "apostates"
- lies about membership numbers
- divides the world into "believers" and "non believers" aka "friends" and "enemies"
- behaves like the Catholic Church when confronted with child sex abuse claims
- wastes money on shrine upkeep/building, when thousands are starving
- stunts the intellectual development of people who would otherwise be reasonable

Also, another point: The only people I see joining the faith are those who don't have the social savvy to belong to any other groups other than religious (where they are forced to accept you). So a lot of your time may be spent having to "love" boring, marginalized people....

Cali

Control Mechanisms and Sanctions in Baha'i Faith

Baha'i leaders employ a number of important control mechanisms to shape the speech and behavior of Baha'is. These include removal of voting rights, shunning, demands for conformity, accusations of "weakness in the covenant," informing and surveillance, and various forms of censorship. Many of these tools are employed primarily against persons who are somehow prominent or appear to have leadership potential but do not seem easy for incumbents to control, or against intellectuals and some businessmen engaged in Baha'i-related businesses.

The prohibition of nominations and campaigning leads administrators to feel a need for strict controls on Baha'i discourse, and often to the avoidance of even mentioning leaders by name in public, which would be construed as "backbiting." The ban on campaigning can become a ban on visibility or on any sort of critical thinking. A group of Californian believers began a Baha'i magazine, *Dialogue*, in the mid-1980s. Although all the articles were submitted for prepublication censorship to the National Spiritual Assembly, a feeling of distrust toward the magazine's left-liberal editorial line grew up in Wilmette and in Haifa. In spring of 1988 the editors proposed the publication of a 9-point reform program, "A Modest Proposal," which they submitted for censorship (*Dialogue* Ed. Board 1987). The article pointed to the decline in conversions, argued against continued censorship, and proposed term limits for N.S.A. members. They offered to (but did not) make the document available beforehand to delegates to the national convention. The response of N.S.A. secretary Robert Henderson and Firuz Kazemzadeh was to accuse the editors of engaging in "negative campaigning." The editors were denounced at the 1988 national convention in Wilmette, and were interrogated by N.S.A. members, who privately expressed concerns that the publication of such a document might have prevented incumbents from being reelected, and who raised suspicions that an independent magazine such as *Dialogue* might prove a vehicle for gaining popularity in the community for the editors such that they might get elected to the N.S.A. The editors, dismayed at this barrage of what they felt were false charges and violations of due process, and worried that *Dialogue* could not survive such official condemnation, closed the magazine (Scholl 1997). The ban on campaigning leads to a situation where a great deal of suspicion falls on any active intellectual or any medium of communication not directly controlled by the N.S.A.

Baha'i administrators put a high premium on enforcing relative conformity of views within the religion, taking steps to prevent the emergence of self-conscious subcultures, which are seen as "parties" and as divisive. Despite the clear ideological divide in the community between liberals and conservatives apparent on email forums, Baha'is are forbidden to label one another in this way, which effectively prevents liberals from complaining about the conservative ascendancy. Although the early Baha'i faith had a place in it for cohesive sub-groups of mystics and scholars, the contemporary American community places a premium on homogeneity. Legitimate leadership is held to be collective, though cults of personality do grow up around Baha'i officials. Great suspicion attaches to any Baha'i teacher or lecturer who is not an elected or appointed official and is thought to be "gaining a following." The story of one such popular Baha'i lecturer in the 1980s, an immigrant from Iran whose name I have disguised, is told by a friend:

Under the auspices of the California Regional Teaching Committee he began to do classes . . . on personal reading of the [sacred] Text. These were very widely attended . . . One day after about 4 or 5 months a representative of the CA RTC said that the N.S.A. was very concerned about the extreme adulation being shown to [Ibrahim], some of which was expressed in letters to the National Center. Tragically, this person said that the friends could think what they wanted to, but to please just change what they wrote to the N.S.A.. This was subterfuge, and this, combined with [Ibrahim's] silence on the matter instead of public renunciation of the adulation, was the death knell. The classes were closed down. The rumor was that it was because he was developing a following (personal communication, 16 April 1997).

While a Baptist preacher would have been rewarded for such activities with his own congregation, the collectivist ethos of the American Baha'i community demanded that this popular preacher actually be silenced for his success.

Among important control mechanisms at the disposal of Baha'i leaders is the removal of a believer's "administrative rights." By virtue of joining the Baha'i faith, all adult believers have the right to vote directly for members of their local spiritual assembly, and to vote at District Convention for their delegate to the annual National Convention, who in turn elects the members of the National Spiritual Assembly each year. Elections of local and national assemblies are conducted according to the "Australian" system, such that the nine persons garnering the most votes win. Every five years, members of the world's National Spiritual Assemblies elect the members of the Universal House of Justice.

One's administrative rights also include holding elective office and attendance at the nineteen-day feast, a combination of worship service and church business meeting. Administrative rights are required for participation in a Baha'i marriage ceremony, and only those in possession of these rights may contribute money to the Baha'i faith. Many conferences, and even some email forums, such as *Bahai-Discuss*, are for Baha'is in good standing only. Local spiritual assemblies may not revoke a believer's administrative rights, but may recommend that the National Spiritual Assembly do so. For the most part the National Spiritual Assembly takes such a step because a believer has repeatedly broken some Baha'i law in a public way—participation in civil politics, belonging to another religious organization, drinking alcohol, gambling, having an affair, homosexuality, failure to abide by Baha'i marriage laws (which require the consent of both parties' parents), or breaking a civil law of some seriousness (Hornsby 1983: 39-51). Those whose rights are removed can no longer serve as public speakers in Baha'i settings, and, if writers, are usually unable to convince Baha'i publishers to publish them. In some instances the N.S.A. has removed rights for essentially political reasons, because a believer has publicly or even privately criticized (Baha'is would say "slandered") the National Spiritual Assembly. A debate on this issue broke out in fall, 1995 on the email network, *Talisman*, in which liberals pointed out that here the National Spiritual Assembly acted as both plaintiff and judge. Most participants defended the current procedures, on the grounds that Shoghi Effendi had given this prerogative only to National Spiritual Assemblies and had specified that assembly members who were party to a dispute with an individual Baha'i should not recuse themselves in deciding that person's fate.

Baha'is who publicly disagree (e.g. on email lists) with policies of the Baha'i institutions can also simply be dropped from the rolls and declared non-members, as happened to Canadian fantasy writer and editor Michael McKenny in July, 1997. The most serious sanction of all is being declared a "covenant breaker." Although Baha'u'llah himself attempted to abolish the practices of shunning and ritual pollution, contemporary Baha'is, like members of the Watchtower and other cults, shun those who are excommunicated. Only the head of the Baha'i faith can impose this punishment, so that this authority now rests with the House of Justice. Whereas loss of voting rights does not necessarily speak to one's spiritual well-being, being declared a covenant-breaker makes one spiritually condemned. Baha'is are not to speak to or have anything to do with covenant breakers (Hornsby 1983: 148-153). **Baha'i friends and family, including the spouse, cut the covenant breaker off. Rank and file Baha'is take the obligation of shunning very seriously, and being cast out from one's support network can be devastating. This punishment typically is imposed upon a Baha'i who has come into direct conflict with the head of the religion.** Most often this is because the individual has put forth a competing claim and attempted to form a Baha'i sect, or because a Baha'i has chosen to join or associate with such a sect. Baha'i officials sometimes even declare ex-Baha'is covenant-breakers. **In late 1996 in New Zealand a new Baha'i who refused to terminate her friendship with the daughter of a covenant breaker responded to pressure to do so by formally withdrawing from the Baha'i religion. She was nevertheless declared a covenant breaker (Universal House of Justice 1996d).** Individuals can also be shunned for expressions of conscience. Recently, the House of Justice informed an American Baha'i liberal who had been critical of the U.S. National Spiritual Assembly and had urged reform of Baha'i judicial procedure that, should he continue on this path, "he and those with whom he has been closely associated" would "find themselves in direct conflict with the Covenant" (Universal House of Justice 1996b). In Baha'i terminology, they were threatening to have these Baha'is shunned if they continued publicly criticizing ("attacking and undermining") Baha'i institutions or their policies, even though they were not fomenting a schism. Threats to use shunning for this purpose have increased with the rise of cyberspace.

Although Baha'i authorities do not appear to intervene in individuals' secular businesses that are licit in Baha'i law, they do feel it their prerogative to interfere with Baha'i businesses that pursue activities directly related to the Baha'i faith. Thus, the making and marketing of Baha'i-related jewelry and decorations is strictly monitored and individuals can be ordered to desist from such activities. Music by Baha'i musicians with Baha'i lyrics must be "reviewed." The National Spiritual Assembly claims the prerogative of telling private Baha'i publishers what Baha'i-related books they may or may not publish, and even of ordering the deletion of certain passages from both secondary and primary sources (MacEoin 1992:i). During the build-up to the 1991 Baha'i World Congress in New York, the National Spiritual Assembly encouraged all Baha'is to use its expensive official travel agency, and some private Baha'i travel agents report that the N.S.A. used threats of sanctions to pressure them not to offer competing, lower-priced packages (personal communication, March 8, 1996, and enclosures).

Conformity of views and behavior is a strong value, and deviation from stock phrases and ideas is looked upon with considerable suspicion (Johnson 1997). Despite the existence of New Age and liberal subcultures, the most widespread approach in the American Baha'i community to scriptural exegesis is literalism, as in fundamentalist Protestantism. Administrative practice is based largely on a literalist reading of Shoghi Effendi's English-language letters concerning the development of the Western Baha'i communities. Although Baha'is supposedly believe in the "unity of science and religion," in practice most U.S. Baha'is put a literalist interpretation of scripture above science. Recently Counselors have begun demanding assent to a literalist approach to Baha'i scripture from liberal Baha'i academics, on pain of being shunned (Birkland 1996).

The community employs a number of mechanisms to impose doctrinal and behavioral conformity. One is to charge that a speaker with whom one disagrees is weak in or actually undermining the Covenant by his or her words. This tactic was employed to disrupt an academic conference on Baha'u'llah's Most Holy Book held in Wilmette in March, 1995, where Baha'i intellectuals presenting other than conservative views were sniggered at by some in the audience and called, sotto voce, "covenant breakers" (personal communication, 1995). When, in the early 1990s, a left-liberal academic Baha'i took a job at Carleton College, Counselor Stephen Birkland of Minneapolis privately told Baha'is in the region to shun him as though he were a covenant breaker (pers. communication, July, 1997). With the rise of unmonitored email forums, where Baha'i liberals and other nonconformists are free to express themselves publicly, the difficulty of maintaining a monopoly on the media for Baha'i orthodoxy has increased. In response, the House of Justice encouraged Baha'is who hear something they think out of the ordinary to challenge the speaker to justify his or her statement with regard to the covenant (Universal House of Justice 1996a). On the Talisman email forum, for instance, an Iranian-American engineer alleged that Baha'i liberals constituted a sub-group who were "attempting to undermine the covenant" (Talisman, April 1996). This practice is similar to the Muslim principle that lay puritan volunteers should go about "enjoining the good and forbidding the bad."

Informing, which is officially encouraged, forms another important control mechanism. If accusations of covenant breaking do not cow the liberal, the conservative Baha'i will often "report" the offender to the spiritual assembly or to a member of the increasingly clergy-like Institution of the Learned. In the U.S. this body consists of four North American counselors, who command nearly 70 auxiliary board members, each of whom in turn has an average of 60 assistants. This cadre of over 4,000 persons forms a significant proportion of the active believers, and those concerned with "protection" in particular vigorously monitor the community for their superiors. An official will sometimes investigate the accused, and then meet with the offender in an attempt to persuade him or her to orthodoxy. The authorities keep files on those so reported, and sometimes blacklist them from prominent committee assignments, appointment as assistants, and from speaking at official Baha'i events and conferences.

Some anecdotes illustrate these practices. A Baha'i professional attended meetings of a special-interest group for Baha'is, in the mid-1980s. At one of these he suggested that the phrase "world government," employed by Baha'is, was off-putting to most Americans and that Baha'is should find a different terminology. (Conformity to the vocabulary of Shoghi Effendi is an especially strong value, which this individual's remark violated). He says that as a result, a member of the National Spiritual Assembly put a fellow conference participant "under secret orders" to keep an eye on him, but that the person recruited to spy on him later confessed this to him (personal communication, 1996). It was alleged to me that this National Spiritual Assembly member maintained a network of informers nationally.

Ross Summers, a health care professional in Seattle, relates that before going on pilgrimage to the Baha'i shrines in Haifa in the 1970s, he saw a newly-issued letter from the House of Justice that discouraged Baha'is from reading covenant-breaker material, but did not absolutely forbid it. Summers then went on pilgrimage, and while in Haifa casually mentioned the letter's contents to another Baha'i pilgrim. Many Baha'is seek out and

destroy covenant-breaker materials in libraries, and believe it virtually a mortal sin to possess such books or pamphlets (though the Baha'i institutions discourage such extreme measures). So the Baha'i pilgrim disbelieved Summers' remark, and was alarmed. Back in the U.S. on the East Coast, the offended pilgrim contacted a former auxiliary board member and related the content of the conversation. This man then passed the information on to a counselor. Upon his return home to Seattle, Mr. Summers was contacted by a local auxiliary board member, who sought a meeting in his home about his statement to the pilgrim in Haifa. Mr. Summers accepted, and produced for the ABM the letter from the Universal House of Justice, vindicating his remarks. Neither the ABM nor the Counselors appear to have been aware of this letter previously. Summers felt that having been essentially spied upon rather spoiled the good feelings he had otherwise taken away from his pilgrimage (personal comm., 26 April 1996). As these anecdotes suggest, to be a Baha'i is to be under constant surveillance by one's community, and to be open to being reported on if one says or does anything that seems to another Baha'i out of the ordinary. The accused has no access to such reports and no right to face his or her accuser. The system of using rank and file informers has a venerable history in the Middle East.

Juan Cole

Persian Colonization of the Baha'i World Assemblies

I do not have the statistics regarding the Persian colonization of the Baha'i world Assemblies. However, when this topic came up Baha'is from all around the world (India, Africa, Canada, and elsewhere) identified this phenomena. **One Indian wrote in and said that even though there are**



thousands of Baha'is there the people that dominate the Administration are the Persians. I do appreciate that many Baha'is, have not realized what has happened in many areas of the Baha'i world Faith. As you know this is reflected in the election of the UHJ where majority of the members are Iranian. **Unfortunately the local people in most of these countries were on the Assemblies and are now displaced – putting us back into a previous condition of having masses of “artificial assemblies” administrating in the Baha'i World.**

Written by a Baha'i Critic

Babis and Baha'is – Are they Muslims ??

The following article is extracted from: <http://islamqa.info/en/ref/88689>

Shaykh Ibn Baaz (may Allaah have mercy on him) wrote a brief description of Baabism and Baha'ism, which we will quote here. He (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

This is a brief description of Baabism and Baha'ism.

In their view, the word al-Baab (lit. "the Door") refers to an ignorant Iranian individual who claimed to be a Sufi. His name was 'Ali ibn Muhammad al-Shirazi. He claimed that he was the door to Baha'-Allaah Mirza Husayn 'Ali, and that he was the messenger to whom revelation came from Baha'.

The Baabis are named after him. Every time he was put under pressure and asked to repent, he repented from Baabism and claimed to be a Ja'fari, one of the Ithna-'Ashari Shi'ah.

The Baabis held a conference one year in the desert of Dasht to announce their views and proclaim glad tidings of the awaited imam whom they claimed had appeared.

The Baabis are not all the same in their beliefs and view of the Baab, as is stated on p. 97 of the book al-Baha'iyyah Tareekhuhu wa 'Aqeedatuha wa Sillatuha bi'l-Baatiniyyah wa'l-Suhooniyyah (Baha'ism, its History and Beliefs and its Connection with Esotericism and Zionism), by the head of the Ansaar al-Sunnah al-Muhammadiyah organization in Egypt, Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahmaan al-Wakeel (may Allaah have mercy on him).

In their conference there were two groups of Baabis, one of which was led by al-Bashroo'i and al-Quddoos, and the other by al-Baha' and Qurrat al-'Ayn, as it says on p. 98 of this book. Their gatherings were also of two types, one just for the imams (leaders) of Baabism and another for the common folk. The topic of discussion in gatherings of the leaders was Baabism's abrogation of Islamic sharee'ah. Their ultimate view was that the Baab was greater and higher in status than all the Messengers, and that what was revealed to him of religion was more complete and more perfect than any previous revelation or religion.

As it says in pp. 99-100 of the book mentioned, Qurrat al-'Ayn delivered a reprehensible speech in this conference when al-Bashroo'i and al-Quddoos were not present. Al-Baha' was also absent, claiming that he was ill. He was worried about the consequences of her speech and waited to see the reaction of the delegates and whether they would reject her ideas or not. **In her speech she clearly stated that the religion of Muhammad was completely abrogated by the new religion (Baha'ism) which had come to the ummah via the Baab, even though only a little of it had come so far and they were now in an interval. The ruling of Islamic sharee'ah no longer applied and it was permissible for the people – indeed prescribed for them – to share their wealth and women.**

Al-Wakeel said that this was what was clearly stated by the Baha'i historian in his book al-Kawaakib al-Durriyyah (p. 180, 210). And she clearly stated in her speech that she did not believe in the resurrection.

This Qurrat al-'Ayn was a strong proponent of their views. She issued a fatwa before she got in touch with al-Baha', then when she got in touch with al-Baha' she submitted to him and attributed the fatwa to him.

The Shi'ah scholars debated with him several times, and he was exposed and his ignorance and confusion were clearly demonstrated. Among the cleverest questions that were put to him was when he was asked about the defects in Islamic sharee'ah and about the perfection of that which he had brought, and he could not offer any answer, rather he could not even say a word. He was asked to deliver a speech and he delivered a worthless speech that did not deserve to be listened to. Hence the scholars ruled that he was a kaafir and should be executed, and he was executed.

Note: We stated above that the Baab in whom the Baha'is believe was the harbinger of al-Baha' and he is the one who received revelation and conveyed it. So he is like a messenger for al-Baha'. The Baabis believe in al-Baab, who is 'Ali ibn Muhammad al-Shirazi, the ignorant Sufi who claimed that he was the most perfect human vessel in which the divine reality manifested itself, and that he was the one who created everything by his word. See p. 117. They also quoted him as saying:

How ridiculous are these words that no wise person would utter. (Shar'at al-Baab, p. 119).

The Baab abolished the five daily prayers, Jumu'ah prayer and prayer in congregation, except in the case of the funeral prayer. He stated that purification from janaabah was not obligatory, and that the qiblah was the house in which he was born in Shiraz, or the place where he was imprisoned, or the houses in which he and his followers lived. These are the places to which his followers were required to go on pilgrimage.

With regard to fasting, it was to be observed from sunrise to sunset, for one Baabi month which lasts for nineteen days. As for zakaah, it was one-fifth of one's property, to be taken at the end of the year and handed over to the Baabi council. There are other ridiculous rulings which you can see on p. 120 of al-Wakeel's book.

Baha'ism

As for al-Baha', who is known as Baha' al-Deen, he was Mirza Husayn ibn 'Ali ibn al-Mirza 'Abbaas Bazrak al-Maazandrani al-Noori al-Iraani. He was born in Tehran in 1233 AH and he was involved in Sufism all his life. He took his myths and stories from his Shaykhs. Then he moved to

Baghdad from Tehran as a visitor or in exile, then he moved frequently from Baghdad to other places, then he moved to 'Akka for political reasons and ulterior motives, and because of the many disputes between his Baabi followers and the followers of his brother, Yahya ibn 'Ali ibn Mirza. After all of that and after many developments, al-Baha' made the following claims (see p. 143 of al-Wakeel's book).

Death of al-Baha'

When he was in the prime of his strength and his call was at its strongest, Allaah caused him to develop a fever, from which he died when he was believing in his false claims and ridiculous myths. He died in Dhu'l-Qa'dah 1309 AH. See p. 144 of the essay and footnotes of Abu'l-Fadaa'il. Abu'l-Fadaa'il was one of the propagators of the false sect of al-Baha'.

Al-Baha's methods of propagating his views

He was a Sufi who relied on allusions, symbols and jargon. See p. 147 of al-Wakeel's book.

His books

The most famous of them are al-Ayqaan and al-Aqdas. He wrote the former in Baghdad; it deals with proving that the Baab was the Mahdi and al-qaa'im. It refers to the claims of al-Baha'. He wrote this book in response to questions about the Baab. In this book al-Baha' acknowledged that he was sinning by writing this book. How strange are the actions and evil deeds of this criminal. Glory be to Allaah, how great He is: He insisted that these criminals and liars should fail in their words and deeds. To Allaah be praise for the clarity of the truth and the failure of falsehood. See p. 150 of al-Wakeel's book.

Baha'is hatred towards Muslims

Al-Mirza did not hate any community as much as he hated the ummah of the Final Messenger. It is sufficient for you to know that he accused the earlier and later generations of not having understood anything of the Qur'aan, and he said: Then al-Baha' says: "The one who does not drink from our sealed nectar, the seal of which we have broken with our name al-qayyoom has not grasped the light of Tawheed, and he does not know the meaning of the Books of Allaah, and he is one of the mushrikeen."

Note:

In this summary about the Baabis and Baha'is, I have not seen any words that you cannot find in the book of al-Wakeel. It should be noted that some of it comes from the book of Dr Muhammad Mahdi Khaan al-Irani al-Tabreezi, who lived in Egypt, which is called Miftaah Baab al-Abwaab. Some of it was taken from articles written by Muhibb al-Deen al-Khateeb about Baabism and Baha'ism, and some of it is my own words. And Allaah is the Source of strength. May Allaah send blessings and peace upon our Prophet Muhammad and his family and companions. End quote.

Majmoo' Fataawa al-Shaykh 'Abd al-'Azeez ibn 'Abd-Allaah ibn Baaz (7/407-412).

Shaykh Ibn Baaz (may Allaah have mercy on him) also issued another fatwa stating that the Baha'is are kaafirs. He was asked about the views of Baha'-Allaah who claimed to be a Prophet, and also claimed that Allaah was incarnated in him. Is it permissible for the Muslims to bury these kaafirs in the Muslim graveyards?

He replied:

If the beliefs of the Baha'is are as you say, then undoubtedly they are kaafirs and it is not permissible to bury them in the Muslim graveyards, because anyone who claims to be a Prophet after our Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) is a liar and a disbeliever according to the texts of sharee'ah and the consensus of the Muslims, and because this is disbelief in the words of Allaah (interpretation of the meaning):

"Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allaah and the last (end) of the Prophets"

[al-Ahzaab 33:40]

And because there are mutawaatir reports from the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) stating that he is the Seal of the Prophets and there is no Prophet after him. Similarly the one who claims that Allaah is incarnated in him or in any other creature is a kaafir according to the consensus of the Muslims, because Allaah, may He be glorified, is not incarnated in any of His creatures; rather He is greater and mightier than that. Whoever believes that is a kaafir according to the consensus of the Muslims, and he is denying the verses and ahaadeeth that say that Allaah is above the Throne, and He is above all His creation. He, may He be glorified, is the Most High, the Great and there is none like unto Him or comparable to Him. He described Himself to His slaves as follows (interpretation of the meaning):

"Indeed, your Lord is Allaah, Who created the heavens and the earth in Six Days, and then He rose over (Istawa) the Throne (really in a manner that suits His Majesty)"

[al-A'raaf 7:54]

End quote.

Majmoo' Fataawa al-Shaykh 'Abd al-'Azeez ibn 'Abd-Allaah ibn Baaz (13/169).

The Twelve Apostates of Baha'i Faith

Having recently read Moojan Momen's paper "Marginality and Apostasy in the Baha'i Community" in the journal "Religion", I believe that I see a general flaw in the paper. It appears that the cases that Dr. Momen cites to support his thesis are by and large unsupportive of that thesis. This observation is based principally upon the information that Momen provides, though my own experience does enter into it.

In the interest of fair—if not full—disclosure, I was a Bahá'í until 1988, retained my membership for another decade, and have been a somewhat outspoken—though less than outstanding—apostate over the decade since. I have visited the Internet forums to which Dr. Momen refers irregularly since April 1996, and I moderate the Yahoo! discussion group, so I have had some contact with most of the characters to which Dr. Momen refers, but I have never met any of them in person.



Dr. Momen specifies a particular, rather unorthodox working definition for the term "apostate" in his paper: apostates are the subset of the group of people who would typically be called apostates who

1. Are involved in contested exits,
2. Affiliate with an oppositional coalition.

I ask that the reader consider this definition while reviewing Momen's accounts of "apostates", though the definition itself may be somewhat ambiguous.

Dr. Momen enumerates his conclusion in six points, though one of the six appears to be twofold. Following are those points that will be addressed herein (some have been trimmed or summarized for brevity):

1. The majority of Bahá'í apostates have characterized the Bahá'í Faith as a cult, and have been partially successful in doing so.
2. What apostates and dissidents see as bad can be seen by mainstream Bahá'ís as good. For example, what apostates see as authoritarianism in the Bahá'í Faith can be seen by "core members" as guidance.
3. The Internet has enabled apostates and dissidents to form a community, and to a degree, to organize.
4. Although in fact only one of the apostates currently holds an academic post, apostates have been very successful in their use of the academic media to present their views. Several have published books and articles in respectable venues.
5. If religious movements want to avoid apostasy, they must act at an early stage in this process.

I do not wish to address these specific assertions. I do not intend to discuss whether the Bahá'í Faith is a cult or not, or to debate the extent to which the Bahá'í Faith is exclusivist, authoritarian, or paternalistic. I do acknowledge that a number of Bahá'í apostates and dissidents have enjoyed some success in their efforts, often enabled by the Internet, but I don't see the point in evaluating the extent of their success.

As for the last point (5) it seems as reasonable as saying "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," though it appears that Dr. Momen is going further and advocating early and active resistance to marginal believers and apostates. If that is the case, he is not concise enough for his assertion to be addressed in a serious manner.

Those points aside, we are left with two points which attempt to characterize the phenomena of dissidence and apostasy as they pertain to the contemporary Bahá'í community:

1. The apostates have created an apostate mythology, with its own heroes and anti-heroes. This mythology, when combined with the apostate issues, which form something of a creed that is regularly recited; the 'captivity narratives' are the equivalent of salvation or conversion stories; and the medium of the Internet, creating a community, amounts almost to the creation of a religion of its own. One could call it an 'implicit religion'. But since this 'religion' has no independent life and exists only to oppose, it would perhaps be more accurate to call it an anti-religion.
2. ... the road that leads to apostasy is usually a long one. Clashes with the central authorities in the religion over positions, actions or strategies lead to the build up of resentment, which is expressed in ways that, in the Baha'i community at least, leads to further clashes. Frustration leads to marginality and in turn to rejection of the religion. The accumulated hostility can then lead to apostasy...

These assertions are not obviously representative of real Bahá'í apostate communities, and must be tested against real world observations.

Dr. Momen mentions 17 individuals in various degrees of variance from the mainstream Bahá'í community, one of which is an enrolled but marginal Baha'i. Twelve to fourteen are considered apostates by Momen. A number of these, however, claim to be Bahá'ís, but are probably willing to accept the "marginal" label.

Here I review the primary examples that Dr. Momen provides, and attempt to determine the extent to which each conforms to Momen's thesis.

1. K Paul Johnson

I begin chronologically with K. Paul Johnson, a young Bahá'í who resigns his membership at age 20. Twenty years later he becomes a well-known author on theosophy, known for his critical but non-antagonistic research on Madame Blavatsky.

After he became established as a theosophical historian, Mr. Johnson introduced himself to the online academic Bahá'í community in the mid-1990s, seeking assistance for a forthcoming book addressing Bahá'í history. Dr. Momen accuses Mr. Johnson of "attacking core Bahá'í beliefs", but provides no example nor even a specific reference wherewith to validate this accusation. Still, we may allow that Mr. Johnson has criticized Bahá'í beliefs: would this information support Momen's thesis? Would it establish that Johnson is a case of resentment, or someone who conforms to a community myth? No, it would only establish that Johnson has criticized Bahá'í beliefs.

Mr. Johnson has not made himself known as an outspoken antagonist of the Bahá'í Faith, but thanks to Dr. Momen, Mr. Johnson may very well have that reputation from now on.

Having myself interacted with Mr. Johnson in recent years, I have found him notably disinclined to debate with Bahá'ís. He is far from an object example of Dr. Momen's thesis. There is no known period of marginalization, and no visible expression of hatred or envy that might be born of. Given what I have seen, I am inclined to believe that Momen did not do adequate research on Johnson. For example, Momen's assertion that Johnson "could be called a serial apostate" seems to have no basis whatsoever.

2. Francesco Ficicchia

Dr. Momen credits this Swiss apostate with giving the Bahá'í Faith the reputation of a cult in Germany. Dr. Momen claims that Mr. Ficicchia was marginalized before his apostasy, but Momen does not support this assertion. He states that Ficicchia "had been a Baha'i from 1971 to 1974, when he declared to his former fellow Baha'is that 'you will from now on have me as an embittered enemy who will fight you with all possible means at every opportunity'". This sudden, angry opposition does not represent a pattern of apostasy emerging from marginality. It appears more like an epiphany. As for whether any apostate community or associated myth applies to Ficicchia's case, Momen admits that it does not. Ficicchia was not a member of any marginal community or coalition.

3. Denis MacEoin

I remember hearing of Mr. MacEoin as a young Bahá'í. He was the only apostate that I was aware of, other than yours truly. I remember wondering whether I had acquired a "MacEoin syndrome".

Dr. Momen states that Dr. MacEoin "departed after clashes with the Baha'i administration." This tells us that MacEoin may have become unhappy with the Bahá'í administration, and even the religion itself, before he disavowed it. But was his exit contested?

MacEoin was a professor of Islamic studies, and his disagreements with the Bahá'í leadership were not, however, a typical matter of personal marginalization, but rather a matter of academic controversy. Momen admits that MacEoin, like Ficicchia, was part of a group of dissidents or an oppositional coalition. Though both of these men are apostates, they are not apostates by Momen's formal definition, and certainly do not fit his model.

Dr. Momen submits no argument that either Mr. Ficicchia nor Dr. MacEoin supported a myth of lost innocence or administrative usurpation. Their criticism of the Bahá'í Faith appears all too fundamental, comprehensive, and personally conceived to fit any such mythology. Perhaps the next generation of dissidents and apostates will better fit Momen's model.

4. Juan Cole

Yet another respected scholar and author, Dr. Cole "voiced concerns about certain aspects of Bahá'í administration", and upon being confronted by the Bahá'í leadership, resigned his membership amid much debate and controversy, but before long turned his attention to world affairs. I see him often on TV, discussing the Iraq war as an expert-for-hire. Again, this is not a picture of all-consuming resentment. This man, hardly a marginal sponge for community myths, has moved on. It seems to me that Dr. Momen ought to have recognized this, and left Professor Cole out of the picture.

5. William Garlington

Mr. Garlington is an Ex-Bahá'í author who, as far as I am aware, is not associated with a community of apostates, and Dr. Momen does not indicate anything to the contrary. Momen asserts that Garlington presented a biased weighting of the issues of the American Bahá'í community in his book, but he makes no claim that Garlington ever made any false statements or exhibited any envy, hatred, or any other behavior that might be born of resentment.

6. Eric Stetson

Mr. Stetson was a Bahá'í for several years as a young man, then became known for supporting ex-Bahá'ís and uncertain Bahá'ís and promoting Christianity. Though his web site has a good deal of content that is critical of the Bahá'í Faith, it is not written in a hateful or a vengeful way. Furthermore, Mr. Stetson is not an active critic of the Bahá'í Faith, but has put his efforts into promoting Christian Universalism, which, contrary to Dr. Momen's assertions, is not Mr. Stetson's creation. Momen is apparently unaware that Christian Universalism is a significant part of the American religious tradition that lives on, to a degree, in Unitarian Universalism, and has begun to regain support among some liberal Christians today.

Dr. Momen also indicates that Mr. Stetson once claimed to be a prophet. That may be a fact, but it has no bearing on Momen's thesis. Upon reflection, such a detail would appear to contradict the thesis, as it would show that Stetson was capable of moving in his own direction. Mr. Stetson may have once been confused about his self-image, and he may yet again, but any assertion that Stetson is obsessed with opposing the Bahá'í Faith is baseless.

As a moderator of Mr. Stetson's discussion group, I have become acquainted with Stetson over the last couple years, and have found that he has become uninterested in Bahá'í controversies. He is all but absent from the discussions, and leaves daily operations to the moderators.

7. 'BB'

This angry, self-described Bayani is idiosyncratic to say the least. I think it is safe to say that he is not about to conform to any community myth, whether apostate or otherwise. My personal experience has been that he is just as inclined to hurl accusations at apostates as he is inclined to denounce the Baha'i authorities. Though he may be subject to some resentment, and who isn't?, this individual appears to have positive interests in a variety of cosmic pursuits. I have interacted with him online (partly as a group moderator), and I find him, as volatile and angry as he can be, quite the antithesis of Momen's communal apostate.

8. 'CC'

Dr. Momen points out that this man, who was only very briefly a Baha'i, is a conservative who doesn't fit well at all into any supposed apostate community or myth thereof. Again, not a very good match for Momen's full thesis.

9. Frederick Glaysher

This benign but paranoid man exists on the fringe of the dissident fringe. As Dr. Momen points out, he is typically regarded as little more than a spammer. He is more an erratic lone wolf than a community member, though many of his liberal stances are not objectionable to many dissidents. Like 'BB', he is no conformist.

Mr. Glaysher is too erratic to represent Momen's proposed model. Momen presents little to indicate that resentment is a factor in Glaysher's behavior, rather, Momen presents yet another thesis for Glaysher's case; not one of social conformity, but one of personal fantasy in isolation.

10. 'DD'

Though I may have unknowingly interacted with 'DD' at some point in the past, I am not familiar with him, so I will have to base my response on what little data Dr. Momen provides. Momen briefly describes 'DD' as follows:

1. He exhibited a marginality phase on talk.religion.bahai previous to his resignation.
2. He has grown "ever more extreme" on talk.religion.bahai since his resignation.

We might call into question whether 'DD' is even an apostate according to Momen's definition, considering that:

1. Momen says nothing about a contested exit.
2. Momen says little to give the impression that 'DD' is a member of an oppositional coalition, or that 'DD' conforms to a community myth.

Dr. Momen implies that 'DD' is a member of an oppositional coalition by pointing to the presence of 'DD' on talk.religion.bahai. I am unsure that this Usenet group represents a community due to its chaotic, unmoderated nature. I have typically avoided talk.religion.bahai for this very reason. Still, some individuals may have formed a kind of niche community in that chaotic space.

Dr. Momen provides nothing to support the notion that 'DD' is a case of pronounced resentment or that he conforms to an apostate community myth. Momen is notably brief in his coverage of this apostate's behavior, telling us only that 'DD' is "extreme in his attacks on the Baha'i faith." Does this broad stroke say anything useful?

11. Alison Marshall

Is Alison Marshall an apostate? Let us review Dr. Momen's definition. An apostate is:

1. involved in contested exits,
2. affiliated with an oppositional coalition

According to this convoluted definition, Mrs. Marshall is the ultimate apostate because she really wanted to remain a Baha'i and still stubbornly considers herself a mainstream Baha'i. It is certain that few Baha'i exits have been so contested as the expulsion of Marshall.

Mrs. Marshall still appears to be orthodox in most respects. I will concede that she speaks her mind, and that she does not appear to be happy with being cast out of the Baha'i Faith organization, but she does not appear to be interested in vilifying the Bahá'í authorities. Though some mainstream Bahá'ís that I know often express opinions that appear flagrantly antagonistic to the Bahá'í authorities and even the Baha'i Faith itself, this is not my experience with Marshall.

Where I must question Mrs. Marshall's credentials is with respect to the second criterion. She may have contested her expulsion, but is she affiliated with an oppositional coalition? My experience has been that she shuns all such things. Admittedly, my experience with her has been limited.

Dr. Momen identifies Mrs. Marshall as a among dissidents and apostates. This is perhaps true among the dissidents, but not so true among the ex-Bahá'ís. To a dissident Bahá'í, Marshall may be a heroic figure in that she still appears to love Bahá'u'llah yet she has been expelled from the body of believers, which is much more than a social club; it would be more accurate to call it the . An ex-Bahá'í, as someone who does not follow Bahá'u'llah in the first place, is more likely to see Marshall as one of a myriad would-be religious reformers who is an unfortunate casualty in an internal squabble. An ex-Bahá'í is likely to be sympathetic to Marshall as a tragic figure, but less likely to see her as a hero.

Mrs. Marshall may be a hero to some, but she can hardly be seen one who has conformed to any anti-institutional community myth. She has clearly resisted association with the wide variety of criticisms of the Baha'i authorities and the Baha'i religion that are commonly expressed on the Internet today.

12. Karen Bacquet

Dr. Momen concedes that Ms. Bacquet is not known to have undergone a marginal phase, so she is also a mismatch with respect to Momen's thesis. She simply leaped from Baha'I to enemy of the Faith, though she appears to have been quite inactive over the last year or two, albeit she does continue to maintain her web site and discussion group, as can be seen in her reappearance to respond to Momen's statements about her.

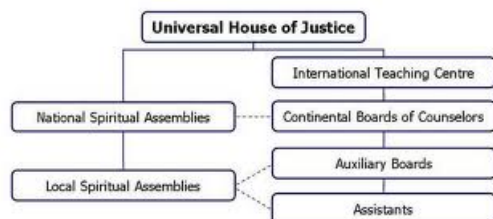
This concludes Dr. Momen's list of apostates; his of the Anti-Faith. He goes on to mention several others, but does not attempt to show how any of them conform to his model.

The list of "apostates" Dr. Momen has provided is not a satisfactory representation of his model. There may be angry apostates, bitter apostates, obsessive apostates, and even insane apostates, and there may even be apostates who conform to Momen's model, but until this latter group can be identified, we cannot apply the model to the population as a whole.

Dan Jensen

Bahai Faith-A Religion Out of Balance

“I believe in Baha’u’llah; I just don’t believe in that other stuff” is a common refrain heard among disillusioned, inactive, and unenrolled Baha’is. To believe in Baha’u’llah is to accept His Writings as the Revelation of God. The “other stuff” is Baha’i administration.



How did administration come to hold such a central place in the Baha’i community? The first generation of Baha’is in this country were free-wheeling seekers of truth, who looked upon their new-found faith as “the spirit of the age”, and thought nothing of participating in the worship services of Christian churches, or in mixing with Theosophists and other New Thought groups. How did their descendents become servants of an inward-looking bureaucracy?

To answer that question requires a quick look at Baha’i history:

Baha’u’llah had two concerns when he laid out the instructions for how his religion was to be governed: The first was that it was not to be ruled by professional clerics, but by the consultations of elected bodies. So he instructed his followers, in his Writings, to elect “Houses of Justice”(currently called Local Spiritual Assemblies) to consist of nine people in every city. The religion as a whole would be governed by a Universal House of Justice.

The second concern was for the unity of his faith, that it would not be divided into various sects. In his will, called “The Book of the Covenant” he appointed his eldest son, ‘Abdu’l-Baha, to be the leader of his faith and the interpreter of his Writings. The existence of a scripturally mandated central authority was meant to prevent major schisms in the religion, and has, for the most part, been successful.(There have been, throughout Baha’i history, small groups that have challenged the central Baha’i authority, but none of these have ever been viable threats to the Baha’i mainstream)

There was little administrative development under the ministries of Baha’u’llah or ‘Abdu’l-Baha. However, ‘Abdu’l-Baha, in His Will and Testament, established the institution of the Guardianship, a hereditary office whose occupant is both the chief executive of the religion and the authorized interpreter of the Writings. The Guardian, along with the legislative body, the Universal House of Justice,would work together in governing the affairs of the Faith. This Will also appointed his eldest grandson, Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, as the first Guardian. Since all of Shoghi Effendi’s relatives were excommunicated, and he had no children, there was no one left to fill this hereditary office when he died in 1957. The Universal House of Justice was elected in 1963, but the administrative directives laid down by Shoghi Effendi are still closely followed. It is, in fact, very difficult to reform any of them, since as Guardian, he is popularly regarded as infallible.

Baha’i administration does not develop according to the needs of the community for organization, but exists as a goal in itself. In fact, many Baha’is believe that these institutions will evolve into a future world theocracy, so that in creating them, they are actually engaged in “saving” the world.

Baha’i scholars, however, have questioned this theocratic model, pointing to evidence that Baha’u’llah himself actually supported the separation of church and state. (See Juan R.I. Cole’s book “Modernity and the Millennium” for an excellent presentation of Baha’u’llah’s political thought.)

A Local Spiritual Assembly(LSA) will be formed as soon as there are nine adult members in a locality, so it is not uncommon for virtually all the active community members to be serving on it. (It is also not unheard of for inactive members to be elected to an LSA, if the community is so small there is no one else to elect.)In such a situation, it is almost impossible to be an active member and not be involved in the administration. Even brand-new converts are frequently put on Assemblies.

There are warnings against over-administration in Shoghi Effendi’s writings, but it can scarcely be avoided when the formation of an Assembly is the first thing a community is expected to do. In fact, Baha’i missionaries, called “pioneers” will relocate primarily in order to help form an LSA — going to a community that already has seven or eight members. (Those with less than nine members are encouraged to organize as a “group”, which includes electing officers.)

Another very odd regulation is the way that localities are divided up. Localities are determined by already existing government boundaries, so that the Baha’i population, no matter how small, existing within a city limit makes up one Baha’i community. Baha’is who reside outside that city limit make up another, separate community. For example, during my first year as a Baha’i, there were eight Baha’is in the city, and three in the surrounding court district that were expected to organize separately. Yet, so important was the formation of the city Assembly considered, that the first question I was asked when I was showing an interest in the Baha’i Faith was whether or not I lived in the city limits.

I personally know of people that have begged the National Spiritual Assembly to do away with this ridiculous and unnecessary roadblock in the way a small, struggling communities. But such pleas have fallen on deaf ears. It is difficult not to believe that this is done primarily to make the statistics look good. The Baha’i Faith claims to have over 1700 LSAs in this country, and no one on the outside would ever suspect that many, perhaps most, of them really have no community to manage, except for the Assembly members themselves.

Finally, administration invades even occasions that are primarily for worship. One-third of the main devotional service, the Nineteen Day Feast, is devoted to the discussion of community issues. It is this administrative portion that makes the gathering off-limits to non-Baha'is. This time is usually devoted to reading letters, listening to tapes, or watching videos sent from the National Center. Ideally, this period is supposed to be used for community consultation, and recommendations are to be given to the LSA. (Rather redundant when everyone is already on the LSA.) However, anecdotal evidence suggests that this time period is not often used very effectively, and that believers seldom feel that their suggestions are being taken seriously. Also, a long period spent discussing business negates the spiritual atmosphere that is supposed to attend such an occasion.

Baha'u'llah, besides ordaining the election of a "House of Justice" for every city, also mandates the building of a "House of Worship" in every city. This institution, more properly known as the "mashriq'u'l-adhkar" (meaning roughly "dawning place of God's remembrance"), is supposed to be the center for Baha'i worship and charitable giving. Various humanitarian services (schools, clinics etc.) are an integral part of the mashriq. The House of Worship and its charities are to be open to all humanity, whether they are Baha'is or not.

So, just like its sister religions, Christianity and Islam, the Baha'i Faith was intended to be a religious community that centers on worship and charitable giving, and yet one can hardly spend five minutes as a Baha'i without realizing that neither of these things are given top priority.

A reorientation of the Baha'i community towards this center of worship and charity would restore some of the openness that was present in the early Baha'i Faith. To participate in administration, a person must be an enrolled Baha'i in good standing, and even many of these are not suited for administrative work. Members of the community associated with the mashriq'u'l-adhkar do not even need to be Baha'is. This fact is recognized even in current practice, since non-Baha'i scriptures are commonly read in the existing Houses of Worship, which are open to all.

There are Houses of Worship in the Baha'i World — in the U.S., Germany, India, Uganda, Australia, Samoa, and Panama. A person can hardly encounter an introductory pamphlet about the Baha'i Faith without seeing pictures of one or more of them. However, these beautiful buildings are not practical places of worship for the vast majority of the world's Baha'is. They are showplaces for curious tourists; they are another opportunity to "teach the Faith"; they give us pretty pictures used to prove that the Baha'i Faith is indeed a "world religion". But they are only the shiny wrapping on a box that remains mostly empty.

The major obstacle, at least in the West, to the creation of local Houses of Worship is the pattern of Baha'i development. Quite obviously, communities that consist of 12-15 members are not going to be able to afford even the simplest building. As long as the Baha'i administration divides Baha'is into tiny "localities" the mashriq is only a dream for the vast majority.

Another obstacle is internal — Baha'is are accustomed to thinking of the House of Worship as something for the future, an institution that will develop when the tiny local communities grow to the point when it can be supported. The fact that it is, according to Baha'i scripture, even more important than the Spiritual Assembly is overlooked.

Instead of a distant dream, the mashriq can be a living reality in Baha'i communities today. 'Abdu'l-Baha clearly called a meeting "where they shall glorify God and fix their hearts upon Him, and read and recite the Holy Writings" the mashriq'u'l-adhkar.[1] That is, a worship meeting itself is the mashriq, not the building; it is this that is supposed to be the center of Baha'i community life.

There are some positive signs, however. Recognizing the hunger for a more spiritual and meaningful community life, some Baha'is have made concrete steps towards establishing the local mashriq'u'l-adhkar by centering the community around "mashriq meetings" instead of the more administratively-oriented Feast. One U.S. community has even purchased land on which to build their House of Worship.

Official reactions to this development have been mixed, however. Support of the mashriq'u'l-adhkar was characterized in the [April 7, 1999 letter](#) from the Universal House of Justice as a "particularly subtle form" of "internal opposition" to Baha'i teachings. However, since then statements have become more moderate, even positive. Especially encouraging is its Dec. 28, 1999 letter which promoted the "holding of regular meetings for worship open to all and the involvement of Baha'i communities in projects of humanitarian service" as expressions of the mashriq'u'l-adhkar. So there is certainly room for hope, even though there is still considerable suspicion in some quarters of any vision of the Baha'i Faith that does not center on institutional development and loyalty.

[1] Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Baha pp. 93-4

Why the Baha'i Faith Can't Keep its Converts??

The National Baha'i Center in Wilmette, IL claims that there are 140,000 Baha'is in the United States. However, it is almost axiomatic among Baha'is that half of the Faith's enrolled members are inactive. In fact, the reality may be even worse than that. **One independent poll on American religions estimated that there are only 28,000 people in this country who consider themselves Baha'is.**



One reason for this huge discrepancy is that no one is ever removed from the membership rolls unless they write a letter to the National Center renouncing their belief. So a person who becomes disillusioned and simply drifts away can remain on the rolls indefinitely. While the 28,000 figure is probably low, the Baha'i assumption that there are thousands of people who consider themselves Baha'is but have no contact with the community is not realistic. (There is the possibility that some do maintain their belief in isolation, but there are not likely to be many who do so.)

What I propose to examine here are the possible reasons for that. This article is not based on scientific data, but my own observations. I would not have the resources to research something like this, even if I had the training. However, I did spend thirteen years in the Baha'i community, and watch a lot of people come and go. Also, the Internet is rife with "ex-Baha'i" stories, and I think the Baha'i community can learn something from what these people are saying. The teachings of the Baha'i Faith — the unity of religion, the individual's right to investigate truth, racial harmony, and the agreement of reason and religion — have a wide appeal. The Baha'i Faith appears to be a religion that is wasting its potential.

I have no way of knowing which of the problems I mention is responsible for the greatest amount of convert dissatisfaction, I have therefore put them in the order that a convert is likely to encounter them:

THE FALSE FRONT

The Baha'i Faith, in its public presentations, emphasizes the more broad and tolerant aspects of Baha'u'llah's teachings. The itself is not dishonest, since those liberal teachings are actually present in Baha'i scripture, and historically, converts into the Faith have been from among more open-minded and educated people. However, these free-spirited seekers often do not find out about the more authoritarian and exclusive aspects of Baha'i thought until after they have enrolled.

There are a few things commonly told to converts that can hardly be seen as anything other than deceptions. (To be fair, however, Baha'is often convince themselves that they are true.)

Another example is the exclusion of women from the Universal House of Justice, the religion's supreme governing body, even though equality of the sexes is promoted as a fundamental principle. That fact also can come as a shock to a new convert, and perhaps cause them to leave. [For a more detailed look at this issue, see my Themestream article ["But Some are More Equal than Others"](#).]

UNSATISFYING COMMUNITY LIFE

One of the least understood aspects of the Baha'i Faith by the general public is the central place administration holds in Baha'i community life. Life as a Baha'i can seem like an endless series of frustrating committee meetings. Building a multitude of LSAs scattered geographically all over the country has taken priority over building solid communities. Once a community has the nine adults necessary to form an Assembly it can be left virtually on its own. In fact, Assemblies exist on paper that never actually meet because not enough of the people in the community are active. But such Assemblies are counted in the impressive statistics given to the public.

The vast majority of Baha'i communities are too small to offer much in the way of services. In an era when mega churches that provide something for everyone are all the rage, the Baha'is look pretty thin. In a very small community, sometimes just getting together for any activity at all can be difficult. Baha'is are often enjoined to be patient, and told that the Faith is only in its infancy. Realistically, however, a religious movement that has been part of the American scene for the last 100 years can hardly continue the claim that it is "embryonic". The simple fact is that the Baha'i Faith has just done a terrible job in creating a rich and rewarding community life for its members, and many of them drift away for that reason.

On the bright side, however, there has been some recognition of this problem on the part of the Baha'i institutions, and in some areas, greater efforts towards community development have been made.

SANCTIONS AND PUNISHMENTS

Like Judaism and Islam, the Baha'i Faith has a religious law code that adherents are expected to abide by. Persistent, public, and continued violation of one of these laws (for example, drinking alcohol, or cohabitation without marriage) can result in sanctions, most commonly the removal of administrative rights. A person so sanctioned cannot participate in any administrative activity, including Feast, the main worship service. This can prove to be an extremely alienating experience, and can result in a person leaving the Baha'i Faith altogether. Even the threat of such sanctions can be the cause of disillusionment. Also, unfortunately, some Baha'is feel it is their duty to "turn in" people who are not living up to Baha'i standards.

INTIMIDATION BY BAHÁ'Í AUTHORITIES

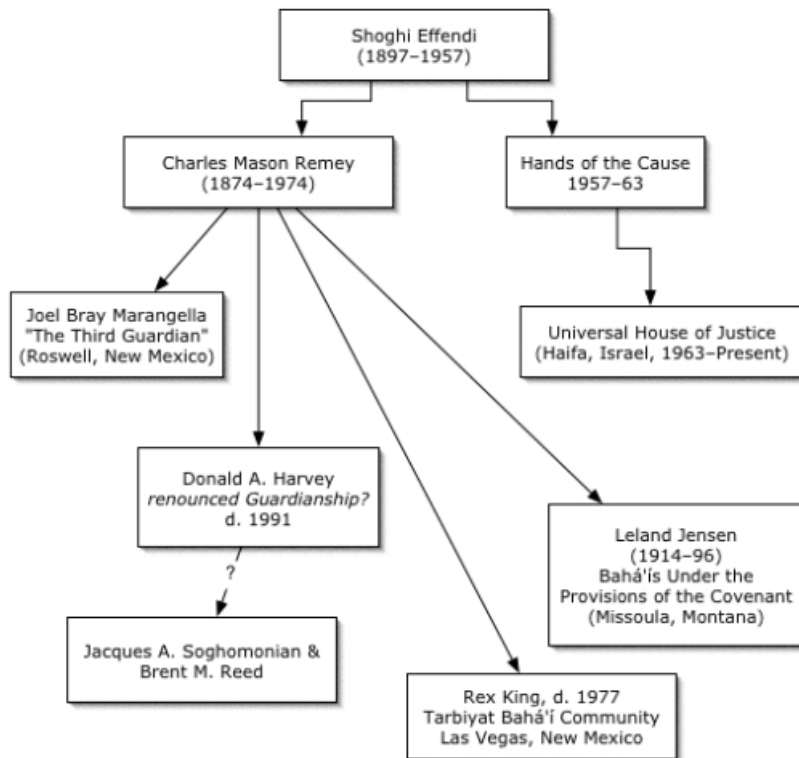
There are abundant stories on the Internet that tell of Baha'is leaving after an encounter with a Counselor or Auxiliary Board Member (ABM). **These appointed officials have the responsibility for the “protection and propagation of the Faith”. It is primarily those who have responsibility for “protection” that show up to investigate cases of possible impropriety. The primary target of these officials are people who are showing an interest in one of the small Baha'i sects, known to mainstream Baha'is as “covenant-breakers”. Opposition to the current head of the faith, the Universal House of Justice, is considered to be a spiritual illness, that could possibly be contagious, so the news that someone is reading their material and openly discussing it will almost certainly bring an ABM into the community who will investigate, warn, and threaten with shunning, a person who fails to abandon such contacts.**

However, with the advent of the Internet, “protection” duties will also include the monitoring of email traffic for anything that seems heterodox. The most notorious incident of this was the [Talisman crackdown](#) in 1996, where professors and intellectuals were threatened with shunning for statements made on an email forum.

Besides associating with schismatics, or email heresy, a Baha'i can attract the attention of Baha'i authorities simply for oral statements, or being seen as a “charismatic leader”. Independent and innovative thinking are viewed with suspicion, with submission to the institutions viewed as a fundamental value. This can drive some of the more talented members away from the Faith.

Bahai Splinter Groups after the demise of Guardian

Bahá'í Splinter Groups After the Demise of the Guardianship *(click boxes for more info)*



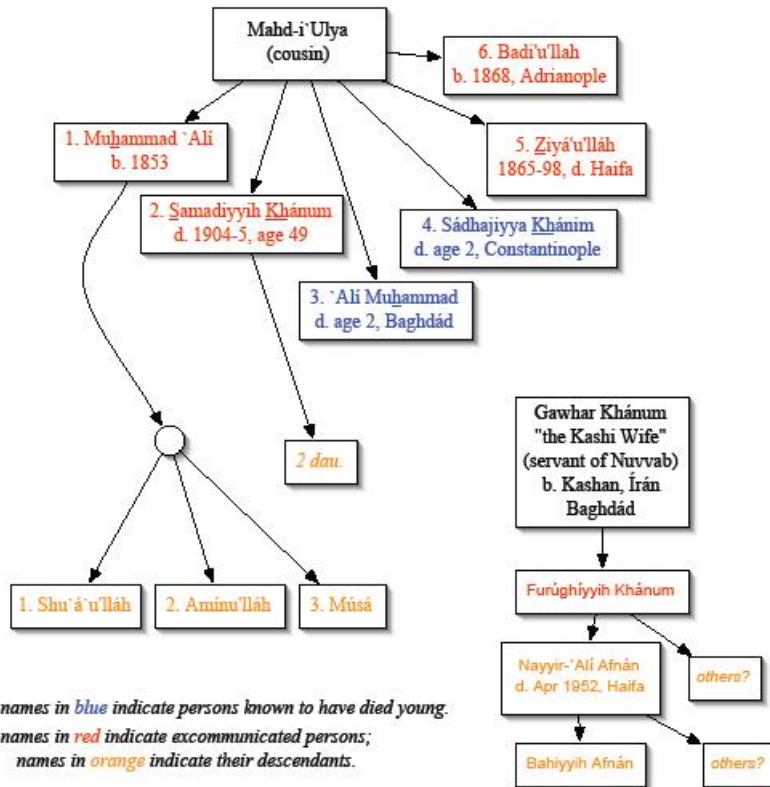
Still Bahais claims that there are no sects in Bahai Faith.

And there are no conflicts among the Bahais....and bla bla bla....

The Demise of Aghsan

Their excommunication would be left to his grandson and preferred heir Shoghi Rabbání. 'Abdu'l-Bahá's *you're with me or you're against me* policy was embraced by his grandson, and the price they both paid for their unwillingness to condone the slightest dissent, even when it was motivated by a person's faithfulness to their immediate family, was the annihilation of the Asán line that Bahá'u'lláh based his covenant upon.

Bahá'u'lláh had three concurrent wives by the names of **Asiyih** (Navváb), **Fatimih** (Mahd-i-'Ulya) and **Gawhar**. His third wife Gawhar was a maid of his first wife Asiyih



chiron.valdosta.edu/whuitt/religion/bahai/verities/rtf/timeln14.rtf
Ancestors of Parvine Afnan Shahid

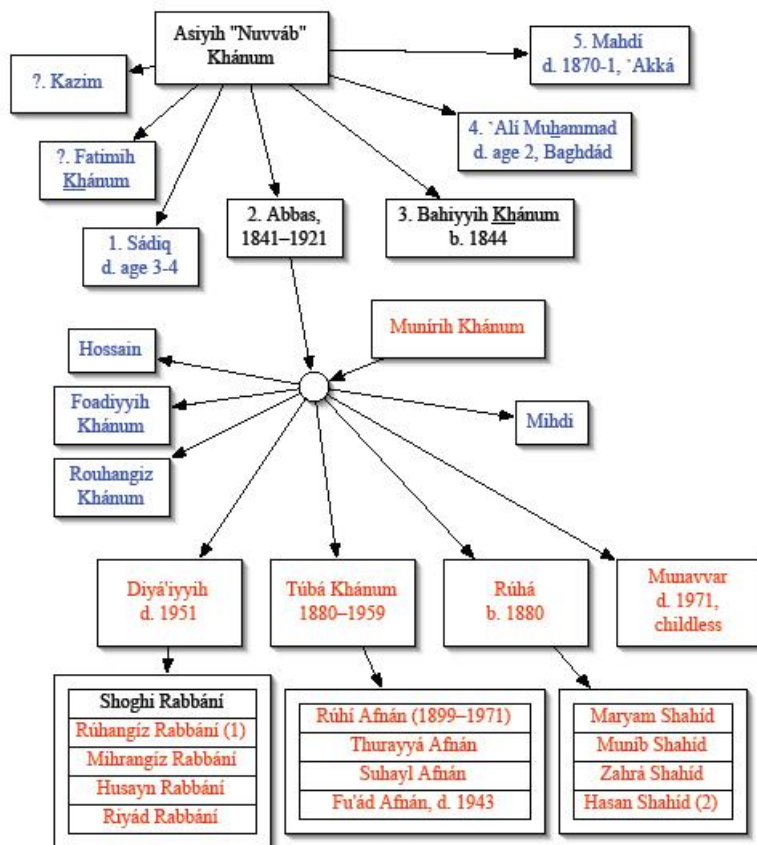
List of Descendants of Mirza Buzurg of Nur, the Father of Baha'u'llah, E.G. Browne
http://bahai-library.com/?file=browne_descendants_mirza_buzurg.html

'Abdu'l-Baha Meeting with Two Prominent Iranians, by Muhammad Qazvini
<http://bahai-library.com/articles/qazvini.html>

The Baha'i Faith: Its History and Teachings, by William M. Miller
<http://www.gospelcom.net/wclbooks/thebahaifaith/>

Baha'u'llah's Family
<http://www.euromade.freemove.co.uk/bahai/bahafamily.htm>

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names in blue indicate persons known or presumed to have died young.
names in red indicate persons excommunicated by Shoghi Rabbáni.

- 1 – Had a daughter named Bahiyyih Afnán
- 2 – Had a son named Parvine Afnan Shahid

List of Descendants of Mirza Buzurg of Nur, the Father of Baha'u'llah, E.G. Browne
http://bahai-library.com/?file=browne_descendants_mirza_buzurg.html

Ancestors of Parvine Afnan Shahid

Baha'u'llah's Family

<http://www.euromade.freemove.co.uk/bahai/bahafamily.htm>

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Baha'is in my Backyard-Trailor

“World peace, no less, is what the Bahai faith wants – a widespread and mysterious religion. This is an investigative road movie about a feel-good religion, two overachieving directors, a prophet’s great-granddaughter, and a CIA agent. A detective-like quest after the Bahai religion, which originated in Iran some 150 years ago, and ended up building its world center on Mount Carmel in Haifa, Israel, – right in our backyard.” For more information go to www.belfilms.co.il

Baha'is answer these two questions!!

The Baha'i Faith is indeed a strange religion. The more I study it, the more I am amazed at its level of duplicity and intent to deceive people. Let me explain this.

You know there are those kinds of people who like to please everyone. And they will say anything – right or wrong to ensure that people like them or that they don't lose their appeal. Sure, for some time we like them. But then their "sweetness" starts getting to you. Over a period of time, this "sweetness" starts getting sickening. You then want them to come clean in discussions, when it comes to giving their opinions and speak the right thing. You want them to speak the facts and not what people want to hear. Ever met people like that?

Well, the Baha'is remind of these types of people. Those who will say anything to appear pleasing to everyone in the world. Let me give you some examples on this.

Baha'is claim to unite religions. Yet they have no thought or opinion on how they can unite the tangential beliefs in religions without antagonizing the other. Christianity believes that Jesus is the son of God. Islam says no. Christianity believes that Jesus was crucified. Islam says no. If the Baha'i Faith was truly the next generation revelation which is meant to unite religions, it must address these very clear contradictions. But you know what. They will never call a spade a spade. They will go onto a tangent. **So who is Jesus? Is he the son of God? Ask the Baha'is – they will say he is a Manifestation of God. Sure. But is he the son of God? He is a Manifestation. Oh, but is he the son of God? whew...** You will never hear anything from them. Why can't they come clean on this? Why can't they either tell the Christians that you guys have been misguided all these years – Jesus is not the son of God. Or simply tell the Muslims – there is no unity of God. Jesus is the son of God. Perhaps they can't come clean on this without antagonizing either Islam or Christianity. So as the adage goes – if you can't convince, then confuse!



A Persian Baha'i with Zionist President

I am still unable to reconcile the fact that Baha'is are not meant to teach the Faith to Jews. Huh? C'mon are you not a universal religion or Bahauallah the messenger of all times etc etc, as you claim? Then why are you depriving the Jews of guidance. **Ask the Baha'is and they will tell you that this is as per pact which Bahauallah entered with the Jews. Huh? A messenger of God entering into an arrangement with a community to deprive them of the teachings of God? Ask the Baha'is and they will shy away from this. What right do they have to stake claim to being a universal religion when they cannot teach such an important community in the world?** So whenever a Muslim comes to me, that's what I tell him – ask the Baha'is to teach the Jews first and then Christians and then Islam. In any case that is the sequence in which Allah revealed his message in any case. Or else, tell us that the Jews are right and we all will follow the Jews and not Bahauallah.

There are several such instances which highlight the false sweetness of the Baha'i Faith. The sad part is that the Bahais themselves are not able to see through these contradictions. Anyways, if ever you meet any Baha'i who appears very sweet to you, just throw him these questions and watch the "sweetness" disappear!

Source : talk.religion.bahai

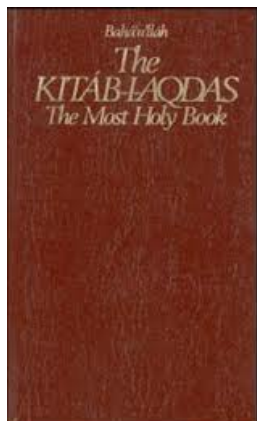
<http://bahaism.blogspot.com/>

Leaders of Baha'i Faith



How much really changed in the Aqdas?

Bahá'u'lláh is said to have written the Kitáb-i-Aqdas in 1873, or perhaps several years earlier. This was relatively early in his ministry, so much was added or amended afterward, but the Aqdas stands as the book that Bahá'u'lláh intended to serve as the foundation of his scriptures. The Aqdas, when viewed with its Islamic, Shi'i, Iranian, and Bayanic origins in mind, presents very little original material, and is hence a very traditional book in the Shi'i style, and it contains much that western Bahá'is and non-Bahá'is might find hard to swallow. It is therefore no surprise that the Bahá'í authorities did not complete an authoritative English translation until 120 years after its release in Arabic. Its release in English, along with the advent of the Internet, preceeded a surge in fundamentalism in the previously liberal western Bahá'í community.



First and foremost, the Twin Duties assigned by the Aqdas to all men are (1) belief in Bahá'u'lláh and (2) obedience to his laws and ordinances. ¶1 The Aqdas states quite clearly that good deeds—without satisfying these two duties—are worthless. This fundamentalist doctrine of salvation leaves no room for the unbeliever and those who cannot manage to live by the entirety of Bahá'u'lláh's rules and regulations, which are—as well shall soon see—quite hard to swallow. The Bahá'í community, in fact, does not follow many of the directives of the Aqdas, though they claim they will one day when mankind has reached a sufficient level of maturity.

There are certainly passages in Bahá'í scripture that exhibit tolerance of the unbeliever, but there are certainly passages that exhibit a less than complimentary attitude:

The peoples of the world are fast asleep. ... So bewildered are they in the drunkenness of their evil desires, that they are powerless to recognize the Lord of all being, Whose voice calleth aloud from every direction ... ¶39

One of the most striking characteristics of the Aqdas, especially in light of the fact that such gravity is given to its laws and ordinances, is that a number of important issues are omitted while several less important topics are addressed in great technical detail. What the Aqdas chooses to address appears to follow the pattern of Islamic tradition and Bábí law more than issues that concern modern civilization. Indeed, the Aqdas itself indicates that Bahá'u'lláh wrote the Aqdas to appease the many contemporary Bahá'is who saw great importance in addressing Islamic law. ¶98

It is not enough to say that the Aqdas endorses capital punishment. In many parts of the world where capital punishment is used, it is reserved for extreme crimes. In the Aqdas, the application of capital punishment is more straightforward: if one kills (with intent), one is to be killed. ¶62

Even stronger is the punishment for arson, which appears to be the equivalent of burning at the stake. ¶62 Not to imply that arson is not a dreadfully serious crime, but isn't that a bit cruel and unusual? Is there no other crime that calls for a punishment of proportionate cruelty?

Though Bahá'u'lláh dealt with a handful of topics in great detail, his handling of these topics left something to be desired with regard to fairness.

One example of this are the flat monetary fines applied to fornication ¶49 and manslaughter ¶188 and flat amounts assigned to dowries ¶66: did it ever occur to Bahá'u'lláh that this approach favors the wealthy? It has the effect of making fornication and manslaughter similarly minor offenses for those who can easily part with a little gold.

I have, on occasion, stopped to wonder how a modern criminal court system might be served by the additional load of fornication cases. I also wonder how people might come to be accused of fornication. It's good for a laugh or two.

Manslaughter is treated as a civil offense for which the blood money is set to about 11 troy oz. of gold. The fine for first offense adultery is about an ounce.

The passages of the Aqdas on marriage ¶63-70 are noticeably gender-biased. Men are permitted to have two wives ¶63 ('Abdu'l-Bahá later abrogated this allowance of bigamy). Men are presumed to be the sole bread winners, so no consideration is given to the likelihood that a woman might work ¶67. Whereas adultery is considered to be an offense that men and women can commit ¶49, divorce appears to be justifiable by female adultery only, for, in keeping with Islamic tradition, divorce is not a two-way street: the man divorces the wife; not the other way around. ¶68.

Dowries are set to a couple ounces of gold for city urban Bahá'is and a couple ounces of silver for rural Bahá'is. ¶66 Silver is, of course, worth much less than gold. This system favors rural residents whether they are rich or poor, but more importantly, why even bother with such detail? Why require dowries in a modern age in which wives are presumably no longer possessions?

Bahá'u'lláh's rules for inheritance clearly favor men over women. ¶20–29 The only defense Bahá'is have for this is that Bahá'u'lláh's rules are merely a default to be used when Bahá'is don't leave a will (which would be illegal). Is this to suggest that Bahá'u'lláh's inheritance rules are not to be used, even as a model? Of course they are to be used! If failing to leave a will is forbidden, why else would Bahá'u'lláh have specified these allotments? To punish the female descendants only? Important Topics Avoided

It seems a bit peculiar that, having dealt with incidental topics in great detail, Bahá'u'lláh found his way to sidestep some important issues, such as circumcision—especially the female variety practiced in parts of the Muslim world. He must have been aware of the practice, yet he did not seem to believe it was an issue deserving of his attention.

Some heinous crimes are not touched by the Aqdas. Thievery is addressed in detail, but robbery—the violent equivalent—is not touched.

The Aqdas does not address sexual crimes such as molestation and rape. These heinous offenses may not have been considered as serious from Bahá'u'lláh's Islamic perspective, but of course that's no excuse for a universal manifestation.

The Aqdas fails to discuss rape, sexual assault, or molestation, but it does express great abhorrence for something it ambiguously calls the subject of boys. ¶107 Shoghi Effendi interpreted this as a general forbiddence of sexual relations between males. As ambiguously grossed out as Bahá'u'lláh appeared to be by the subject of boys, Shoghi Effendi was probably reading Bahá'u'lláh right.

Though the Bahá'is claim to respect cultural diversity, the very fabric of the Bahá'í Faith threatens cultural diversity, because the Bahá'í Faith is no mere code of international and interracial good will as it has been sold to us; rather it is a complex set of behavioral codes that dictate manner of dress, eating, worship, marriage, and on and on. One directive that drives this point home is Bahá'u'lláh's directive on the trimming of hair:

Shave not your heads; God hath adorned them with hair, and in this there are signs from the Lord of creation to those who reflect upon the requirements of nature. He, verily, is the God of strength and wisdom. Notwithstanding, it is not seemly to let the hair pass beyond the limit of the ears. Thus hath it been decreed by Him Who is the Lord of all worlds. ¶44

It's a good thing Shoghi Effendi clarified the prohibition against long hair to be directed only toward men! Still, given the apparent spirit of this passage, consider how Bahá'u'lláh kept his own hair. We have included a photo to assist the reader.



The Roots of Shundamentalism

Shundamentalism, the distinctly Bahá'í practice of shunning other Bahá'is who follow another Bahá'í leader, was put forward again and again by Bahá'u'lláh, and an example is to be found in the Aqdas:

Erelong shall clamorous voices be raised in most lands. Shun them, O My people, and follow not the iniquitous and evil-hearted. This is that of which We gave you forewarning when We were dwelling in Iraq, then later while in the Land of Mystery, and now from this Resplendent Spot. ¶37

Later, in Questions and Answers, Bahá'u'lláh utters this remarkably divisive statement regarding non-Bahá'í family members, giving great legal weight to the practice of shunning apostates:

Any heir, from whichever category of inheritors, who is outside the Faith of God is accounted as non-existent and doth not inherit. # Answer No 34

Why one should not become—or remain—a Bahá'í, according to the Aqdas

Finally, here are some selections from the Aqdas to help motivate good people to keep clear of the Bahá'í Faith:

It is inadmissible that man, who hath been endowed with reason, should consume that which stealeth it away. ¶119

Burden not an animal with more than it can bear. ¶187

Doesn't matter, just Sign them in

Bahá'í Declaration (please print)

Mr., Mrs., Ms., Miss _____ Full name—please do not use nicknames

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Country/State of Birth _____

Have you ever enrolled in the faith before? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Signature _____ **Date** _____

☐ Adult
☐ Youth

Birth Date: _____

Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

Telephone Numbers: _____

Home: _____

Work: _____

"If we made the requirements too rigorous, we will cool off the initial enthusiasm, rebuff the hearts and cease to expand rapidly. The essential thing is that the candidate for enrollment should believe in his heart in the truth of Bahá'u'lláh. Whether he is literate or illiterate, informed of all Teachings or not, is beside the point entirely. When the spark of faith exists the essential Message is there, and gradually everything else can be added unto it..."

(From a letter written on behalf of the Guardian to the National Spiritual Assembly of South and West Africa, July 9, 1957: Teaching the Masses, p. 12) (Compilations, Lights of Guidance, p. 69)

Baha'i Leadership May Spy on You

The Baha'i Leadership May Spy on You, Track Your Movements, and Violate Your Privacy — Beware!

Below is a report prepared on one individual who left the Baha'i movement:



NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHAI'S OF AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED A.R.B.N. 009 727 128 Incorporated the A.C.T.) (Liability of members limited) Phone: (02) 99113 2771 SECRETARIAT Fax: (02) 9970 7275 Email: aus...@bahai.org.au

4 November 1997

The Local Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the Gold Coast

PO Box 833 Southport 4215

Dear Baha'i Friends,

RE: MR. NIMA HAZINI

The National Spiritual Assembly of Australia has been informed by the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States that Mr. Nima Hazini occasionally spends time in Australia visiting parents and often associates with the Baha'i youth here. As Mr. Hazini's parents are members of your community we are sharing the following information (which has been provided by the National Assembly of the United States) with your Assembly: ***"...It is important for you to know that Mr. Hazini withdrew his Baha'i membership in December 1996 after expressing his strong dissatisfaction with the Baha'i community and our National Spiritual Assembly. Shortly after his withdrawal was accepted, Mr. Hazini wrote to the National Spiritual Assembly stating that he had not withdrawn from the Baha'i Faith but had withdrawn only from the Baha'i community. He provided a copy of his letter to the Universal House of Justice...When Mr. Hazini received a copy of the Universal House of Justice's letter, he chose not to pursue reinstatement of his Baha'i membership. The last information that we had about him was that he had decided to become a follower of Sufism."***

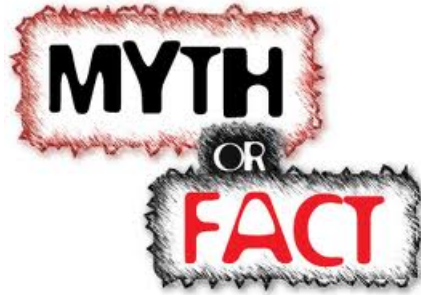
At one stage Mr. Hazini was transferred to the United States as a Baha'i in good standing. However, in light of the information given by the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States we have made the necessary changes in our records about his status. Your Spiritual Assembly is advised to be alert to Mr. Nima Hazini's activities in your area, when he comes to Australia to visit his parents, especially his association with the Baha'i youth.. Thanking you for your cooperation and with loving Baha'i greetings. *Gul Williams for the Secretariat*

Reg. Office: Baha'i National Centre, 173 Mona Vale Road, Ingleside, NSW

19 Myths Baha'is LOVE!!!!

Myth #1: The Bab and Baha'u'llah was anti-slavery

Truth: Both owned, bought, and sold black slaves. Baha'u'llah forbade the slave trade in the Aqdas, not slavery itself. One of the first laws that the Confederate States of America enacted was to make the slave TRADE illegal. But slavery itself continued.



Myth #2: Baha'u'llah was tolerant of homosexuality because He told Baha'is to have a “sin-covering eye”.

Truth: Baha'u'llah called homosexuality HARAM (absolutely forbidden) for Baha'is. The term sin-covering eye referred to “minor sins” (sagiraḥ). There is no one Arabic word for “sin”. There is one for major sins (sagiraḥ) and one for minor sins (sagiraḥ). Baha'u'llah used the one for minor sins. He considered LIWAT (male homosexual acts) and SIHAQ (female homosexual acts) to be among “satanic deeds”; another name for MAJOR sins. He likened LIWAT and SIHAQ to ZINA (adultery/fornication).

Myth #3: ‘Abdu’l-Baha was infallible.

Truth: No way. He said that Universal Peace would be established in 1957. He said that under the Law of Moses a thief’s hand could be cut off. Both untrue. He identified the “24 Elders” in the Book of Revelations as “the Bab, the 18 Letters of the Living, and 5 others” in one place, and identified the same 24 Elders as the 24 Guardians during the Baha’i Revelation in another, contradicting Himself.

Myth #4: Baha’i Holy Law does not mention abortion, and thus it is up to the House to rule upon it.

Truth: The Kitáb-i-Aqdas was the Addendum to the Babi book of Laws, the Qayammul-Asma’, which forbade abortion and divorce. Shoghi Effendi repeatedly said that abortion was “absolutely forbidden” for Baha’is, without making exceptions to this rule.

Myth #5: The Central Figures and Shoghi Effendi preached against racism, and proclaimed that all races are equal in every respect.

Truth: Shoghi Effendi NOWHERE wrote or said that the races are equal in intelligence. He did NOT condemn scientific racism (something he was taught at Oxford as scientifically proven fact), but rather “racialism”; the philosophy that one race can dominate others.

Myth #6: Baha’i teachings say that Jesus never arose from the dead, but His body is still buried somewhere in Jerusalem.

Truth: Baha'u'llah said that Jesus had the “Power of the Great Ether” and this is why He arose from the dead.

Myth #7: Baha’i Writings say that Christ came to unite cities, and to improve the status the rights of minorities and women.

Truth: Nothing in the Writings, nor in the Pilgrim’s Notes, says anything close to that.

Myth #8: Krishna was a black Manifestation of God.

Truth: Krishna is presented in the Bhagavad-Gita, and in Hindu tradition, as an Aryan of the Warrior caste. All of the Manifestations of God in the Adamic Cycle have been Caucasian men.

Myth #9: The next Manifestation of God will be a woman.

Truth: .

Myth: #10: The Baha'i Writings say that all the Prophets are equal to each Others, none of Them are greater than the Others. To say one is greater than the Others is to "distinguish" between Them, which the Writings forbid.

Truth: . By "distinguish between Them" Baha'u'llah was NOT condemning allotting to them ranks, but rather condemning what the Christians and Jews were doing his His day, accepting some and rejecting others as Prophets.

Myth #11: The World Order of Baha'u'llah will be established via the "World Peace" Message, when everyone realizes that we can only have World Peace by becoming Baha'is, then they will become Baha'is.

Truth: Baha'u'llah in a pilgrim's note says how the World Order of Baha'u'llah will be established. It will come after a World Union is formed. The World Union will outlaw religion because of wars and terrorism and enmity between religious groups. Religion will be outlawed by the World Union. However, in one or two generations the leaders of the World Union will see that mankind will become too corrupt without organized religion, so they will choose the Baha'i Faith among all the religions as the most ecumenical and suiting of the needs of world unity, and thus all children will then be raised as Baha'is, and that will commence the World Order of Baha'u'llah.

Myth #12: The death of Jesus on the Cross was just a martyrdom, nothing more. The Bab suffered more because He was tortured before death. Baha'u'llah suffered more because He was put in the Black Pit for four months.

Truth: *Ishmael (offered as a test upon Abraham) *Jesus (died the sins and iniquities "of all mankind") *Imam Husayn (blood atoned for collective sins of Shia Muslim community) *Mirza Mihdi (died for the sins of the Baha'is against Baha'u'llah...allowing them to re-enter His presence)

The ONLY Manifestation of God in that list of Jesus Christ. His death was a "universal atonement" in that its effects had an effect "on all created things".

Myth #13: The depictions of Hell-fire and Jehenna in the Qur'an are mere symbols, and were created by Muhammad as a way to frighten ignorant Arabs into getting them to follow the religion of Islam

Truth: There is NOTHING in the Writings or the pilgrim's notes that even suggests this! In His Tablet to Varqa,

Myth #14: The Bible is full of myths and errors of fact, and everybody knows this, and the Writings say this too. The Gospels as well are full of myths and errors, and were written many years after the events described therein.

Truth: but that certain parts of the Bible should be considered parable or metaphor rather than literal (such as Eve eating a piece of fruit after being tempted by a talking snake).

Myth #15: The Baha'i Teachings are summed up in the 12 (or 11 or 13 or 14) Principles of the Baha'i Faith.

Truth: The "Principles" were first called the "Foundations of World Unity" and they were NEVER put forth as the summum bonum of Baha'i beliefs, nor even basic Baha'i beliefs. They were compiled as "Foundations" to present to world peace clubs and race unity clubs, to find common ground with them, so that Baha'is could speak at such meetings to talk to others about the Faith.

Myth #16: Baha'u'llah said that what the Afterlife was like is beyond description, meaning we cannot possibly know what it is like, therefore the Qur'anic descriptions of the Afterlife must merely be parables of something we can't possibly understand.

Truth: Baha'u'llah described the conditions, including the stench, of the Siyah Chal ("Black Pit") as being "beyond description". This does not mean that we cannot imagine it, nor that the Siyah Chal was simply a metaphor or parable of some personal suffering of His that we cannot comprehend. Baha'u'llah affirms the Qur'anic descriptions of the After life in His Tablet to Varqa.

Myth #17: The Writings say that Heaven and Hell are conditions of the soul, not

geographic locations. Therefore, Paradise and Hell have no existence other than in our own souls.

Truth: (i.e. Paradise was just beyond the fixed stars..fixed in a crystal sphere, and Hell was under the earth in great caverns of fire). The Sufis said we create our Heaven or Hell, depending upon the condition of our soul at death. In other words, if our soul is in Heaven at death, a Heaven is created for us. If our soul is in Hell at death, a Hell is created for us, in the Unseen World, which is as real as this World, but is ethereal instead of physical. The Unseen World exists in every location where the physical Cosmos exists. For years Baha'u'llah used the title Baha'u'Din, the name of the founder of a popular Turkish Nashqabandi Sufi sect. Baha'u'llah wore a Darvish Turban of the Nashqabandi Sufi Sect from the time He lived among the Nashqabandis (1863-5) until His death in 1893.

Myth #18: The Writings say that reincarnation is not true, and impossible.

Truth: Baha'u'llah wrote He was the return of "Jesus, the spirit of God". 'Abdu'l-Baha said that "human souls" do not return to THIS planet. The Sufis taught that when a man became a WALI ("Saint") he no longer had a human soul, but an angel soul or a divine soul. This occurred when the Seeker extinguished his "ego" (human soul), and his nafs (self) is fana' ("blown out like a candle"). Other incarnations on other planets are not ruled out, and seem to be at least hinted at in some Writings and pilgrim notes. The souls of Prophets are pre-existent, and thus not human souls. The souls of the Saints are not "human souls" because they have extinguished their human souls and the only eternal thing that remains in them is the Divine, or Angelic, Soul.

Myth # 19: The purpose of the Baha'i Faith is to establish World Peace/Race Unity/the Equality of Men and Women/Universal Education/equal pay for equal work/socialized medicine/national health care/Esperanto as the Universal Language, etc.

Truth: The purpose of the Baha'i Faith is to establish the Justice of God on Earth; to end injustice in all forms, so that Mankind may be spared from the Wrath of God (final extinction).

Darrick Evenson

Baha'i Cult Leader was on the Payroll of the Racist & Imperialistic British Military



Source : <http://iranianfacebook.com/2012/07/15/bahai-leader-bahai-prophet-was-on-the-payroll-of-the-racist-imperialistic-british-military-the-same-british-that-gandhi-had-to-free-india-from-during-its-period-of-enslavement/>

Why I believe Baha'i is false!!

My initial impression of the teaching of Bahá'u'lláh was favorable. After all, the objectives of peace and regeneration of the world were noble and desirable. However, noble objectives are not sufficient to substantiate the reality of its claim to be the ultimate explanation of supernatural reality.

What about the many cases of martyrdom of believers in the Bab and in Bahá'u'lláh? Do not these lend credence to the Baha'i faith? Much as one is emotionally inclined to do so, I believe this is insufficient to constitute proof of supernatural reality.

Bahá'u'lláh proposes that divine revelation occurs in stages. This is the concept of **progressive revelation**. Each stage is suitable for the level of human understanding at that particular stage in history. He proposed that he is the ultimate Messenger of God and constitute the Messiah hoped for by the Jews, the triumphant return of Jesus Christ and the long-awaited return of Imam Mahdi.

This audacious claim is nonetheless a **theory**. Any theory purporting to explain the divine is attempting to explain a reality in the supernatural realm. As such, it must stand up to the scrutiny of tests of supernatural reality.

If the writings associated with the theory contain historically supported events which cannot be explained by nature, then it constitutes evidence that the theory probably describes a supernatural reality.

The two objective tests of supernatural reality are accurate predictions of future events and performance of miracles.

Prediction of future events constitute one type of evidence of supernatural reality if the likelihood of those events taking place by chance is extremely remote.

Other than three predictions, I have yet to find other predictions in the life and works of Bahá'u'lláh which have come to pass in secular history.

Behá'u'lláh claimed that the Báb had predicted his coming.

The Báb had declared that his own revelation as the "door" to the Imam Mahdi was not final, and that he would, at some future time be succeeded by "**Him whom God shall manifest**". At the same time the Báb had laid it down that the time of this promised deliverer's arrival was known only to God, that no one could falsely claim to be him. The Báb also indicated that the next manifestation would appear suddenly and unexpectedly.

After the execution of the Báb in July 1850 by the Iranian government, a number of important Babis put forth extravagant claims of divinity. This included Sayyid Basir-i Hindi of Multan in 1851. He was one of several Babi leaders of the time who claimed participation in divine manifestations, similar in some ways to those claimed by Sufis or mystics. Another such person was Sayyid 'Uluvv who had made claims to being God incarnate. He resided in the shrine city of Kerbala in Iraq, the site of the tomb of the Imam Husayn.

Thus during those turbulent times, anyone could claim he was "Him whom God shall manifest." I believe Bahá'u'lláh seized the opportunity to declare his divinity and take over the mantle of leadership of the Babis. Thus his appearance as "Him whom God shall manifest" was neither sudden nor unexpected.

Bahá'u'lláh predicted that Sultan 'Abdu'l-'Aziz, the Grand Vizer, 'Ali Páshá and the associate, Fu'ád Páshá would have their lives taken from them as punishment for exiling him to the prison city of Akka.

It is not uncommon for people to curse their enemies. I believe the likelihood of the curse made by Bahá'u'lláh coming to pass by chance is not extremely remote.

What is more interesting is not the prediction coming to pass but the very fact that the curse was made at all. One of the central tenets of Baha'i Faith is belief of common brotherhood of man and that people of the Baha'i should be shining examples to all mankind. I quote from his Writings on the Civilizing of Human Character:

"O peoples of the world! Forsake all evil, hold fast that which is good. Strive to be shining examples unto all mankind, and true reminders of the virtues of God amidst men."

This appears to be contrary to the making of curses. I believe that is an example of hypocrisy and is totally inconsistent of a man who claims he is the "Manifestation of God." and the epitome of the virtues of God.

Behá'u'lláh predicted that a democracy of the people would rule one day in Iran. If this prediction was made before democratic government appeared on earth, it would have been exceptional. However, Behá'u'lláh was looking at the fledgling democracy in England when he made his prediction. Hence the likelihood of this prediction occurring by chance is not extremely remote.

In summary, the likelihood of these three predictions concerning Behá'u'lláh occurring by chance are not extremely remote and therefore are not sufficient to invoke a supernatural causation.

Performing deeds which are impossible in the natural to occur are known as miracles. Miracles constitute evidence of supernatural reality. I am unable to find examples of miraculous acts performed by Bahá'u'lláh.

Thus there is insufficient evidence for me to be convinced that Bahá'u'lláh's theory of "Progressive Revelation" represents supernatural reality.

How can I explain Bahá'u'lláh's behavior? I like to propose a theory that Bahá'u'lláh has megalomania, a psychological state characterized by delusions of grandeur. Examination of his writings show that this theory is plausible.

Bahá'u'lláh claimed that he was infallible (incapable of failure or error) (the 'Ishraqat circa 1855)

However, he made an error when he pronounced that creation had no beginning. I quote from his 'Writings on the human soul'.

*"As to thy question whether the physical world is subject to any limitations, know thou that the comprehension of this matter dependeth upon the observer himself. In one sense, it is limited; in another, it is exalted beyond all limitations. The one true God hath everlastingly existed, and will everlastingly continue to exist. His creation, likewise, hath had **no beginning**, and will have no end. All that is created, however, is preceded by a cause. This fact, in itself, establisheth, beyond the shadow of a doubt, the unity of the Creator".*

It had been scientifically established that there was a beginning described as the 'Big Bang'. **Thus Bahá'u'lláh was not infallible.**

Bahá'u'lláh's original name was Husayn-`Ali Nuri. Consistent with his condition of megalomania, he renamed himself Behá'u'lláh, the meaning of which is "The Glory of God."

He claimed that he is the Manifestation of God and that no one can recognize God except through Him. (the Tajalliyat circa 1855)

He claims that the various messianic prophecies of earlier religions were fulfilled by his coming. (the 'Ishraqat circa 1855)

He glorified himself in a fashion consistent with megalomania:

*"Had Muhammad, the Apostle of God, attained this Day, He would have exclaimed: 'I have truly recognized Thee, O Thou the Desire of the Divine Messengers!' Had Abraham attained it, He too, falling prostrate upon the ground, and in the utmost lowliness before the Lord thy God, would have cried: 'Mine heart is filled with peace, O Thou Lord of all that is in heaven and on earth! I testify that Thou hast unveiled before mine eyes all the glory of Thy power and the full majesty of Thy law!' ... Had Moses Himself attained it, He, likewise, would have raised His voice saying: 'All praise be to Thee for having lifted upon me the light of Thy countenance and enrolled me among them that have been privileged to behold Thy face!'" (Bahá'u'lláh, *Summons of the Lord of Hosts*, p.149)*

If I examine Bahá'u'lláh's claim that the prophets Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Muhammad, Imam Mahdi and Bahá'u'lláh are Manifestations of God, I find something interesting.

None of them claimed to be Manifestations of God except Jesus and Bahá'u'lláh.

Prominent Baha'is of India involved in Criminal Activities!

<http://www.hindu.com/2006/08/19/stories/2006081914800400.htm>

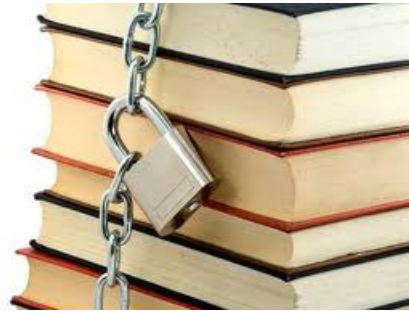
The Delhi High Court on Friday stayed the arrest of the trustees and management committee members of Delhi's Lotus temple, till September 25 on a complaint registered with the Delhi Police.

Justice A K Sikri directed the Economic Offence Wing(EOW) of the Delhi Police not to arrest the trustees and management committee members of the Lotus temple, founded by the Bahai faith, till the next date of hearing.

Trial Judge Kamini Lau, on the complaint of some of the former employees of the temple, had directed the Delhi Police to lodge a complaint against the trustees and management committee members who **were allegedly involved in smuggling of classified defence documents, hawala transactions and religious conversions.**

The trustees and members, some of them from Iran, also procured about 80 Indian passports by submitting false address proof, Counsel S S Tripathy and Sandeep Jain said. Incidentally, Zina Sorabjee, the wife of former Attorney General of India Soli Sorabjee, is one of the trustees. UNI

Scripture Censorship in Baha'i Faith



Any and all scripture that would call into question Baha'i orthodoxy is censored. Is there an authorized Baha'i version of the Bab's W&T, no; is there an authorized Baha'i version of the Bab's Bayan, no. Why?, because these scriptures call into question the very legitimacy of the Baha'i faith and of Baha'u'llah's covenantal claims.

If Baha'u'llah's and Abdu'l-Baha's Wills and Testaments are taken as evidence of Baha'u'llah's covenant shouldn't the Will and Testament of the Bab be put forth as a part and parcel of that covenant?

Truth is that the Bab's Will & Testament is unlikely to ever be issued in an authorized Baha'i version because it would have to be so censored and or altered as to make no sense to cover up the fact that according to the Bab's Will & Testament it was Azal and not Baha'u'llah who was given the authority over the Bab's covenant.

Truth is that church fathers whether they be Christian, Baha'i, Buddhist or Muslim are always willing to make things up as they go to cover up any and all inadequacies and inconsistencies in their orthodox scriptures, doctrines and dogmas.

They are willing to leave things out or gloss things over which would show their chosen ideology in a poor light. In short they are more interested in fabrication than they are in the truth as long as that fabrication fits the mold of their personal interpretation.

Thus the Gnostic Gospels were edited out of the Bible. So to do the Baha'i powers that be strictly control, through the review-censorship process, all Baha'i information using their false label of authorization.

Yours Larry Rowe

False facade of ‘Unity’ and ‘Love’ by Bahais

Let all non-baha’is realize the FALSE facade of ‘unity’ and ‘love for all people’ portayed by the BAHAI universal House of Justice.



Please read my posts and one can deduce that Baha’is ARE NOT ABLE to answer logically- safe to make derogatory remarks.

INDIVIDUAL CONSCIENCE is NOT TOLERATED BY The Baha’i authority- BAHAI universal HOuse of Justice— this is discuss details by Martin(Baha’i mathematician from Canada- member of the all male 9 members of BAHAI Universal House of Justice).

Any Baha’i member with individual conscience is SUMMARILY threatened with expulsion and ostracized by his-her own Baha’i family.

In this case Martin and his 8 ‘divinely’ inspired members of BAHAI universal HOuse of Justice decided to shut Shirin up for 3 years by KIDNAPPING HER IN Peru and placing her in a mental institution.

To many, the Baha’i cult is a dangerous PLAGUE – that plans to take over the world through a Middle Eastern Theocracy- whereby non-baha’is will be forced into financial ruin (through the laws of baha’i inheritance- THE AQDAS).

The Baha’i cult had in fact MISLEAD its own followers into believing that THE LESSER PEACE would be instituted by the end of the 20 century. THIS HAS NEVER HAPPENED

This STUPID prediction was based on the book of Daniel that was supposed to have occured in 1957 then re-written by Baha’is to occur by the end of the 20th century.

NOW, why do Baha’is refer so often to the Bible when at times, Baha’is do not believe that the Bible is entirely authentic. Baha’is choose what they want to portray- and make ‘fun’ of Christians for their belief in the physical ressurection.

Here is a link to Baha’i views on the “lack of authenticity of the HOLY BIBLE”= <http://bahai-library.com/uhj/holy.scriptures.html>

Baha’u’llah is CAUGHT misquoting the Bible in the Gleanings- “As to the question raised by...in connection with Baha’u’llah’s statement in the ‘Gleanings’ concerning the sacrifice of Ishmael; although this statement does not agree with that made in the Bible, Genesis 22:9, the friends should unhesitatingly, and for reasons that are only too obvious, give precedence to the saying of Baha’u’llah, which, it should be pointed out, is fully corroborated by the Qur’an which book is far more authentic than the Bible, including both the New and Old Testaments. The Bible is not wholly authentic, and in this respect is not to be compared with the Qur’an, and should be wholly subordinated to the authentic writings of Baha’u’llah.” (From a letter dated July 28, 1936 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to a National Spiritual Assembly

“...we cannot be sure how much or how little of the four Gospels are accurate and include the words of Christ and His undiluted teachings, all we can be sure of, as Baha’is, is that what has been quoted by Baha’u’llah and the Master must be absolutely authentic. As many times passages in the Gospel of St. John are quoted we may assume that it is his Gospel and much of it accurate.” (From a letter dated January 23, 1944 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer)

The Baha’i CULT -an offshoot of Iranian Islam- SHI’ITE SECT- has REPEATEDLY tried to discredit the authenticity of the Bible- and the have turned around and have Baha’u’llah make statements that ARE NEVER FOUND IN THE BIBLE.

Email from an ex-student of New Era School, Panchgani - INDIA

Extracted from : <http://panchgani-bahais.blogspot.com/2011/10/email-from-ex-student-of-new-era-school.html>

Wednesday, 19 October 2011

Proselytizing Baha'i faith in schools is unethical and immoral

I was a student of New Era School and I will not hesitate in accepting that a full scale Proselytizing goes on in the school in the name of Children Moral Classes. To be honest I have to say here that I did accept the Baha'i Faith for a while for which I was given a declaration card to sign stating that I believe in Bahauallah and Abdul Baha. Therefore I was not at all surprised to see your blog which points towards the Baha'is Proselytizing the Faith to the tiny tots in the Schools in India in the name of Community development. The methods adopted by the Baha'is are dangerous and deceptive as the children are not mature enough and cannot realize what is the actual purpose of these courses. But the fact is that whatever Baha'is are doing is just the order of their apex organization the Universal House of Justice. To support my point, I am reproducing the following extract which has been taken from Baha'i newsletter, 'Reflections on Growth' – Number 25, August 2009, Page 6 Prepared under the auspices of the International Teaching Centre for the institution of the Counselors.

Need I say more?

From the time New Era school has been established there are cases of 500 conversions to the Faith. Countless others are sympathetic and support the cause by large donations – cash and kind.

My dear countrymen, be cautioned !!!!!

Bayanis (Azalis) through the world celebrate New Year 165

Today (23 April 2012) is the 1st of the month of Baha' (splendor) and so the beginning of the Year 165 of the Bayani calendar. Also unlike the Baha'is the Bayani calendar possesses no intercalary days to make up for the 365/366 solar year cycle deficiency. The calendar of the Bab follows a strict scheme of 361 days (19×19) so that the beginning of every new year falls on a different day than the one previous. This is because the Bayani calendar is supposed to reflect and symbolize the all-things/kullu-shay' ($19 \times 19 = 361$).

Given the occasion, I would like to here extend a heartfelt happy new Bayani Year to the Bayani community of Iran and abroad, and hope that our collective efforts to set the historical record straight against 146 years of orchestrated persecution by the Baha'i establishment with their anti-Bayani Baha'i propaganda and historical whitewashes – which the Western establishment has helped them diffuse – will finally begin to pay off. This Year of 165 should be a significant year since 165 is the abjad numerical value of there is no god but God لا اله الا الله

Nima Wahid Azal Official website of the Bayani Community <http://bayanic.com>

What is the religion Baha'i about?

1. How new members are found ?

Baha'i Faith: There are secrets but these secrets are not known to the poor, innocent, newly converted Baha'is. **Does the common baha'i know that the Baha'i Elections are fully controlled by the "All Male, Supreme, All Infallible, Haifan Organisation"? Do they know this, that these are not spiritual but highly fraud and controlled? there are many secrets and are available on the internet. Search on google for Pakistan Baha'i Election Fraud, Baha'i Control on their Electoral System, Baha'i Election fraud in India.**

2. How funding is obtained? Baha'i Faith: Has commercial businesses, they collect money from poor Indians, Burmese, Nepalis, Pakistanis in the name of Community Banking and then use these funds for proselytizing. Also auctions are held of different used Clothings of Baha'i Leaders for fund raising. If they know (and they actually know) that you have money, they (Especially Iranian Baha'is) will start motivating you to give the Some of the fund is used for Pioneering purpose and it is allocated by the Counselors to its own people, sometimes exceeding 15000 US\$ a year. There are huge financial scams in the Baha'i community. Just google to learn more, Search for Baha'i financial scams in Dubai, India, Italy, Pakistan, Africa, Iran etc.

3. Charismatic central figure.

"Baha'i Say: There is no clergy, paid or unpaid" Totally false!

4. Investigation of truth Baha'i Say: Baha'is are encouraged to investigate all religions, and to appreciate truth no matter where it is found.

Totally Wrong.

Baha'is are strictly not allowed to read the material of other Baha'i Sects.

5. Behavior control, as defined by Hassan. Baha'i Faith: Behavior is fully controlled by the Supreme Baha'i Administrative Bodies. Once Baha'i Administration declares any fellow as a "Covenant Breaker" then other Baha'is are supposed to totally boycott / shun him even if he be your brother.

This is what I found, the advice of UHJ to Baha'is "There is no excuse for believers continuing to associate with ... and those who, knowing everything, still insist on doing so, should be shunned by their fellow-Bahá'is. The same applies to people who have left the Cause and associate with ..."

6. Thought control ! Baha'i Faith: The "Ruhi Institute" is specially meant to brainwash the newly converted.

7. Emotional control! Baha'i Faith: Exactly same here, Guilt and fear are often used to control members, including alternating praise and public humiliation (if you are critical of this cult) or forced confession, and indoctrination (Shunning) against leaving the group.

8. What happens when people leave the religion Baha'i Faith: Exactly Same with the Baha'i Cult. **Search the Phrase "Non-association with Covenant-breakers" and read the teaching of Baha'u'llah, Abdul Baha and Shoghi Effendi.**

"SO BAHAI FAITH IS ACTUALLY A CULT" "THE MOST DANGEROUS NWO CULT" Source(s): <http://bahaicultfaq.blogspot.com>

Baha'i government would be totally tyrannical

The Baha'i Administrative Order, developed by Shoghi Effendi, and derived from the writings of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l-Baha, is a badly flawed and ineffective mode of government, which would naturally take over an area if the Baha'is ever became the majority of any place on Earth. Here's why that must NEVER happen:

Second, consider this quote from Baha'u'llah himself: Consider the pettiness of men's minds. They ask for that which injureth them, and cast away the thing that profiteth them. They are, indeed, of those that are far astray. We find some men desiring liberty, and priding themselves therein. Such men are in the depths of ignorance.

Liberty must, in the end, lead to sedition, whose flames none can quench. Thus warneth you He Who is the Reckoner, the All-Knowing. Know ye that the embodiment of liberty and its symbol is the animal. That which beseemeth man is submission unto such restraints as will protect him from his own ignorance, and guard him against the harm of the mischief-maker. Liberty causeth man to overstep the bounds of propriety, and to infringe on the dignity of his station. It debaseth him to the level of extreme depravity and wickedness.

Regard men as a flock of sheep that need a shepherd for their protection. This, verily, is the truth, the certain truth. We approve of liberty in certain circumstances, and refuse to sanction it in others. We, verily, are the All-Knowing.

Say: True liberty consisteth in man's submission unto My commandments, little as ye know it. Were men to observe that which We have sent down unto them from the Heaven of Revelation, they would, of a certainty, attain unto perfect liberty. Happy is the man that hath apprehended the Purpose of God in whatever He hath revealed from the Heaven of His Will, that pervadeth all created things. Say: The liberty that profiteth you is to be found nowhere except in complete servitude unto God, the Eternal Truth. Whoso hath tasted of its sweetness will refuse to barter it for all the dominion of earth and heaven.

I think George Orwell would call this sort of thing "doublespeak". Of course, if you are a Libertarian, this is total nonsense to you. War is peace, freedom is slavery, ignorance is strength. NOT!

Consider this testimony from another ex-Baha'i:

<http://www.bahai-faith.com/ex-Bahai-10.html>

I used to be a member of the Baha'i Faith, and though it has some very good points, it ultimately fails to pass the test of independent investigation. **Baha'is usually seek an image as being very liberal and open-minded, to attract seekers no doubt. Once within the community however, you are very limited in terms of how you should feel about any aspect of life... it has to be the "Baha'i Way" or no way. In fact, you may find yourself in a ridiculous situation if you have unique family situations...**

Are you adopted? Oh, too bad if you were wanting to get married.... Better hope you can track down your biological parents, or you will face a real nightmare, because you need their permission before you can marry if they are still living. If they, let's say, don't like "negroes" and you want to marry interracially, then despite the fact that they have never seen you before in their lives (because they dumped you at an orphanage) you are forbidden to marry, and face severe penalties if you do so anyways. Have you, or anyone you know, had an experience where you faced a four fold conflict with: the love of your life, a biological parent you've never met (or a hard-headed parent with prejudices against your love's race), the Baha'i religious administration, and your own conscience.

Then why bother to have a UHJ at all? It is toothless!

A Multi-Milliard Rial Scam By A Baha'i Company in Dubai

Originally appeared in the Persian language 'Asr-i-Iran 26th of Isfand 1387 (solar) = Monday, March 16, 2009 CE
<http://www.asriran.com/fa/pages/?cid=67633>

After the passage of 20 months it is established that this company not only did not build a single tower/high rise, but didn't even obtain the properties for their construction! In an unprecedented scam involving the amount of 2,150 milliard rials (which was taken from Iranians who had invested money for the purpose of obtaining property in Dubai), a high-rise/tower construction development company connected to the Baha'is in the United Arab Emirates has committed fraud.

According to reports by [the newsagency?] MAWJ (wave), approximately 20 months ago the company 'Reliance', which is connected to two Baha'is by the names of Farhang Rahavi and Elham Sabeti, took money from Iranians in a pre-sale/'on plan' venture capacity, which involved 60 percent on the sale value [of properties], totalling 724 million dirhams (equivalent to 1,950 milliard rials).

With the sale of two [corporate] projects (a German named 'Solar Star' and the Emirati named 'Al-Mahara'), this company as well demanded the sum of 75 million dirhams (equivalent to 200 milliard rials) from Iranians for the purpose of buying property, and obtained it.

Farhang Rahavi, who is an Iranian national with an American passport, then traveled to Dubai with the aim of organizing an association for the defense of the misled Baha'i cult. He – who sometime before, due to his involvement with other fraudulent ventures, had earlier fled Iran – married Elham Sabeti (the former wife of Dr. Mahbubi, i.e. the community head of the misled Baha'i cult in Dubai), and with the company named 'Reliance' entered the real estate property market in Dubai.

It should be mentioned that amongst this collected sum approximately 1,110 milliard rials (equivalent to 112 million US dollars) has been transferred out of the United Arab Emirates and over to the United States of America.

The buyers [i.e. investors] are of the opinion that through the agency of one individual named Pezhman Riazati, who is also a Baha'i, their money was sent out of Iran over to the United Arab Emirates and then transferred to the United States.

The defrauded Iranians in seeking redress with the legal courts of the Emirates are as yet unsuccessful in obtaining hearings, and moreover their cases presently stand in a state of limbo. Some of the bigger Iranian real estate companies in Dubai, who likewise had dealt with this company in the past, at the present time have also not been able to contact the company owners of 'Reliance'.

A few years ago, in regard to foreign investments and transactions in Iran, the Chief Justice of our nation had in some cases specifically warned about unknown companies without identity.

* 'Kollah-bardari' (literally, 'taking the hat off') is translated interchangeably as 'scam' and 'fraud'.

Badi Villar Cardenas: A Bahai Terrorist!

Badi Villar Cardenas is a Lima, Peru based member of a dangerous rightwing Stalinist religious cult known as Haifan Baha'ism. In his capacity as a member of this cult, on the internet he serves in their Baha'i Internet Agency. Throughout Latin and South America, in the past Haifan Baha'ism has been involved with CIA-funded rightwing regimes, such as that of Augusto Pinochet in Chile, and even rightwing death squads in El Salvador in the 1980s as well as the CIA crack-cocaine funded Contras in Nicaragua in the 1980s. Members of the Haifan Baha'i National Spiritual Assembly of Chile served in the cabinets of Augusto Pinochet and so are culpable for the human rights violations under the Pinochet regime against the people of Chile. Recently high ranking members of Haifan Baha'ism in Peru maintained close ties simultaneously to the ousted authoritarian regime of Alberto Fujimori as well as Abimael Guzman's the Maoist Shining Path terrorist organization. **It is a well known fact that uhj member Farzam Arbab, the father of the Ruhi Institutes, developed his model upon that of Marxist guerilla indoctrination cells which the Shining Path maintained in the jungles of Peru, Bolivia and Columbia.** With Alberto Fujimori high ranking members of the NSA of Peru have maintained (and apparently still do) financial interests. On April 7, 2009, Fujimori was convicted of human rights violations and sentenced to 25 years in prison for his role in killings and kidnappings by the Grupo Colina death squad during his government's battle against leftist guerrillas in the 1990s.

In his various capacities in the Peruvian Haifan Baha'i community, Badi Villar Cardenas serves as consultant to several Haifan Baha'i owned agribusiness contractors in the Amazon, one of which was owned by now deceased Costa Rica (cosa nostra) based Iranian Baha'i Hozhabr Yazdani. These are (Haifan Baha'i) companies who are responsible for logging and destruction of the Amazon rainforests and contributing to the genocide against the native Amerindian peoples living along the river — monies which they then send to their cult headquarters in Haifa, Israel. As such Badi Villar Cardenas is an accomplice in the war and genocide against the indigenous Quechua peoples and, along with his Baha'i cosa nostra masters, a war criminal who should be hauled before a human rights commission at the Hague.

On several occasions (esp. in 2006) Mr Cardenas has committed identity theft on the internet against assorted critics of Haifan Bahaism. Additionally Badi Villar Cardenas is rumoured to engage in brujeria (black sorcery, witchcraft) and to solicit the services of Peruvian brujos and brujas (male dark sorcerers and female dark sorcerers) against the ideological enemies of his creed in Peru and outside of it.

Reference: <http://badivillarcardenas.blogspot.com>

Was Mirza Subh i Azal the real successor of Bab?-A Debate



Mirzā Yahyā Subh-i-Azal (seated in centre) and three of his sons, 'Abdu'l-'Alī to the left of the picture, and Rīzwan 'Alī ("Constantine the Persian") and another to the right.

雙魚 Feb 2, 2010 12:34 AM

Fancy may kill or cure. Reply

Anonymous Oct 31, 2010 07:46 PM He was NOT the real successor of the "Bab". He was the half brother of Baha'u'llah. Her mother pushed her son and the other friends to try to gain power... His followers poisoned Baha'u'llah and trying everything to destroy Baha'u'llah family and followers.... Reply

Lover of Bab Dec 14, 2010 11:40 AM @ Anonymous You are totally biased. What are the proofs of all that you said? You are just saying what has been taught to you in your Ruhi Classes. You have been brainwashed. I feel sorry for you. Reply

Anonymous Jan 19, 2011 10:14 PM how is it biased, it is the truth it has not been stated anywhere that mirza yahya was the successor of the bab. Look at all the things that he did to Bahau'llah, do you think that it was good? Of course not, Mirza yahya was the arch covenant breaker. Also it doesn't just say that in the ruhi books it says it in most of the holy writings, so i dont know what your talking about. Reply

Badi 19 Feb 7, 2011 01:39 AM Dear Anonymous, You said Subh-i-Azal was not a good man. The same is said about Baha'u'llah, that he was not a good man. Do you know that the Thugs of Baha'u'llah murdered so many followers of Subh-i-Azal? Have you ever visited <http://www.bayanic.com/> You will get all the information about Subh-i-Azal and how Baha'u'llah committed crimes against Azal and his followers. May God guide you towards the right path. Reply

Anonymous Feb 23, 2011 03:50 AM Don't tell me about the right path mirza yahya was a covenant breaker as well as his so called followed. Bahau'llah did not have thugs. They are called his followers who are known as today as the Baha'is. I do not mean to be rude but please review the writings of bahau'llah and the many Baha'i stories, I'm sure you are a knowledgeable person. Bahau'llah was a manifestation of god and endured many sufferings including sufferings from his own half brother mirza yahya. He endured those sufferings for humanity. He was a manifestation of and we should all recognize this, please think this over. Reply

Naser Mar 4, 2011 08:29 AM You haifan baha'is are completely ruhi'i'zed. Open your eyes! don't just follow all what is being taught to you in those Ruhis. The haifan UHJ is taking the benefit of the poor people of your likes. You are completely blind of the Babi history. Reply

Anonymous Mar 6, 2011 10:20 PM oh shut up stop making your own stupid sects its people like you that cause all these problems it plain and simple. A prophet is sent down us to teach us Gods message either take it or leave it but DO NOT CHANGE IT! Its not that hard to understand The ruhi books are another way of teaching. STOP making your own stupid terms like 'ruhized'. Grow up! Stop causing problems. What is in the ruhi books is in line with the teachings of the faith. It is not seperate so stop making seperate. The governing body of the Bahai faith is The Universal House of Justice you know that I know that everyone who is a bahai knows that. All bahai's are bahai's there are no sects. STOP causing problems. If religion was the cause of dissension it would be better for it not to exist at all. This is quoted. CREATE UNITY NO PROBLEMS. Ya Bahaul Abha. Reply

Anonymous Mar 6, 2011 10:25 PM Oi nasser whats with the 'haifan UHJ' what are there other Universal Houses of Justice. Think before you say something. I inplore you to read the BAHAI writings which i'm sure are available. Independent investigation of the truth is one of the important things of the bahai faith. Do not listen to others, investigate it for yourself, if the bahai faith is not to your liking, at least do not cause problems! Reply

Naser Emtesali Mar 9, 2011 09:32 AM "whats with the 'haifan UHJ' what are there other Universal Houses of Justice" Dear Anonymous, There is one another UHJ that I am aware of and I am sure you are also aware of it. See this : www.uhj.net bye Reply

Anonymous Mar 13, 2011 04:33 AM No I'm not aware of it and I shouldn't have to cause there is no such thing as another universal house of justice there is only one. Why to you believe all these different misconceptions and ideas. I don't understand why you can't just be a Baha'i. Don't believe that stuff. I honestly believe you can change your mind. It really upsets me that people make problems and have misconceptions and just

can't create unity. Not that I'm trying to say that I'm superior at all. Do you really think that 7 million Baha'is around the world are believing in something false and that people like you are understanding the truth of the faith. I didn't want to have to say that but how can I influence people such as your self. You guys are just making things complicated. Mirza yahya was a covenant breaker he did bad things throughout bahaullahs life, yet bahaullah endured them, disentangle that sound updating to you. Bahaullah was trying to teach everyone about the faith the message from god and that he was a manifestation, mirza yahya caused problems to bahaullah, he was in no wise a good man, how can a man such as mirza yahya be good, he did no good he showed no good and he was not faithful to bahaullah or the faith and yet you still believe in him. I don't understand that after all that you still choose to follow that path. Mirza yahya had the opportunity to become a follower yet he chose to throw it away, how can someone such as himself who was close to bahaullah throw an opportunity like that away. He was jealous and ignorant, there always is a ignorant person, I can't understand why he would want to hurt bahaullah or the faith, if he didnt like bahaullah or the faith he could of at least not involved himself in it. Instead of causing all these problems for everyone, what god has set and sent down will be achieved I can guarantee you that, if it is gods will it will happen eventually the whole world will be unified and will be Baha'is, steadfast bahais that a steadfast in the covenant and hopefully do not follow in the footsteps of mirza yahya. I hope you read this extremely long message with great thought and given it a hard thinking, sleep on it, do what ever you want with it, I can only hope that you will become a Baha'i that is firm in the covenant and steadfast with the laws of bahaullah and his teachings Reply

NaserMar 14, 2011 03:47 AM I thank you for your humble comments. I really have sympathy for Haifan Baha'is like you who are completely brainwashed. When the Haifan Bahai Administration (HBA) is not allowing to read you the authentic Babi material. How can you pass a judgment by reading only those censored Haifan Books. Please do justice to yourself. If you really believe in IIOT (Independent.....truth) then do visit <http://bayanic.com/>, do read the crimes committed by Baha'u'llah and his goons in the early days.

Because the HBA says you so about Subh'i' Azal and because it have so many chapters dedicated to him in your Ruhi Course, you have become blind. Open your eyes.

Baha'i faith was not, is not and will never be united. There are two UHJs one Based in ISRAEL and the other in US. Where is your unity?

There are so many guardians and they have so many followers and all are saying that your Haifan UHJ is bogus without a guardian. Isn't that mentioned in your writings.

7 Million baha'is is a Joke. Were are these 7 millions? Which country. Scattered here a there a few people does not make 7 million.

you need to see this : <http://bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com/> Awake from your sleep. They will snatch all your money in the name of funds and huququallah. Beware. Thank you. Reply

AnonymousMar 18, 2011 07:16 PM Are you crazy or something THERE ARE 7 MILLION BAHAI'S IN THE WORLD!!!! You want me name the countries ok here we GO!!! AMERICA. AUSTRALIA, CHINA, CANADA, RUSSIA, THAILAND, IRAN, ISRAEL, KENYA, BRAZIL, PORTUGAL, GHANA, ENGLAND, FRANCE, ITALY, GERMANY, SWITZERLAND, NEWZEALAND, ETC... REAL FACTS BEFORE YOU SAY SOMETHING. THERE ARE NOT TWO UHJS YOU SOUND LIKE A SMART PERSON, TOO BAD YOUR GETTING THE WRONG INFORMATION. THERE ARE MORE BAHAI'S THAN THERE ARE PEOPLE LIKE YOU WHO WANTS TO DERRANGED ARE STOPPING IT. IT IS GODS WILL AND IT WILL BE ACHIEVED, HE WILL BE VICTORIOUS OVER ALL GODS WILL AND IT WILL BE ACHIEVED. Where the hell did you get many guardians from there is and was only one SHOGHI EFFENDI GRANDSON OF ABDULBAHA AND GREAT GRANDSON OF BAHAUULLAH, NOT YOUR STUPID COVENANT BREAKER SAY THAT THEY ARE THE NEXT GUARDIAN. YOU TURN SOMETHING THAT IS WONDERFUL INTO SOMETHING THAT HAS NO MEANING WHATS SO OVER. NO YOU NEED TO OPEN YOUR EYES AND CLOSE THAT DAMN MOUTH OF YOURS AND USE YOUR EARS TO LISTEN TO SOMETHING USEFUL LIKE WHAT IM SAYING. AND GET OVER THE RUHI COURSE YOU TALK TOO MUCH ABOUT IT GET OVER IT!!!! mirza yahya screwed everything up he DIDNT WRITE ANY TABLETS HE DID NOT DO ANYTHING TO CAUSE UNITY AND HE WAS NOT THE SUCCESSOR OF THE BAHAI FAITH. AFTER YOU THOUGHT REPLYING ABOUT WHAT I HAVE JUST SAID DONT EVEN THINK OF WRITING "YES BUT HE DID DO SOME GOOD THINGS" YEH WELL GUESS WHAT SOME IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH AND WILL NEVER BE AND I CANT EVEN IMAGINE WHAT HE WOULD OF DONE AT ALL. THE INFORMATION YOU ARE GETTING IS A LOAD OF LIES AND FALSE. YOU NEED TO OPEN YOUR EYES BEFORE ITS TOO LATE, TOO LATE TO RECREATE YOUR FATE!!!!!! Reply

NaserMar 20, 2011 12:07 AM "Are you crazy or something" I may be crazy in the blinded eyes of Haifan cultist like you. The actual crazies are the Brainwashed people like you, who are believing in the body of those nine elected (or selected?) members to be infallible. How can a sane person believe to me a body of nine normal individuals to be manifestation of God for this age?

Read this "*We don't want to be like those people who want to see God with their own eyes, or hear His melody with their own ears, because we have been given the gift of being able to see through the eyes of the House of Justice and listen through the ears of the House of Justice.*" – Bahai Counselor Rebeque Murphy

more can be found here <http://bahaicultfaq.blogspot.com/>

You are Crazy and Blind and Deaf.

Now regarding 7 Million Baha'is? How many Baha'is are there in those countries? Don't blindly believe in what is being said to you by those Pseudo Gods. They say you 7 million and u believe without any proof? You are really too submissive. Ask them proof. You haven't visited this blog i think, do visit please : <http://bahaicensusindia.blogspot.com/>

There are 2 UHJs and this is a fact. You cannot deny. Boothe these UHJs are fighting with each other. Isn't this true? Why you deny? Tell me if you believe in this UHJ?<http://www.uhj.net> Baha'u'llah's faith has started rotting. It has become stagnant many are leaving the faith. Why there is so much opposition to the Haifan UHJ? Are these all people the agents of Iranian Intelligence as told to you by your RUHI TUTOR. They are controlling your mind. Think independently, read this article. EXIT BY TROOPS

<http://www.angelfire.com/ca3/bigquestions/troopsexit.html>

“LISTEN TO SOMETHING USEFUL LIKE WHAT IM SAYING”

What is useful in your saying. Junk. Everything without proofs. Just damn claims.

“mirza yahya screwed everything up he DIDNT WRITE ANY TABLETS HE DID NOT DO ANYTHING TO CAUSE UNITY AND WAS NOT THE SUCCESSOR OF THE BAHAI FAITH.”

Read this from the true authentic Babi Sources (Uncensored) <http://www.bayanic.com/>

Baha'u'llah was a fraud and so the cult established by him

See this for more understanding <http://bahaicultfaq.blogspot.com/>

Happy Persian New Year to you. Happy Navrooz Reply

Anonymous Mar 20, 2011 01:12 AM It's important to realize that there are several different Bahai denominations. The Wilmette-Haifan Baha'is have in fact been expressing plenty of "hatred" toward other Bahais for many decades, suing and harassing them in the attempt to deprive them of their Constitutional rights of religious freedom and conscience:

Opinion of US 7th Circuit Court of Appeals, Case No. 08-2306 – November 23, 2010
http://www.fglaysheer.com/bahaicensorship/US_7th_Circuit_Court_of_Appeals_11-23-2010.html

Baha'i Faith & 7th Circuit Court of Appeals <http://bahaifaith7thcircuitcourtofappeals.blogspot.com> Reply

Anonymous Mar 21, 2011 10:32 PM First of all its Happy Naw ruz second of all there are 7 million bahais and i have been to different countries and seen it. Also i did not say the house of justice is a manifestation of god. Are actually a dum ass you must be retarded or something, its like you dont retain any information i tell you, if you want to stay this way that way, but let me tell this is the last time i am going to comment, i tried my best you. BUT YOU JUST DONT LISTEN, YOU CAN STICK YOUR BLODDY BAYANIC.COM CRAP AND SHOVE IT UP YOU FOR ALL I CARE. IT IS A FALSE WEBSITE, IT IS PROBABLY THE ONLY WEBSITE THAT YOU PEOPLE HAVE AND EVER HAVE BECAUSE YOU CANNOT THINK OF ANY OTHER CRAP TO PUT INTO IT, YOU ARE BLOODY CONTRADICTING YOURSELF AND ARE RUINING THE LIVES OF OTHERS, SO NEXT TIME YOU WANT TO REFER THAT CRAP BAYANIC WEBSITE THINK, DO I WANT TO TELL SOMEONE SOMETHING FALSE, SHOULD I WASTE MY LIFE IN CONTRADICTION MISINTERPRETATION AND FALSE TALK. THE CHOICE IS YOURS, YOU MAKE IT. BUT DONT MAKE YOUR CRAP THERE IS ONE TRUE SUCCESSOR THAT IS BAHAU'LLAH, HIS NEXT SUCCESSOR ABDULBAHA, HIS SUCCESSOR EFFENDI AND NOW THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE LOCATED IN HAIFA, WHO ARE THE ONLY HOUSE OF JUSTICE AND THERE WILL ONLY BE ONE. GOODBYE AND GOOD NIGHT FOREVER. Reply

Wahid Azal Mar 25, 2011 06:07 AM “Her mother pushed her son and the other friends to try to gain power...”

This is quite a humorous statement considering that the mother of Subh-i-Azal died while Subh-i-Azal was a baby and it was the mother of Mirza Husayn 'Ali Nuri (aka Baha'u'llah) who became Subh-i-Azal's primary care giver. She also died before the events under the question.

It does not cease boggle the mind as to how ignorant Haifan Bahais are of the overall features of their own history. Reply

Anonymous Jul 12, 2011 04:34 PM Hello

The issue being discussed is; who was the One that the Báb predicted that would be made Manifest: The Azal's believe it was Mirza Yahya Subh-i-Azal; The Baha'is Believe it was Bahá'u'lláh.

Lover of Bab Asked: “What are the proofs of all that you said?”

On investigating The Baha'i Faith, as with other religions I was told bad things about the Faith, however, I investigated these rumors for my self, and after clearing away the dirt, I saw such a luster of spirituality, I wanted to be part of this myself. My point is, if one wants to know the truth, one must investigate the reality themselves. The proof I needed was Bahá'u'lláh's teachings has the ability to change peoples lives by the love of God and a love for their fellow man with honesty and truthfulness.

What follows is a few things worthy of consideration.

In a “Tablet Addressed To ‘Him Who Will Be Made Manifest’ ... The Báb says only “Him Who Will Be Made Manifest” can establish His Faith “that no one can attain anything save by Thy power and that He Whom Thou hast raised up is but Thy servant and Thy Testimony.” Only Bahá'u'lláh was able to establish His Faith and made It a world Faith. And further, in this same Tablet, The Báb said: “I, indeed, beg to address Him Whom God shall make manifest ...” “do Thou grant a respite of nineteen years as a token of Thy favour so that those who have embraced

this Cause may be graciously rewarded by Thee.” The Báb declared His Faith in 1844; Bahá’u’lláh declared His Faith in 1863, Exactly 19 years after the Báb declared His Faith.

Bahá’u’lláh’s younger half-brother Mirza Yahya Subh-i-Azal ... rejected Baha’u’llah’s claim to be “He Whom God Will Manifest,” ... As for those who followed Subh-i-Azal; Professor Browne himself estimated their number to be no more than three or four in every hundred Babis, all the remainder having recognized in Bahá’u’lláh the signs of the Bab’s “Promised One.”(15)

“It is impossible that any responsible examination of the Babi era could be undertaken without making extensive use of THE DAWN-BREAKERS: NABIL’S NARRATIVE, the detailed history of that period written by the one person who was both a firsthand observer and recognized historical writer.(19) “For those events which he did not personally witness, Nabil provides in exhaustive detail, the identity of the observers from whom he received the accounts and very often the circumstances surrounding the transmittal”(20) In its place, the principal source used for this period (apart from Mr. Azal) is an extraordinary manuscript produced by unknown writers some time between 1852 and 1863, under the title NUQTATU’L KAF. (21)

Part 2 below Reply

Anonymous Jul 12, 2011 04:36 PM

“The Bab’s recognition of the title of Bahá’u’lláh (Glory of God) was particularly significant since He had used precisely this term in the Bayan to allude to the promised “Him Whom God Will Manifest.” On the eve of His departure for Tabriz where He was executed the Bab reiterated this recognition in a remarkable Tablet which He forwarded to Bahá’u’lláh. Nabil, who was himself a witness of the transmittal, describes the document as: ...a scroll of blue paper, of the most delicate texture, on which the Bab, in His own exquisite handwriting, which was a fine shikastih script, had penned, in the form of a pentacle, what numbered about five hundred verses, all consisting of derivations from the words “Baha.” ... So fine and intricate was the penmanship that, viewed at a distance, the writing appeared as a single wash of ink on the paper. We were overcome with admiration as we gazed upon a masterpiece which no calligraphist, we believed, could rival” (37) “The scroll was duly delivered to Bahá’u’lláh at Tíhran. The most cursory research would have cleared up any question which a modern student of the Baha’i Faith might have on the subject.” 38 As a foot note, the Báb sent a box with His Tablets including the Scroll just mention, and with the Báb’s on pin, to Bahá’u’lláh.

In conclusion: I know that Bahá’u’lláh makes a new creation of those who comes under His Teachings. I don’t have any experience with the Azal movement, so I have nothen to say.

The Báb said only the one that God Manifested could established His Faith. I know that Bahá’u’lláh establish His Faith, and It became a world Faith.

The Báb asked “do Thou grant a respite of nineteen years as a token of Thy favour so that those who have embraced this Cause may be graciously rewarded by Thee.” Bahá’u’lláh Made His public declaration in 1863 exactly 19 years after the declaration of the Báb. Did Azal give a declaration 19 years after the Báb’s?

Did the Azal’s , study the detailed history of The ‘Dawn- Breakers’: Nabil’s Narrative? Or were they content with the NUQTATU’L KAF, a manuscript produced by unknown writers?

If Azal was the promise one, Why did The Báb sent a box with His Tablets, and with His own pin, to Bahá’u’lláh?

This is something to think on! Regards. Reply

Anonymous Jul 29, 2011 06:17 AM

Guys, please. Let’s put our differences aside and stop arguing. Honestly, what is the point of argument. It achieves absolutely nothing. Allah’u’abha Reply

Wahid Azal Jul 29, 2011 07:18 AM

“The Báb said only the one that God Manifested could established His Faith”

Not the Primal Point’s, and beside the Bab explicitly said He whom God shall make Manifest would not appear for between 1511 to 2001 years.

“I know that Bahá’u’lláh establish His Faith, and It became a world Faith. “

So did Reverend Sung Young Moon, Osho, Sai Baba and a whole slew of New Religious Movement cults – some of whom even outnumber you Bahais.

“do Thou grant a respite of nineteen years as a token of Thy favour so that those who have embraced this Cause may be graciously rewarded by Thee.”

He addressed this to HWGSMM when he appears between 1511 and 2001, and not to Mirza Husayn Ali Nuri.

“Did the Azal’s , study the detailed history of The ‘Dawn- Breakers’: Nabil’s Narrative?”

No, because no such history was ever written by Nabil Zarandi. The DAWN BREAKERS is a complete fabrication of Shoghi Effendi. If this te:

is real, let us see the original. <http://www.scribd.com/doc/59724054/Tabatabai-on-Tarikh-i-Nabil>

“Or were they content with the NUQTATU’L KAF, a manuscript produced by unknown writers?”

Nuqtat’ul-Kaf was authored by Hajji Mirza Jani Kashani, a companion of the Bab. There are early manuscripts of this work as early as 1853 (a year after the author’s death).

“If Azal was the promise one,”

He wasn’t. Subh-i-Azal never claimed to be anything other than what the Bab had nominated him as: his Mirror (mir’at) and successor (wasi).

” Why did The Báb sent a box with His Tablets, and with His own pin, to Bahá’u’lláh?”

He didn’t. This is a lie and fiction peddled by you Baha’is. All the earliest documentary evidence proves beyond any shadow of a doubt that all of these were sent to Subh-i-Azal, not to Mirza Husayn Ali Nuri. Reply

Reference: <http://bahaism.blogspot.in/2010/02/high-resolution-image-of-subh-i-azal.html>

Baha'i "Elections" in Haifa, Israel are a Fraud

This year, out of 1'200 votes cast, 500 have been sent by mail to Haifa, Israel, according to the Baha'i administration.

The Israeli Postal Authority (an Israeli Government Agency) has replaced and tempered some (if not all) of these votes. The entire procession is a farce!

Letters are opened and fake ones replace the votes (the list of Baha'is who are eligible is OPEN information).

Most "experts in security" know that it takes less than 30 minutes for a government agency like the Israeli Postal Authority (or Mossad) to open a letter and replace its content (or just make copies) – including SEALED letters, without ANY possibility of detection by the addressee.

Notably, Baha'i elections do not allow campaigning (rightly so), therefore one can expect the votes to be RATHER EVENLY distributed among the 1200 people that can be elected (except may be the names of present members of the UHJ and Counselors, etc.) People are not elected with 70% of the votes with may be the exceptions cited above. Now that the corruption is in place, it is easy to control the administration entirely from the inside, not counting some CORRUPT "Baha'i officials" in Haifa who are unelected.

Therefore, the 500 votes sent by mail can make a BIG difference if (some of) the letters' content has been replaced even partially (or tempered with). Nevertheless, checking it should be an ESSENTIAL PART OF THE AUDITING PROCESS, but again, unfortunately, it is virtually IMPOSSIBLE to audit this part, unless exceptional measures are taken, beyond the ones taken by the Baha'i administration at present. It does NOT require "big" logistics for any Government to commit this kind of fraud. It can be done VERY EASILY, as explained above by the Israeli Postal Authority or the Mossad. However, the "Baha'i" administration will dismiss this possibility. This by itself is very strange...

The Baha'i administration, by its own admission, does NOT verify the authenticity of the mail's CONTENT (i.e., the votes themselves), but ONLY the fact that the sender's name matches the authorized list of Baha'is. Furthermore, the ballots are SECRET (that means that no one knows "who voted for who" beside the person himself/herself, which is not bad by itself).

But this important loophole CAN and has been exploited by the same people who wrote the Protocols of Zion and who have sworn to replace ANY religion with their perverted form of Judaism and who have been condemned and denounced by many US Presidents.

Beware of the Baha'i Elections unless ALL the above issues have been resolved in a COMPLETELY TRANSPARENT way!

– **George Mugabee**

Apr 29 2008

Electioneering in Universal House of Justice

As we all know, Baha'i elections are *supposed* to take place without any nominating procedure, and without campaigning.

I'd like to suggest that in the light of these principles of Shoghi Effendi, the last few persons elected to the Universal House of Justice were elected in contravention of Baha'i electoral law and are guilty of de facto electioneering.

Typically, the punishment for electioneering is that the person's administrative rights are removed and the body on which he serves is often dissolved for new elections.

In 1963-1983, Baha'i elections for the Universal House of Justice, in which NSA members serve as delegates, appear to have been conducted in an upright manner. Several US and UK NSA secretaries were elected. But then people like Hushmand Fatheazam (India) and Ali Nakhjavan (pioneer in Uganda) were also put on.

From 1988, however, almost all electees have been Counsellors with appointments at the International Teaching Center in Haifa. The two exceptions prove the rule. Adib Taherzadeh was a continental counselor and Doug Martin had been brought to Haifa as a publicist for the UHJ. The NSA secretary of the largest Baha'i community, India, has never been ranked that highly in the voting, even though he makes the most sense given that most Baha'is are in the third world and he knows how to administer them. Likewise, NSA secretaries or just NSA members in large Baha'i communities in Africa and Asia are not considered eligible, apparently.

On Taherzadeh's death last year, Kiser Barnes, yet another Counselor at the International Teaching Center, was tapped to succeed him. He joins Hooper Dunbar, Peter Khan and Farzam Arbab, all of whom came in that way.

Now, one gets to be counselor at the ITC by appointment. If the ITC counselors are now the candidate pool for UHJ membership, which is what the voting pattern of the past decade and a half demonstrates, then *appointment of a male counselor to the ITC is a form of nomination*.

Counselors at the ITC travel (on your dime folks) all over the world to consult with NSAs, so that they become very well known to the very people who elect the UHJ. **This is a form of stealth campaigning.** They are also in a position to do favors for NSAs and their members.

It seems to me, then, that Hooper Dunbar, Peter Khan, Farzam Arbab, and Kiser Barnes got to be on the UHJ by nomination and campaigning. The same applies to Doug Martin in my view, but that case is more ambiguous.

Khan and Arbab in particular have shown a ruthless disregard for Baha'i law and basic human decency (as in the scurrilous threats launched at talismanians and the hijacking of the Baha'i encyclopedia by Arbab, and the expulsion of Alison Marshall at Khan's insistence). This pattern of unethical behavior accords well with the illegitimacy of their route to power.

Recently the ITC was shuffled yet again and counselors like Fred Schechter, who were considered too 'soft,' were fired, with extreme hardliners brought in. Not only are the ITC Counselors now 'nominated' for UHJ membership and then sent about to campaign, but they are subject to an ideological litmus test that is ratcheting the center of gravity on the UHJ increasingly toward the Far Right of authoritarianism, disregard for the rule of law, regimentation of the community & etc.

In an ideal world, those guilty of electioneering would be forced off the House, have their administrative rights removed, and the House would be dissolved in preparation for free and fair elections. But, then, in an ideal world, Hell would have frozen over.

Cheers,

Juan

April 20,2001

Universal House of Fear

Baha'u'llah, founder of the Baha'i Faith in 1863, stated **"The essence of all that We have revealed for thee is Justice"** and designed a **"new world order"** including a world-wide system of elected, nine-member bodies at the local, national and international levels, with the top-most body named **The Universal House of Justice (UHJ)**, first elected a century later in 1963.

Many assumed that Baha'u'llah and his UHJ crowning a developing Baha'i Administration may eventually fulfill various messianic prophecies such as "the Kingdom of God" on earth, that the meek shall inherit the earth and the like. **However, in subsequent decades, most notably in the 1980s, a growing number of Baha'is began to perceive that various corrupt practices were permeating the Baha'i Administration on all levels.** This article explores the idea that the UHJ may be degenerating into a weak Universal House of Fear at a time when the Baha'i community needs strong leadership.

Several examples of the House of Fear come to mind. "In Search of Ruhi" suggested some possible implementation faults in the Ruhi program, apparently promoted by at least one contemporary UHJ member. Commenting on this article, Baquia wrote "James, you're going to get in trouble if you keep this up." Was Baquia implying the troubling notion that the UHJ or some of its members might somehow strike back at authors writing critiques on some of their pet projects, contrary to the Constitution of the UHJ? The clear implication may be that Baha'i Administrative institutions might be becoming objects to fear instead of love. Individuals and institutions that rely on fear for influence are inherently weak. **The Baha'i community needs UHJ leadership exhibiting confidence and strength instead of fear and weakness.**

Recent UHJ actions may belie fear of consultation, debate and diversity of ideas and opinion in the Baha'i community The summary ex-communication (removal from membership) of Alison Marshall in New Zealand a few years ago may be a case in point. It seems the issue was whether women should be eligible for election to the UHJ, an idea which Ms. Marshall favored. Exactly what does it matter if one or more Baha'is think women should be able to serve on the UHJ? Why should this issue not be openly debated? The weak avoid debate; the strong welcome it. In prior years, a group of Baha'is in Los Angeles, California, raised this issue, but felt it necessary to present their views in a secretly distributed manuscript, fearing retribution from the Baha'i Administration. With humanity in peril of the worst economic depression in history and a possible world war, has the UHJ membership lost perspective of the highest priority issues that most merit focus and effort? **The Baha'i community needs UHJ leadership exhibiting confidence and strength instead of fear and weakness.**

The ex-communications of Sen McGlinn and many others provide similar examples. When the purported rationale for membership removal in the McGlinn case is read carefully, it may be clear that there was no rationale. McGlinn had done nothing different than dozens of other Baha'i writers according to the literal description of the UHJ. This lack of rationale for what may amount to religious persecution of McGlinn appears to suggest fear and weakness among the UHJ membership. Is the membership so weak that it cannot tolerate an articulate writer on Baha'i subjects? Should not the priority be to increase membership in the Baha'i Faith, not decrease it? These sorts of efforts to stifle independent investigation and expression have prompted many capable Baha'is to become inactive or simply leave the Baha'i membership roles. **The Baha'i community needs UHJ leadership exhibiting confidence and strength instead of fear and weakness.**

The bogus Khan-Martin doctrine of the supposed infallibility of UHJ actions, exposed as lacking any scriptural support in "Infallibility Artifice" and further debunked in "Infallibility Verdict", has revealed just how weak and fearful the UHJ membership may have become. For about two decades, Khan and Martin were allowed to promote their man-made infallibility doctrine, without any support from Baha'i scripture or from any official UHJ statement. This doctrine appears to have had only one purpose: to humiliate and weaken the UHJ as the leading administrative unit of the Baha'i World, turning the UHJ into a sort of institutional clown to be laughed at and mocked as absurd by observers in every quarter — far from the lofty intentions and aspirations of its designer, Baha'u'llah. During this entire period when Khan and Martin and their surrogates travelled the world promoting their doctrine to disgrace the institution of the UHJ, did even a single UHJ member publicly speak up to clarify that the Khan-Martin infallibility doctrine was nothing more than a misguided theory or to oppose this assault on Baha'i interests? Did a single National Spiritual Assembly (NSA) or NSA member speak up? **The Baha'i community needs UHJ leadership exhibiting confidence and strength instead of fear and weakness.**

Meanwhile, silence of the Baha'i Administration on the campaign of Khan, Martin and surrogates to replace the Baha'i Faith with their revised version allowed these usurpers to plant the false idea among many Baha'is that UHJ decisions were in fact infallible. Indeed, a growing number of Baha'is came to believe that the home-brewed infallibility theory was actually based on Baha'i scripture, although nobody could produce any quotation to verify it, since available scripture dealt with inputs to, and the design of, the UHJ and not its specific decisions. Did the childish illusion that UHJ decisions were infallible act as a sort of invincibility drug for UHJ members? Rephrasing, how many UHJ decisions have been reversed in, say, the last 30 years? Can anybody name even one such case? Absence of any evidence that the UHJ can perform one of its constitutionally mandated functions — changing prior decisions, may be viewed as yet another sign of weakness. **The Baha'i community needs UHJ leadership exhibiting confidence and strength instead of fear and weakness.**

"Purge Cover-Up" is the most popular article among Baha'i readers, showing abundant awareness in the international Baha'i community of the apparent failure of the Baha'i Administration to officially recognize the largest schism and loss of membership in the history of the Baha'i Faith as well as to formally issue appropriate apologies, remedies and reparations. Is it possible that the elected members of key NSAs and of the UHJ are not as aware of their own history as the community they serve, as gauged by the popularity of "Purge Cover-Up"? Strong, confident UHJ leadership might have addressed these pressing issues thoroughly and effectively years ago. **The Baha'i community needs UHJ leadership exhibiting confidence and strength instead of fear and weakness.**

Among many out-spoken authors, Baquia continues to document the freeze in the elected membership of most major NSAs and of the UHJ in Baha'i Administration. As suggested in "Bondage by Baha'i Election", Baha'i voters elect persons who voters deemed to be "best qualified" in prior years, rather than assessing who may be "best qualified" at election time. As a result, the elected membership of many NSAs and

the UHJ has come to resemble a powerful, entrenched elite, similar to that which controls secular political parties. Can these elected NSA and UHJ members be unaware of this trend which can severely impair realization of Baha'u'llah's vision? "Bondage by Baha'i Election" suggested several obvious remedies, some of which have been on the table from other authors for many years, such as term limits. Has there been any hint from these NSAs and the UHJ that a remedy to this serious problem is being considered? How many of these members have announced their resignations effective on the date of the next election, to allow Baha'i voters to improve their voting performance by electing other qualified persons? How many of these existing NSA and UHJ members can honestly say that their performance merits re-election? Is silence on this problem consistent with adequate performance of administrative duties or alternatively, with fear, weakness and even incompetence? **The Baha'i community needs UHJ leadership exhibiting confidence and strength instead of fear and weakness.**

The need to renew and invigorate the Baha'i Administration, to exit from apparent inaction, elitism, fear, weakness and lack of creativity, continues to gain priority as political and economic problems in the secular world increase in severity and as the next UHJ election in 2013 approaches. Will the Baha'i community suffer more of the same? Since the UHJ is elected by NSA members, the annual NSA elections come into sharp focus in April, 2012. Can there be any excuse for failure by delegates in those elections to replace the entire membership of most NSAs with new blood of qualified persons? Can delegates actually do their job and research prospects for new members? It may be that no less will be required to elect an entirely new UHJ. The power of the elected bodies — NSAs and the UHJ, resides in great part in the teaching that members should follow the dictates of their own conscience. Likewise, the power of Baha'i voters arises from their ability in each election cycle to issue a vote of confidence or no-confidence whereby some or all members of a Baha'i institution are replaced with persons deemed to be better qualified at that time to fulfil Baha'u'llah's vision. Will Baha'i voters arise to this challenge in 2012 and 2013? Will they make some effort to replace the elitists who, intentionally or unintentionally, have come to occupy key elected positions "for life", contrary to the Baha'i precept that elected members are "lay persons", not permanent administrators until death? **The Baha'i community needs UHJ leadership exhibiting confidence and strength instead of fear and weakness.** © 2012 James J Keene Posted by James J Keene PhD

Reference: <http://jameskeene.blogspot.com/2012/02/universal-house-of-fear.html>

Baha'i faith and it's teachings (Persian) Part 1

The Final Word about Baha'ism and Polygamy

Reference : <http://reference.bahai.org/fa/t/b/KA/ka-87.html#pg57>

Here is my translation from the Arabic version of Ketabe Aghdas.

Sec 57: "Follow the Sonat [that mean culture but my Palestinian translator believe he is attacking Soni's], but not the old people, and not the ignorant. God wrote that you should get married, do not you ever think about going over two women [wives]. And if the guy is satisfied [with one], it is better for you and her."

By that there is no more argument has left that polygamy is legal in Baha'ism up to two wives. My only question is how come Baha-aalah had 3 wives.

Posted by Ataturk

Reference: <http://bhgoat.blog.com/>

Should anyone intentionally destroy a house by fire, him also shall ye burn-Kitab Aqdas

I was invited to a Baha'i party last weekend. The food was great and we were having fun till the host of the party started reading random sentences from a book "Sexuality in Islam" (قوه باء). This book, Sexuality in Islam, is an honest gathering from all the Islamic documents that contains the meaning of sexuality, sexual relation, and even the sexual desires of Mohammad. This book was published in Iran after the revolution and its content has been approved by many Iranian officials and religion authorities.

We were laughing loud and having fun until I mentioned "Islam like any other religion is full of crap, and if you look deep in the Baha'i book you will find nothing but historical jokes like that". This comment has faced a serious feedback. To elaborate my point, **I mentioned "Ketabe Aghdas (کتاب اقدس) said if someone burned your house you should burn him to death"**.

62 : Should anyone intentionally destroy a house by fire, him also shall ye burn; should anyone deliberately take another's life, him also shall ye put to death.(Kitab Aghdas)

Reference: <http://reference.bahai.org/en/t/b/KA/ka-5.html#gr62>

That sentence ended the joy of the party. All I remember was the Baha'i army who were fighting me to prove no such a thing existed in their book. I asked for the Ketabe Aghdas several times; however my requests were rejected with louder argument. Finally someone took responsibility to go online and check for the accuracy of this fact. And believe it or not, I was right.

When the English version of the book revealed that, you can burn a person alive to death if he burns your house, they challenged me to check into the Arabic version. And sadly this strategy did not take them too far. They relentlessly argued at each other for the next two hours on how to translate the Arabic version and how to interoperate it properly to not to make it look better. Meanwhile other friends and I were laughing at them while drinking tea.

They are the group who didn't go to school for their religion, they consider themselves patriotic, but they do not know the content of a 60-page book of Ketabe Aghadas.

But I learned one thing that night. If you understand the true meaning of their book and say it loud, you might be in trouble.

Posted by Ataturk

Courtesy: <http://bhgoat.blog.com/>

Arabic Text:

Reference: <http://reference.bahai.org/fa/t/b/KA/ka-86.html#pg56>(Read the last part of pg 56 and first line of page 57)

Are Baha'is Worshiping God or Son of God?

I was reading Baha'i prayers last night, surprisingly majority of the prayers are addressing Abolbaha, not even BahaAllah or God. Even the prayers that has put together during Abolbaha's time, directly address him as a rescuer and savior. I did a little of research to see why Baha'is who claim they have the most modern religion still stock with the name and the individual. And the following are my discovery.

Baha'is in contrast with traditional religions do not believe in a path to God. The only pass is the happiness of Abolbaha and his successors, Garfield Castle (house of Justice).

Although Baha'is believe in:

"There is none other God but Thee, the Inaccessible, the Omnipotent, the Omniscient, the Holy of Holies." (Bahá'u'lláh Gleanings)

They completely block the way to discover that God. The relation between Baha'is and God has to go through Abolbaha because the real god is inaccessible. In other writing Abolbaha has even forbidden to search or try to understand God.

THE WAY IS CLOSED AND SEEKING IS FORBIDDEN. (Abdul Baha Questions pg. 169)

And that is more astonishing to read BahaAllan boldly called himself God:

"Manifold and mysterious is My relationship with God I am He, Him himself, and He is I, Myself, except that I am that I am and He is that he is." (p.66-67 GLEANINGS FROM THE WRITINGS OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH)

Maybe that is the reason Baha'is like Christian pray and Worship the son of God. And the only remaining question is that "Are Baha'is worshipping God or son of their God (Abolbaha)" **Posted by Ataturk**

Reference: <http://bhgoat.blog.com/2009/01/>

Baha'i Electoral System seems to elect the ambitious and greedy (and paranoid) to the top offices

The problem with the current situation in Baha'i Faith is not merely that the voting records of the NSA members are completely unknown. It is that the activities and policies of the NSA as a whole are almost completely unknown! What exactly do these people do? What policies have they made? What effect have the policies had? Have they been good for the growth of the community, numerically and spiritually? Without knowing the answer to this question, how can the delegates even begin to vote intelligently? Though, as we have seen, the very rules of the elections leave them with little potential impact.

We know that there were about 48,000 adult Baha'is with good addresses in the US in 1978. There are now about 60,000. In the meantime 12,000 Iranians immigrated. **This means that there has been no growth in over twenty years.** *None*. Of course, hundreds if not a few thousands of people have come in during the past two decades, but enormous numbers of them have gone right back out. Would any CEO who had not increased his earnings a single penny over twenty years be reappointed by the board?

The exclusivistic policies of Mr. Henderson, who is frankly mean-spirited, have contributed enormously to this Great Stagnation. He was the one who cracked down on Dialogue magazine in such a nasty way. **He bullied Baha'i travel agents in 1991, for the Lord knows what reward from the corrupt Corporate Travel Consultants.** He agitated behind the scenes for a crackdown on talisman@indiana.edu. He has chased travel teachers out of the country, seeing them as an electoral threat should they become successful. I have no idea about the propriety of Jim Nelson's book-keeping practices, but surely for Henderson to publicly smear him after Jim served on the NSA 1971-1999, in circumstances where Nelson cannot even publicly defend himself, is the height of sleaze. Henderson has arranged for himself to live rent free free in a 9-bedroom mansion (having the Bourgeois studio knocked down to build it, against UHJ instructions) with free Baha'i maids and gardeners, and his main business seems to be bullying Baha'is into silence behind the scenes. And I fully acknowledge that he is probably acting rationally given the way the Baha'i system is structured.

So, I think all these things are related: the fact that the Baha'i faith in the US has been going nowhere fast for decades; the fact that the electoral system seems to elect the ambitious and greedy (and paranoid) to the top offices; the fact that even initially upright people are made perpetual incumbents, exposing them to the temptations of absolute power held for decades and corrupting them; the fact that the electoral system provides an incentive for the incumbents to slap down and chase out potential competitors; the fact that it would not be in the incumbents' interest for the faith to expand, become more open, attract a lot of new voters who might rock the boat.

Term limits would go a long way toward solving all these problems. In fact, why not have staggered elections for 4-year terms? You could elect 5 members in 2000 and 4 in 2002. People who don't serve as long as Nelson did might not become tempted to act high-handedly. They wouldn't face reelection and so would have no reason to fear being unseated by active young folks.

Counselor Fred Schechter, one of the people who falsely accused me, once told a friend of mine that anyone who becomes active in the faith will be attacked (by the faith's officials, it is implied). We hadn't at the time realized that Schechter intended to *act* on this observation!

This is a dysfunctional system, folks. There are ways in which it destroyed Dan Jordan (forcing him to live a lie and to resort to secret trysts), Allen Ward, and now Jim Nelson—not to mention the spiritual harm it has wreaked on the Baby Boom intellectuals who were enticed in with promises of tolerance and justice (!!!).

When Glenford Mitchell had become a huge pain in the ass as NSA secretary and was finally elected off it to the UHJ, everyone breathed a big sigh of relief. And when Henderson came in, the word was that he was a good guy, and we were all relieved. And then in a few short years he demonstrated that he was an even bigger pain in the ass than Mitchell had been. Even dumping Henderson wouldn't solve the problem. The *system* creates the Hendersons and the Nelsons. If anyone cared about the fortunes of the faith as opposed to the size of their marble offices, they would fix the system.

Reference: <http://www-personal.umich.edu/~jrcole/bahai/bhnsa.htm>

Bahai hypocrisy over The Exiling of the Palestinian People

The Exiling of the Palestinian People

“When the Zionists decided to found an independent Jewish state on Palestinian territory, one of the first problems they faced was the small size of the Jewish population living there. In the early 1900s, Jews constituted less than 10 percent of the population of Palestine. Thanks to the efforts of the Zionists, the number of Jewish migrants, 100,000 in the 1920s, reached 232,000 in the 1930s according to official figures. By 1939 there were 445,000 Jews out of a total population of 1.5 million. From representing 10 percent of the population just two decades before, they now constituted 30 percent by 1939. Jewish settlement areas were also expanded in line with the rise in population. By 1939 the land owned by Jews had doubled in comparison to the 1920s. By 1947, there were 630,000 Jews in Palestine and 1.3 million Palestinians. Between the partitioning of Palestine by the United Nations on November 29, 1947 and the founding of the state of Israel on May 15, 1948, the Israelis acquired a substantial part of Palestinian lands. As a result of pressure and killing in Palestinian villages, the number of Palestinians living in some 500 cities, towns and villages fell from 950,000 to 138,000. A great number of these people had been killed, and others were exiled. The Zionist terror groups that would later form the Israeli Army attacked Muslim villages at night. Muslims were shot, and everywhere these groups passed through was burned and destroyed. By these means, some 400 Palestinian villages were wiped off the map in 1948 and 1949. The property left behind by the Palestinians was taken over by the Jews by virtue of the Absentee Property Law. Until 1947, Jewish land ownership in Palestine was some 6%. By the time the state was formally established, it had sequestered 90% of the land.⁹ The Palestinian Arabs were left with just two separate areas, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. <http://www.harunyahya.com/spring04.php>

In 1937 the Baha'is owned one million dollars' worth of property on Mount Carmel. (see evidence enclosed below) .Today that could be as much as one billion. After 1948 the local Arab Palestinians were exiled by force and their land and property confiscated by the Jews who in turn sold some of these properties to the Baha'is in Haifa and Acca. Surely many readers would agree Christ (or the Muslim Madhi or Quam) would not return in the form of Baha'u'llah to do such a prejudiced discriminating deed on his people, as has happened to the poor sad Palestinian people since the Jews laid claim to their land in 1948.

“The Bahá'ís own one million dollars' worth of property on Mount Carmel, one quarter of this is owned by the American N.S.A., about 35 acres. Muhammad Ali's son, Moussa Bahá'í, had to sign all the deeds which went to America as he is on the land commission. When they wanted to transfer the property in the name of the N.S.A. of America, through a power of attorney, Moussa Bahá'í said the N.S.A. was not recognized legally in Palestine. Shoghi Effendi went to a lawyer, who recommended forming a Palestine Branch. A new power of attorney was sent and the property transferred. This pilgrim house (Western) belongs to the N.S.A. of America, also a plot of land near Akka. Shoghi Effendi's plan is to have all the N.S.A.'s of the Bahá'í world own property here on Mount Carmel. This will impress the authorities and protect the property. The “endowments of the Bahá'í Faith in America” would be a better name than “property of.” There are National, International and local endowments. The endowments here in Haifa (Akka, etc.,) are International. The Temple, etc. is a National endowment, and local endowments must also be obtained. http://bahai-library.com/?file=maxwell_haifa_notes.html&chapter=2

In Abdu'l-Baha's & Shoghi Effendi's time there was not enough housing accommodation for 900 Baha'is who work at the BWC as there is today. It was only after the Guardian died in 1957 and the UHJ was formed in 1963 did the Administration start buying up property to house the expanding workers and staff. Most of the property which house these 900 Baha'i workers today was purchased from the Jews who had confiscated it from the exiled Palestinians.

The Jews in Haifa built new homes with the profits from selling some old Palestinian property to the Baha'is for the new incoming Russian Jew immigrants to Haifa. The Russian Jewish immigrants only lived in some of these old Palestinian apartment buildings (for an interim period) until new accommodation was built for them. Some of these apartment buildings still lie vacant today they had to be kept for returning Palestinians as the property rightly belonged to them. But that all looks about to change as George Bush has agreed with Sharon only yesterday to not let any Palestinians back to live in Israel. **So the Jews will start selling more of this property now to the Baha'is who will only be too happy to gobble up as much real estate as they can in Haifa and Acca.**

Below are some facts about Haifa most Baha'is never hear about.

“There are numerous old Palestinian apartment buildings that are still standing in Haifa and vacant. These cities are central to Palestinian culture and history. Accommodating returnees in the major Palestinian cities will greatly contribute to the resolution of the conflict. If Palestinians continue to be barred from these cities they will remain a painful thorn in Palestinian memory and history that will threaten stability.”

“The Palestinian Arabs within Israel made up the majority of inhabitants of Palestine before to 1948. As a result of the war of 1948 and the establishment of the State of Israel, 84% of the Palestinian population” were exiled and became refugees <http://www.arabhra.org/article26/general.htm>

“I have cousins in Beirut, in Syria, in Saudi Arabia, in all the countries of the world. It is their right to return to their country and homeland. The son of Haifa has the right to return to his town. ... **The person who comes from America or Russia has the right to live in Haifa and Tel Aviv, and the true son of Haifa and Tel Aviv remains homeless and exiled. Is this justice? Where is justice? Would you accept that for yourself? Would Bush accept this?** <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/holy/onground/pales.html>

1948 March 22.

Palestine today had one of its ugly days of violence in Haifa, Jews blew up two areas in the Arab quarter, killing 17 and injuring another 150. Chronical of the 20th century (by Jacques Legrand 1988)

How could you make a sustainable solution out of telling Palestinians exiled from Haifa and Jaffa that they could “return” only to Jericho and Nablus? <http://www.yaledailynews.com/articlefunctions/Printerfriendly.asp?AID...>

May I ask, does your prophet Baha’u’llah (Second coming of Christ) find the interpretation in the Christian Gospels to support this?

Baldrick

**Introduction to the Reform Bahai Faith. A Talk Presented to
the Troy Interfaith Group, Troy, Michigan, March 5, 2012.**

Future Baha'i (inspired) Government in Iran



by Ravian Bilani 27-Jun-2009

Baha'ism has set forth a system of civil government. Claiming to be a revelation from God, it has enunciated the laws and regulations of the future State. It approves of constitutional monarchy as the best form of government, and permits republics. But this monarchy will be limited not so much by its constitution as by the law of Baha'ism and its hierarchy. Baha, in the "Kitab-ul-Akdas," the Book of Laws, directs that Baitul Adl, houses of justice, be established in every place, with nine or more members, all Baha'i men, who shall be Trustees of the Merciful, Administrators for God. In the thirteenth, of the "Glad Tidings" he says:

"The affairs of the people are placed in charge of the men of the House of Justice. They are daysprings of command (divine agents, representatives of God). They may execute what they deem advisable. It is incumbent upon all to obey them. Their souls will be inspired with divine aspiration. God will inspire them with what He willeth."

With them will lie the interpretation of points of doctrine. They must decree and judge according to Baha'i revelation. "They must gaze day and night towards that which hath been revealed from the horizon of the Supreme Pen." They shall rule by divine right. Their authority shall be absolute. Abdul Baha restates the words of Baha: [n 1 "The House of Justice must be obeyed in all things." "It is the centre of true government." "The Law of God will be invested in them, and they will render decisions." "All judgment will be from the standpoint of God's laws." "Its decisions and commands will be guarded from mistake. It will have conferred upon it infallibility." The House of Justice will have local councils, national ones, and an international one. Of the latter, Abdul Baha said in an address in New York:

"A universal or world House of Justice shall be organized. That which it orders shall be the Truth in explaining the commands of Baha'u'llah and shall be obeyed by all. All men shall be under its supervision."

Its functions are not confined to matters of faith, for Abdul Baha continues: "The House of Justice is endowed with a political as well as a religious aspect.

It embodies both aspects, and is protected by the preserving power of Baha'u'llah himself." In the political aspect it will be supreme. "The separation of the Religion and the State can only be temporary," says Dreyfus, "a momentary stage. For the present the two spheres are separate. When Baha'ism triumphs they will be united." "The House of Justice will have under its control almost the whole administration, and naturally will take the place of our municipal councils. Such has been Baha Ullah's intention. Further he clearly aims not only at a municipal House of Justice, but also at a legislative one, sitting as a national parliament and as an international tribunal." Remember that all the members are to be Baha'is. So Remey says, "There will be a union of Religion and the State — the governments of the nations. The material laws of men will be founded and enforced according to" Baha'ism. In this politico-religious regime, the political will be subject to the religious. "The kings and rulers of the world," says Abdul Baha, "will find their true authority under the rulings of the House of Justice. It will decide between kings and kings." Baha addressed letters to kings with arrogant assumption of authority to control the civil powers.

The Houses of Justice will have large financial powers. They shall inherit all property of those dying without heirs, and one-third of that of those dying childless. One-third of all fines for crimes shall go to them. For example, in case of murder, two-thirds of the blood money shall go to the family of the murdered and one-third to the House of Justice. A tithe of nineteen-hundredths shall be given into their hands. They shall act as trustees for minors and incapables, and as a Poor Board.

They shall have civil jurisdiction, "to settle material difficulties between believers," for the protection of men, for the preservation of human honour. "If any man refuses to educate his children, the House of Justice shall do it at his expense," and "shall order all the negligent to pay" and use police powers to enforce it.

They must also interpret and administer criminal law, for Baha has "revealed" a code of laws and regulations concerning material as well as spiritual

things. Abdul Baha says, "The revelations of Baha'u'llah contain all the great laws of social government." "The laws cover all points and questions of national administration." For example, in the "Kitab-ul-Akdas," the punishment for theft is prescribed: for the first offense, exile; for the second, imprisonment; for the third, branding "thief" on the forehead, "lest other countries accept him." For adultery a fine is to be paid to the House of Justice,

and for the second offense, double of the fine. Arson is made punishable by burning, etc. This fiat legislation of Baha'u'llah is to be imposed upon the parliaments of all nations. "All legislative and administrative functions," says Dreyfus, "shall assume a sacred character" under the control of the Baha'i House of Justice.

In brief, Baha'ism would set up in each town, in every country, ruling councils, and a central one universal in its sway, composed entirely of Baha'is, clothed with supreme authority, because God-given, over kings, parliaments, and peoples; councils infallible and absolute, superior to appeal or protest; deciding and exacting obedience in every department of the life of humanity — religious, domestic, social, educational, financial, judicial, and political. It would be not an imperium in imperia, but an Empire over all. It would be a priestcraft [2] such as the world has not yet seen—a religious-political regime in which kings and presidents will go not to Canossa but to Acca, and alike hold the stirrups of Baha'i justices, and laws of parliaments will be subject to revision and veto by the Baha'i House. In it is the certainty of priestly oppression when fallible men set up their judgment as God's. The Baha'is claim to have no priests and no hierarchy. It is a question of names. Their system and laws contain the real thing, full-fledged, men mediating God's will. We may call it a Baha'iarchy, if they prefer.

Abdul Baha, recognizing the objections that will be made to the political functions of the Baha'i justices, and foreseeing difficulty with Governments, has, for the time being, directed that in America and Europe the name "House of Spirituality" or "House of Consultation" be used. But change of name does not alter the reality or change the "revelation" of Baha. The House of Justice (central) is to be set up when Abdul Baha dies, and it will assume its functions gradually as opportunity and expediency demand. Already orders have gone forth prohibiting the interpretation of the words of Baha or personal expositions of them. Already the fiat has interdicted the publication, by a Baha'i, of a tract, book, or translation on the Baha'i religion without submitting it to the censor at Acca.

The effect of the working of the Baha'i system may be realized by imagining it as set up in Persia. Suppose, for example, that the small minority of Baha'is now in Persia should become a majority, with a Baha'i Shah. Baha'ism would become the established religion. "Houses of Justice" would come into operation. What of those who remain Moslems and Christians? Fortunately Baha has abolished the law of the Bab that required their expulsion from the chief provinces of Persia and the confiscation of their property. But either the other religions must be judged by Baha'i courts, or separate courts must be set up for them. This would perpetuate the double system of courts, the urfi or civil and the shari or religio-civil courts. The latter would be entirely Baha'i and either lording it over or in conflict with the civil administration. This would be a continuation of the present confusion of Persian conditions, only with the Baha'is in control. What might the minority expect? The oppressions and anathemas received by the old Baha'is from the followers of Abdul Baha Abbas give the answer. Fortunately for the world, the universal reign of Baha'ism is not to be realized, neither is the prophecy of Abdul Baha to be fulfilled which says "that the flag of Baha'u'llah will overcome every other flag and all rulers will do homage to it."

Reference: <http://www.iranian.com/main/blog/ravian-bilani/future-bahai-inspired-government-iran>

Introducing the Baha'i Jewish Lobby

The anti-Iranian nature of the missionary affair continues to reverberate within the Iranian Baha'i community. **Iran has been the cradle of this British manufactured, Zionist supported cult from the very beginning. Most of its adherents have come from Iran. In fact, for all their posturing that they have managed to convert large populations in the Third World – and who for some reason can't actually be found any rolls –, no other country in the world has been so receptive to the Baha'i idea than Iranians and particularly Iranian Jews.**

These days, predominantly of former Jewish and sometimes Zoroastrian backgrounds, the current make up of Baha'is in Iran is vastly different to what it was in the late nineteenth century. **The Baha'i faith lost its appeal to the mainstream Iranian community in the early 1900s during the Constitutional Revolution when Abbas Effendi not only failed to support the constitutional movement, but tacitly even supported the Russian involvement in Iranian internal politics and its sponsoring of Muhammad Ali Shah's coup d'etat against the Parliament and people of Iran.** Later in the mid 1950s Shoghi Effendi directly instructed Iranian Baha'is to work closely with the Pahlavi regime, ergo Habib Sabet. The exodus of Baha'is from Muslim backgrounds resulted in the reduction in the intellectual output of the community.

Coupled with that came the influx of new believers from these Iranian Jewish and Zoroastrian minorities. The new believers had been under persecution in their respective religions and saw the new faith as an opportunity to exert control over others. Introducing the powerful Baha'i "Jewish" Lobby.

Brought together by their dislike of Muslim influences on Iranian culture, the Jewish Baha'is began to gradually purge the Iranian Baha'i community from its Islamic roots and origins. This can be witnessed in their whitewashings of the militant Shi'ite and Babi past.

This agenda fitted well with Shoghi Effendi's vision of abandoning Iran in favour of exporting the cult to other parts of the world. With the death of Shoghi Effendi in 1957 and the rise of the new UHJ oligarchy, the new Jewish (and sometimes Zoroastrian) adherents were quickly promoted through the ranks to high places within the Iranian and International Baha'i communities. Key members of the Iranian NSA and continental Board of Counsellors came from this new ethnic grouping in the Baha'i cult. Following the 1979 revolution, most of the Jewish Baha'i elite migrated to Western Europe and California, USA, where their monies helped buy properties for the AO. The completion of the ARC project is owed to a large part to donations given from these two groups. Several confidential trips by UHJ members Fatheazam and Nakhjavani to LA and Australia in 1989 ensured that all the monies required for the ARC were secured from these groups. In fact the whole of these monies had been raised long before the advertising campaign for fundraising ever begun, much of through their own investments, with smatterings of large grants and subsidies given them by the Israeli government.

During the late 80s and early 90s many of the donators and their relatives were rewarded by the BWC by being nominated to key positions on the Continental Board and the ITC. In fact a quick scan of existing Counsellors in Europe, Australia and North America since 1985 suggests that former Zoroastrians and Jews have done quite well in this regard, but not their Muslim background counterparts.

The UHJs decision to adopt a more rabid form of fundamentalism and hardline position in 1996 bode well for the Baha'i Jews especially.

They were the ones that successfully lobbied the UHJ to: 1) Instruct Iranian Baha'is not to attend Naw-Ruz celebrations by Iranian exile communities; 2) Instruct Iranian Baha'is not to associate with the general Iranian community in exile, thereby attempting to foist a Baha'i-only - rather than a universally Iranian – Naw-Ruz culture.

Counsellor Manijeh Reyhani, for example, who was instrumental in getting Hamid Taheri excommunicated comes from a dual Zoroastrian and Jewish background. These people control the Payam-i Bahai magazine (run by '60s-'70s Pahlavi insider Shapour Rasekh a.k.a. Delaram Mashhuri), the Andalib magazine, and, until its demise Landegg in Switzerland, as well as Radio Bahai (broadcasting in Persian), not to mention composition of the Ruhi modules.

Iran has always been rich in supplying and exporting Baha'i travel teachers around the world. The Baha'i Jewish lobby now wants to dominate and silence the mainstream Iranian Baha'i community by exporting their hyper-fundamentalist reading of the cult into Iran. They have funded companies and businesses through the missionaries in order to "teach the youth" and set up Ruhi Institutes. The Baha'i community in Iran has suffered enormously at the hands of the Islamic regime. It has lost some of its most charismatic Baha'i intellectuals like the Bakhtavars or Davudis. The present elite leadership is exclusively made up of former Jews. There are deep divisions in the community and some of the truly learned ones have boycotted the current crop of leaders and their activities.

So this latest effort to export missionaries is aimed at demonstrating "the correct version of the faith" to the rank and file at the same time isolating (and hopefully driving out) the voices of dissent. It is also a means, among others, by the Israelis to gain further footholds inside Iran itself. Both policies, it would appear, have now failed. The Iranian Baha'i community is racked with dissension and schism, and the IR finally blew its top (and reasonably so given all the freedoms they had given the Baha'is since the mid '90s) with this ridiculous allegation of genocide by the Jewish Baha'i leadership. One wonders if maybe deep down these Jewish Baha'is actually pray for a holocaust to occur in Iran so that they can politically capitalize on it for their future designs, just as their European Jewish counterparts vis-a-vis Palestine.

Reference: <http://www.iranian.com/main/blog/covenant/introducing-bahai-jewish-lobby>

The Soviet system of Baha'i elections

Originally posted, [here](#) by ravi.kumar.7079@gmail.com

IT IS SELECTION NOT ELECTION

A. A study of Baha'i institution

Many control mechanisms relate to the electoral system and the realities of power are existing in the Baha'i community. Early Baha'is allowed nominations to be made for Baha'i office, and also allowed campaigning for Baha'i Institution. When early Baha'is asked 'Abdu'l-Baha, how they should conduct elections for local spiritual assemblies ? He replied that they should follow the rules for elections common in their own country ('Abdu'l-Baha 1908-1916: I,7).

Van den Hoonard points out that nominations and canvassing for Baha'i office were standard practice in North America in the time of 'Abdu'l-Baha (van den Hoonard 1996:157-158).

Baha'i Institutions abolished the practice of nominations and campaigning for elective Baha'i office in accordance with Iranian Baha'i practice. Although ending these practices appears to have a reason, as the community grew, it became impossible for Baha'i elective institutions to have a control over the elections and to bring only those candidates whom they rely and decide.

CRITICISM OF BAHAI INSTITUTIONS BY A BAHAI IS CONSIDERED AN ACT OF "COVENANT BREAKING".

Criticism of Baha'i institutions by a Baha'i is considered an act of "Covenant Breaking" and is often branded a "dishonest attack" on the Baha'i faith, punishable by shunning. After a vote has been taken, all the members of the Baha'i community must support the result, and defeated minorities may not continue to criticize. This theory of political behavior denies the need for checks and balances.

The placing of elected bodies above public criticism and the silencing of defeated minorities has had predictable effects at the national level.

BAHA'I ELECTIONS ARE INFECT SELECTIONS

BAHA'I ELECTORAL RESULTS ARE SKEWED IN THREE WAYS.

First The National Spiritual Assembly enjoys all the advantages of controlling the image of potential NSA members in the national newspaper, **The Baha'i News India** (an organ of the N.S.A.), sending these incumbents to local communities, and sending members around to conferences, which enhances their visibility (all this is paid for out of the national Baha'i fund). These advantages of incumbency are especially very useful in a system where no campaigning for office by others is allowed.

Second The sitting members often promote close associates onto the body, "flying them around to conferences," appointing them to high-powered national committees, and giving them prominence at important events. Since speaking openly about candidates is not allowed, subtle non-verbal signals have taken on extreme importance for delegates, who seem willing to be guided by the incumbents in these indirect ways.

So the future members of the NSA is made a part of an orchestra conducted by the N.S.A Formally approved by Universal House of Justice and supported by the Continental Counselor present in the Convention.

Third Some campaigns are launched by unannounced candidates who go about the country giving talks. Such informal campaigning, the National Spiritual Assembly occasionally stops by ordering the person's talks cancelled, or, if chairmanship of a national committee is becoming a platform for popularity, by firing the individual.

Baha'is call these manipulation of elections, as divinely inspired. Control Mechanisms and Sanctions.

Baha'i leaders employ a number of important control mechanisms to control the Baha'is. These include removal of voting rights, shunning, demands for sticking to traditions, accusations of "weakness in the covenant," informing and surveillance, and various forms of censorship. Many of these tools are employed basically against persons who are somehow prominent or appear to have leadership potential but do not seem easy for incumbents to control, or against intellectuals

The prohibition of nominations and campaigning leads administrators to feel a need for strict controls on Baha'i discourse, and often to the avoidance of even mentioning leaders by name in public, which would be considered as "backbiting."

The ban on campaigning leads to a situation where a great deal of suspicion falls on any active intellectual not directly controlled by the N.S.A. Great suspicion attaches to any Baha'i teacher or lecturer who is not an elected or appointed official and is thought to be "gaining a following."

B. A study of Indian Baha'i Institution

National Convention

Delegates Till about 1986 there were about 171 delegates, courtesy Oliyai Family. These delegates were in accordance with the paper Baha'is projected by the Oliyai family which controlled the NSA elections. False statistics were given by which a large number of delegates were procured. These delegates were given free Delhi trip and free lodging and boarding and were asked to vote for particular candidates. One of the

delegate reported "While all of us were coming from Gwalior in a Jeep for National Convention, one of the delegates said," Nissan Oliyai is a very good boy, vote for him."

Many of the decisions of the NSA were taken outside NSA as Oliyai family enjoyed the majority. A set of decisions were made and it was circulated amongst their friends to finally approve them in the meeting.

Once the members were of no use they were dropped from the NSA list in the next elections. **Mr. Bargawa in 1972 Mr. Khare in 1986 Mr. & Mrs. Gandhi in 2000 Mr. Khemani in 2000 Mr. Shah in 2003**

Later on the UHJ cut short the number of delegates from 171 to 38 to cut Oliyai family to size, but HOUSE failed miserably. Letter of Universal House of Justice dated 20th September 1988 The allocation of 38 delegates to India is a temporary measure. {11th meeting of NSA, 26th and 27th May 1993.}

Canvassing in the National Conventioni. A full scale canvassing is being done during the National convention, the NSA members show deep interest in the delegates enquiring about every minor and finer points of their states, to convey to the delegates that they are very true and faithful Baha'is and always wish for the development of the Faith in his state. This concern goes down till the Ballot paper. And once the Election is over, everything is backed to original state.

ii. Some of the members although unable to pronounce clearly Allahabha use to greet every delegate with a loud welcome of ALLAHUABHA. To show that they are completely PERSIANISED.

iii. The NSA members also do not fail in giving treats to the delegates of ICE CREAMS, who under ordinary days will not even bother to glance at them.

iv. The consultation during conventions are a major platform to project the Candidates for the NSA election. All the speeches are occupied by outgoing NSA members where they leave no stone unturned to show that they are the one "Human with potentials" and deserved to become the NSA members.

v. Although Hindi is the Mother Tongue of a large number of the delegates, the NSA members will give big speeches in English, which is not even understood by a large number of delegates, but English is the effective way of proving that they are PERSONS WITH CAPACITY

vi. The NSA also decides during the year to have meetings in different states. This is just a publicity stunt and to impress the delegates who will be attending the convention.

False Voting

A teller reported that a number of Ballot papers are received by post with the same name repeated in the same order showing that the source of all these ballot papers are one

The total numbers of delegates present in the convention were 17. The total number of ballots received and counted were 33.

All these is well known by the Counsellor present in the convention. It all takes place with the effective approval of the UHJ as they do not want any unapproved member on NSA.

UHJ interference in elections

Many a times the appointment of Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer came from UHJ, there was no election, only selection, but it was announced as election of the office bearers. It was clear that the House was very interested in appointment of certain member as a Treasurer.

Many a times Members of the House attended the NSA of India meeting and requested certain members to resign.

Present Scenario

The UHJ controls every bit of NSA members and their decisions

Mr. Payman Mohajir is the person responsible for India. He is in direct contact with Mrs. Farideh Vahidi who cares a damn not only to the various departments of NSA but also to her host Country. When one of the employees of the Baha'i House, who was unjustly removed after his long years of services asked her to follow the law of the Land, She said I care a damn about your Country and its Laws.

The election of Mrs. Sorabji is actually an election of Mr. Sorabji. It should be known that a non-Baha'i Mr. Sorabji is more useful to the Faith than Mrs. Sorabji. As amount of power he yields in the Government.

Mr. Sohail Mohajir, Yes the Surname matters a lot to UHJ.

So the main decision taker is UHJ through Mr. Payman Mohajir supported by Mrs. Vahidi, Mrs. Sorabji Mrs. Nazneen Rohani and ofcourse one can take Mr. Mohajir for granted because of his surname.

To put aside any discrepancies Mr. Satnam is appointed as the consultant showing the real position of Indian counselors.

Not to mention all other members NSA are just a show piece. Congrats to Mr. Sarwal and Dr. Ansari for their self respect.

PREPARED

BY

A FORMER MEMBER OF NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF INDIA

The Claims and actions of Babis and Baha'is

The claims of Bahaullah.

He considers Bab as his herald. But is he the “Man Yazharahullaho”?

He considered himself a prophet (God Passes By).

He claims to be God.

“There is no God but Me, the Honoured, the Wise.” (Kitabe Aqdas, page 42)

“Take what the Ancient Hand gives you.” (Kitabe Aqdas, page 96)

“There is no God but Me, the securer, the regulator. Certainly We have sent the prophets and revealed the books.” (Kitabe Aqdas, page 58)

“The God of eternity is in the prison.” (Iqtedarat page 36)

“Everything other than Me is created by My command.” (Kitabe Mobeen)

“I am the Greatest Branch (Abdul Baha) without any partners.” (Behjatus Sudoor)

“We Bahais are certain of the eternal beauty.” (Behjatus Sudoor page 217)

“Surely I am God. There is no God but me, the Lord of all things. Everything other than Me is My creation, then O My creation you worship Me.” (Tajalliyate Baha, Tajalli 4)

Baha considers himself to be a Worthless Ant (Asare Kalame Aala vol.4 page 364)

So many personalities in a single person! This is truly fantastic.

Was Bahaullah mentally unstable when he made all (in one) claims!!!

Apart from those discussed above there are yet five principles:

Equality between men and women: This statement is just to please women and in reality is just hogwash.

Let us review some Bahai rules about gender equality

No women are included in the 9-member Universal House of Justice (UHJ) with the sole exception of the widow of Shoghi Affendi. Why only this lady is included? Is she not a normal woman!

The shroud to be given by the eldest male child. Women are disallowed.

Dower to be given to women only.

Polygamy is acceptable but polyandry is banned.

If a man wishes to travel he should inform his wife of the time duration, which if exceeds nine months the lady has right to remarry. Then if the husband does not specify the time of his journey the wife should wait for him all her life.

Maintenance of women is obligatory on the man.

Only women should attend to the household chores.

No Hajj for women. Nor are they expected to keep the fasts lapsed during the days of menstruation. Why? **Tahera Qazvini sanctified her life for Bahaullah but her grave is not included in the Hajj. Why was her body not brought to Akka like others?**

The house and the clothes of a deceased are the sole property of the eldest male child and nothing is there for women. Is this not inequality?

Equality and justice for one and all. Firstly this is not a new principle – rather all religions and societies aim for its achievement. Secondly, it is important to see how have the Bahais interpreted this.

The Bahais killed Mohammad Ibrahim by throwing him into the river Tigris for not believing in Bahaullah's call. (The Book of Haji Maftoon, page 23).

They tried to assassinate Nasiruddin Shah the king of Iran.

Bahaullah killed one hundred and thirty people in one night and plundered their belongings (Nuktatul Qaf page 161).

Bahauallah ill treated his brother Subhe Azal and Abdul Baha did worse to his brother Mohammad Ali.

Let us now see the Babi teachings in this regard. Babis! God has made war obligatory upon you. Capture cities and people for Babism (Bayan chapter 1)

Do not let those who do not believe in the Bayan remain on the earth (Bayan chapter 1)

Snatch the wealth of those who do not believe in the Bayan (Bayan Arabic chapter 5)

Rejectors of Bab! Even if you take bath 1000 times in a day, you shall remain unclean.((Bayan chapter 2)

Whatever belongings of the non-Babis come into possession of the Babis they become clean (Bayan chapter 4)

No intelligent person will call this justice.

Illegal sale of Alcohol at Baha'i Center-A Report

Attention All Units!

Wait til they find out about IMBRA and other Tahirih Justice Center crime spree!

“Being a Bahai is stressful enough, especially when you don’t know exactly when the takeover is going to happen! Bahais don’t believe in drinking alcohol or at least that’s what we tell everybody. The truth is that we are such lushes, we want ALL the liquor for ourselves as long as somebody else pays for it! If we could just get some of the damn booze Layli Miller-Muro is hogging for the politicians and herself, we wouldn’t need to break no stinking laws. License? We Bahais don’t need no stinking license!”



Monday, November 19, 2007 4:52 PM Police Confiscate Illegal Alcohol BY POLICE MEDIA UNIT

Police at Central Station and Liquor Licensing Squad are investigating an incident of the illegal sale of alcohol at BAHAI CENTRAL last Thursday.

Police attended a residence at **BAHAI** and discovered that the resident owner was selling alcohol without a license.

During the operation, police have confiscated LARGE QUANTITIES of various types of alcohol, including: cartons of SB, cartons of Solbrev, cartons of Saratoga, cartons of Ice House, cartons of Scotch Cola, cartons of Red Horse, bottles Rum, bottles of premium Whiskey, bottles of Frigate rum, a bottle of Captain Morgan and bottles of premium Vodka.

The Officer in Charge of the SIPF Liquor Licensing Squad said that illegal selling of alcohol is a serious crime and members of the public should consider the legal consequences of such an act.

“To sell liquor in the Solomon Islands, you must have a license. It is illegal to sell alcohol without a license and police are working very hard to stop this from happening,” he said.

Police seized the alcohol and the seller will be charged on a later date.

Investigation is continuing.

Reference: <http://solomontimes.com/news.aspx?nwID=951>

Ayyam-i-Ha or Ayyam-i-Dal ??!-Stupidity of 19 days months

The Baha'i calendar has 19 Months of 19 days each, totalling 361 days in a year + the intercalary days (Ayyam-i-Ha). Only a leap year has 366 days. Obviously Husayn 'Ali Nuri (Baha) could not count properly because any solar intercalary calculation would make those days Ayyam-i-Dal (i.e. the days to the calculation of the letter dal, 'd', letter dal = 4) not Ha (letter ha = 5). Ayyam-i-Ha would technically only occur for the leap years not the normal years. So much for the 'supreme manifestation of the day' who could not even count properly!

Reference: <http://bahaism.blogspot.com/2012/02/ayyam-i-ha-or-ayyam-i-dal.html>

To Know more, visit [stupidity of nineteen days months in bahai faith](#)

Baha'i Faith is at a stage, which can see its utter extinction

Written by a very depressed Baha'i :

Do you guys not realize that the leaders of the Baha'i Faith, the people sitting on top of the Carmel Mount, don't know that Baha'i Faith is at a stage, which can see its utter extinction? They know.

What else are they to do? **The Bab is gone. Baha'u'llah is gone. Abdul'-Baha is gone. Shoghi Effendi is gone. There is no-one left to lead the Faith.** Even Shoghi Effendi didn't know what to do to preserve the Baha'i Faith, once Abdu'l-Baha passed. Don't you think he was afraid? Very afraid?

And its running out of gas. The vision of the Bab... can we let it die with Him? What about Baha'u'llah.... just writing His name moves me. I support the House is all they do.. and command you all to follow in my footsteps.

If we splinter off... let our egos start to take over – ‘hey, I want to run something’ will Baha'u'llah disappear forever.

Baha'u'llah will disappear.

Some Unanswered Questions about Baha'i Faith

Today, I don't believe Baha'u'llah's was who he claimed to be. As for his purposes I can only judge them by being able to read different opinions from others, which I was unable to read prior to coming on the internet. I believe many western converts to Baha'ism are ignorant (of the Christian Bible) like I was when I first became a member and are easily tricked into joining this nice so called religion wanting Unity for all. But even in my ignorance I knew something was drastically wrong.

Here are some views I questioned when still a Baha'i but found no Baha'is willing to discuss it. All I got was a wall of silence in my community.

Baha'u'llah taught that while normal human beings have two natures (physical reality and rational soul), the manifestations of God have a third nature (the spirit and attributes of God reflected in them). The same spirit of God (although not the same as the Holy Spirit in Christianity) is said to have dwelt within each manifestation, which is why Baha'u'llah claimed to be the return of Christ.

If this is so, **how could two different manifestations of God live in the same era of history?** Not only were Buddha and Confucius contemporaries (both lived between about 550-480 B.C.), but Baha'u'llah was a disciple of the Bab. Did each of these men only have half of this spirit, or are there two different spirits? Baha'is reject both of these options. The Bab said of He whom God will manifest whose coming he foretold, Were He to appear this very moment, I would be the first to adore Him, and the first to bow down before Him. Yet Baha'u'llah was regularly near the Bab, yet the Bab did not recognize Baha'u'llah as this manifestation, and there is no suggestion that he ever bowed down before him.

'Abdu'l-Baha' said that the physical universe has neither beginning nor end. Baha'u'llah taught this too, but he also declared that God created all things out of utter nothingness. Obviously both cannot be true. But if the Baha'is hold that the universe has eternally existed, this violates their basic principle that religion cannot contradict science. The second law of thermodynamics says that the universe is running out of usable energy, hence it could not have been here forever or it would have already spent itself. It must have had a beginning in a moment of time, brought into existence by God.

Baha'is also believe in a form of macro evolution, but they do not believe that man evolved from species of animals. 'Abdu'l-Baha' said that while man may have existed in the form of animals which changed and progressed to the present state, he was always by nature the human species, distinct from animals. In this attempt to reconcile the pseudo-scientific theory of evolution with the belief in a Creator the Baha'is contradict both the Bible and the widely propagated Darwinian view of evolution. We know that each species of plant and animal has a unique, unchanging DNA code. Therefore a dog cannot give birth to a monkey, and a monkey cannot produce a human being. And the Bible affirms that plants and animals were created according to their kind, with man being created separate and distinct from them, in the image of God (Gen. 1-2).

One of the greatest contradictions within the teachings of Baha'u'llah is the fundamental principle that religious truth is not absolute, but relative. This means that the truth which a manifestation teaches may later be contradicted by another manifestation, yet the teachings of each manifestation were true for his time. Baha'u'llah may have thought that this was a solution to the insurmountable problem of vast differences among the doctrines of the religions of the world, but this concept is self-defeating. The statement religious truth is relative must be a religious truth, since it was uttered by Baha'u'llah who, as a manifestation of God, claimed to be infallible. If his statement religious truth is relative is absolute, then the statement religious truth is relative cannot be true. If, however, his statement is relative (i.e. true only some of the time), then his statement is not universally true in all times and in all places, meaning that absolute revelation does indeed exist. Either way, this doctrine of relative revelation is false.

This revelation by Baha'u'llah by itself condemns him as a false prophet to be avoided by those who seek truth (Deut. 18:22).

Baldrick

The will of Abdu'l-Baha is not genuine.

EXCERPTS – Ruth White. Abdul Baha's Questioned Will and Testament.
<http://www.fglaysher.com/bahaicensorsip/archives/WhiteABQWT.pdf> Download All Documents Deposited by Ruth White at the Library of Congress PDF: <http://www.fglaysher.com/bahaicensorsip/archives/WhiteLCDocs.pdf>

White, Ruth. Abdul Baha's Questioned Will and Testament. Beverly Hills: White, 1946:

"The scientific indications are that the will of Abdu'l-Baha is not genuine. Also, from the spiritual viewpoint, there are overwhelming indications that it is not genuine, as it contradicts the teachings of both Baha'u'llah and of Abdu'l-Baha. But whether the alleged will of Abdu'l-Baha is authentic or spurious, the results of the administration of Shoghi Effendi and the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is stand as an historical indictment against them. They no more represent the Bahai Religion than the bigots of the dark ages of Christianity" (11-12).

"One of these actions is the trade marking of the name "Baha'?" in 1928. This is the same as if one sect within Christianity had tried to trade mark the name "Christian." In their application for the trade mark they described themselves as the "National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is of the United States and Canada, a common-law corporation, organized and operated under declaration of trust and doing business at . . ." This trademark was later pronounced invalid by the court when the Assembly instituted two law-suits, during 1941, against two well-known Bahais, to prevent them, or anyone else, from spreading the Bahai teachings except through their organization. Of course the Assembly lost both suits and they were severely reprimanded by Judge Valente, who reminded them of the Bill of Rights, and pointed out that each one has a right to practice his religion unmolested by others.

"The Assembly of Baha'is use the assets that Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l-Baha built up by preaching some of their principles from the platform. But in private, after a person has joined the Assembly, that person is faced with the alternative of complying with the narrow, bigoted edicts of Shoghi Effendi and the Assembly, or of being excommunicated.

"For in the hands of Shoghi Effendi, and The National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada, the great universal Baha Cause has been changed into a narrow bigoted sect and many of the tactics of the dark ages have been revived. This is what has happened to the religion that many leading thinkers of the day believe is the remedy for this age" (26).

"I also did a great deal of recollecting of events that had happened during our two visits to the home of Abdu'l-Baha, where I had an opportunity to see him in relation to his family and his "in-laws." The deductions that I made confirmed what Abdul-Baha had so often said—that the spiritual relationship was the real kinship, and not the physical. For his family, with the exception of his wife and sister, were the average types with a strong bent toward organized religion, whereas Abdu'l-Baha was universal, "super-racial and undogmatic." The world was his family. His loving care for his universal family was evident throughout his life, but at no time was it more evident than during the first world war and directly after it. He personally supervised vast agricultural projects at Tiberias and Adassieh, and he rationed and distributed the products that he cultivated, thereby saving thousands from starvation" (28-29).

"It is important for those who are interested in the Bahai Religion to free themselves from the idea that the family of Abdu'l-Baha is a "Holy Family." In fact his family, and "in-laws," with the exception of his wife and sister, were somewhat materialistic, and viewed the religion more or less as a little family affair with a strong bent toward organization. For years they have indoctrinated, more or less, the pilgrims who visited the home of Abdul-Baha, myself included, with this conception of religion. This partly nullified the great universal teachings. The result was that when Abdul-Baha passed from this world in November, 1921, some of his family, who had laid the ground-work for organization through these pilgrims while he was alive, hastened to establish it more firmly when he died. All this resulted in making the Bahai Movement, under the dictatorship of Shoghi Effendi, an organization which for narrowness and bigotry has no parallel in history except in the dark ages" (31). "Not until three years had elapsed after the alleged will had been read in 1922, were copies of it finally distributed, and then only to "old and recognized believers." I was among those who received a copy. But my stand continued to be one of "watchful waiting." This stand on my part caused me no embarrassment, inasmuch as I had never been a member of the Bahai organization, (Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahais). I knew that belonging to them meant conforming to the group repression and being shorn of the universal attitude which Abdu'l-Baha said is the essence of the Bahai Cause" (40).

"In May 1926 the National Spiritual Assembly of Bahais incorporated the Bahai Cause, made the alleged will part of the by-laws, and proclaimed it an article of faith that Shoghi Effendi as the Guardian of the Bahai Cause must be obeyed in all things. The alleged will had never been examined by handwriting experts. by the powers granted in the alleged will, the Guardian collected large sums of money, and sent out various pleas for this purpose" (40).

"As Mr. Mountford Mills was one of the "well known Baha'is" who had gone to Palestine shortly after the passing of Abdu'l-Baha, I wrote to him asking him to give me what information he could concerning the alleged will. Mr. Mills, by the way, drew up the by-laws of the Bahai Cause, than which nothing could be more un-Bahai. although he is an exceptionally fine man, that did not interfere with his blindness. Just after he had drawn these by -laws, my husband and I had an interview with him, in which he said that he had recently finished reading 'Christianity Past and Present' by Charles Guinebert, and that if he had read it before drafting those by-laws the history of the Bahai Cause would have been different. In other words Mr. Mills deeply regretted his action" (45).

"Dr. Mitchell not only spent months examining the enlarged specimens submitted to him, but he examined minutely every line of the ten photographs of the alleged will, and his conclusion is that it is not written throughout by the same person. This fact, in addition to others, indicates that the will is spurious, especially if we bear in mind that Shoghi Effendi, and the Spiritual Assembly of Bahai's, assert that every word of it is written in the hand of Abdu'l-Baha. Also if we bear in mind that it is undated and unwitnessed, and that it contradicts the teachings that both

Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l-Baha gave during their lifetimes—that the Bahai Cause is a spiritual democracy and not a theocracy. The appointment of an hereditary guardianship contradicts this” (69).

“Dr. Mitchell’s report also shows that none of the handwriting of the alleged will is the same as the authentic specimens of Abdu'l-Baha’s handwriting that were submitted to him” (69).

“Most persons are unaware of the fact that handwriting experts use modern inventions that measure the slants, the spaces, and the tremors of writing so accurately that it makes the difference between two specimens of different writing overwhelmingly apparent, when these are enlarged, even though one of the specimens may be so clever a forgery of the other as to appear identical to the naked eye” (69-70).

“Those Bahais who assert that they are familiar with the handwriting of Abdu'l-Baha, and have compared it with the writing of the will, and have found them identical, reveal the fact that they are either totally unaware of the science used by the best handwriting experts, or else fear has prompted them to assert their belief in the authenticity of the will—fear of being excommunicated if they so much as question the document. This science that the best handwriting experts use is so mathematically accurate that any number of experts using these modern inventions will arrive at the same results” (70).

“I have already referred to the extreme care that Abdu'l-Baha showed in regard to letters purporting to be from him, sent or brought to this country. The following instance shows that he was even more careful to make certain that any Tablet or document of his relating to important public matters was properly translated and authenticated before it was sent out. He wrote a Tablet to the Secretary of the Court for Durable Peace, at the Hague, on December 17, 1919, and he considered it necessary to have four men translate it. These four men were Shoghi Effendi (Rabbani), Dr. Zia M. Bagdadi, Mirza Lotfullah Hakim, and Dr. J. E. Esselmont. This Tablet was signed Abdu'l-Baha Abbas, and was published in the Star of the West (Bahai Magazine), August 1, 1920, with the four names of the translators and witnesses.”

“The quadruple witnessing of this Tablet, written two years before Abdu'l-Baha passed from this world, make it evident that he did not consider Shoghi Effendi careful enough, or efficient enough, to translate the Table to the Court of Durable Peace without the help of three other men. Is it likely, then, that at this very time and authentic will of Abdu'l-Baha’s, of infinitely greater importance than this Tablet to the Hague, should lay hidden in the earth, undated and unwitnessed, in which this same Shoghi Effendi was appointed sole guardian of the Bahai Cause, with more potential power and wealth than asking and pope combined? And that later this same will was translated by the one person only, the beneficiary himself—Shoghi Effendi. Is this in accordance with Abdu'l-Baha’s super-carefulness?” (70-71).

“Abdul Baha said that if an angel from heaven comes down and tries to change the teachings of Baha'u'llah, do not believe him. Shoghi Effendi has changed them by pronouncements and actions which are in direct contradiction to Bahai teachings—above all he has changed the very character and fundamental principle of the Cause by putting a theocracy, which the founders said it was not [boldface in original], in place of the spiritual democracy which they said, over and over again, it is. The following instances show what acceptance of the alleged will has done to the blind followers of its rules.”

“Mr. Horace Holley, as spokesman for Shoghi Effendi, made this statement in 1925:

“The individual conscience must be subordinated to the decisions of the elected Spiritual Assembly.” [boldface in original]

“This statement strikes at the very foundation of the Bahai Cause, as one of its cardinal teachings is that man must have freedom of conscience. Among dozens of instances that could be given of Abdu'l-Baha’s statements on this subject is the following: ‘... the conscience of man is sacred and to be respected . . . ’” (73-74).

“We can see from the foregoing that Abdu'l-Baha emphasized the necessity of man’s being able to exercise freedom of conscience, as Baha'u'llah did” (75).

“During the lifetime of Abdu'l Baha the attempts of the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha’is to organize the Bahai Religion were held in abeyance, but after he passed from this world, under the dictates of Shoghi Effendi, they swung it into an organization the like of which has not been seen since the dark ages. They tried to exercise the power over the Bahai world that Baha'u'llah said would be vested in the SUPREME TRIBUNAL of the future world governments. In order to enforce this power they excommunicated those who would not accept their pronouncements, and twice the members of the National Assembly sued at law in order to try and prevent other Bahais from promulgating the religion which they held in common; but, fortunately, they lost both these suits. Judge Valente, reprimanding them, reminded them of the Bill of Rights, which grants freedom to every man to practice his religion unmolested. All of this the reader can learn in the ensuing pages” (76).

[Ruth White quotes Abdu'l-Baha]:

“The worst enemies of the Cause are in the Cause and mention the Name of God. We need not fear the enemies on the outside for such can be easily dealt with. But the enemies who call themselves Friends and who persistently violate every fundamental law of Love and Unity are difficult to deal with in this Day. . . .”

“This last paragraph applies overwhelmingly to the activities of Shoghi Effendi, and the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha’is. They have violated the principles of brotherhood and unity because of their inversions of the Bahai teachings. These inversions are all the more tragic of this particular time when the world has been made receptive, through much suffering, to the great universal principles of the Bahai Religion. Two prophecies of Baha'u'llah have been so accurately fulfilled—the discovery of Atomic Power, and the embryonic Supreme Tribunal as manifested in the United Nations Organization that we would do well to consider the third—the possible destruction of our planet unless we circumvent this threatened fate by a balanced spiritual civilization” (84-85).

“This matter of freedom of conscience is the most important part of the Bahai Teachings. God has given man free-will, and no earthly priestcraft nor dictatorship must interfere with man’s using that free-will in matters of faith and the inner relationship between the soul and God. This is the meaning of the spiritual democracy of which Abdu’l-Baha so often speaks—religion percolating through all the affairs of our daily life, and an ideal political government coming into existence as the result of the change of man’s nature and belief.”

“This is just the twist that the present leaders of the Bahai organization have tried to give to the Universal Message of Baha’u’llah.”

“There are many other wholly un-Bahai edicts that Shoghi Effendi and the National Spiritual Assembly of Bahais have issued beside these two that follow: “. . . the individual conscience must be subordinated to the decisions of the Spiritual Assembly, . . . and: ‘. . . individual Bahai effort without due consultation is foredoomed to failure” (87-88).

“Everyone of these edicts are inversions of the Bahai Teachings, as given to the world by the Founders of the Cause.”

“In saying that recognized Bahais must not vote in any election based on a party system Shoghi Effendi and his hierarchy have set up what might be considered a government within each government in every country where there are enough of his followers. Over that government he is supreme dictator. His subjects must pay taxes to him (tithes) and he forbids his followers to vote on national and civic affairs. All his edicts no matter how un-patriotic, or how much in violation of the universal principles of the Bahai Religion, must be obeyed under threat of excommunication.”

“This revival of excommunication is a horrible inversion of the Bahai teachings—the Revelation for which Baha’u’llah suffered imprisonment for twenty-five years, and Abdu’l-Baha for forty years—the Cause for which twenty thousand martyrs sacrificed their lives to establish freedom of conscience and to unite all mankind regardless of religion, race or country. The idea of excommunication is impossible in the world envisaged by Baha’u’llah” (89-90).

“Whether the alleged will of Abdul Baha is authentic or spurious, the results of the administration of Shoghi Effendi and the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha’is stand as an historical indictment against them. [Boldface in original] They no more represent the Bahai Religion than the bigots of the dark ages of Christianity.

“We had the dark ages because the bigots of that era got control of Christ’s teachings and tortured all those who did not comply with their interpretation. Shoghi Effendi, and the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha’is, cannot in this day resort to physical torture to enforce their will, but they have resorted to mental torture by blackmailing with excommunication all those who do not comply with their inverted teachings” (100).

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**ABDUL BAHÁ'S QUESTIONED WILL
AND TESTAMENT**

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ABDUL BAHÁ'S QUESTIONED WILL AND TESTAMENT

by
RUTH WHITE

This book contains the report of Dr. C. Ainsworth Mitchell, the handwriting expert for the British Museum, and editor of THE ANALYST. It is the end of an exciting trail of spiritual adventures and a sequel to my book:

**BAHÁI
LEADS OUT OF THE LABYRINTH**

**RUTH WHITE
P. O. Box 1471
Beverly Hills, California
1946**

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Ruth White
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“ . . . look not upon each other with the eye of strangeness. Ye are all the fruits of one tree and the leaves of one branch.”

“The earth is one country; and mankind is its citizens.

“ . . . diversity of states is one of the peculiarities and concomitants of the human race.”

Baha'o'llah.

“ . . . the Religion which does not walk hand in hand with Science, is itself in the Darkness of Superstition and ignorance.”

Abdul Baha.

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Foreword.

The atomic bomb was prophesied by Baha'o'llah, founder of the Bahai Religion, eighty-one years ago. At that time he also gave the remedy that would circumvent the possible destruction of our planet. This prophecy was repeated by Abdul Baha in 1912. He warned that we must speed up spiritual civilization to keep pace with scientific and material progress, otherwise materialism would destroy us.

This book deals with the conditions that have largely prevented their remedial teachings from becoming better appreciated — the mal-administration of the Bahai heritage by Shoghi Effendi and the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is,* who claim to derive their authority from the alleged will of Abdul Baha. In this book also is *printed the analysis of that alleged will, by the great handwriting expert for the British Museum, Dr. C. Ainsworth Mitchell.* The scientific indications are that the will of Abdul Baha is not genuine. Also, from the spiritual viewpoint, *there are overwhelming indications that it is not genuine, as it contradicts the teachings of both Baha'o'llah and of Abdul Baha.* But whether the will is genuine or spurious, the actions of the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is, and of Shoghi Effendi, stand as an

*The two ways of spelling the word "Bahai" used in this book is due to the fact that during Abdul Baha's lifetime the word was spelled "Bahai." But Shoghi Effendi insists on the word being spelled "Baha'i."

historical indictment, recorded for all time against them. Their actions show that they no more represent the Bahai Religion than the bigots of the dark ages represented Christ's teachings.

One of these actions is the trade marking of the name "Baha'i" in 1928. This is the same as if one sect within Christianity had tried to trade mark the name "Christian." In their application for the trade mark they described themselves as the: "National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is of the United States and Canada, a common-law corporation, organized and operated under declaration of trust and doing business at . . ." This trade mark was later pronounced invalid by the court when the Assembly instituted two law-suits, during 1941, against two well-known Bahais, to prevent them, or anyone else, from spreading the Bahai teachings except through their organization. Of course the Assembly lost both suits and they were severely reprimanded by Judge Valente, who reminded them of the Bill of Rights, and pointed out that each one has a right to practice his religion unmolested by others.

The Assembly of Baha'is use the assets that Baha'o'llah and Abdul Baha built up by preaching some of their principles from the platform. But in private, after a person has joined the Assembly, that person is faced with the alternative of complying with the narrow, bigoted edicts of Shoghi Effendi and the Assembly, or of being excommunicated.

This book is a challenge to them to prove, if they can, not only whether the will of Abdul Baha is genuine, and

the authority which they claim to derive from it is legitimate, but also whether their administration of their assumed authority is in the spirit of the teachings of Baha'o'llah and Abdul Baha.

Each one reading this book should feel a personal responsibility toward this greatest peace movement of modern times. Dr. David Starr Jordan said of one of its founders:

"Abdul Baha will unite the East and the West, for he travels the Mystic Path with practical feet."

FOREWORD 1947

Will pro-God democracies and freedom prevail in the world? Or shall we become slaves of the state under an anti-God communism?

The pro-God's possess an invulnerable power—the equivalent of the atom bomb in the domain of Spirit. It can shatter the forces of materialism, and circumvent our destruction by atomic force, if it is rightly understood and applied.

The communists are trying to undermine this power by destroying faith in God—the very genius of humanity. For faith unfolds our intuitions. It transforms us into spiritual giants, compared to which the materialists, however mighty, are pygmies.

**Read: BAHAI LEADS OUT OF THE LABYRINTH And its sequel:
ABDUL BAHÁ'S QUESTIONED
WILL AND TESTAMENT**

BY RUTH WHITE

Beverly Hills, Calif.

P.O. Box 1471

Each book \$2.00

The author is not connected with the Bahai Administration (corporation). For the Bahai Movement, which Baha'O'llah founded, is a unifier of the Spirit of all religions, and the Spirit cannot be incorporated.

Chapter I

Atomic power prophesied by Baha'o'llah

When I met Abdul Baha in May, 1912, while doing newspaper work in Boston, he started me on a spiritual *trail that led me out of the labyrinth of materialistic philosophy into the spiritual, or intuitional consciousness.* Prior to meeting him I had read much literature on Marxian Socialism and Communism and had met many of the exponents of both philosophies. As a result the poverty of the submerged classes got into the very marrow of my bones. So concentrated on negative conditions had I become that I reproduced the stigmata of poverty in my life and affairs as surely as Saint Francis, through much concentration, reproduced the stigmata of Christ's wounds upon his hands.

But my first glimpse of a photograph of Abdul Baha in a newspaper revived in me remembrances of happier days — when I had believed in the wonders and mysteries of religion. Gradually this belief had faded through much contact with the dry formalism of institutional religions, and was finally replaced by a growing belief that perhaps communism was the best solution for man's woes.

Fortunately, at my first interview with Abdul Baha he turned me face about and told me that communism and the regimentation of the human race was not the

way. The most urgent need of humanity is to attain God-consciousness — to establish spiritual civilization — that was the burden of his message everywhere he went. After release from forty years imprisonment for his faith, he traveled through Europe and America in order to arouse man from his materialism, which, he said, was driving us into universal war.

Both he and Baha'o'llah pre-visionsed atomic power and both warned that in order to circumvent the possible destruction of our planet we must speed up spiritual civilization to keep pace with scientific and material progress. Eighty-one years ago Baha'o'llah said:

"A strange and wonderful instrument exists in the earth; but it is concealed from the minds and souls. It is an instrument which has the power to change the atmosphere of the whole earth, and its infection causes destruction." *

This prophecy was reiterated by Abdul Baha in an interview which he gave to the Japanese Ambassador to Spain, Viscount Arawaka, and his wife, during his sojourn in Paris — October, December, 1911, and recorded by Lady Blomfield. He said:

"Scientific discoveries have greatly increased material civilization. There is in existence a stupendous force, as yet, happily, undiscovered by man. Let us supplicate God, the Beloved, that this force be not discovered by science until Spiritual Civilization shall dominate the human mind. In the hands of men of lower material nature, this power would be able to destroy the whole earth."

He prophetically indicated that the discovery of

*Tablets of Baha'o'llah

atomic power on American soil was God-ordained. For, though he said this country is also very materialistic, yet he conceded that we are more trustworthy than any nation on earth, our form of government is better than any on earth, and that eventually it will be adopted by every country and universal peace first will be proclaimed here.

Spiritual atomics is the core of every religion that ever existed, and hints of it have been released in every age. It is the awakening of our slumbering genius, our spiritual consciousness.

The hunch of the man in the street is this spiritual consciousness in embryo; in its fulness it is the Samadhi of the yogis, the dhyana of the Buddhists, the Tao of the Chinese, the Wacanda of the American Indians, the Kingdom of God of the Christ, the Resignation of Mohammed, and the "Intuitions of the Holy Spirit," of the Bahai Religion.

When a sufficient number of people awaken this consciousness, spiritual civilization will come into being.

Abdul Baha opened my eyes to the fact that the problem of paramount importance in the world today is the struggle between those who are anti-God and those who are pro-God, for in this problem all others are involved. The basic reason for this struggle is unknown to most people. In the world of politics the anti-God tendency is manifested by the dictators who stand for state regimentation and the bondage of the race, and the pro-God tendency is manifested in the democratic form of government.

Democracies are always pro-God. Or perhaps it should

be expressed the other way about. Religion always stands for the freedom of the individual and for democracy. When the principles of religion, as given by Great Teachers who appear in different eras are applied, the application increases the freedom of the individual and increases the genius of the race by developing the intuitional or super-consciousness of man.

On the other hand, the dictators, with their regimentation of individuals, are always anti-God in their tendencies, and are an evidence of loss of faith. The State takes the place of God, and through loss of faith the development of the super-consciousness is more or less retarded, thereby conducing to a moronic condition of the race.

The pro-Gods, who are vitalists and who believe that life is ruled by a beneficent Design, should become more fully aware of the definite cleavage between their ideology of democracy and that of the anti-God communists, who believe in the mechanistic conception of life, and that life is based on and governed by chance. They must become more fully aware of the priceless heritage of faith — more completely united on the most important point of every religion that ever existed — faith in God. Unless they do, they cannot circumvent the united efforts of the anti-Gods to undermine their faith. For the communists are fully aware that the quickest way to establish their form of government is to lessen faith in God.

I mention communism as the great menace, for out of it stems all other forms of totalitarianism. Within this frame of pro-Gods and anti-Gods there are many gradations of belief and unbelief. Innumerable people who think they have faith in God believe in Him only as a theory without any vital influence in their lives; they

therefore belong in the frame of the anti-Gods although they are not militantly anti. This applies to many persons inside the churches as well as to many outside. **It is this loss of faith in the reality of God as a living vital influence in one's life which is the greatest calamity that can happen to man.**

As the militantly anti-Gods are organized on a world scale to regiment the whole of mankind, therefore the lukewarm believers in God should strive to awaken to this menace. In 1919 when Abdul Baha was asked by Mr. W. H. Randall: "What will be the future of Russia?" he replied:

"The future is bad; in the future there will be great destruction. Nations should rise to extinguish this fire (of Bolshevism) so that it would not spread to other countries. Soon it will affect them. . . ." *

If I had not had the advantage, although it was through much suffering, of this alternating contact with the pro-Gods and the anti-Gods, I would also have remained asleep, as so many people are today, to the significance of this struggle. I would have remained unaware of the fact that the almost universal malady of modern man is spiritual atrophy. Baha'o'llah gave a warning of this eighty-one years ago, which was reiterated by Abdul Baha later. They both said in substance that if the race cannot be awakened spiritually, then calamities will increase until man will be driven, through untold suffering, to believe in God. We know that this has already partly taken place. Only by establishing a spiritual civilization can we avert further major calamities.

When I was a near-communist my outer condition

*The Light of the World. Page 117.

was a reflection of my inner poverty of spirit. I was unhappy, poor, unsuccessful. But when Abdul Baha revived my faith in God, life became for me a glorious adventure, enriched on all the planes. This enrichment came to me through the awakening of my intuitional nature, which enabled me to see beneath the surface of things and to act wisely in all aspects of life. This gift is open to anyone who really lives according to the principles of religion, and it always enriches us and contributes to the enrichment of the race. It is the next great step forward in spiritual, mental and moral evolution. Only by taking this step can we keep pace with the material evolution on which we have concentrated too much attention. Belief in the supernatural aspect of religion, together with the application of its principles, is the formula for attaining this super-consciousness. To ignore this belief in the supernatural is to rob religion of its vital power — the part that revives the genius of the race.

If our attitude toward scientific discoveries had been as skeptical as most people's attitude is toward the discovery of the supernatural aspect of religion, we would have been largely deprived of our modern inventions, such as radio and television. The development and discovery of the spiritual counterpart of radio and television is of infinite importance today, especially as our material development is now so far ahead of our spiritual unfolding that it threatens our destruction.

Dr. Alexis Carrel says:

Mystical activity has been banished from most religions. Even its meaning has been forgotten. Such ignorance is probably responsible for the decadence of the churches. The strength of religion depends

Man the Unknown. Harper and Brothers.

upon the focuses of mystical activity where its life constantly grows . . .

I have emphasized this mystical aspect of the Bahai Religion not only because of my first hand experience with it, but due to the fact that since Abdul Baha passed from this world in 1921, it has been excluded from the Bahai Religion by Shoghi Effendi, his grandson, together with the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada. They have tried to use the Bahai Religion for the regimentation of mankind on the religious plane just as Stalin is trying to do on the political plane. Incredible though it may seem, in this supposedly progressive age, the members of the Assembly, urged on by Shoghi Effendi, carried their idea of regimentation to the extent of actually trying to violate the constitution of the United States. They instituted two lawsuits against two Bahais, Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler, and Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, to restrain them from spreading the religion except through their organization. Naturally the members of the Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is lost both suits. Furthermore they were severely reprimanded by Justice Louis A. Valente for attempting to break the Bill of Rights, which grants freedom to every man to practice his faith unmolested.*

The logical conclusion of such actions is that if Shoghi Effendi and the Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is had succeeded in violating the Bill of Rights, and in gaining enough followers, it might have resulted in time to a recurrence of the dark ages. The offices of this organization are at Wilmette, Illinois, where stands the Baha'i Temple. Their publications are, WORLD ORDER (maga-

*See, BROKEN SILENCE by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, New History Foundation, 132 East 65th Street, New York, N. Y.

zine), BAHÁ'Í YEAR BOOK, and BAHÁ'Í PUBLISHING COMPANY. Lectures are given under the caption BAHÁ'Í FAITH, and other captions.

For those who are not familiar with the Bahai Cause I give this brief outline so that in reading the second part of this volume they may know why the Cause has been temporarily obscured.

The Bahai Cause had its inception in Persia on May 23rd, 1844 on which date occurred the double event of the Declaration of the Bab and the birth of Abdul Baha. These two great lights, together with Baha'o'llah, are the Founders of the Bahai Cause.

Of the fourteen important principles that Baha'o'llah gave to the world eighty-one years ago, as the ideal for man to pattern his life upon, practically none had been envisaged by mankind. Neither had the modern scientific inventions been discovered which are now forcing these principles to be adopted. In an era when such a thing as a world tribunal was not thought of, Baha'o'llah warned the world that the present day cataclysms would engulf us unless we developed spiritual civilization side by side with material civilization. He gave to the world an economic plan together with his spiritual teachings, which, if applied, would bring universal peace and happiness to mankind. At that time, about 1865, when he showed the necessity for an International Tribunal, conditions had not yet arisen which would seem to make this imperative. But now, after eighty-one years, the plans which he prophetically outlined have become a necessity, and we see a concerted attempt on the part of the United Nations to establish it. These attempts have been hastened by the

discovery of the atomic bomb, which brought to a speedy end the war with Japan.

Through this terrible instrument of destruction man is now being forced into adopting some of the principles which otherwise might have required several centuries to come into existence. In other words, what we would not heed through precept, we are now being forced into accepting through chastisement.

The fourteen most important principles that Baha'o'llah gave to the world eighty-one years ago, which were later exemplified by his son, Abdul Baha, are as follows:

1. The independent investigation of Truth. Freedom of conscience.
2. The unity and oneness of all religions.
3. The unity and oneness of mankind.
4. The unity of religion and science.
5. The unity of all countries, but each retaining its individuality. A spiritual democracy, founded on a two party system, by the votes of the people.
6. Universal education.
7. A universal auxiliary language.
8. Equal rights between man and woman.
9. Solution of the economic problem.
10. Prejudices of all kinds must be forgotten.
11. Universal Peace.
12. An International Tribunal.
13. The demonstration of Divinity and Inspiration.

14. The necessity of the confirmations of the Holy Spirit.

The last two of these principles are the most important for on them depends the ability to carry into successful action all the others. They are what Christ called "The Mysteries," and Abdul Baha called, "The Intuitions of the Holy Spirit. He said:

" . . . if a man is bereft of the intuitive breathings of the Holy Spirit, deprived of Divine Bestowals, out of touch with the heavenly world and negligent of the eternal truths, though in image and likeness he is human, in reality he is an animal; . . . " *

Therefore the ethics and morals of religion by themselves have not the magic power to transform man individually or collectively. It is this leaven of the spirit only that will accomplish that. If we combine and apply the morals and the ethics with the Intuitions of the Holy Spirit, we become the possessors of an Aladdin's Lamp. For the Power of which Aladdin's Lamp is a symbol is the Gift of religion to man; but when he forgets how to use it, it remains entombed within the religion. It needs only the magic touch of the right application of our faith to release it with benefit to ourselves and to mankind. It is our slumbering genius, which, when awakened, will catapult humanity to such heights that we of today shall appear mere pygmies in comparison.

In the following pages I shall try to show what has temporarily halted the progress of the next great step forward in spiritual evolution.

*The Promulgation of Universal Peace, Vol. II P. 311.

Chapter II

Alleged Will of Abdul Baha discovered

The late Professor E. G. Browne of the University of Cambridge, who was the best historian of the Bahai Cause, states:

“My object in the present essay on the Babis is twofold. . . .

I wish to point out how much still remains to be done to thoroughly elucidate the matter, and to emphasize the fact that every year which passes will render it more and more difficult to fill in certain important details in the history and chronology of this sect. I sincerely hope that some, who have the means and opportunity of assisting in this task, may be induced to do so while it is still possible; . . . Believing as I do that Babism* is destined to leave a permanent mark in the world, I feel very strongly how desirable it is that this work should be accomplished. . . .”

Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society 1889; page 485.

It is equally important to chronicle the history of the Bahai Cause as it has come under my observation from

*“Babism” is now known as “Bahaism” or the “Bahai Cause” which derives its name from Baha’o’llah. “The Bab” means “The Gate.” He heralded the coming Messiah, Baha’o’llah.

the time that Abdul Baha passed from this world, in November 1921, up to the present writing, 1945.

The earlier chronicles of the Bahai Revelation dealt with the physical martyrdom of the Babís. This present history deals with the spiritual martyrdom which the Bahai Revelation has suffered, since Abdul Baha passed from this world. For in the hands of Shoghi Effendi, and The National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'ís of the United States and Canada, the great universal Bahai Cause has been changed into a narrow bigoted sect and many of the tactics of the dark ages have been revived. This is what has happened to the religion that many leading thinkers of the day believe is the remedy for this age.

I have already published in 1929 some history of this matter in my book, "The Bahai Religion and Its Enemy the Bahai Organization." In this book is printed the complete set of nine photographs of the alleged will of Abdul Baha written in Persian together with the English translation of it consisting of thirty-one pages.*

But since the publication of this book such appalling conditions have taken place, under the administration of Shoghi Effendi and the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'ís of the United States and Canada, that I feel it necessary to write again upon this matter, and recount the calamitous results of those happenings.

Three months after Abdul Baha passed from this world, November 26th, 1921, the following cable was sent to this country to Roy C. Wilhelm of 104 Wall Street, New York City:

*Copies of this book may be purchased from the author, Mrs. Ruth White, P. O. Box 1471, Beverly Hills, Calif.

“Wilhemite, N. Y.

In Will Shoghi Effendi appointed Guardian of the Cause and Head of House of Justice.

(Signed) Greatest Holy Leaf, Haifa.”

The “Greatest Holy Leaf” is the sister of Abdul Baha.

The appointment of a successor came as a thunderbolt out of a clear sky to everyone. For Abdul Baha gave no hint that this was his intention. On the contrary he spoke many times against such a possibility.

A typewritten English translation of the alleged will arrived in New York four weeks later. This document, undated and un-witnessed, was read by Mr. Horace Holley to a gathering of Bahais at which I was present. No details concerning it and no comments upon it were vouchsafed. Later we heard that it had been buried in the ground, but who found it, and when, and where, has never been revealed so far as I know.

As I listened to Mr. Holley’s reading, my inner admonitor kept up a running comment: “Why had Abdul Baha appointed Shoghi Effendi as Guardian when everything he said and wrote indicated that he did not mean to appoint any successor?” And as Mr. Holley continued: “. . . a fixed money offering . . . is to be offered through the Guardian of the Cause of God . . .,” I thought “This endows Shoghi with more potential power and wealth than a king and pope combined.”

Then Mr. Holley continued, “The Hands of the Cause of God must be ever watchful and so soon as they find anyone beginning to oppose and protest against the Guardian of the Cause of God, cast him out from the congregation of the people of Baha and in no wise accept any excuses from him. . . .”

Again my inner admonitor reasoned: "That is what is known in law as the "terror clause," in case a will is disputed. It will prevent those who can be easily frightened from investigating, or from even asking questions concerning the will."

After Mr. Holley had finished reading the document those present filed out of the room shocked into silence.

I kept my thoughts to myself and decided to re-read everything that both Baha'o'llah and Abdul Baha had said and written, and find out if I had missed something in my previous readings which would indicate their intention of appointing an hereditary line of successors or guardians.

My husband and I had the privilege of knowing Abdul Baha for the last ten years of his life, and we spent over a hundred days in his presence, forty-nine of which were spent at his home in Haifa, Palestine, during two visits there. I had read and re-read all of his published writings as well as hundreds of unpublished Tablets and notes and I now went through the long list again. After months of research I found that neither he nor Baha'o'llah had given the slightest intimation that they intended to appoint an hereditary guardianship. In fact everything that they had said or spoken indicated the opposite intention.

I also did a great deal of recollecting of events that had happened during our two visits to the home of Abdul Baha, where I had an opportunity to see him in relation to his family and his "in-laws." The deductions that I made confirmed what Abdul Baha had so often said — that the spiritual relationship was the real kinship, and not the physical. For his family, with the exception of his

wife and sister, were the average types with a strong bent toward organized religion, whereas Abdul Baha was universal, "super-racial and undogmatic." The world was his family. His loving care for his universal family was evident throughout his life, but at no time was it more evident than during the first world war and directly after it. He personally supervised vast agricultural projects at Tiberias and Adassieh, and he rationed and distributed the products that he cultivated, thereby saving thousands from starvation. *For this service and for his help in frequently bringing peace between warring factions in the Holy Land* he was knighted by the British Government in April, 1920, at which ceremony we were present.

I also wish to give a few high-lights on Shoghi Effendi, the grandson of Abdul Baha, who is now his alleged successor. He had failed in his college course at the age of twenty-four, and he wished to go to Oxford University, in the autumn of 1919. Despite the objections of Abdul Baha he went. This act demonstrates that Shoghi Effendi had little consideration for the wishes of his grandfather, who was then seventy-four years of age. It also shows that he was lacking in the spiritual attributes which would have enabled him to know that it was of far more value to be with Abdul Baha, both spiritually and mentally, during the last two years of his life, than any amount of academic training could possibly be. For these last two years were filled with intense activities, and spiritual confirmations, as it was just after the first world war, and the war had made people hungry for spiritual enlightenment. As a result there flocked to the home of Abdul Baha a steady stream of pilgrims from all over the earth — the poor, the wealthy, the distinguished, and also frightened refugees. They came by

camel, train, auto, boat, and on foot to imbibe the spiritual wisdom of Abdul Baha, and each day there dined at his table about forty pilgrims. This personal contact which we were privileged to have was of tremendous importance, not only because of what he said, but because of the emanation of his spirit, which transported those who were receptive into kingdoms of enlightenment and happiness. Yet Shoghi Effendi chose to be away during the last two years of Abdul Baha's life, and did not return for a full month after he had passed from this world.

Another significant fact to which I wish to call attention is this: If Abdul Baha had had any secret intention of appointing Shoghi Effendi as Guardian of the Bahai Cause, it does not seem plausible that he would have excluded him from the entourage that accompanied him on his trip through Europe and America during 1912. Shoghi Effendi at that time was eighteen years of age and spoke and wrote English, Persian and Arabic; yet he was not included in this trip. Even after Abdul Baha returned to Palestine, instead of choosing Shoghi Effendi as his secretary, he chose Ahmad Sohrab, who had accompanied him to Europe and America, and who continued as his secretary for five succeeding years.

It is important for those who are interested in the Bahai Religion to free themselves from the idea that the family of Abdul Baha is a "Holy Family." In fact his family, and "in-laws," with the exception of his wife and sister, were somewhat materialistic, and viewed the religion more or less as a little family affair with a strong bent toward organization. For years they have indoctrinated, more or less, the pilgrims who visited the home of Abdul Baha, myself included, with this conception of religion. This partly nullified the great universal teach-

ings. The result was that when Abdul Baha passed from this world in November, 1921, some of his family, who had laid the ground-work for organization through these pilgrims while he was alive, hastened to establish it more firmly when he died. All this resulted in making the Bahai Movement, under the dictatorship of Shoghi Effendi, an organization which for narrowness and bigotry has no parallel in history except in the dark ages.

Remembering these things, together with my months of research, convinced me that neither Baha'o'llah nor Abdul Baha had at any time advocated an 'organization' of Bahais, far less an official organization headed by a Guardian who collected 'dues' and had the power of excommunication. Among hundreds of quotations that could be given on this subject to show that they had no intention of such an organization the following will suffice:

"The Blessed Perfection* has upturned the root of the tree of superstition and religious officers. In the past the ambitious leaders of religions have been the cause of the retrogression and ignorance of a nation. In this Cause there are no religious titles, no ceremonies of ordination. One is not respected simply because he wears a peculiar dress or carries a religious title, or has inherited it from the Fathers. No! These are not the marks of distinction. On the other hand, those sanctified souls, the signs of their divine sanctity and spirituality become apparent in the hearts of others. People are unconsciously attracted to them through their pure morality, their justice

*Baha'o'llah

Spoken by Abdul Baha at a Persian meeting and recorded by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, July 19, 1913.

and loving kindness. Everyone is drawn to them through their praiseworthy attributes, and pleasing qualities, and all the faces are illumined by the lights of their virtues and integrity. In this movement there is no title to be given to anyone; no See to be inherited by any person. 'The Hands of the Cause' are the Hands of Truth. Therefore, whosoever is the promoter and the servant of the Word of God he is the hand of Truth. By the 'hands of God' certain definite meanings are connoted. It is not only a verbal expression. Whosoever is more humble in the Cause of God, he is more confirmed; and whosoever is more evanescent, he is more favored."

It is inconceivable that Abdul Baha would have made this public declaration and also the following two statements if at that very time a will existed appointing a successor endowed with all the powers of a pope:

"There are no officers in this Cause. I do not and have not "Appointed" anyone to perform any special service, but I encourage everyone to engage in the service of the Kingdom. The foundation of this Cause is pure spiritual democracy and not a theocracy."

STAR OF THE WEST; page 116. August 20, 1917.

"In answer to a question as to whether or not there would be any clergy in the Bahai Cause, Abdul Baha said: 'No. In this movement there will never be any paid ministers, no appointed clergy, no bishops, no cardinals, no popes, no ceremonies. A clergyman, assuming that he is ordained to his ministry, may think that he knows more about God than anyone else, whereas the humble man in his congregation may know more about God than he does. The

sacerdotal and theological position makes a clergyman proud and haughty. But there is one thing in this Cause: some people may become greater than the rest, not through appointment, but through the purity of their hearts, their unselfish deeds, their heroic sacrifices, and their knowledge of God. Such illumined souls, like kind fathers or teachers, will guide and teach those less fortunate. They are the elder brothers of the members of the community. They do not arrogate to themselves any title or position. You will know them by their humility, their sincerity, their deeds, their severance, their knowledge, their spirituality, and their attraction."

Diary of Ahmad Sohrab, March 21, 1913.

"A gentleman who had spent many years in India asked by what means and what kind of organization Abdul Baha intended to spread his teachings. The answer was: 'Our organization is the love of God, the knowledge of the Almighty, the descent of the breaths of the Holy Spirit, the outflow of the spiritual life; our capital is good deeds, merciful attributes, heavenly characteristics, and divine ethics.'"

Diary of Ahmad Sohrab, December 30, 1912.

"Holding to the letter of the law is many times an indication of a desire for leadership. One who assumes to be the enforcer of the law shows an intellectual understanding of the Cause, but that spiritual guidance in him is not yet established.

The alphabet of things is for children, that they may in time use their reasoning powers. 'Following the spirit' is a guidance by and through the heart,

the prompter of the spirit. The Pharisees were extremely orthodox, holding strictly to the law. They were the cause of the condemnation and ultimate crucifixion of Jesus."

• • •

"Were not the Revelation of Baha'o'llah one adaptable to the entire world and its diverse nations, it could not be a unique and universal Revelation, but its elasticity adapts itself to all conditions, and its spirit is one that moulds itself into every vehicle and need for the accomplishment of the divine plan of unity.

But when some follow merely the hard and fixed letter of the law, they deprive it (the Revelation) of its elastic quality — the spirit — and endeavor to convert it into a hard instrument of inflexible qualities."

Star of the West, June 24, 1915; pages 43, 44, 45.

"O friends! It is the wish of Abdul Baha, that the friends may establish general unity, and not a particular meeting of unity. You must have great consideration for this fact, for during past cycles such events were, in the beginning, a means of harmony, they became in the end the cause of trouble."

Tablets Containing Instructions; 1906.

". . . It is not necessary even to label one's self. One may call one's self a Bahai and in no way live the life; on the other hand one may live the life and never be known as a Bahai. It is not so much by what name you are called, but what you are in your

heart. Are you loving and serving God? Love and service are the greatest requisites of a good life. Endeavor in every possible way to do some favor, some service for someone else; do this daily, no matter how small or trivial the act of kindness may be. Even a smile counts for much."

From Table Talks of Abdul Baha; 1906.

"If we are true Bahais, speech is not needed. Our actions will help on the world, will spread civilization, will help the progress of science, and cause the arts to develop. Without action, nothing in the material world can be accomplished, neither can words unaided advance a man in the Spiritual Kingdom. It is not through lip service only, that the Elect of God have attained to holiness, but by patient lives of active service they have brought Light into the World.

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Chapter III

Bahai Religion Incorporated

From the beginning of my contact with Abdul Baha I observed a definite cleavage between the universality that he was trying to establish, and a strong tendency on the part of most of his followers toward organization, and I evaded all attempts to be drawn into it. Although I was a "recognized Bahai" I never belonged to the "Spiritual Assemblies." During my first visit to the home of Abdul Baha, in May, 1920, I decided to ask him if my stand was right. So one morning, when my husband and I were taking early morning tea with him, we found him engulfed in great floods of correspondence, and contrary to his usual custom of praising people he spoke of the dreadful lack of harmony existing among the members of the Bahai Assemblies in America, and the letters of complaint that they wrote to him one against the other.

"Great God!" he exclaimed, "Can't they understand that I have nothing to do with such pettiness?"

The thought occurred to me, "Why is he telling me this? I have never belonged to the Assemblies." I concluded that this was an opportune time to ask him if my stand in not becoming a member of them was the right one. His face beamed with happiness as he nodded approval and said:

"The organization that the Bahais have among themselves has nothing to do with the teachings of Baha'o'llah. The teachings of Baha'o'llah are universal and cannot be confined to a sect."

These same people who were the leaders in the organization then are the leaders in it today.

During the lifetime of Abdul Baha the following utterance of his was widely circulated in a blue pamphlet, 9:

"The Bahai Religion is not an organization. You can never organize the Bahai Cause. The Bahai Religion is the Spirit of this age. It is the essence of all the highest ideals of this century. The Bahai Cause is an inclusive movement; the teachings of all the religions and societies are found here; the Christians, Jews, Buddhists, Mohammedans, Zoroastrians, Theosophists, Freemasons, Spiritualists, etc., find their highest aims in this Cause. Even the Socialists and Philosophers find their theories fully developed in this Movement."

My months of research was in accordance with one of the most important points of the Bahai Religion — Independent investigation of truth, as the following by Abdul Baha will make plain:

". . . . know ye that God has created in man the power of reason whereby man is enabled to investigate reality . . . He has endowed him with mind or the faculty of reasoning by the exercise of which he is to investigate and discover the truth; and that which he finds real and true, he must accept. He must not be an imitator or blind follower of any soul. He must not rely implicitly upon the

opinion of any man without investigation; nay, each soul must seek intelligently, and independently, arriving at a real conclusion and bound only by that reality. The greatest cause of bereavement and disheartening in the world of humanity is ignorance, based upon blind imitation. It is due to this that wars and battles prevail; from this cause hatred and animosity arise continually among mankind. . . ."

"God has given man the eye of investigation by which he may see and recognize truth. He has endowed man with ears that he may hear the message of reality and conferred upon him the gift of reason by which he may discover things for himself. This is his endowment and equipment for the investigations of reality. Man is not intended to see through the eyes of another, hear through another's ears nor comprehend with another's brain. Each human creature has individual endowment, power and responsibility in the creative plan of God. Therefore depend upon your own reason and judgment and adhere to the outcome of your own investigation; otherwise you will be utterly submerged in the sea of ignorance and deprived of all the bounties of God. Turn to God; supplicate humbly at his threshold, seeking assistance and confirmation, that God may rend asunder the veils that obscure your vision. Then will your eyes be filled with illumination; face to face you will behold the reality of God and your heart become completely purified from the dross of ignorance, reflecting the glories and bounties of the kingdom.

". . . It is the duty of everyone to investigate

reality, and investigation of reality by another will not do . . ."

The Promulgation of Universal Truth.
Discourses by Abdul Baha; pages 285-287-288.

Not until three years had elapsed after the alleged will had been read in 1922, were copies of it finally distributed, and then only to "old and recognized believers." I was among those who received a copy. But my stand continued to be one of "watchful waiting." This stand on my part caused me no embarrassment, inasmuch as I had never been a member of the Bahai organization, (Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahais). I knew that belonging to them meant conforming to the group repression and being shorn of the universal attitude which Abdul Baha said is the essence of the Bahai Cause. During these three years, however, my outer as well as my inner life was absorbed with the question of Abdul Baha's alleged will.

In May 1926 the National Spiritual Assembly of Bahais incorporated the Bahai Cause, made the alleged will part of the by-laws, and proclaimed it an article of faith that Shoghi Effendi as the Guardian of the Bahai Cause must be obeyed in all things. The alleged will had never been examined by handwriting experts.

By the powers granted in the alleged will, the Guardian collected large sums of money, and sent out various pleas for this purpose. I made four contributions during 1925 and 1926, in answer to one of these pleas which was printed on the Bahai Fund receipt and was as follows:

"It is the sacred obligation of every conscientious servant of Baha'u'llah, who desires to see His

Cause advance, to contribute freely and generously for the increase of that Fund.” — Shoghi Effendi.

One division of this BAHAI FUND was to be used in response to Shoghi's plea that more money was needed at once to buy land around the *Tomb of the Bab* on Mount Carmel, in order to protect this shrine from the encroachment of other people who were also buying land there. In answer to this plea I sent \$200 for the Mount Carmel division of the Bahai Fund. Later I wrote to Shoghi Effendi, and also to the National Spiritual Assembly of Bahais, asking how much land had been purchased, and the number and size of the lots, and where they were situated. But the only information I could get was that my contribution had been pooled with contributions of others. Who these 'others' were I could not find out. Nor was any other information given me for which I had asked.

Now I will jump ahead to 1944 and show that Shoghi Effendi and The National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is have, for the last twenty-one years, continued to disregard the question of accounting for money received. Mirza Ahmad Sohrab in his book published in 1944* writes that the Bahai Movement, under Shoghi Effendi is now an organization, and he makes the following statement:

“The movement is an organization run by an administrative body along the lines of laws and by-laws; and to be consistent with this new aspect, the financial department should be regulated according to institutionalized custom. . . . He (Shoghi Effendi) as treasurer, should see to it that

*The Will and Testament of Abdul Baha, Page 67
New History Foundation, 132 East 65th Street, New York, N. Y.

a certified accountant give to the members of his community a detailed report on this fund to which they have subscribed. . . . This has not been done up to date, although twenty-one years have elapsed since the departure of the Master (Abdul Baha) . . ."

Now to return to my own experience in 1926. I knew that inasmuch as I had made contributions to the BAHÁI FUND, in answer to Shoghi Effendi's plea, and could get no financial statement from him or the Assembly, that I had a legal right to demand a photographic copy of the alleged will. I therefore wrote to the Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is part of which letter is as follows:

"I request that you, in your official capacity as one of the officers of this organization, present to me legal evidence that your organization, in its acceptance of Shoghi Effendi as the successor of Abdul Baha, is founded on a legal claim, by presenting to me, on or before the 19th day of January, 1928, an authentic photographic copy of this document which purports to be the will of Abdul Baha.

**Yours in the service of the Cause of God,
Ruth White**

Four weeks later, on December 31, I received a reply from Mr. Holley, part of which is as follows:

**National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the
United States and Canada
Office of the Secretary
129 East Tenth Street, New York City
December 31, 1927.**

My Dear Mrs. White:

Although you have indicated several points on

which you desire explanation or comment, we feel that your letter raises only one fundamental question, namely, the validity of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha. Since this Will appoints a Guardian to administer the administrative affairs of the Cause, and since the Guardian has approved the matters you question, it of course follows that those who really desire to conform to the wishes and instructions of 'Abdu'l-Baha will accept His instructions concerning administrative affairs as soon as they know what these instructions are.

We can, therefore, give you full assurance that the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha, a copy of which was sent you over two years ago, is a document written by Him in His own hand, the validity of which has been established by a number of well-known Baha'is from different countries who inspected the original at Haifa.

Apart from this entirely convincing proof, it is a matter of interesting historical record that, when the custody of one of the Bahai'i tombs at Haifa was questioned after the departure of 'Abdu'l-Baha the final decision lay in the hands of the representative of the British Government administering Palestine under the mandate of the League of Nations, and after full investigation he restored the keys of the Tomb to the Guardian appointed in the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha.

As no photographic copies of this document exist in this country, we are unable to meet your request for such a copy. In view of the fact that the world-wide Baha'i community naturally most con-

cerned with establishing the completeness and accuracy of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's final instruction to His followers, has been satisfied with the verbal accuracy of His Will and Testament; and in view also of the fact that the highest civil authorities of Palestine have also accepted the Guardian as the administrative head of the Baha'i Cause, we know that you may rest assured that obedience to 'Abdu'l-Bahá at this time means obedience to the Guardian appointed by Him in all matters pertaining to the Baha'i Cause."

(Signed) HORACE HOLLEY, Secretary.

This answer was wholly unsatisfactory, for the very point of my letter, as well as others that I had previously sent, was that the alleged will is not in accord with the wishes or teachings which Abdul Baha expressed during his lifetime. Furthermore Mr. Holley's so-called proof of the validity of the will, that it is "a document written by him (Abdul Baha) in his own hand, the validity of which has been established by a number of well-known Baha'is from different countries who inspected the original at Haifa" would be thrown out of any court as worthless. For the "well-known Baha'is" were not handwriting experts, and no one but a handwriting expert is legally qualified to judge the validity of a questioned will. Another reason why the evidence of these "well-known Baha'is" is worthless is that they are not disinterested witnesses. They are leaders in the very organization in the by-laws of which this alleged will was incorporated. and they had made it an article of faith that this will must be accepted. Those who even questioned it were to be thrown out of the congregation of the Bahais.

As for Mr. Holley's statement: "... in view also of

the fact that the highest civil authorities of Palestine have also accepted the Guardian as the administrative head of the Baha'i Cause . . ." it means nothing at all as far as the vital issue is concerned. For there was no property, either personal or real, bequeathed in the alleged will and as no one contested the right of Shoghi Effendi as successor to the point of insisting upon having the alleged will put to the acid test of handwriting experts, the government's recognition of him consisted in permitting him to be the custodian of the Tombs of the Bab and of Baha'o'llah. This would have been conceded him even without a will, as he is the oldest male descendant of Abdul Baha.

As Mr. Mountford Mills was one of the "well known Baha'is" who had gone to Palestine shortly after the passing of Abdul Baha, I wrote to him asking him to give me what information he could concerning the alleged will. Mr. Mills, by the way, drew up the by-laws of the Bahai Cause, than which nothing could be more un-Bahai. Although he is an exceptionally fine man, that did not interfere with his blindness. Just after he had drawn these by-laws, my husband and I had an interview with him, in which he said that he had recently finished reading 'Christianity Past and Present' by Charles Guignebert, and that if he had read it before drafting those by-laws the history of the Bahai Cause would have been different. In other words Mr. Mills deeply regretted his action.

The following is his reply to my letter:

January 19th, 1928.

Dear Mrs. White:

I have your letter of yesterday and have also received the copies of your earlier letters to the

National Spiritual Assembly and to Mr. Holley, all bearing upon the question whether the Will accepted by the National Spiritual Assembly as Abdul' Baha's Last Testament is really so. Needless to say, I am glad to give you any information I can relating to the matter.

Answering more specifically the questions in your letter to me,

I have seen the Will.

It is written entirely in the Master's own hand.

It is signed by him.

Its parts written before the Master's seal was stolen from him in this country are sealed.

It is not dated, but its approximate date appears from its contents.

It has not been probated in the sense that we use the word, as there is no provision under the laws of Islam for such a proceeding. It has, however, been officially recognized by the British Government, the Mandatory Power now governing Palestine.

I hope these answers will satisfy the doubts that have arisen in your mind concerning the authenticity of the Will. Please let me know. I have enjoyed exceptional opportunities to learn the facts about it and do not hesitate to assure you that the document of which copies have been circulated among the Bahais in this country is the Last Will and Testament of Abdu'l Baha and embodies his final and most sacred message to his followers.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) MOUNTFORD MILLS.

Then upon further questioning he wrote again as follows:

January 22nd, 1928.

Dear Mrs. White:

I have your letter of yesterday.

As I wrote in my last letter, the formal standards in executing wills here required by our laws cannot be applied to the Will of Abdu'l Baha. Viewing it through the eye of our custom so far as possible, however, we should consider its three parts as forming his main Will to which two codicils had been added, all three parts being his Last Will and Testament. This is the view I took when writing you. It also seems beyond question that this was the Master's own intention. The three parts were filed together in one place by him, with the evident intent that they should be read together as one document.

Answering your specific questions,

All three sections are signed by Abdu'l Baha.

The first two sections are sealed.

All three sections are in the handwriting of Abdu'l Baha.

The Master's seal was stolen during his visit to this country in 1912.

The first two sections were thus obviously written before 1912, the last section after his return to Palestine in 1913. A closer approximation to the exact dates can be drawn from events referred to in

the separate sections, but I have not this data with me here. As explained above, following our occidental terminology, there is but one Will with two codicils, the three parts having been written at different dates.

The commands of Abdu'l Baha which you quote concerning the identification of letters alleged to have been written by him were given out with special reference to Orientals who might come to this country and mingle with the Friends with the purpose of creating differences among them, and it has always been supposed that the commands were given with particular reference to Dr. ———, who, as you know, did come here shortly afterwards. That these instructions could not have been intended to apply in full detail to all of the Master's writings is clearly shown by the innumerable Tablets sent to us that were almost never written in his own hand beyond the signature. However, I agree with you entirely that he would wish even more strongly that anyone feeling that he had reasonable grounds to doubt the authenticity of so gravely important a document as his Will should take every reasonable precaution to be sure.

Sincerely,

(Signed) MOUNTFORD MILLS.

Here again in both letters Mr. Mills' statements: "It is written entirely in the Master's own hand," and . . . "All three sections are in the handwriting of Abdul Baha" are no proof at all, as only a handwriting expert is legally qualified to judge the authenticity of the handwriting of a questioned will.

In response to other letters that I wrote to the National Spiritual Assembly, reiterating my request for photographs of the alleged will in order to have it examined by handwriting experts, I received a reply from Mr. Holley asking me to meet the members of the Spiritual Assembly. I accepted this invitation and met them on February 25, 1928. The object of the meeting on their part was, apparently, to try and make me feel that I should accept this document on verbal and circumstantial evidence. I, on my part, reiterated what I had written in my letters and tried to make them realize that to accept it in this manner was disobedience to the commands of Abdul Baha.

I asked them how they could possibly believe they were carrying out the wishes of Abdul Baha in accepting this alleged will before they had first carried out his wishes regarding the acceptance of any document alleged to be his. I reminded them that he had written:

"Any Persian . . . (who comes to America) . . . even if it is Shoghi Effendi, or Rouhi Effendi (the two grandsons of Abdul Baha) the friends must demand of him before anything else, his credential letter, written in my handwriting, or signed with my signature."

(Signed) Abdul Baha Abbas.

From Star of the West, October 16, 1915.

They contended that this referred to a certain relative of Abdul Baha's. I maintained that it referred to anyone, and that it made no difference whether a letter or document alleged to be Abdul Baha's was brought or sent to us. He would insist that we should see his own writing or signature before we accepted it. In particular this would

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apply to his alleged will, for it gave Shoghi Effendi authority totally out of keeping with Bahai principles.

The fact that Shoghi Effendi was specified in the letter of Abdul Baha just quoted, was portentous of what has happened. It was a prophetic warning foreshadowing just what has taken place.

I learned at this meeting with the Assembly that the photographs of the alleged will, which I had requested three months prior to this meeting, had not even been sent for. Therefore the next day, before the members of the Spiritual Assembly adjourned, I sent a letter to them by special delivery in which I urged that they cable to Mr. Allen McDaniel, who was then in Haifa, and request him to bring back the photographs when he returned.

In response to this letter Mr. Holly wrote that the photographs had been sent for.

Chapter IV

London — on the trail of the alleged Will

Although everyone whom I had questioned concerning the alleged will of Abdul Baha had assured me that it had never been photographed, yet about this time I heard that one set of photographs did exist and was owned by a Persian in London.

In order to insure having photostatic copies made from these in case the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais failed to secure the photographs they had sent for, or would not permit me to photograph them in case they came, I sailed with my husband for England on April 25, 1928.

I believed I could secure copies of the set through the help of a prominent Bahai in London, Mrs. Claudia Coles, because I had rendered her a great service in 1926, through foreknowledge of an event that vitally concerned her welfare. The whole story is so extraordinary that I wish I could recount it here, for it demonstrates that those who follow guidance must be willing to follow it for others also, no matter how much work is entailed and how much time and money spent. Lawrence and I had made our trip to London in 1926 solely to help her. In this particular case the Higher Powers had acted on me in the same way that a novelist acts when, as he plots his novel, he "plants" ahead of time hints of future

events. Many times I have been moved in this way to do inexplicable things, the wisdom of which only became known to me later. Happy are we if we can catch a glimpse of the plot of our lives and align ourselves with it.

The events of 1926 gave Mrs. Coles such confidence in me that now, when I suddenly appeared two years later and asked her to secure for me the photographs of the will of Abdul Baha, she gladly consented.

The very day after our arrival the photographs were in our hands and together we went to the British Museum and had them photostated. Some of the ten sheets were illegible in part, as evidently something had been spilled over the photographs from which they had been reproduced, or perhaps the plates had been over-exposed. But, needless to say, I was overjoyed at the truly miraculous way in which we had gained possession of them.

After meeting practically all the Bahais in London and many of those in Germany, we returned to America with the much-coveted document, arriving in New York on May 29th, 1928. On that very day Mr. Holley wrote to me that the photographs of the will were at his office and invited me to inspect them. But I assured him that an inspection at his office would not suffice. Three days later, on June 1st, he wrote to me again and his attitude is typical of that of all the Bahais in the organization toward the alleged will. He thought that by looking at it, and then looking at the writing, which might or might not be that of Abdul Baha, I could judge whether the writing of the will is genuine. They surely must have known that only an expert could determine this after much work with the comparative microscoper used by handwriting experts. The following is part of his letter:

My dear Mrs. White:

June 1, 1928.

At the time when the National Assembly recorded in its minutes a reference to your joint meeting with us, and our decision to request photographs or photostats of the Will and Testament, it was not contemplated that you would require more than a careful inspection of these copies of the original papers at my office. The members felt sure that by comparing the signature and handwriting with copies of original tablets which might be in your possession, you could readily satisfy yourself that the Will and Testament is absolutely genuine.

If I had not surprised him with the information that I had just returned from London with photostatic copies of the alleged will, I believe that an inspection at his office is all that would have been granted me. When I asked permission to have his set photostated as some of the sheets of those I had were partly obliterated, he said he would bring the matter up before the members of the National Spiritual Assembly.

While awaiting their decision I wrote them another letter on June 26th, 1928, saying that it would greatly assist me if they would send me three or four photographs of tablets of Abdul Baha, written in his own hand, in order that these might be compared with the alleged will. Although I sent this by registered mail and the return card came back with Mr. Holley's signature, yet when he mailed the photostats to me on July 13th no mention was made of my request. This despite the fact that there were in the Bahai archives in New York, as early as 1907, five hundred tablets of Abdul Baha.*

*See Tablets of Abdul Baha, Vol. I. Introduction.

In fact the National Spiritual Assembly by refusing to have the original text of the will examined themselves and by their obvious reluctance to assist me in my efforts to have it done, appeared to be unwilling to put the alleged will to the test of handwriting analysis for fear that it might be proved invalid.

My next step was to secure the services of the greatest handwriting expert I could obtain, one whose integrity was above reproach. I finally went to Mr. Albert S. Osborne but for a number of reasons he could not undertake the task. Yet he was greatly interested, very kind, and gave me valuable advice. He said that the document should be examined from three different angles. First, from the spiritual point of view. Does the alleged will agree with the teachings and the intent that the maker held during his lifetime, or does it contradict them? Secondly, from the literary point of view. Is it written in the style of Abdul Baha? Thirdly, from the scientific point of view — submit it to the scrutiny of the best handwriting experts. As he lived in Montclair, New Jersey, Mr. Osborne kindly procured for me a photograph of the inscription written by Abdul Baha on May 12, 1912, in the Bible in the Unitarian Church in that city.

Mr. Osborne emphasized the value of having the original document of the will examined. As this was in the Holy Land he suggested that I take the matter up with the British Analyst in Palestine. But on inquiry I was told there was none there. I therefore wrote to the High Commissioner of Palestine on December 31st, 1928. I assumed that, inasmuch as the alleged will was an affair of international interest and inasmuch as it had been incorporated, without legal proof of its authenticity, in the bylaws of the National Spiritual Assembly of

Baha'is, and had thereby empowered Shoghi Effendi to collect large sums of money, the High Commissioner might undertake the examination of the document. I felt also that his verdict would carry much more weight than if I personally undertook the work, even if I had had the means to do so.

The following is the reply to my letter:

**Secretarial, Government offices, Jerusalem,
6th February, 1929.**

Madam,

I am directed to refer to your letter of the 31st December regarding the Will of Sir Abdul Baha Abbas and to inform you that any information which you wish to obtain must be obtained privately and that if you wish to take any steps to examine the Will you would be well advised to employ an advocate in Palestine.

The money order which accompanied your letter is returned herewith.

**I am, Madam,
Your obedient servant,
(Signed) E. Mus,
For Chief Secretary.**

**Mrs. H. Lawrence White
New York City, U. S. A.**

This letter from the High Commissioner was such a disappointment that I decided to publish the result of my long and careful study of the material bearing on what Mr. Osborne called 'spiritual proof': does the alleged

will agree with or contradict the expressed intent of the alleged maker? In the autumn of 1929 I published the book to which I have already referred, "The Bahai Religion and its Enemy, the Bahai Organization." This was followed in 1930 by an appendix in which I definitely challenged the authenticity of the will.

For between the publication of this book and the appendix I sailed for England in order to engage the services of the very best handwriting expert in England, Dr. C. Ainsworth Mitchell. I felt he was especially qualified as he is the official expert on documents in the British Museum and the editor of *THE ANALYST*. Equally important was the fact that he is a man above reproach.

I submitted to him specimens of the handwriting of Abdul Baha together with photostat copies of the alleged will. The authentic specimens that I submitted are as follows:

1. A photographic copy of the inscription which Abdul Baha wrote in the Bible of the Unitarian Church at Montclair N. J. in 1912. This was secured for me by Albert S. Osborn and on the upper left margin of the photograph was typed: "Authentic writing of Abdul Baha written in the book of the Unitarian Church, at Montclair, N.J., U.S.A. 1912"

2. Writing from the Guest Bible for 1912, City Temple, London. This photostat copy was made by Donald Macbeth of the Manuscript Division of the British Museum.

3. Authentic signatures on two letters written to Mrs. J. Stannard and a signature on a very old letter written to Mrs. Devine.

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Fac-Simile Reproduction of Part of the Alleged Will
From page 5, section 16 and 17 of the Alleged Will of Abdul Baha

پروردگار! ای یزدان! ملوک و کوه و چمن و بهشت و محط عظم دریا
 تا آنکه بایست عظم رسیدم و در این کشور نام و نشان تو بر زبان راندم
 در این ملک مانند پادشاهان و ملوک تو هم مرا ونداد این ملک
 منجذب هر خورشید و در پناه حق محفوظ و مصون بدار و مبارک
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The three photographs herewith reproduced are: 1. Section of the alleged will of Abdul Baha. 2. Facsimile reproduction of the authentic writing of Abdul Baha written in the Bible of the Unitarian Church, Montclair, New Jersey in 1912. 3. Facsimile reproduction of the writing of Abdul Baha written in the Guest Bible of the City Temple, London, in 1912:

Two of these specimens herewith reproduced are authentic writings of Abdul Baha beyond a doubt. The one from the Guest Bible of the City Temple, London, agrees with the writing in the Bible of the Unitarian Church at Montclair, New Jersey. Three men witnessed Abdul Baha write with his own hand the inscription in the Bible of the City Temple. They are: John Kelman, Oliver Lodge, and Edwin Brough. Donald Macbeth, of the manuscript department of the British Museum, who photographed it, signed on the back of the photograph to that effect. The following is the translation of this inscription that Abdul Baha wrote in the Bible of the City Temple, in 1913:

This book is the Holy Book of God, Celestial Inspiration; it is the Bible of Salvation, the noble Gospel. It is the mystery of the Kingdom and its Lights. It is the Divine Bounty, the sign of the Guidance of God.

(Signed) 'Abdul Baha' 'Abbas

This English translation appears side by side with the Persian writing of Abdul Baha.

The following is a translation of the inscription that Abdul Baha wrote in the Bible of the Unitarian Church at Montclair, New Jersey, May 12, 1912, on which occasion he spoke at that church:

"O Almighty! O Pure God! Thanks be unto Thee that the mountain and desert were traversed, the all surrounding ocean was crossed until we arrived on this continent and now in this country have we loosed our tongue in Thy name and Mention, and in this church like unto Elias have we heralded Thy Kingdom.

O God! Attract the members of this church to Thy Beauty, protect and guard them under Thy Shelter and bless them!

(Signed) Abdul Baha Abbas.

The third specimen of handwriting reproduced here is from the alleged will of Abdul Baha. A comparison of this enlarged writing with the enlarged writing of the two authentic writings of Abdul Baha makes differences perfectly apparent that would not be so apparent without enlargement.

There can be no doubt about the authenticity of this signature to Mrs. Devine's letter, or of the two signatures in letters to Mrs. Stannard. Dr. Mitchell said that these two undoubted specimens of Abdul Baha's writing and *the specimen from the Unitarian Church in Montclair*, and also that from the City Temple in London, all agree together as the writing of the same person.

After months of analytical work on the handwriting of the alleged will, comparing it with the three undoubted specimens of Abdul Baha's writing, Dr. Mitchell says that the writing in the alleged will is not all in the same hand. *Furthermore none of it is in the same handwriting as the specimens submitted.* The following chapter is devoted to Dr. Mitchell's report.

Chapter V

Dr. C. Ainsworth Mitchell's Report

C. Ainsworth Mitchell, D.Sc., F.I.C.

Tel Victoria 8363.

85, Eccleston Square
London, S.W.1.

June 3rd 1930

R E P O R T

ON THE WRITING SHOWN ON THE PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE ALLEGED WILL OF ABDUL BAHA.

I have made a minute examination of the writing in the photographs and photographic enlargements of the alleged will of Abdul Baha, and have compared it with the authenticated writing of Abdul Baha in a series of photographs and photographic enlargements received from Mrs. H. Lawrence White.

In the absence of an opportunity to examine the original document, any conclusions to be drawn from an examination of the photographic enlargements must necessarily be of a provisional character contingent upon the accuracy of the photographic records. Moreover, some of the facts which are taken into consideration in

the scientific examination of an original document cannot be perfectly studied in a photographic reproduction, such as, for example, the ink, paper, penstrokes, and so on.

Assuming that the authenticated specimens of writing are of approximately the same period as that at which the disputed will is alleged to have been written and signed, the points which can be accurately compared in the photographic enlargements are the mode of formation of the writing, the changes in pressure, the form of individual letters, and the relationship in the size of parts of the letter to the whole.

A fact requiring explanation is the presence of apparent erasures on some of the pages of the will, namely in lines 12 and 13 of page 2, and line 13 of page 4. Without a microscopical examination of the original document it is not possible to state whether a chemical agent has been used, but assuming there have been erasures at these points I think it probable that they were done mechanically, not chemically. The apparent erasure on page 5, line 11, may possibly be the result of an imprint from other written matter while the ink was wet.

The photographic reproductions of authenticated specimens of the writing of Abdul Baha were the following:—

1. Writing from the Book of the Unitarian Church, Montclair, New Jersey.
2. Writing from the Guest Bible for 1912, City Temple, London.
3. Authenticated signatures on two letters to Mrs.

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انما كتاب بهر اهل بیت بود که در آنجا
 انجمن صبر است اسرار ملکوت است انوار لاهوت است
 معنی الهیت انما در پرتو نور است
 معنی لاهوت انما در پرتو نور است

Fac-Simile Writing of Abdul Baha from the Bible of the City Temple, London

Stannard on a photograph, and a possibly authentic signature in the possession of Mrs. Devine.

There is no reason to doubt the authenticity of the signature from Mrs. Devine, since it agrees closely with the other signatures.

The Signatures on the Envelope: — A comparison of the four signatures on the envelope of the alleged will with the four authenticated signatures reveals many striking differences in the mode of formation of the characters, as for example:

In the authentic signatures the width of these characters, compared with their height, is much greater than in the signatures on the envelope. The strokes are also much firmer in the envelope signatures than in the authenticated signatures.

In the authenticated signature, the entire character is roughly $2\frac{1}{4}$ times the width of the open space between the uprights; in the disputed signatures the corresponding figure is twice as great. In the authentic signatures the cusp is rounded; in the disputed signatures it is pointed. In the authenticated signatures the relationship between the depth of the gap and its breadth is as 1 : 1.4 to 1.6, whereas in the disputed signatures it is as 1 : 2.3 to 2.6. Thus the ratio is totally different. In my opinion these differences are not consistent with the signatures upon the envelope being in the writing of the writer of the authenticated signature.

The Body of the Will: — A comparison of the formation of the writing on the envelope with that on pages 9 and 10 of the will shows so many points of resemblance

that there is no reason to doubt that they were written by the same person.

I have also studied minutely the photographic enlargements of the writing on the other pages of the will, and have formed the following conclusions:—

Page 2, with the exception of the last two lines, agrees with Page 3.

The last two lines of Page 2 agree with Page 4.

The other pages, namely 5, 6, 7 and 8, agree in the characteristics of writing with the writing on Page 4. That is to say, the writing does not agree with the hypothesis that it was all written by one person.

The writing of Abdul Baha has certain distinctive features, among which are a sudden change of pressure in some of the strokes, wavering formation of some of the curves, and the formation of sharp angles in some of the characters. These characteristics are sharply indicated in the enlarged photographs of the writing in the City Temple, London, and in the Montclair writing.

A minute comparison of the authenticated writing with the writing on every page of the alleged will, and in particular with the lines 10, 11 and 12 on page 5, has failed to detect in any part of the will the characteristics of the writing of Abdul Baha, as shown in the authenticated specimens.

In addition to these differences in writing habits, there are also differences in the shapes of many of the parallel characters in the body of the document com-

pared with the authenticated writing, as in the case of the signatures mentioned above.

(Signed) C. AINSWORTH MITCHELL.*

Dr. Mitchell not only spent months examining the enlarged specimens submitted to him, but he examined minutely every line of the ten photographs of the alleged will, and his conclusion is that it is not written throughout by the same person. This fact, in addition to others, indicates that the will is spurious, especially if we bear in mind that Shoghi Effendi, and the Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is, assert that every word of it is written in the hand of Abdul Baha. Also if we bear in mind that it is undated, and unwitnessed, and that it contradicts the teachings that both Baha'o'llah and Abdul Baha gave during their lifetimes — that the Bahai Cause is a spiritual democracy and not a theocracy. The appointment of an hereditary guardianship contradicts this.

Dr. Mitchell's report also shows that none of the handwriting of the alleged will is the same as the authentic specimens of Abdul Baha's handwriting that were submitted to him.

The ratio between the depth of the gap and its breadth, Dr. Mitchell shows, is totally different between the authentic signatures and those in the alleged will. It is as 1:1.4 to 1.6 in the authentic signatures, whereas in the disputed signatures it is as 1:2.3 to 2.6.

Most persons are unaware of the fact that handwriting experts use modern inventions that measure the slants, the spaces, and the tremors of writing so accurately that it makes the difference between two speci-

*A photostat copy of Dr. Mitchell's report is in the Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.

mens of different writing overwhelmingly apparent, when these are enlarged, even though one of the specimens may be so clever a forgery of the other as to appear identical to the naked eye.

Those Bahais who assert that they are familiar with the handwriting of Abdul Baha, and have compared it with the writing of the will, and have found them identical, reveal the fact that they are either totally unaware of the science used by the best handwriting experts, or else fear has prompted them to assert their belief in the authenticity of the will — fear of being excommunicated *if they so much as question the document*. This science that the best handwriting experts use is so mathematically accurate that any number of experts using these modern inventions will arrive at the same results.

I have already referred to the extreme care that Abdul Baha showed in regard to letters purporting to be from him, sent or brought to this country. The following instance shows that he was even more careful to make certain that any Tablet or document of his relating to important public matters was properly translated and authenticated before it was sent out. He wrote a Tablet to the Secretary of the Court for Durable Peace, at the Hague, on December 17, 1919, and he considered it necessary to have four men translate it. These four men were Shoghi Effendi (Rabanni), Dr. Zia M. Bagdadi, Mirza Lotfullah Hakim, and Dr. J. E. Esselmont. This Tablet was signed Abdul Baha Abbas, and was published in the Star of the West (Bahai Magazine), August 1, 1920, with the four names of the translators and witnesses.

The quadruple witnessing of this Tablet, written two

years before Abdul Baha passed from this world, makes it evident that he did not consider Shoghi Effendi careful enough, or efficient enough, to translate the Tablet to the Court for Durable Peace without the help of three other men. Is it likely, then, that at this very time an authentic will of Abdul Baha's, of infinitely greater importance than this Tablet to the Hague, should lay hidden in the earth, undated and unwitnessed, in which this same Shoghi Effendi was appointed sole guardian of the Bahai Cause, with more potential power and wealth than a king and pope combined? And that later this same will was translated by one person only, the beneficiary himself — Shoghi Effendi. Is this in accordance with Abdul Baha's super-carefulness?

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Chapter VI

Spiritual indications that the will is spurious.

I have tried to show that the authenticity of the alleged will does not stand the test of handwriting analysis; that its contents contradict the often expressed intent of Baha'o'llah and of Abdul Baha for Bahais; and that its undated, unwitnessed condition is in direct contradiction to Abdul Baha's habits of extreme, meticulous care in regard to everything which he wrote.

I wish now to trace the devastating effect of this alleged will upon the organization which accepted it blindly, and to show by contrast the splendid work which has been done by Bahais who have acted freely and in accordance with true Bahai teachings.

Abdul Baha said that if an angel from heaven comes down and tries to change the teachings of Baha'o'llah, do not believe him. Shoghi Effendi has changed them by pronouncements and actions which are in direct contradiction to Bahai teachings — above all he has changed the very character and fundamental principle of the Cause by putting a theocracy, which the founders said it was **not**, in place of the spiritual democracy which they said, over and over again, it is. The following instances show what acceptance of the alleged will has done to the blind followers of its rules.

Mr. Horace Holley, as spokesman for Shoghi Effendi, made this statement in 1925:

"The individual conscience must be subordinated to the decisions of the elected Spiritual Assembly."*

This statement strikes at the very foundation of the Bahai Cause, as one of its cardinal teachings is that man must have freedom of conscience. Among dozens of instances that could be given of Abdul Baha's statements on this subject is the following:

" . . . the conscience of man is sacred and to be respected; and that liberty thereof produces widening of ideas, amendment of morals, improvement of conduct, disclosure of the secrets of creation, and manifestation of the hidden verities of the contingent world. . . . So in the world of existence two persons unanimous in all grades (of thought) and all beliefs cannot be found. 'The ways unto God are as the number of the breaths of (His) creatures,' is a mysterious truth. . . . "

Again, about twenty years later, Abdul Baha said:

" . . . Just as in the world of politics there is need for free thought, likewise in the world of religion there should be the right of unrestricted individual belief. Consider what a vast difference exists between modern democracy and the old forms of despotism. Under an autocratic government the opinions of men are not free, and the development is stifled, whereas in democracy, because thought

*Bahai Year Book, Vol. I P. 55

*The Traveller's Narrative. Translated by Prof. Edward G. Browne.

and speech are not restricted, the greatest progress is witnessed. It is likewise true in the world of religion. When freedom of conscience, liberty of thought and right of speech prevail, that is to say, when every man according to his own idealization may give expression to his beliefs, development and growth are inevitable.” *

We can see from the foregoing that Abdul Baha emphasized the necessity of man's being able to exercise freedom of conscience, as Baha'o'llah did.

The reason Mr. Holley, as spokesman for Shoghi Effendi, made this incredible statement that “. . . the individual conscience must be subordinated to the Spiritual Assembly, . . .” is that since Abdul Baha passed from this world the Bahai teachings have been garbled in such a way as to lead people to suppose that when Baha'o'llah said that mankind must obey its governments he meant the Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is!

In order to realize how this inversion could have taken place we must understand that Baha'o'llah gave to the world, as one of the cardinal points of his teachings, the necessity for a Supreme Tribunal, composed of the wisest men in each nation, and he used such expressions as “Assembly” and “National Assembly,” in speaking of these anticipated Parliaments of the world. This title, “National Assembly,” was adopted by the Bahai's when they began their activities in America over forty years ago. Whether the leaders of that time did this with the intention of making the writings of Baha'o'llah appear as if they referred to the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is whenever he spoke of the National Assemblies,

*The Promulgation of Universal Peace. Vol. I. Page 192.

or Parliaments of the world, I do not know. But I do know that Shoghi Effendi and the National Spiritual Assembly of Bahá'ís are forcing this interpretation upon the Bahá'í world today.

The only valid subordination of the individual conscience is, according to the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh and of Abdul Bahá, in civil matters, as for instance in the election of Mr. Roosevelt for president. He won by majority vote, therefore those who had voted for Thomas Dewey had to subordinate their individual conscience, that is their preference, to the wishes of the majority.

During the lifetime of Abdul Bahá the attempts of the National Spiritual Assembly of Bahá'ís to organize the Bahá'í Religion were held in abeyance, but after he passed from this world, under the dictates of Shoghi Effendi, they swung it into an organization the like of which has not been seen since the dark ages. They tried to exercise the power over the Bahá'í world that Bahá'u'lláh said would be vested in the SUPREME TRIBUNAL of the future world governments. In order to enforce this power they excommunicated those who would not accept their pronouncements, and twice the members of the National Assembly sued at law in order to try and prevent other Bahá'ís from promulgating the religion which they held in common; but, fortunately, they lost both these suits. Judge Valente, reprimanding them, reminded them of the Bill of Rights, which grants freedom to every man to practice his religion unmolested. All of this the reader can learn in the ensuing pages.

The Tablet that Abdul Bahá wrote to the Court for Durable Peace at The Hague, referred to in the preceding pages, is one among many instances that could be cited

confirming what has here been stated — that when Baha'o'llah and Abdul Baha speak of "Assembly," and "National Assemblies" in relation to world governments, they do not mean the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is. Part of this Tablet of Abdul Baha's follows:

To the Central Organization for Durable Peace

Office of Secretary:

19 Prinsesegracht

The Hague, Holland

Executive Committee

"O ye esteemed ones who are the pioneers among the well-wishers of the world of humantiy!

. . .

"There is not one soul whose conscience does not testify that in this day there is no more important matter in the world than that of Universal Peace. . . .

". . . the teachings of His Holiness Baha'o'llah were not limited to the establishment of Universal Peace . . .

". . . Among these teachings was the independent investigation of reality . . .

". . . the oneness of the world of humanity . .

". . . religion must be the cause of fellowship and love . . .

". . . religion must be in conformity with science and reason. . . .

". . . religious, racial, political, economic and patriotic prejudices destroy the edifice of humanity. . . .

. . .

“Regarding the economic préjudice, it is apparent that whenever the ties between nations become strengthened and the exchange of commodities accelerated, and any economic principle is established in one country, it will ultimately affect the other countries and universal benefits will result. . .

“As to political prejudice, the policy of God must be followed and it is indisputable that the policy of God is greater than human policy. We must follow the Divine policy and that applies to all individuals. He treats all individuals alike: no distinction is made, and that is the foundation of the Divine Religions.

“And among the teachings of His Holiness Baha’o’llah is the origination of one language that may be spread universally among the people in order that this universal language may eliminate misunderstandings from among mankind.

“. . . the unity of women and men. The world of humanity has two wings — one is women and the other men. Not until both wings are equally developed can the bird fly. . . .

“. . . voluntary sharing of one’s property with others among mankind. This voluntary sharing is greater than equality, . . . But this should not be introduced by coercion so that it becomes a law and man is compelled to follow it. Nay, rather, man should voluntarily and of his own choice sacrifice his property and life for others, and spend willingly for the poor, . . .”

“And among the teachings of His Holiness Baha

'o'llah is man's freedom, and through the ideal Power he should be free and emancipated from the captivity of the world of nature; . . .

"And among the teachings of Baha'o'llah is that religion is a mighty bulwark. If the edifice of religion shakes and totters, commotion and chaos will ensue and the order of things will be utterly upset, for in the world of mankind there are two safeguards that protect man from wrong doing. One is the law which punishes the criminal; but the law prevents only the manifest crime and not the concealed sin; whereas the ideal safeguard, namely, the religion of God, prevents both the manifest and the concealed crime, trains man, educates morals, compels the adoption of virtues and is the all inclusive power which guarantees the felicity of the world of mankind. But by religion is meant . . . the foundation of Divine Religions and not human imitations.

"And among the teachings of Baha'o'llah is that although material civilization is one of the means for the progress of the world of mankind, yet until it becomes combined with Divine civilization the desired result, which is the felicity of mankind will not be attained. . . . Divine civilization is the lamp itself and the glass without the light is dark. Material civilization is like the body. No matter how infinitely graceful, elegant and beautiful it may be, it is dead. Divine civilization is like the spirit, and the body gets its life from the spirit, otherwise it becomes a corpse. It has thus been made evident that the world of mankind is in need of the breaths of the Holy Spirit. . . .

. . . .

"In fine such teachings are numerous. These manifold principles, which constitute the greatest basis for the felicity of mankind and are of the bounties of the Merciful, must be added to the matter of Universal Peace and combined with it, so that results may accrue. Otherwise the realization of Universal Peace (by itself) in the world of mankind is difficult. As the teachings of His Holiness Baha 'o'llah are combined with Universal Peace, they are like a table provided with every kind of fresh and delicious food. Every soul can find, at that table of Infinite bounty, that which he desires. If the question is restricted to Universal Peace alone, the remarkable results which are expected and desired will not be attained. The scope of Universal Peace must be such that all the communities and religions may find their highest wish realized in it. At present the teachings of His Holiness Baha'o'llah are such that all the communities of the world, whether religious, political or ethical, ancient or modern, find in the teachings of Baha'o'llah the expression of their highest wish.

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"For example, the question of Universal Peace, about which His Holiness Baha'o'llah says that the SUPREME TRIBUNAL must be established; although the LEAGUE OF NATIONS has been brought into existence, yet it is incapable of establishing Universal Peace. But the Supreme Tribunal which His Holiness has described will fulfil this sacred task with the utmost might and power. And his plan is this: that the national assemblies of each country and nation — that is to say parliaments —

should elect two or three persons who are the choicest men of that nation, and are well-informed concerning international laws and the relations between governments and aware of the essential needs of the world of humanity in this day. The number of these representatives should be in proportion to the number of inhabitants of that country. The election of these souls who are chosen by the national assembly, that is, the parliament, must be confirmed by the upper house, the congress and the cabinet and also by the president or monarch so that these persons may be the elected ones of all the nation and the government. From among these people the members of the Supreme Tribunal will be elected, and all mankind will thus have a share therein, for everyone of these delegates is fully representative of his nation. When the Supreme Tribunal gives a ruling on any international question, either unanimously or by majority-rule, there will no longer be any pretext for the plaintiff or ground of objections for the defendant. In case any of the governments or nations, in the execution of the irrefutable decision of the Supreme Tribunal, be negligent or dilatory, the rest of the nations will rise up against it, because all the governments and nations of the world are the supporters of this SUPREME TRIBUNAL. Consider what a firm foundation this is! But by a limited and restricted LEAGUE the purpose will not be realized as it ought and should. This is the truth about the situation, which has been stated."

. . . .

**(Signed) Abdul-Baha Abbas
Haifa, Palestine, December 17, 1919**

Published in STAR of the WEST August 1, 1920

Translated by: Shoghi Rabbani (Effendi)

Dr. Zia M. Bagdadi
Mirza Lotfullah Hakim,
Dr. J. E. Esslemont.

The reader will note that whenever Abdul Baha speaks of "National Assemblies," he always adds "The Parliaments of the world."

This Tablet, a résumé of some of Baha'o'llah's teachings, deals chiefly with the necessity of establishing a SUPREME TRIBUNAL. The United Nations Organization is an embryonic SUPREME TRIBUNAL such as he envisioned eighty years ago, and even though the results of this first attempt may still be far from successful, yet the beginning of the fulfillment of this prophecy is a harbinger of better things to come.

When Baha'o'llah spoke of the necessity for the establishment of the SUPREME TRIBUNAL, he released with those words the leaven of the Spirit to all mankind. Those who were receptive, including people who may never have heard of Baha'o'llah, became animated by this leaven to carry parts of the Bahai Teachings into action. And this leaven has been working ever since. For eighty years it has worked in many ways — worked through constructive means, such as inspiring those with scientific talents to discover great inventions — airplanes, radio and many others — which united the world physically in preparation for its spiritual unification. This leaven worked even through destructive forces such as the great chastisement of the two world wars. During and after this last world war we have heard it said frequently that "there are no atheists in the fox holes."

Abdul Baha's method of conveying the Bahai Message was largely by way of tests. He gave the universal teachings in three ways — by speech, by deeds, and as Baha'o'llah did, by the leaven of the Spirit. He rarely said, "Do not do this or that." He never interfered with anybody's conception of religion. If one could not learn by precept, and example, and the awakening of the Inner Light, one had to learn by the more difficult way of tests and chastisements. The spiritual law of tests is one of the *cardinal points of every religion that ever existed*; it is Christ's spiritual law of Cause and Effect — "As a man sows so shall he reap." It is one aspect of the Buddhist and Hindu Law of Karma. It applies to all of us whether we believe in it or not, and regardless of what religion we belong to, or even if we belong to none at all. The following, by Abdul Baha, on "Tests" embodies this fundamental law of all religions:

In this day everyone must be tested, as the time of the Chosen Ones to prove their worth is indeed very short. The Day of Attainment is drawing to a close for them. The First Fruits must be ripened in Spirit, mellowed in Love, and consumed by their self-sacrifice and severance. None other are acceptable as First Fruits and all that fail to attain to the standard through the tests are relegated to the many who are called.

The more one is severed from the world, from desires, from human affairs and conditions, the more impervious does one become to the tests of God. Tests are a means by which a soul is measured as to its fitness and proven out by its own acts. God knows its fitness beforehand and also its unpreparedness, but man, with an ego, would not believe

himself unfit unless proof were given him. Consequently his susceptibility to evil is proven to him when he falls into the tests and the tests are continued until the soul realizes its own unfitness, then remorse and regret tend to root out the weakness.

The same test comes again in a greater degree, until it is shown that a former weakness has become a strength and the power to overcome evil has been established.

. . .

The worst enemies of the Cause are in the Cause and mention the Name of God. We need not fear the enemies on the outside for such can be easily dealt with. But the enemies who call themselves Friends and who persistently violate every fundamental law of Love and Unity are difficult to deal with in this Day. . . .

This last paragraph applies overwhelmingly to the activities of Shoghi Effendi, and the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is. They have violated the principles of brotherhood and unity because of their inversions of the Bahai teachings. These inversions are all the more tragic at this particular time when the world has been made receptive, through much suffering, to the great universal principles of the Bahai Religion. Two prophecies of Baha'o'llah have been so accurately fulfilled — the discovery of Atomic Power, and the embryonic Supreme Tribunal as manifested in the United Nations Organization that we would do well to consider the third — the

*In an interview given to Dt. Getsinger.
Part of this is published in *Divine Art of Living*.

possible destruction of our planet unless we circumvent this threatened fate by a balanced spiritual civilization.

The following prophecy of Abdul Baha, recorded by Charles Mason Remey in answer to some questions that he asked in 1911, may also be an indirect allusion to atomic power:

What is the significance of the prophecy, 'Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand, three hundred and five and thirty days (1335)?' Daniel 12:12.

A. After that date a great disturbance — a terrible (material) calamity is to happen in the world.

Q. Is it to be in the form of war and strife, or will it be as an earthquake, such as has happened in Messina and elsewhere?

A. Wars and earthquakes, such as you have mentioned, will happen, but these, compared with this great catastrophe to come, will be as nothing. As in the past whole peoples and civilizations have, through physical changes, been obliterated, so that not a trace has remained, so it will be when this great change shall take place.

Q. In the Bible there is a prophecy: "And it shall come to pass that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die, but the third part shall be left therein" (Zechariah 13:8-9.) Does this refer to the happening in question?

A. Yes.

Q. Will this take place soon after the date 1917 (which is the date mentioned, 1335 days) or 1335

A.H. (after Mohammed), or 1917 A.D., or will it happen in the very distant future?

A. It is not so very soon after nor again is it in the so very distant future.

At a later date Abdul Baha explained that these 1335 days mean 1335 solar years, from the flight of Mohammed from Medina to Mecca, which is the beginning of the Mohammedan era 622. This date added to 1335 is 1957.

Strangely enough, as I finish this book in February, 1946, a radio commentator flashes the news that a nation wide poll representing a cross section of the United States, revealed the fact that millions of people believe that within the next ten or fifteen years Russia and the United States will be at war. If this happens we know it will be an atomic war. We also know that the prophecy in the Bible, ". . . two parts therein shall be cut off and die but the third shall be left therein," might then become a reality. Ten or fifteen years from now would bring the date for this cataclysm within the specified time of both this Biblical prophecy and the foregoing prophecy of Abdul Baha. However, both Baha'o'llah and Abdul Baha show that we can circumvent threatened cataclysms through faith in God and prayer, combined with the practice of the principles of religion. In other words, we can deflect any destructive forces leveled at us if enough people will revivify their faith in God and prayer. Baha'o'llah says on this subject:

"The decrees of God as related to fate and predestination are of two kinds. Both are to be obeyed and accepted. The one is irrevocable, the other is, as termed by men, impending. To the former all

must unreservedly submit, inasmuch as it is fixed and settled. . . .

The decree that is impending, however, is such that prayer and entreaty can succeed in averting it."

This matter of freedom of conscience is the most important part of the Bahai Teachings. God has given man free-will, and no earthly priestcraft nor dictatorship must interfere with man's using that free-will in matters of faith and the inner relationship between the soul and God. This is the meaning of the spiritual democracy of which Abdul Baha so often speaks — religion percolating through all the affairs of our daily life, and an ideal political government coming into existence as the result of the change of man's nature and belief.

Many great evils are caused by leaders who have tried to control the conscience of man. We have seen this in our day in Russia, where the first canon of communism is atheism. Over the Kremlin is written: "Religion is the opiate of the people." In Nazi Germany political dictators said: "You must believe in no form of government but mine." A religious dictator says in substance: "You must not believe in any conception of God except what I tell you to believe."

This is just the twist that the present leaders of the Bahai organization have tried to give to the Universal Message of Baha'o'llah.

There are many other wholly un-Bahai edicts that Shoghi Effendi and the National Spiritual Assembly of Bahais have issued beside these two that follow:

" . . . the individual conscience must be subor-

**minated to the decisions of the Spiritual Assembly,
 . . . and:**

“ . . . individual Bahai effort without due consultation is foredoomed to failure.”

Other un-Bahai edicts that are given from time to time in the secret paper BAHAI NEWS, and circulated by the National Spiritual Assembly among its members are:*

1. “Recognized Bahais of the United States and Canada must not take part in any local, provincial or national election, conducted by political parties, where votes are to be cast for one or two or more candidates.” (This forbids voting for our presidents or voting in other government matters.)

2. “Recognized Bahais must not run for any public office as candidates of any political party, nor take part, directly or indirectly, in the promotion of any party or party platform.

3. “Recognized Bahais must not vote in any election based upon a party system.”

4. “Recognized Bahais must abstain from association with movements advocating social changes that presume partisan political action.

5. “Recognized Bahais who speak on Bahai platforms must abstain from making any critical statements about any particular government or national policy.”

6. “Every Local Bahai Center must be respon-

*See BROKEN SILENCE, Pages 155-6, by Ahmad Sohrab, New History Foundation, 132 East 65th Street, New York, N. Y.

sible for the carrying out of the above laws by the Bahais in their respective communities. Local membership must include only the names of those who faithfully obey these regulations."

7. "Recognized Bahais must not retain or apply for membership in any church or religious group."

8. "Bahais failing to give unreserved obedience to the above regulations and to numerous others which are constantly legislated, and month after month spread on the pages of the BAHAI NEWS by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, are expelled or excommunicated from the Cause, and the Bahais are not permitted to associate with these expelled or excommunicated ones, regardless of friendship, no matter of how long standing, nor of the depth of their affection or love."

Everyone of these edicts are inversions of the Bahai Teachings, as given to the world by the Founders of the Cause.

In saying that recognized Bahais must not vote in any election based on a party system Shoghi Effendi and his hierarchy have set up what might be considered a government within each government in every country where there are enough of his followers. Over that government he is supreme dictator. His subjects must pay taxes to him (tithes) and he forbids his followers to vote on national and civic affairs. All his edicts no matter how un-patriotic, or how much in violation of the universal principles of the Bahai Religion, must be obeyed under threat of excommunication.

This revival of excommunication is a horrible inversion of the Bahai teachings — the Revelation for which Baha'o'llah suffered imprisonment for twenty-five years, and Abdul Baha for forty years — the Cause for which *twenty thousand martyrs sacrificed their lives* to establish freedom of conscience and to unite all mankind regardless of religion, race or country. The idea of excommunication is impossible in the world envisaged by Baha'o'llah.

For those who would like a list of books written by the Founders of the Bahai Religion, Baha'o'llah and Abdul Baha, I refer them to the following:

Hidden Words by Baha'o'llah

Seven Valleys " " "

Book of Iqan " " "

Tablets " " "

Some Answered Questions by Abdul Baha

Mysterious Forces of Civilization by Abdul Baha

Promulgation of Universal Peace by Abdul Baha
(Vol. I., II., III.)

Tablets of Abdul Baha (Vol. I., II., III.)

Talks by Abdul Baha, in London

Talks by Abdul Baha, in Paris

Divine Wisdom of Abdul Baha.

Chapter VII

The Lawsuit of the National Spiritual Assembly

The most shocking act of the Bahai organization considered from the point of view of the intentions of the Founders of the Cause, was the legal prosecution brought by the organization against certain well known Bahais who were trying to spread the teachings in the universal spirit in which they had been first given to the world. Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler and Mirza Ahmad Sohrab founded the New History Society in New York in 1929, and The Caravan a year later, with the sincere desire of spreading the Bahai teachings and spirit. They were so successful that Shoghi Effendi 'excommunicated' them, and later, with his sanction, the National Spiritual Assembly brought suit against them in 1941. I quote in full the statement made against them by the National Spiritual Assembly of Bahais:

Statement made by plaintiffs:

1. The individual plaintiffs sue, as members of the National Spiritual Assembly and Trustees of the Bahais of the United States and Canada. The Spiritual Assembly of Bahais of the City of New York, a religious corporation, is a co-plaintiff.

The complaint alleges that the name Baha'i de-

notes a religion identified with the name of the founder BAHÁ.

2. The plaintiffs claim to be the authorized representatives of all the Bahais of the United States and Canada.

3. They allege that they are publishing books and other publications which teach Bahai Religion.

4. They charge that the defendants, who were members prior to April 5, 1929, of the Bahai Congregation of the City of New York, have been conducting, without the authority of plaintiffs, meetings, lectures, classes, social gatherings and other activities, and announcing and advertising the same as Bahai meetings, lectures, classes, etc.

5. They complain that the defendants have been giving these meetings, lectures, etc., a Bahai appearance and atmosphere by teaching, in connection therewith, a religion described as the Bahai Religion and that they have created an erroneous impression that they are connected with and authorized to represent the Bahai religion and to solicit contributions therefor.

6. In addition plaintiffs complain of the opening of a book shop by the defendants under the name of "Bahai Book Shop" and of the listing of the shop in the telephone directory under the name, immediately over the name of Baha'i Center" which represents the listing of plaintiffs' New York office and book shop.

The following is the decision rendered by Supreme

Court Justice Louis A. Valente in favor of Mrs. Chanler and Mirza Sohrab:

1. In the Court's opinion, the complaint fails to state a good cause of action. The plaintiffs have no right to a monopoly of the name of a religion.

2. The defendants, who purport to be members of the same religion, have an equal right to use the name of the religion in connection with their own meetings, lectures, classes and other activities.

3. No facts are alleged in the complaint to indicate that the defendants have been guilty of any act intended or calculated to deceive the public into believing that their meetings, lectures or book shop are identified with or affiliated with the meetings, lectures, etc., and book shop of the plaintiffs.

4. (a) Defendants have the absolute right to practice Bahaism,

(b) to conduct meetings,

(c) to collect funds,

(d) to sell literature in connection therewith, and

(e) to conduct a book shop under the title of "Bahai Book Shop."

Evidently the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is were unable to see that in bringing this lawsuit, they were not only utterly un-Bahai but also they were asking for something that could not be granted without violating the constitution of the United States. For the Bill of Rights grants freedom of conscience and

the right of each citizen to practice his religion without interference.

The Assembly appealed to the Appellate Division of the Superior Court three months later to have the decision of the Supreme Court Justice Louis A. Valente set aside. But again the National Spiritual Assembly lost, and they were put on record for all time as not only trying to violate the constitution of the United States, but also of violating one of the most important teachings of the Bahai religion, which they purport to represent — freedom of conscience and the right of every man to practice his religion without interference.

These two lawsuits had the same significance to Bahais as if the followers of one Christian sect had sued the followers of another sect to prohibit them from calling themselves "Christian" or from practicing their religion. For the name BAHAI means a follower of Baha'o'llah just as the word CHRISTIAN means a follower of Christ.

One more matter in which the organization of Bahai's under Shoghi Effendi has departed from the original intent and practice of the Founders, is in their attitude toward money: they have organized the Bahai Cause on a commercial basis. Nothing could be more abhorrent to the true Bahai spirit than this. They themselves described their organization when they applied to the commissioner of Patents for a copyright on the name 'Bahai' as follows:

"National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada, a common law corporation, organized and operated under a declaration of trust doing business at . . ."

. . .

**National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of
the United States and Canada."**

(Signed) Horace Holley.

All of this is utterly un-Bahai and anti-religious from every point of view. The members of the Assembly instituted a Bahai Fund, and made subscriptions to this fund an article of faith. In their Bahai catechism entitled "*Twenty lessons in Baha'i Administration*" there is this question:

"Why are the contributions to the Baha'i Fund the measure of the faith of a believer?"

Shoghi Effendi's position and procedure in instituting this Bahai Fund and in making contributions to it an article of faith, has the same significance as if, after the crucifixion of Christ, a so-called Guardian had arisen and proceeded to commercialize Christ's teachings, and had instituted a Christ Fund. If Peter had been asked to *contribute to this Fund* he would have replied:

"But I have no money. Christ told me to go forth without purse or script, and spread his teachings."

"Never mind what Christ said," the Guardian replies, "you contribute to this Christ Fund or you are not a believer in Christ, and you will be excommunicated."

"Furthermore don't go out and teach individually, for your efforts will be foredoomed to failure."

The other disciples would be subjected to this same treatment. Yet despite this they would go forth and spread Christ's teachings as he told them to. Shortly after, they would be summoned to court on the complaint

of this supposed Guardian and his organization, who reports to the judge:

"Judge, our organization has trade-marked the name of Christ, and we have incorporated the religion of Christ, and these men who call themselves his disciples have no right to use that name, or to teach without our permission."

To this the judge replies:

"But Peter and Paul and everyone in the world has an equal right to call themselves "Christians" and to teach Christ's Cause. You cannot copyright the name of Christ, nor restrain men from spreading His teachings. Religion is free, and every man has a right to practice his religion and to spread it to others."

And so the Guardian would lose his suit and Christ's teachings would be placed in the public domain.

This is an exact parallel of the attitude of the Baha'i organization to the universal teachings of Baha'o'llah, and in particular of the Assembly's insistence upon a money contribution as being the gauge of a believer's faith.

Chapter VIII

A Modern-day saint.

To come back to the matter of independent Bahai effort and the results which it achieves when carried out in a spirit of sincerity. I myself have tried to follow the teachings in my every-day life and I know that I have been guided and used according to my capacity, just as each one everywhere will be if he prays continually to know the will of God, and reads the signs along the way to find out that will.

This is a different age from that of Saint Peter, and the 'purse and scrip' that we are counseled to leave behind today in spreading the Bahai Cause is a different kind — we must not be attached to worldly possessions. One of these disciples of Baha'o'llah, and of Abdul Baha, who exemplifies changing civilization, but with no change in fervor of devotion, is Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler, against whom the Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is brought suit. Although she had wealth, social position, and education, she armoured herself with the necessary equipment for discipleship. She uses her wealth, her time and her talent entirely in spreading the Bahai teachings. This includes the publication of the magazine, NEW HISTORY, and also THE CARAVAN, which she, together with her late husband, Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler, and Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, founded in 1933. Her four-story

house is used as an office building to carry on the work, and these efforts have been crowned with enormous success. In the first twelve years of the publication of *THE CARAVAN*, from 1933 until January 1945, 480 chapters were established in twenty-four countries, with a membership of 80,000. This in spite of a global war which made correspondence difficult and sometimes impossible. At the present writing, January, 1946, there are 838 Chapters — an increase of 435 Chapters in one year and a total of 100,000 members.*

Each Chapter receives its special charter, with membership pins — a globe flying a green flag with the words, 'The world is everybody's home.' The Chapters work independently on the lines of the 'Nine Bahai Principles,' a compilation of the fundamental Bahai teachings; and through the Pen Friends' Guide, thousands of boys and girls in all parts of the world learn to be friends without reference to race, color or creed. The *CHILDREN'S CARAVAN* has had such a phenomenal success that the *NEW HISTORY* magazine has been discontinued, (the last issue was January 1946) and a new and larger periodical entitled *THE CARAVAN*, to be issued quarterly, has taken its place.

Now let us see by contrast what happened to Shoghi Effendi's administration. During Abdul Baha's lifetime, according to the *WORLD'S ALMANAC* for 1916, there were 2,884 Bahai's in the United States belonging to the National Spiritual Assembly of Bahais. But in 1926, after the first five years of Shoghi Effendi's administration, there were only 1,247 — a decrease of more than half. In 1936 the figures were still below those of 1916.

*See *THE CARAVAN*, January, 1946
132 East 65th Street, New York, N. Y.

This shrinkage was due to two reasons. One was that when an alleged will was produced, after the death of Abdul Baha, appointing Shoghi Effendi as the Guardian of the Cause, evidently those with spiritual insight seceded from the Assemblies, because they could not accept an unwitnessed, and undated document, which contradicted what Abdul Baha had said during his lifetime. A second reason evidently was that when others realized that Shoghi Effendi was substituting inverted principles in place of the teachings of Baha'o'llah, they also seceded.

Again in 1941 and 1942 the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is suffered an enormous loss after their defeat in two lawsuits, and their activities were recounted in that excellent history, *BROKEN SILENCE*.^{*} It is said that more than half of their assemblies had to close through lack of members.

I do not wish to imply that the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is are ogres. Not at all. They are highly conventional, highly respectable, and narrow. In fact they are the counter-part of those whom Christ stigmatised as Pharisees. They lack the sympathetic humanitarianism that is the earmark of a spiritual person. But most of all they lack the faith in what Christ called "The Mysteries," and Abdul Baha calls "The Intuitions of the Holy Spirit." Lacking this attribute, on which depends the success of the other principles of religion, such as universal peace, they reduce religion to an organization. And unwittingly they are trying to convert people to Pharaseeism because they really believe it is the religion itself. As a result in

^{*}By Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, New History Foundation,
132 East 65th Street, New York, N. Y.

their hands they have reduced the great universal Bahai Teachings to a mediaeval cult. The religion for which 20,000 believers were martyred — for which Baha'o'llah suffered imprisonment for twenty-five years, and Abdul Baha forty years. Now the type of persecutor has changed. Shoghi Effendi, who purports to be the "Guardian" of the Bahai Religion, is the arch persecutor of the religion itself, and of many of the disciples of Baha'o'llah and of Abdul Baha. In other words, by his inversion of the teachings of the Founders of this religion, and by his persecution of their disciples, such as we witnessed in the lawsuit, he and the Baha'i Assembly have done more damage to the Bahai Cause than did those who were its open and avowed enemies.

Whether the alleged will of Abdul Baha is authentic or spurious, the results of the administration of Shoghi Effendi and the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is stand as an historical indictment against them. They no more represent the Bahai Religion than the bigots of the dark ages represented Christianity.

We had the dark ages because the bigots of that era got control of Christ's teachings and tortured all those who did not comply with their interpretation. Shoghi Effendi, and the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is, cannot in this day resort to physical torture to enforce their will, but they have resorted to mental torture by blackmailing with excommunication all those who do not comply with their inverted teachings.

Despite these distressing conditions that I have felt obliged to record at the cost of much time and money, my life has been strangely happy, successful, and intensely interesting. For there is no romance in life so

glorious as that of being willing to follow a spiritual trail and be true to it whether the work assigned to one is pleasant, or disagreeable and difficult. The things that seem disagreeable and difficult are only apparently so. For the moment we begin to do them in the same spirit as if they were coated with heavenly nectar, we discover that they contain surprising, wonderful and beautiful elements.

Due to the alternating experiences I have had — first a Roman Catholic, then a Protestant, then an agnostic, then a near-Communist, and then a Bahai, I know that the greatest evil that can befall man is the loss of faith in God. When I became a Bahai there was restored to me not only the best in Christianity, but the best in every religion that ever existed. And because Abdul Baha restored to me faith in God I have written this book, hoping that those who read it, even if they have little faith to start with, may realize that this can be increased through prayer.

The universality of the Bahai Religion enabled me to appreciate and enjoy all religions. Today I can still go to a Roman Catholic Church and, despite the prejudices that I once had against it, pray to the Virgin Mary, and find no contradiction between this and my faith. I could likewise pray in Protestant churches, in a Mosque of Islam, or in a Hindu Temple, and I could pray in all the edifices of all the holy places in the world with deep reverence, knowing that they stand as a testimony of man's faith, of his effort to contact the vital Spirit of God. I feel a great kinship with all those who are striving for this contact. We need the unity of all the pro-Gods in the world in order to counteract the influence of the

rising tide of the anti-Gods, and the Bahai Religion is the synchronizer of all religions. Abdul Baha said:

There are prepared souls in every religion. Today God is working in all the churches instructing many souls in celestial brotherhood. These souls are related by invisible and spiritual ties and are being ripened by the Holy Spirit.

Abdul Baha warned that if those calling themselves "Bahai" could not rise to the greatness of the Bahai principles, then other individuals and groups would gradually put the principles into practice, even if they remained unaware from whence their inspiration arose. We see evidences of this all over the world today. There is a quickening of the spirit, and a great attempt is being made toward the unification of humanity.

Also there are some individuals who are already endowed with this consciousness of the new era. Since meeting Abdul Baha I have come in contact with three of these great intuitives — humanitarians who arrived at their destination through widely different channels. One stemmed his influence from the saints of Islam; one stemmed his influence from the saints within Christianity; and the most recent one I have contacted, within the last year, stems his influence from a great Avatar in India. These great intuitives exemplify the point, that those who live in accordance with the fundamental teachings of all religions can attain God consciousness regardless of the religion from which they stem. Those who make this attainment strive for the same goal — the spiritual unification of the race and the unification of man with God.

This is what Baha'o'llah and Abdul Baha wish us to

do. They did not come to establish a religion of withdrawal from other religions and to form a separate group, but to awaken in us an appreciation of the truths in all religions — to merge with our fellow men, and to come into that consciousness which Baha'o'llah described eighty years ago:

“The foundation of the Palace of Peace is the consciousness of the oneness of mankind.”

Baha'o'llah also indicated that there are as many paths to God as the number of his creatures. For the Bahai Religion is as wide and as deep as humanity itself and higher than its highest aims.

The magic flute of religion is again being heard in the world. Out of divers cults and reforms and sects people are stepping in tune to this call. Some are stirred to a new awakening, others are made uneasy, others are frightened, and others inspired to great achievements, according to each individual's capacity. Man is on the march and will never find peace until he finds his way back to God, the mystical fount without which he cannot survive. In the words of Abdul Baha:

. . . A new era of divine consciousness is upon us. The world of humanity is going through a process of transformation. A new race is being developed. The thoughts of human brotherhood are permeating all regions. New ideals are stirring the depths of hearts and a new spirit of universal consciousness is being profoundly felt by all men.

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Chapter IX

Excerpts from the Writings of Abdul Baha.

FRIENDSHIP

Now is the time when you must affiliate with all nations with joy and the utmost kindness —. . .

In every dispensation the Command of friendship and the law of Love have been revealed, but it has been circumscribed within the circle of believing friends and not with those outside of it. Praise be to God that in this wonderful cycle the laws of God are not confined by any limitations; neither must they be exercised toward a special community to the exclusion of another. He (Baha'o'llah) hath commanded the friends to show love, friendship, amity and kindness to ALL the people of the world.

Now the believers of God must live in accord with these divine Teachings. They must become kind fathers to the children of humanity; affectionate brothers to the youths of mankind and soul-sacrificing children toward those who are laden with age . . . show love and kindness to all, even to your enemies. . . .

**Abdul Baha in Egypt
by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab**

All mankind must attain to spiritual fraternity,

that is to say, fraternity in the Holy Spirit; for patriotic, racial, and political fraternity are of no avail. Their results are meager but . . . spiritual fraterinty is the cause of unity and amity among mankind.*

* * *

If you desire to love God, love thy fellowmen. In them you can see the image and likeness of God. If you are eager to serve God, serve mankind. Renounce the self in the Self of God. When the aerial mariner steers his airship skyward, little by little the inharmony and incongruity of the world of matter are lost, and before his astonished vision he sees widespread the wonderful panorama of God's creation. Likewise when the student of the Path of Reality has attained unto the loftiest summit of Divine Love, he will not look upon the ugliness and misery of mankind; he will not observe any differences; he will not see any racial and patriotic differences; but he will look upon humanity with the glorified vision of a seer and a prophet. Let us all strive that we may attain to this highest pinnacle of ideal and spiritual life.**

REAL FRATERNITY

Creation is the expression of motion. Motion is life. A moving object is a living object whereas that *which is motionless and inert is as dead* . . . Nothing is stationary in the material world or in the inner world of intellect and consciousness.

Religion is the outer expression of the divine reality. Therefore it must be living, vitalized, mov-

*Promulgation of Universal Peace. Vol. 1, page 165.

**Diary notes of Ahmad Sohrab. April 11, 1913.

ing and progressive. If it be without motion and non-porgressive it is without divine life; it is dead . . . All things are subject to re-formation. This is a century of life and renewal . . . Sciences of former ages and philosophies of the past are useless today . . . Old ideas and modes of thought are fast becoming obsolete . . . for this is clearly the century of a new life, the century of the revelation of the reality and therefore the greatest of all centuries . . .

. . . The prophets of God have founded the laws of divine civilization. They have been the root and fundamental source of all knowledge . . . The spiritual bortherhood which is enkindled and established through the breaths of the Holy Spirit unites nations and removes the cause of warfare and strife. It transforms mankind into one great family and establishes the foundation of the oneness of humanity. It promulgates the spirit of international agreement and insures Universal Peace . . . Until all nations and peoples become united by the bonds of the Holy Spirit in this real fraternity, until national and international prejudices are effaced in the reality of this spiritual brotherhood, true progress, prosperity and lasting happiness will not be attained by man. This is the century of new and universal nationhood. Sciences have advanced, industries have progressed, politics have been reformed, liberty has been proclaimed, justice is awakening. This is the century of motion, divine stimulus and accomplishment; the century of human solidarity and altruistic service; the century of Universal Peace and the reality of the divine kingdom.*

*The Promulgation of Universal Peace, Vol. 1, pages 138-9.

THE ILLUMINATI

About six hundred years ago a Society was formed in Persia called the Society of Friends, the members of which gathered together for silent communion with the Almighty.

They divided Divine Philosophy into two parts: That which can be acquired through lectures and study in schools and colleges; and the philosophy of the Illuminati, or Followers of the Inner Light. The schools of this philosophy were held in Silence and meditation, and by turning to the Source of Light. From that Central Light the mysteries of the Kingdom were reflected in their hearts. All the Divine problems were solved by this power of illumination.

Among the great questions unfolding through the rays of Divine Reality upon the mind of man, is the question of the reality of the spirit of man; of the birth of the Spirit; of his birth from this world into the world of God; the question of the inner life of the Spirit, and of the fate of the Spirit after its ascension from the body.

They, likewise, meditate upon the scientific questions of the day, and these also are solved. "Followers of the Inner Light," they attain to a superlative degree of power, and are entirely freed from blind dogmas and imitations. Men rely on their statements. By themselves, within themselves, they solve all mysteries.

If they find a solution by the assistance of the Inner Light, they accept it, and afterwards declare

it; otherwise they would consider it a matter of blind imitation.

They go so far as to reflect upon the essential nature of Divinity, Divine Revelation, and the Manifestation of God in this world. All philosophical, divine, and scientific questions are solved by them through the power of the Spirit.

Baha'o'llah says there is a sign from God in every phenomenon. The sign of the intellect is contemplation, and the sign of contemplation is silence, because it is impossible for a man to do two things at the same time. He cannot both speak and meditate.

It is an axiomatic fact that while you meditate you are speaking with your own spirit. In that state of mind you put certain questions to your Spirit, the Spirit answers, the Light breaks forth, and reality is revealed.

You cannot apply the name of "man" to any being devoid of the faculty of meditation. Without it he would be a mere animal.

Through the faculty of meditation man attains to eternal life; through it he receives the Breath of the Holy Spirit. The bestowal of the Spirit is given in reflection and meditation. Through it, the Spirit of man is informed and strengthened. Through it, affairs of which man knows nothing are unfolded before his view. Through it one receives Divine inspiration. Through it one partakes of Heavenly food.

Meditation is the key for opening the doors of

mysteries. In that subjective mood, withdrawing himself from all outside objects, man can unfold the secrets of things within himself, because he is immersed in the ocean of spiritual life.

Through the power of meditation man frees himself from the animal nature, discerns the reality of things, and is put in touch with God. This faculty brings forth from the invisible plane the sciences and arts. Through the meditative faculty inventions are made possible, and colossal undertakings are carried out. Through it governments can be run smoothly. Through this faculty man enters into the very Kingdom of God.

Nevertheless, some thoughts are useless to man. They are like the waves ebbing to and fro in the sea without result.

But if the faculty of meditation is bathed in the Inner Light, and characterized with Divine attributes, then the results will be wonderful.

The meditative faculty is akin to the mirror. If you put before it earthly objects it will reflect them. Therefore, if the spirit of man is contemplating earthly subjects, he will be informed of these. But if the mirror of the Spirit is turned heavenwards, the heavenly constellations and the rays of the Sun of Reality will be reflected in the heart, and the virtues of the Kingdom will be attained.

Let us, therefore, keep this faculty rightly directed, turning it to the Heavenly Sun and not to earthly objects, so that we may discover the secrets of the Kingdom, comprehend the allegories of the

Bible, and the mysteries of the Spirit. May we indeed become mirrors reflecting Heavenly Realities, and may we become so pure as to reflect the Constellations of Heaven.

Spoken at a meeting of the Society of Friends,
St. Martin's Lane, London, January 12, 1913.

RADIANT ACQUIESCENCE

Freedom is not a matter of place, it is a condition. I was thankful for the prison, and the lack of liberty was very pleasing to me, for those days were passed in the path of service, under the utmost difficulties and trials, bearing fruits and results.

Unless one accepts dire vicissitudes, he will not attain. To me prison is freedom, troubles rest me, death is life, and to be despised is honor. Therefore I was happy all that time in prison. When one is released from the prison of self, that is indeed release, for self is the greater prison. When this release takes place, then one cannot be outwardly imprisoned. When they put my feet in stocks, I would say to the guard, "You cannot imprison me, for here I have light and air and bread and water. There will come a time when my body will be in the ground, and I shall have neither light nor air, nor food nor water, but even then I shall not be imprisoned." The afflictions which come to humanity sometimes tend to center the consciousness upon the limitations, and this is a veritable prison. Release comes by making of the will a door through which the confirmations of the Spirit come.

• • •

The confirmations of the Spirit are all those

powers and gifts with which some are born (and which men sometimes call genius) but for which others have to strive with infinite pains. They come to that man or woman who accepts his or her life with radiant acquiescence.*

The human will must be subdued and trained into the Will of God. It is a great power to have a strong will, but a greater power to give that will to God.

* * *

Sacrifice your will to the Will of God. The Kingdom is attained by the one who forgets self. Everything becomes yours by the renunciation of everything.

* * *

. . . Whosoever is occupied with himself is wandering in the desert of heedlessness and regret! The master key to self-mastery is self-forgetfulness. The road to the palace of life is through the path of renunciation.

GARDENERS OF HUMAN TREES

Thus there have been many holy Manifestations of God. One thousand years ago, two hundred thousand years ago, one million years ago the bounty of God was flowing, the radiance of God was shining, the dominion of God was existing.

. . . These holy Manifestations of God are the educators and trainers of the world of existence, the teachers of the world of humanity. They liberate

*From ABDUL BAHA on DIVINE PHILOSOPHY.
Compiled by Isabel Fraser Chamberlain.

man from the darkness of the world of nature, deliver him from despair, error, ignorance, imperfections and all evil qualities . . .

. . . Were it not for the coming of these holy Manifestations of God all mankind would be found on the plane of the animal. They would remain darkened and ignorant like those who have been denied schooling and who never had a teacher or trainer . . .

. . . The holy Manifestations are the ideal gardeners of human souls, the divine cultivators of human hearts. The world of existence is but a jungle of disorder and confusion, a state of nature producing nothing but fruitless, useless trees. The ideal gardeners train these wild uncultivated human trees, cause them to become fruitful, water and cultivate them day by day so that they adorn the world of existence and continue to flourish in the utmost beauty.

Although the stars are scintillating and brilliant, the sun is superior to them in luminous effulgence. Similarly these holy divine Manifestations are and must always be distinguished above all other beings in every attribute of glory and perfection, in order that it may be proven that the Manifestation is the true teacher and real trainer; that he is the Sun of Truth endowed with a supreme splendor and reflecting the beauty of God. Otherwise it is not possible for us to train one human individual and then after training him, believe in him and accept him as the holy manifestation of divinity. The real Manifestation of God must be endowed with divine knowledge

and not dependent upon learning acquired in schools. He must be the educator, not the educated; his standard intuition instead of tuition. He must be perfect and not imperfect, great and glorious instead of being weak and impotent. He must be wealthy in the riches of the spiritual world and not indigent. In a word, the holy divine Manifestation of God must be distinguished above all others of mankind in every aspect and qualification, in order that he may be able to effectively train the human body-politic, eliminate the darkness enshrouding the human world, uplift humanity from a lower to a higher kingdom, be able through the penetrative power of his Word to promote and spread broadcast the beneficent message of Universal Peace among men, bring about the unification of mankind in religious belief through a manifest divine power, harmonize all sects and denominations and convert all nativities and nationalities into one nativity and fatherland.*

DREAMS

When thou desirest and yearnest for meeting in the world of vision; . . . turn toward the court of the Peerless One, offer prayer to Him and lay thy head upon the pillow. When sleep cometh, the doors of revelation shall be opened and all thy desires shall become revealed.*

As to truthful dreams: I beg of God that thy inner eye (insight) may be opened that thou mayest thyself differentiate between truthful and untruthful dreams.**

*The Promulgation of Universal Peace. Vol. I, pp. 458-464.

**Tablets, Vol. 1, page 196.

. . . Prayer is a key by which the doors of the kingdom are opened. There are many subjects which are difficult for man to solve. But during prayer and supplication they are unveiled and there is nothing that man cannot find out.

Remember not your own limitations. The help of God will come to you. Forget yourself. God's help will surely come.

When you call on the mercy of God waiting to reinforce you, your strength will be tenfold.***

INTERCESSORY PRAYER

. . . Those who have ascended have different attributes from those who are on earth, yet there is no real separation.

In prayer there is a mingling of station, a mingling of condition. Pray for them as they pray for you! When you do not know it, and are in a receptive attitude, they are able to make suggestions to you, if you are in difficulty. This sometimes happens in sleep. But there is no phenomenal intercourse! That which seems like phenomenal intercourse has another explanation . . . The spirit of those that have passed on are freed from sense-life, and do not use physical means . . .*

Followers of the prophets have also this power of praying for the forgiveness of souls; therefore we may not think that any soul is condemned to a sta-

***London Talks, page 27.

*Tablets of Abdul Baha. Vol. 1, page 104.

tionary condition of suffering or loss, arising from their absolute ignorance of God. The power of effective intercession for them always exists. All the people in the other world, are they not the creatures of God? Therefore they can progress in the other world. As they can receive light from supplication here, there, they can also receive light from supplication. The rich in the other world can help the poor, as the rich can help the poor here. In every world all are the creatures of God. They are always dependent upon Him, not independent, nor can they ever be so. While they are needful of God, the more they supplicate, the richer they become. What is their merchandise? What is their wealth? In the other world what is the means of help and assistance? It is intercession. First undeveloped souls must gain progress through the supplications of the spiritually rich; afterwards, they can progress through their own supplications.* *

FAITH, PRAYER AND HEALING

There are three kinds of Faith: first . . . a child is born of Mohammedan parents, he is a Mohammedan. This faith is weak traditional faith: secondly that which comes from knowledge, and is the faith of understanding. This is good, but there is a better, the faith of practice — this is real faith.

• • •

There is but one power which heals — that is God. The state or condition through which the healing takes place is the confidence of the heart. By

*"Abdul Baha in London."

**From magazine "Star of the West" March 2, 1919.

some this state is reached through pills, powders, and physicians. By others through hygiene, fasting, and prayer. By others through direct perception.

* * *

All that we see around us is the work of mind. It is mind in the herb and in the mineral that acts on the human body, and changes its condition.

Disease is of two kinds: material and spiritual. Take for instance, a cut hand; if you pray for the cut to be healed and do not stop its bleeding, you will not do much good; a material remedy is needed.

Sometimes if the nervous system is paralyzed through fear, a spiritual remedy is necessary. Madness, incurable otherwise, can be cured through prayer. It often happens that sorrow makes one ill, this can be cured by spiritual means.

There is nothing sweeter in the world of existence than prayer.

Man must live in a state of prayer. The most blessed condition is the condition of prayer and supplication. Prayer is conversation with God. The greatest attainment, or the sweetest state is none other than conversation with God. It creates spirituality, creates mindfulness and celestial feelings, begets new attractions of the Kingdom, and engenders the susceptibilities of the higher intelligence. The highest attribute given Moses is the following verse: "God carried along a conversation with Moses."

What is prayer? It is conversation with God. While man prays he sees himself in the presence of

God. If he concentrates his attention he will surely at the time of prayer realize that he is conversing with God. Often at night I do not sleep and the thoughts of this world weigh heavily on my mind. I toss uneasily on my bed. Then in the darkness of the night I get up and pray — converse with God. It is most sweet and uplifting.

Prayer and supplication are so effective that they inspire one's heart for the whole day with high ideals and supreme sanctity and calmness. One's heart must be sensitive to the music of prayer. He must feel the effect of prayer. He must not be like an organ from which softest notes stream forth without having consciousness of sensation in itself.

PRAYER AND LIFE AFTER DEATH

A friend asked: "How should one look forward to death?"

Abdul Baha answered: "How does one look forward to the goal of any journey? With hope and with expectation. It is even so with the end of this earthly journey. In the next world, man will find himself freed from many of the disabilities under which he now suffers. Those who have passed on through death, have a sphere of their own. It is not removed from ours; their work, the work of the Kingdom, is ours; but it is sanctified from what we call 'time and space.' Time with us is measured by the sun. When there is no more sunrise, and no more sunset, that kind of time does not exist for man. Those who have ascended have different attri-

butes from those who are still on earth, yet there is not real separation.

In prayer there is a mingling of station, a mingling of condition. Pray for them as they pray for you! When you do not know it, and are in a receptive attitude, they are able to make suggestions to you, if you are in difficulty. This sometimes happens in sleep. But there is no phenomenal intercourse! That which seems like phenomenal intercourse has another explanation.

. . . The spirit of those who have passed on are freed from sense-life, and do not use physical means. It is not possible to put these great matters into human words; the language of man is the language of children, and man's explanation often leads astray."

Someone present asked how it was that in prayer and meditation the heart often turns with instinctive appeal to some friend who has passed into the next life.

Abdul Baha answered: "It is a law of God's creation that the weak should lean upon the strong. Those to whom you turn may be the mediators of God's Power to you, even as when on earth. But it is the One Holy Spirit that strengthens all men." Hereupon another friend referred to the communing of Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration with Moses and Elijah; and Abdul Baha said: "The faithful are ever sustained by the Supreme Concourse. In the Supreme Concourse are Jesus, and Moses, and Elijah, and Baha'Ullah, and other Supreme Souls: there, also, are the martyrs."

—Abdul Baha in London.

The following five talks were given by Abdul Baha while my husband and I were his guests during seventeen out of the last nineteen days of his life on earth:
November 21, 1921

At the evening meal Abdul Baha said:

. . . .

When man enters the Kingdom then all good qualities will become apparent in him. The natural characteristics which are destructive will be banished, and the Divine characteristics will take their place, just like the iron that is put in the fire. The natural characteristics of the iron are hardness, coldness, and blackness. But in the fire these are transformed. The blackness turns to red, the coldness to heat, the hardness to liquidity and softness. All its natural characteristics are transmuted, and it takes on the conditions of the fire.

Likewise when man enters the Kingdom the characteristics of the world of nature are transmuted. In some animals there is great cruelty, in others great greed and ferociousness; these are the necessities of the world of nature. In man these characteristics are also seen, but when he enters the Kingdom his selfish animalistic characteristics change. That is why we say man is reborn, for he has attained to a new life, he has become freed from the characteristics of the world of nature and attained to the life of the Kingdom.

When man is ill he is not good tempered — he becomes irritable and morose, but when he attains health he becomes more kindly and is happy. Like-

wise man's characteristics change completely when he is endowed with the health of the Kingdom.

November 22, 1921

This is what Abdul Baha said at luncheon:

It is necessary for man to eat otherwise he becomes feeble. He cannot say that the food he ate yesterday suffices for today.

God's bounty is unending. Every day he bestows a new bounty. For example, yesterday the sun gave out light, heat, and energy, and today it has repeated that bounty. It does not say, 'Yesterday's rays and heat are sufficient.'

Every day should have its new nourishment, for all things are constantly renewed — thoughts policies science medicine, and the arts. Then is it possible that the bounty of God should not be renewed?

In ancient times old thoughts sufficed. People felt there was no need of new methods. But material civilization has advanced a thousandfold. How foolish it would be if man were to say that the old civilization suffices. The same is true regarding the Divine Civilization. This has also been renewed. Today it is not possible to put some of the commandments of the earlier prophets into practice, for people have progressed to a higher state of civilization. For instance, in the time of Moses, a man's hand was cut off for a comparatively slight theft. Today if a man stole a million dollars this law would not be enforced.

As long as the sun exists we shall have the boun-
TxU

ties of light, heat, and energy, which are the manifestations of the sun. And as long as God exists we shall have His bounties, graces, and activities, renewed through His Manifestations. As long as God is King, He will have soldiers, riches, empires, because this is the basis of His Kingdom. We cannot say that God created an empire and left it.

November 23, 1921.

At luncheon Abdul Baha said:

No matter how much one helps a brother it is animated largely by a sense of duty. But regarding a spiritual brother it is not the same. Any help that might be given is animated by the spirit and is never forgotten, for it is not done for the sake of duty.

The important relationship is the spiritual kinship. This is composed of the heart and soul, while the material relationship is of water and clay. It often happens that the ordinary brother becomes an enemy, but with the spiritual brother this is an impossibility.

When they brought Christ's mother to him someone said: 'Behold thy mother and thy brethren stand without desiring to speak with thee.' But he answered and said unto him that told him, 'Who is my mother? And who are my brethren? . . . For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is heaven, the same is my brother, and sister and mother.'

How many times has it happened that a gardener cuts off a weak branch from a tree and grafts

a strong one in its place. The weak branch is fit only for the fire.

November 24, 1921

Tonight we were again blessed with the presence of Abdul Baha — his last supper with us. He said:

Man has two aspects, the spiritual and the physical. His body is made of clay but his spirit is from the Divine. His body is the shell, and his mind the pearl within the shell. The shell is not so important, but the pearls are very precious. This is the case with man. But the Manifestations of God have other Powers and these Powers are supernatural. They are the Powers which produce such marvelous effects in the world — through which events are foretold thousands of years in advance.

Then he arose from the table and, after washing his hands in the customary oriental fashion, stood in the doorway looking so thoughtfully and for so long a time toward his prison home across the Bay of Acca, that it seemed a portent of something about to happen. Suddenly he turned and bade us goodnight. With one accord we followed him down the steps and watched him as he went up the road, preceded by his tiny grandchild who always lighted her grandfather on his way although she could hardly toddle with the weight of the lantern.

The next afternoon Abdul Baha sent for Lawrence and me and told us we were to depart on the train that left that night. That same evening he said to us:

I shall always be with you, always. Try to remember this — that the physical presence is nothing — that the real union is the spiritual union. In

the days of Baha'o'llah many people believed in him who had never seen him, and there were others who lived close to him all the days of their lives, yet were very far from him.

These last talks of Abdul Baha are especially significant considering what happened later as recounted in this book. He repeated what he had so often said — that the spiritual relationship, and not the physical, is all important. He also repeated what the Founders of every religion have taught, the overwhelming importance of faith in the power of the Holy Spirit — that it works as potently through them, after they pass from this earth, as it did while they walked among us in the flesh. The following is what he said on this subject:

“ . . . the meaning of Christ's resurrection is as follows: the disciples were troubled and agitated after the martyrdom of Christ. The Reality of Christ, which signified his teachings, his bounties, his perfections, and his spiritual power, was hidden and concealed for two or three days after his martyrdom, and was not resplendent and manifest. No, rather it was lost; for the believers were few in number and were troubled and agitated. The Cause of Christ was like a lifeless body; and when after three days the disciples became assured and steadfast, and began to serve the Cause of Christ, and resolved to spread the divine teachings, putting his counsels into practice, and arising to serve him, the Reality of Christ became resplendent and his bounty appeared; his religion found life, his teachings and his admonitions became evident and visible. In other words, the Cause of Christ was like a lifeless body,

until the life and the bounty of the Holy Spirit surrounded it."

Some Answered Questions; pages 120, 121.

Also he promised this to those who would rise up in the Cause of God regardless of what their religion might be:

I say unto you that anyone who will rise up in the Cause of God at this time shall be filled with the Spirit of God, and that He will send His Hosts from heaven to help you, and that nothing shall be impossible to you if you have faith. And now I give you a commandment which shall be for a Covenant between you and me: that ye have faith; that your faith be steadfast as a rock that no storms can move; that nothing can disturb, and that it endure through all things even to the end; . . . for I am with you always, whether living or dead; I am with you to the end. As ye have faith so shall your powers and blessings be . . .

As this book goes to press an article in a newspaper* about General Patton exemplifies the point that I have tried to bring out in these pages — the power of prayer if it is backed up by right action and sacrifice. General Patton was a deeply religious man despite the fact that he used much profanity. He believed he shortened the war in Europe, according to the account given by Col. James H. O'Neil, by distributing a prayer to every man under his command that God would stop the rains.

Part of this article is as follows:

"It was December 13, 1944, three days before

*Magazine section of Los Angeles Examiner, March 31, 1946.

Von Rundstedt's army made its disastrous breakthrough into Luxembourg and Belgium. The rains which preceded and cloaked preparations for the Nazi thrust worried Patton. He sent for O'Neil.

. . . .

"Something," he said, "must be done about these rains. Padre, you've got to pray as you've never prayed before. I want the men to pray, too, to stop the rains commanders can do much, but in every contest there is that margin, in battles as in life, that might be called the breaks. That does not come from men: it comes from God. It is a tide in the events of men and in battle. A tide that makes the decision. I want a prayer written to stop these rains."

The prayer was written by Col. O'Neil and on December 19, it was distributed in the form of Christmas cards to 250,000 men. The following day the rains stopped, the sun shone, the Germans came out in the open, where General Patton wanted them, and the battle was won.

Today there is a greater battle being waged than that of the world war — the battle between the anti-God totalitarians, and the pro-God democracies. This battle can be won by the pro-Gods for the freedom of mankind, if we become pro-Gods in reality, if we apply our religion. Then our prayers will be effective, regardless of our religious affiliations. Then shall we be able to win the battle against the anti-Gods — be able to offset the destructive forces of materialism, and circumvent the possible destruction of our planet through mis-use of atomic power.

THE END

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I have made a minute examination of the writing in the photograph and photographic enlargements of the alleged will of Abdul Baha, and have compared it with the authenticated writing of Abdul Baha in a series of photographs and photographic enlargements received from Mrs. E. Lawrence White.

In the absence of the original document, I have examined the original document and any conclusions to be drawn from the examination of the photographic enlargements must necessarily be of a provisional character, and will be upon the accuracy of the photographic records. Moreover, some of the facts which are taken into consideration in the scientific examination of an original document cannot be perfectly studied in a photographic reproduction, such as, for example, the ink, paper, penstrokes, and so on.

Assuming that the authenticated specimens of writing are of approximately the same period as that at which the disputed will is alleged to have been written and signed, the points which can be accurately compared in the photographic enlargements are the formation of the writing, the changes in pressure, the direction of the penstrokes, and the relationship in the size of parts of the letter as written.

*Presented to the
Library of Congress
by
Ruth White
September 1930*

REPORT

ON THE WRITING SHOWN ON THE PHOTOGRAPHS
OF THE ALLEGED WILL OF ABDUL BAHÁ

BY

DR C. AINSWORTH MITCHELL

EDITOR OF "THE ANALYST"

85, ECCLESTON SQUARE,

LONDON S.W.1

ENGLAND

JUNE 3rd 1930

[AC3959]

C. AINSWORTH MITCHELL, D.Sc., F.I.C.

TEL: VICTORIA 8363.

85, ECCLESTON SQUARE,

LONDON, S.W.1.

June 3rd 1930



R E P O R T

ON THE WRITING SHOWN ON THE PHOTOGRAPHS
OF THE ALLEGED WILL OF ABDUL BAHÁ.

I have made a minute examination of the writing in the photographs and photographic enlargements of the alleged will of Abdul Baha, and have compared it with the authenticated writing of Abdul Baha in a series of photographs and photographic enlargements received from Mrs. H. Lawrence White.

In the absence of an opportunity to examine the original document, any conclusions to be drawn from an examination of the photographic enlargements must necessarily be of a provisional character contingent upon the accuracy of the photographic records. Moreover, some of the facts which are taken into consideration in the scientific examination of an original document cannot be perfectly studied in a photographic reproduction, such as, for example, the ink, paper, penstrokes, and so on.

Assuming that the authenticated specimens of writing are of approximately the same period as that at which the disputed will is alleged to have been written and signed, the points which can be accurately compared in the photographic enlargements are the mode of formation of the writing, the changes in pressure, the form of individual letters, and the relationship in the size of parts of the letter to the whole.

A fact requiring explanation is the presence of apparent erasures on some of the pages of the will, namely in lines 12 and 13 of page 2, and line 13 of page 4. Without a microscopical examination of the original document it is not possible to state whether a chemical agent has been used, but assuming there have been erasures at these points I think it probable that they were done mechanically, not chemically. The apparent erasure on page 5, line 11, may possibly be the result of an imprint from other written matter while the ink was wet.

The photographic reproductions of authenticated specimens of the writing of Abdul Baha were the following:-

1. Writing from the Book of the Unitarian Church, Montclair, New Jersey.
2. Writing from the Guest Bible for 1912, City Temple, London.
3. Authenticated signatures on two letters to Mrs. Stannard on a photograph, and a possible authentic signature in the possession of Mrs. Devine.
There is no reason to doubt the authenticity of the signature from Mrs. Devine, since it agrees closely with the other signatures.

The Signatures on the Envelope:- A comparison of the four signatures on the envelope of the alleged will with the four authenticated signatures reveals many striking differences in the mode of formation of the characters, as for example:

ll
In the authentic signatures the width of these characters, compared with their height, is much greater than in the signatures on the envelope. The strokes are also much firmer

in the envelope signatures than in the authenticated signatures.

me In the authenticated signature the entire character is roughly $2\frac{1}{2}$ times the width of the open space between the uprights; in the disputed signatures the corresponding figure is twice as great. In the authentic signatures the cusp is rounded; in the disputed signatures it is pointed. In the authenticated signatures the relationship between the depth of the gap and its breadth is as 1 : 1.4 to 1.6, whereas in the disputed signatures it is as 1 : 2.3 to 2.6. Thus the ratio is totally different. In my opinion these differences are not consistent with the signatures upon the envelope being in the writing of the writer of the authenticated signature.

The Body of the Will:- A comparison of the formation of the writing on the envelope with that on pages 9 and 10 of the will shows so many points of resemblance that there is no reason to doubt that they were written by the same person.

I have also studied minutely the photographic enlargements of the writing on the other pages of the will, and have formed the following conclusions:-

Page 2, with the exception of the last two lines, agrees with Page 3.



C. AINSWORTH MITCHELL, D.Sc., F.I.C.

85, ECCLESTON SQUARE,

TEL: VICTORIA 8363.

-4-

LONDON, S.W. 1.

The last two lines of Page 2 agree with Page 4.

The other pages, namely 5, 6, 7 and 8, agree in the characteristics of writing with the writing on Page 4. That is to say, the writing does not agree with the hypothesis that it was all written by one person.

The writing of Abdul Baha has certain distinctive features, among which are a sudden change of pressure in some of the strokes, wavering formation of some of the curves, and the formation of sharp angles in some of the characters. These characteristics are sharply indicated in the enlarged photographs of the writing in the City Temple, London, and in the Montclair writing.

A minute comparison of the authenticated writing with the writing on every page of the alleged will, and in particular with the lines 10, 11 and 12 on page 5, has failed to detect in any part of the will the characteristics of the writing of Abdul Baha, as shown in the authenticated specimens.

In addition to these differences in writing habits, there are also differences in the shapes of many of the parallel characters in the body of the document compared with the authenticated writing, as in the case of the signatures mentioned above.

C. Ainsworth Mitchell

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ÁBBÁS EFFENDI
BAHA, ABDUL

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WILL

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Transmitted note excerpt; hand trans ALS 1 PG

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SD 4 PGS

RABBANI, H. 1931 J 10 TO E. E. KLOBE photocopy
SHOGHI EFFENDI note 4 PGS

AFNAN, Rumi 1931 De 1 to Mrs. CARROLL Smith photocopy
Shoghi note 4 PGS

MR 11-3 (1/8) 31-81 cancelled 9-11-81

No one could possibly write a
will such as that of the Master so as
to be able to make the forgery. The
spirit of the Master runs through every
word of it & clearly shows that its
author was inspired by God.

In closing may I assure you
of Shoghi Effendi's loving greetings &
best wishes.

Yours ever sincerely,

Ruhi Effendi

With the assurance
of my loving prayers
for you at the holy shrine,
your true brother,
Shoghi



Peruvian Colony,
Haifa, Palestine
1-12-1931

Dear Mrs. Smith:

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to
acknowledge the receipt of your letter
dated Nov. 5th 1931. Shoghi Effendi
does not attribute much importance
to those who deny the authenticity
of the Will because their attitude is
not due to a desire to seek the
truth, but merely oppose & bring
doubts to others. From the very start
he relegated that task to the spirit
of the Master who is always vigilant
to protect his Cause against the
inroads of its enemies. And thank

• the governor in the office of the latter. The expert compared the original Will with the handwriting of the Master which Mrs. White had sent him as authentic samples. He said that they are both written by the same person & that the person who had decided otherwise does not know what he is speaking about. The expert was an Englishman who knew nothing of the Cause or the Baha'is & was absolutely impartial. I think the High Commissioner sent to Mrs. White the result of his findings but she preferred to keep quiet about it.

The whole trouble is that Mrs. White & her sympathisers are animated with the wrong spirit, a spirit of hatred rather than impartial seeking.

God the Master has helped him & made their opposition a cause of success for His Faith, rather than a danger to its ^{own} existence.

About five or six months ago Mrs. White - who is at the head of ~~such~~ this movement to set the Master's Will aside - wrote the High Commissioner in Palestine on the subject & asked him to find about the authenticity of the document. The High Commissioner wrote to the governor of Haifa & sent the government expert to verify the hand-writing. Shoghi Effendi was written on the subject & asked to send the Will to the government. He sent me with the will & the expert studied it before me

to either the Will or the institution of the Guardianship but to the personnel of the National Assembly & the manner it is functioning.

The future will surely reveal not only the truth but also will testify in a manner that none can question the wisdom of the verities enshrined in so precious & momentous a document.

With the assurance of Shoghi Effendi's prayers for your spiritual advancement & the removal of every doubt that may still perplex your mind.

Yours Sincerely,
H. Rabban

read & approved

Shoghi

[Ac 3959 add 1]

(To Mr E. E. Khazgi)



July 10th, 1931

Dear Babá'í Brother,

I am directed by Shoghi Effendi to inform you of the receipt of your letter dated June 12th, 1931.

Your whole letter centers around the authenticity of Abdu'l-Babá's Will, a thing which no one in the Orient among the believers & the enemies of the Cause has thought to challenge.

Shoghi Effendi has felt it below his dignity to subject so sacred a document to a scientific expert examination so long as no serious doubt has been entertained by any considerable number of believers throughout the world.

Shoghi Effendi³ never felt the need, nor does he feel it at present, in spite of your letter, to expatiate upon such matters. The very progress of the Cause, the extension of the Administration, will in themselves constitute the surest evidences of the authenticity of the Will as well as of the soundness of all its provisions.

He wishes you, therefore, not to indulge in premature & hasty considerations which can bring in their wake nothing but disillusionment & regret.

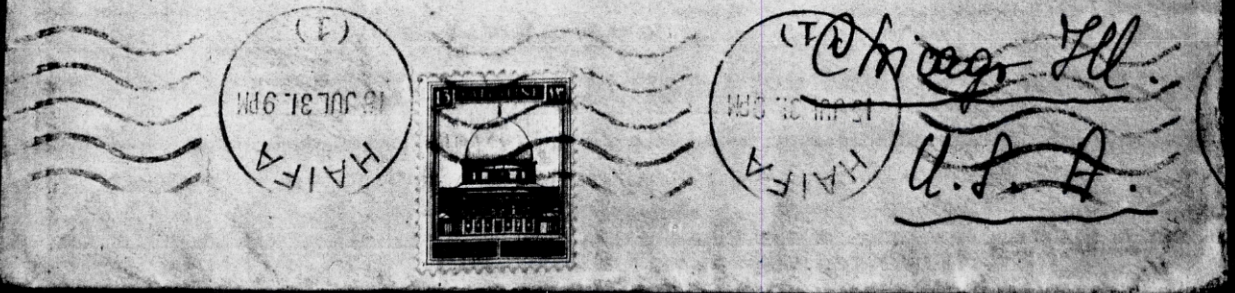
Even in Germany where a certain number of believers have fallen the slave to Mrs. White's foolish assertions, a few among them have expressed themselves as having been misled in this matter. They have plainly stated that their objections have not been directed

It might² interest you to know, however, that the Will in its entirety has been closely examined by experts appointed by the Palestine government authorities. Not even the slightest objection or the faintest doubt has been expressed concerning its authenticity by them.

'Abdul-Bahá has never stated that the House of Justice would be the only body that would administer the affairs of the Cause after Him. In fact He has in a Tablet revealed to Persian believers who had questioned Him about this point stated plainly that this was "a hidden secret concealed within the shell of the Cause" & that its significance would surely be revealed in the future.

Rec. July 30th '31
E. E. K.

Mr. E. E. Klinge
4728 Virginia Ave



EAE 3959 2H 1J

Any reply should be addressed to
**THE CHIEF SECRETARY,
GOVERNMENT OFFICES,
JERUSALEM.**

and should quote

No. 1232/29

**SECRETARIAT,
GOVERNMENT OFFICES,
JERUSALEM.**

25th
November, 1930.



Madam,

I am directed to refer to your letter of the 7th October regarding the will of Sir Abdul Baha Abbas and to ask that I may be furnished with the document or a photograph of it, purporting to be the will, which you caused to be examined by Dr.C.Ainsworth Mitchell.

Steps will then be taken, if possible, to compare that with the original will which is in Palestine.

I am,
Madam,
Your obedient servant,

CHIEF SECRETARY.

Mrs. H. Lawrence White,
Butler Hall,
88 Morningside Drive,
New York City,
U.S.A.

EX 3959 add U

Any reply should be addressed to
THE CHIEF SECRETARY,
GOVERNMENT OFFICES,
JERUSALEM.

and should quote

No. 1232/29.

SECRETARIAT,
GOVERNMENT OFFICES,
JERUSALEM.



7th January, 1931.

Madam,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 12th December, enclosing photographs of the alleged will of the late Sir Abdul Baha Abbas.

2. I have also to thank you for the copy of your book "The Bahai Religion , and its enemy the Bahai Organisation" which accompanied it.

3. I shall not fail to inform you of the result of the comparison of the alleged will with the original document.

I am, Madam,

Your obedient servant,

CHIEF SECRETARY.

Mrs. H. Lawrence White,
88 Morningside Drive,
New York City.

[AC 3959 241]

Government of Palestine.

In case of reply
please quote the
date of this letter
and the following

N.Y/58/31.

Chief Secretary's Office,

Jerusalem,

Palestine.

Registered

10 ^Q
July, 1931.



Madam,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 5th June, on the subject of the will of the late Sir Abdel Baha Abbas, and to say that the Government do not feel disposed to take any further administrative actions in the matter.

I am,

Madam,

Your obedient Servant,

Rushd al-Din
for CHIEF SECRETARY.

Mrs. H. Lawrence White,
Butler Hall
88 Morningside Drive
New York, City,
U.S.A.

EAC 9959 add 17

Government of Palestine

*In case of reply
please quote the
date of this letter
and the following*

No. Y/58/31.

Chief Secretary's Office,

Jerusalem,

Palestine.



190
May, 1931.

Madam,

In continuation of my letter No. 1232/29 of the 7th of January, 1931, on the subject of the will of the late Sir Abdel Baha Abbas, I am directed to inform you that Mr. Afnan Shoghi Effendi Rabbani permitted a comparison to be made between the document which is reported to be the original will of the deceased and the photographs which you have produced.

Such examination revealed that the photographs appeared to be authentic reproductions of the document produced as the will of the deceased.

I am,

Madam,

Your obedient servant,

Rueh Abdelbasy
for ACTING CHIEF SECRETARY.

Mrs. H. Lawrence White
Butler Hall
88 Morningside Drive
New York City
U.S.A.

Partial Copy of letter in As. Dir.:



September 2, 1930.

A photostat copy of a "Report on the Writing shown on the photographs of the alleged will of Abdul Baha." The report is by Dr. C. Ainsworth Mitchell of 85, Eddleston Square, London, England, and who is the editor of "The Analyst."

This is an important historical document concerning the Bahai Religion. I therefore wish you to place it on file in your library. Please file it under "Bahai Religion" or "Bahai Literature", and also under "Abdul Baha", otherwise researchers of the Bahai Religion would not find it.

— signed Ruth White

(Mrs. H. Lawrence White,
Butler Hall,
88 Morningside Drive,
New York City

Correspondence between the High Commissioner of Palestine and Ruth White, regarding the alleged will of Sir Abdul Baha Abbas.

By
Ruth White
March, 1932.



In a previous pamphlet, "Abdul Baha's Alleged Will is Fraudulent" I published a letter that I had written to the High Commissioner of Palestine on Dec. 31, 1928, asking him to investigate my charges that the alleged will of Abdul Baha is fraudulent. This request for an investigation seems to have troubled the minds of the adherents of Shoghi Effendi, since the following appeared in "The Baha'i News Letter," no. 31, for April 1929.

"Instructions concerning Attitude Towards Those Attacking Cause.

"A copy of the pamphlet published by Mrs. Ruth White was sent to Shoghi Effendi in January. This matter is taken up by the Guardian in his letter to the National Spiritual Assembly recently reprinted (as recorded in summary of last Assembly meeting), but the following words written in a briefer letter on February 27, 1929 are instructive: 'I have in a letter addressed to the National Assembly set forth my views regarding the contents of Mrs. White's pamphlet. I have thus far received no intimation from the Palestine authorities, and have no reason to believe that they will consider it worthy of their consideration. The friends, however should avoid hurting her feelings and should abstain from provocation. Her case will suffer the fate which has met Dyar's opposition in 'Reality', and should be totally disregarded by the believers...'"

A sincere man in Shoghi's position should gladly have accepted my challenge for an investigation. Any man confident of the justice of his case would, in fact, have courted and insisted upon an impartial and judicial examination of the alleged will and of all the facts bearing on his claim to Guardianship. Shoghi Effendi however, it can be seen, was congratulating himself that there was no likelihood of the Palestine authorities considering the question. He shunned a test of the alleged will and of his claims. And I have every reason to believe that his advice to his followers not to hurt my feelings at that time was with a view to prevent me from pursuing the matter further.

In reply to my letter to the High Commissioner I received a letter from His Excellency written through his chief secretary and dated February 6, 1929 to the effect that any information I wished to obtain must be obtained privately and that I would be well advised to employ an advocate in Palestine. This letter was, of course, a great disappointment to me. Not until two years later did it occur to me that I could cite an instance which would prove indubitably that the fraud was one under the jurisdiction of the Palestine authorities and that then the British Government would have to take notice. In other words, in my first letter I had cited only the fact that Shoghi Effendi was collecting money from the Bahais of America based on the authority

granted in an alleged will of Abdul Baha. In my next letter to the High Commissioner, written October 7, 1930, I brought the fraud forward as operating right in Palestine. And because of this fact, on account of the collection of money having taken place in Palestine I received a different response from the High Commissioner. The following are the letters that have passed between us.

To His Excellency
The High Commissioner of Palestine
Jerusalem, Palestine.



October 7, 1930

Your Excellency:

As a victim of a fraud, which is being perpetrated under the Mandatory Power now governing Palestine, I wish to make a complaint against Shoghi Effendi, of the Persian Colony, at Haifa Palestine.

Shoghi Effendi is collecting money from the people of the various nations of the world under the powers granted him in an alleged will which he claims is the will of Sir Abdul Baha Abbas, and in which he is appointed successor of Sir Abdul Baha Abbas. I base my assertion that a fraud is being perpetrated by Shoghi Effendi on the following facts:

About three months after the death of Sir Abdul Baha Abbas, in November 1921, typewritten copies of an English translation of a document were sent to England, America, and other countries, which Shoghi Effendi alleged is the will of Sir Abdul Baha Abbas, appointing him his successor. This alleged will is undated, unwitnessed, unprobated, and unstamped by the Government. It also contradicts the intent that its alleged maker held during his lifetime. For the alleged will commands people to obey Shoghi Effendi as if he were God, and to pay a tax to him. This is the motive of the fraud--money and power.

I have submitted the photographs of the alleged will to Dr. C. Ainsworth Mitchell, the renowned English handwriting expert; and editor of The Analyst, at 85 Eccleston Square London, S.W.1. and his report shows that this document is fraudulent. No part of it was written by Abdul Baha, although Shoghi Effendi, and the family of Sir Abdul Baha assert that every word of its ten pages was written by Sir Abdul Baha. Shoghi Effendi ignored my request for permission to send a handwriting expert to Haifa to examine the original document.

Aside from my having contributed to various Bahai activities in America I also sent \$200. to Palestine, in response to a solicitation from Shoghi Effendi, which he made through The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the U.S. and Canada, urging them to send money to him to buy land on Mount Carmel, in order to protect the Tomb of the Báb. No financial statement was ever given to me regarding the purchase of this land, although I have requested an account of it. I enclose photostat copies of the appeal, and the receipt, for contributions to this fund, also two letters of acknowledgment of my contribution. I also enclose a photostat copy of Dr. Mitchell's report.

I am not making this complaint merely because of the money I have contributed, as this is small compared to the expense that I have

incurred in collecting evidence against Shoghi Effendi. But I am making this complaint in order to protect the public from a fraud, and a movement, which under Shoghi Effendi has become far more subversive than that of Bolshevism. For Shoghi Effendi aims to become world dictator, and he is establishing enemy states within each state, and collecting taxes from the people of these enemy states. All this is contrary to the teachings of Sir Abdul Baha Abbas whose successor he claims to be.

Will you please investigate these charges, and upon verifying Dr. Mitchell's report take such steps as lies within your jurisprudence to prohibit Shoghi Effendi from perpetrating the fraud that he is the successor of Sir Abdul Baha.

Yours very truly,
(Signed) Ruth White.

Tel. Add. "CHIEFSEC, JERUSALEM"

Any reply should be addressed to
The Chief Secretary,
Government Offices,
Jerusalem
and should quote
No. 1232/29

SECRETARIAT,
GOVERNMENT OFFICES,
JERUSALEM.

25th November, 1930.

Madam,

I am directed to refer to your letter of the 7th October regarding the will of Sir Abdul Baha Abbas and to ask that I may be furnished with the document purporting to be the will, or a photograph of it, which you caused to be examined by Dr. C. Ainsworth Mitchell.

Steps will then be taken, if possible, to compare that with the original will which is in Palestine.

I am,
Madam,
Your obedient servant,

(Signed) Max Norock

Mrs. H. Lawrence White,
Butler Hall, 88 Morningside Drive,
New York City, U.S.A.

CHIEF SECRETARY.

To the
Chief Secretary
Government Offices
Jerusalem



December 12, 1930

Dear Sir:

Thank you for your letter of November 25, 1930, 1232/29. It gives me great pleasure to send you the photographs of the alleged will of Sir Abdul Baha Abbas which I herewith enclose. These photographs are copies of a set of photographs which Mr. Horace Holley lent me. Mr. Holley is the secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada, and this organization

officially represents Shoghi Effendi, the alleged successor of Sir Abdul Baha. I also enclose two samples of the authentic writing of Sir Abdul Baha. One sample is a photograph made from the Book of the Unitarian Church at Montclair, New Jersey, in which book he wrote directly after he delivered a sermon at the church on May 12th, 1912. The other sample is a photograph made from the Bible at the City Temple, London, in which book he also wrote directly after he had finished delivering a sermon there in 1911. One cannot be certain of any writings purporting to be those of Sir Abdul Baha except those secured from church records, and other public books in which he wrote. For almost all of his later letters were written by his secretaries, and many of these secretaries were related to him, hence they are interested parties, as all of Abdul Baha's family share in the tax that is derived from the powers granted in this alleged will.

If you will pardon me for digressing a little I would like to recount to you an incident that occurred while I was in London last May and June, having the alleged will of Sir Abdul Baha examined by Dr. C. Ainsworth Mitchell, which made me certain that a Higher Power was guiding this affair. Two years prior to this I had tried to get in touch with the British Analyst of Palestine (as I thought at that time that he was the proper official to address regarding the investigating of the alleged will of Sir Abdul Baha) and I was assured by one of the officials at the British Embassy, here in New York City, that there was no British Analyst in Palestine. Then what was my astonishment one night in London, while at a meeting of distinguished scientists, to meet Mr. Gerald Baker, who I learned had been the Analyst there for Great Britain about nine years. I thereupon recounted to him the incident and asked him if he would go to Dr. Mitchell's office and see the enlarged photographs of the alleged will, as well as the authentic samples of Sir Abdul Baha's writings. This he did. I am sure that he will be glad to tell you what he has heard personally from Dr. Mitchell.

Under separate cover I am sending you a copy of my book, "The Bahai Religion and Its Enemy the Bahai Organization." Between pages 165 and 200 you will find the printed reproduction of the alleged will of Sir Abdul Baha, and the English translation of its complete text. Also a sample of his authentic writing.

If I can do anything further to assist you, please call upon me as I shall be only too happy to help you in any way I can.

Yours very truly,

(Signed) Ruth White

P.S. Between pages 178 and 184 of my book you will find the appointment of Shoghi Effendi.

Tel. Add. "CHIEFSEC, JERUSALEM"
Any reply should be addressed to
The Chief Secretary
Government Offices,
Jerusalem.
and should quote
No. 1232/29

SECRETARIAT,
GOVERNMENT OFFICES,
JERUSALEM.

7th January, 1931.

Madam: I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 12th December, enclosing photographs of the alleged will of

the late Sir Abdul Baha Abbas.

2. I have also to thank you for the copy of your book "The Bahai Religion, and its enemy the Bahai Organisation" which accompanied it.
3. I shall not fail to inform you of the result of the comparison of the alleged will with the original document.

I am, Madam,
Your Obedient Servant,

(Signed) Max Norock

CHIEF SECRETARY.

Mrs. H. Lawrence White,
88 Morningside Drive,
New York City.

GOVERNMENT OF PALESTINE

In case of reply please
quote the date of this
letter and the following
No. Y/58/31.

Chief Secretary's Office
Jerusalem,
Palestine.

19th May, 1931.

Madam,

In continuation of my letter No. 1232/29 of the 7th of January, 1931, on the subject of the will of the late Sir Abdel Baha Abbas, I am directed to inform you that Mr. Afnan Shoghi Effendi Rabbani permitted a comparison to be made between the document which is reported to be the original will of the deceased and the photographs which you have produced.

Such examination revealed that the photographs appeared to be authentic reproductions of the document produced as the will of the deceased.

I am,
Madam,
Your obedient servant,

(Signed) Ruhi Abdulhady

for ACTING CHIEF SECRETARY.

Mrs. H. Lawrence White
Butler Hall, 88 Morningside Drive
New York City, U.S.A.

To His Excellency
The High Commissioner of Jerusalem
Palestine.

June 5th, 1931

Your Excellency:

Thank you for your letter of May 19th, Y/58/31, sent through your secretary.

I am glad that the first step has been accomplished, and that you have compared the photographs I sent you of the alleged will of

Sir Abdul Baha Abbas with the original document purporting to be his will, and found that the photographs are reproductions of it. Thank you for taking this very necessary step. But you of course are aware that my request for an investigation was not in order to ascertain whether the photographs I sent you were copies of this purported document, for I never doubted that they were. My request was for you to ascertain whether the document is authentic or fraudulent. When Dr. Mitchell examined the enlarged photographs of the alleged will he said that he had done all he could with photographs, and that the next step should be for an expert to examine the original alleged will at Haifa in order to ascertain many points that can be ascertained only through an examination of an original document, as for instance--the chemical analysis of the ink, its age, and evidences of erasures, and also evidences of paper having been pieced together, and many other points familiar to a handwriting expert.

After Dr. Mitchell told me this I sent Shoghi Effendi Rabbani a registered letter asking him to grant me permission to send a handwriting expert to Haifa and have the original examined. But to this he did not reply, nor did I expect him to, inasmuch as he has done everything to prevent an investigation. Yet he has not hesitated to collect money from me and other Bahais under the powers granted in this alleged will.

I most respectfully repeat my request to you that inasmuch as I am one of the victims of this fraud, and inasmuch as this fraud is continuing to be perpetrated internationally upon the public, and great sums of money collected under the powers granted in this alleged will, that you have the original alleged will of Sir Abdul Baha Abbas examined by a handwriting expert and report your finding to me. Your report that the photographs examined by the handwriting expert to whom I submitted these (Dr. Mitchell) have been verified as accurate reproductions of the original document, in conjunction with the report of Dr. Mitchell make a prima facie case of fraud against those who have used this alleged will as a basis of soliciting money from the public, and you will hence recognize the necessity of further action on your part.

You already have Dr. Mitchell's report which shows that his examination of the photographs of this alleged will proves it to be fraudulent. You also have photostats of the receipts showing that I contributed to this Bahai Fund (from which Shoghi Effendi receives his tax). And at the time I contributed to this fund it was without knowledge that the alleged will had not been fully authenticated. Therefore as all indications are overwhelmingly in favour of the belief that this alleged will, which was undated, unwitnessed, unprobated and unstamped by the government, is fraudulent, and especially as this belief is backed up by the report of Dr. C. Ainsworth Mitchell showing it to be fraudulent, I am confident that you will take the final step and have the document examined and make a report so that these victims may no longer be defrauded by Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, who claims to be the successor of Sir Abdul Baha Abbas, and that restitution may be made to me, and to many others, from whom large sums have been obtained under false pretences.

A report coming from the British Government would have an overwhelming effect in putting a stop to the fraud and thereby His Majesty's Representatives would live up to the wonderful reputation they have established all over the world for rectifying injustices.

I have great hope in the British Government, as I have lived many years in England, and am conversant with the fact that they do not pigeon-hole such matters as is often done in the United States. My confidence in the British Government's sense of justice also made me select Dr. C. Ainsworth Mitchell as the handwriting expert to examine this alleged will.

Please let me know what action you take in the matter, and please send your report by registered mail.

With many thanks for your prompt attention to this matter, I am

Very truly yours,
(Signed) Ruth White

GOVERNMENT OF PALESTINE

In case of reply please
quote the date of this
letter and the following
No. Y/58/31.

Chief Secretary's Office,
Jerusalem,
Palestine.

(Registered)

10th July, 1931.

Madam,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 5th June, on the subject of the will of the late Sir Abdel Baha Abbas, and to say that the Government do not feel disposed to take any further administrative actions in the matter.

I am,
Madam,
Your obedient servant,

(Signed) Ruhi Abdulhady
for CHIEF SECRETARY.

Mrs. H. Lawrence White,
Butler Hall, 88 Morningside Drive,
New York City, U.S.A.

The reader will note that the High Commissioner, in his letter of November 25th asks for photographs of the alleged will in order to compare these photographs with the document from which they had been photographed! This letter astonished me as well as disappointed me as it so evidently evaded the thing I had asked for. I never doubted, nor did anyone else, that the photographs which I had received through Shoghi Effendi were photographs of the alleged will. There could have been no motive in his sending over photographs of something else and saying that they were photographs of this document.

What I had asked for, and what Dr. C. Ainsworth Mitchell, the expert in London, had said should be done, was for experts to go to Haifa and make a long and careful study of the original alleged will in order to ascertain many things that cannot be ascertained from a photograph such as, for instance, the chemical analysis of the ink

and its age, water marks on the paper and the age of this paper, evidences of erasures, or of the piecing together of paper and many other things familiar to handwriting experts. This would have required weeks, and perhaps months of careful research by experts, and yet Ruhi confesses that so brief a time was consumed, in looking over the photographs, that he waited in the office while this was being done. And now, in order to deceive the Bahais, Shoghi Effendi pretends that the comparison of the photographs of the alleged will with the document from which they had been photographed is an authentication of the alleged will!

At first the statements emanating from Shoghi Effendi were worded very cautiously though clearly intended to mislead. Thus in a letter written through his secretary to Mr. E. E. Kluge of Chicago, dated July 10, 1931, he says:

"It might interest you to know, however, that the Will in its entirety has been closely examined by experts appointed by the Palestine Government authorities. Not even the slightest objection or the faintest doubt has been expressed concerning its authenticity by them."

Here the implication is made that the alleged will was examined by the authorities with a view to ascertain whether or not it was authentic and that the result was that nothing could be discovered that impugned its authenticity. How far this is from the truth can be seen from the correspondence between the Palestine Secretariat and myself previously given here.

Those who begin to deceive by the implication of their words are likely soon to proceed to plain prevarication, and it is hard to regard as anything else another letter from Shoghi Effendi dated December 1, 1931 to Mrs. Carroll Smith of Dallas, Texas. Mrs. Smith wrote to Shoghi and stated that it had been reported to her that an official comparison had been made of the will with documents known positively to be in the handwriting of Abdul Baha, and she ends the letter as follows:

"Please tell me if such an official comparison really has been made and let the believers know that as a result the Palestine Government certified that the Will was in the Master's handwriting and was genuine.."

To this Shoghi Effendi replied through his secretary, Ruhi Afnan, in a letter part of which is as follows:

"About five or six months ago Mrs. White -- who is at the head of this movement to set the Master's Will aside -- wrote the High Commissioner in Palestine on the subject and asked him to find about the authenticity of the document. The High Commissioner wrote to the Governor of Haifa and sent the Government expert to verify the handwriting. Shoghi Effendi was written on the subject and asked to send the Will to the Government. He sent me with the Will and the expert studied it before me and the governor in the office of the latter. The expert compared the original Will with the handwriting of the Master which Mrs. White has sent him as authentic samples. He said that they were both written by the same person, and that the person who had decided otherwise does not know what he is speaking about. The Expert was an Englishman who knows nothing of the Cause or the

Baha'is' and was absolutely impartial. I think the High Commissioner sent to Mrs. White the result of his findings but she preferred to keep quiet about it."

This statement of Shoghi Effendi asserts that "The expert compared the original Will with the handwriting of Abdul Baha which Mrs. White had sent him as authentic samples." This absolutely conflicts with the statement of the High Commissioner in his letter dated May 19, 1931 that "the photographs appeared to be genuine reproductions of the document produced as the will of the deceased." As Soghi Effendi's statement stands it means that the photographs of the two samples of the authentic writings of Abdul Baha which I had procured from two Bibles, in two different churches, one in America and one in England, were duplicates of a will which had been written in the Orient and buried under ground years before! This as the reader can see is not only sheer nonsense but was written with intent to deceive.

I wish to call the attention of the reader to another point also. Shoghi Effendi wrote to Mr. Kluge that experts examined the will. Later he wrote to Mrs. Smith that only one expert examined the will--an Englishman. The extracts from these two letters are as follows:

"...the Will in its entirety has been closely examined by experts.... not even the slightest objection or the faintest doubt has been expressed concerning its authenticity by them."

Six months later he wrote to Mrs. Smith through his secretary as follows:

"The High Commissioner wrote to the governor of Haifa and sent the Government expert to verify the handwriting... the expert studied it before me and the governor in the office of the latter. The expert compared the original Will... He said that they were both written by the same person...The expert was an Englishman..."

After the final statement of the High Commissioner in his letter of May 19th, the reader will note that I again urged him in my letter of June 5th to make the examination I had asked for, and his last letter to me, dated July 10th shows that the Government would not take the actions I had asked for, as the following statement shows:

"I am directed ... to say that the Government do not feel disposed to take any further administrative actions in the matter."

The "further administrative actions" I had asked for was an examination of the alleged will by experts which would have required weeks and perhaps months of careful work. If the Government really had had the alleged will examined by experts, and had made a definite report showing whether it was spurious or authentic, then as that was all I had asked for there would have been no sense in their replying that, "The Government do not feel disposed to take any further administrative actions in the matter."

Furthermore if there had been any authentication of the document wouldn't Shoghi Effendi have been only too eager to have blazoned this to the Bahai world, considering that for four years I had publicly challenged him with the fact that this document was spurious? Wouldn't he have gloried in publishing such a report in all the Bahai publications thereby trying to prove me wrong? But this he did not do. He has kept silent on the subject, except where he could not do otherwise in the two letters already cited. For in these two letters of Mr. Kluge and Mrs. Smith, ~~xxxxxxx~~ he was asked point blank whether there had been an official authentication of the alleged will, and he therefore was placed in the embarrassing position which necessitated a reply. His policy has been, and still is to keep quiet, and caution the Bahais to keep as quiet as possible about the matter, hoping that by so doing it will die. But it will not die. What will die is the papistry that Shoghi Effendi and his coterie have set up. For in this enlightened age it is impossible for the people to revert to this mediaeval institution; especially as it is wholly irreconcilable with the Bahai teachings. The reader may ascertain for himself the truth of the statement that the papist group is rapidly diminishing by looking in THE WORLD ALMANAC for 1931 on page 391. There he will find that in 1916 the number of Bahais in the United States and Canada was listed as 2,884. But since this group became papists under Shoghi Effendi their numbers have diminished to 1,247 under his "Guardianship." On the other hand all the groups who have rejected Shoghi

(Continued on page 10)

Effendi are rapidly increasing, with the result that the largest number of Bahais are in the ranks of those who are no longer under this papist domination.

There are three attitudes of mind among the Bahais today toward the alleged will of Abdul Baha. First there is the attitude of this papist group, known under the names of "Spiritual Assemblies", "Local Assemblies" and "National Spiritual Assemblies of Baha'is". The members of this group accept Shoghi Effendi as the "Guardian" whom they believe they are commanded to obey as if he were God, likewise feeling under the obligation to pay a tax to him, according to the directions given in the alleged will.

The second attitude of mind is that of certain dissident Bahais who although they have thrown off the authority of Shoghi Effendi still nominally accept as authentic the alleged will of Abdul Baha on which this authority is based. This attitude is not a very consistent one, for a Bahai who believes that Abdul Baha bequeathed the powers of "Guardian" to Shoghi and yet refuses to follow the latter is disobeying what he thinks are the commands of Abdul Baha. It is setting a harmful example to future generations to violate deliberately what one believes to be an important teaching of Abdul Baha. However I am confident that the Power which has guided these Bahais in breaking away from the Papistry of Haifa will lead them further in the right path and that they will ultimately completely reject this so-called Will.

The third attitude toward the alleged will is the right one because it is following the course that Abdul Baha told us to take -- to reject any document or letters, purporting to be his, which grants any authority to anyone unless it is proved beyond the question of a doubt that they are his. Therefore, as not only did this alleged will grant Shoghi Effendi more potential authority than a king and pope combined but moreover the application of it nullifies the teachings of both Baha'o'llah and Abdul Baha, all those who remain true to the Bahai Teachings must reject it as it has never been proved authentic but on the contrary has already been shown to be spurious.

The papal group claimed that a successor or "Guardian" would keep the Bahais united. Far from this having proved true it has brought intense inharmony among the Bahais and chaos to the Cause. Their position is utterly unlogical. That is why we have the astounding spectacle of this group promulgating any number of conflicting principles, without being in the least aware that they are conflicting. For instance they purport to promulgate the principles of Baha'o'llah and of Abdul Baha, the foremost of which was to free all religions from sectarianism, and at the same time they promulgate Shoghi's ideas of a super-sectarian cult more dogmatic and narrower than any other in existence.

The attempt to pervert the Bahai Movement by subjecting it to Organization domination is a parallel to the corruption of primitive Christianity by ecclesiasticism. Recently in trying to ascertain on what authority Christianity was able to establish a papistry new light came to me on this matter. Christ said, after Peter had divined His station: "Blessed art thou, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee but my Father which is in Heaven...thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church." The meaning of this verse seems

to have wholly escaped Christians. Christ meant that Peter's inner guidance had revealed to him the station of Christ, and on this spiritual principle of innate knowledge would the church of Christ be built. Not on an outer church or organization confined to bricks and stones but on an inner Church founded on the right of freedom of conscience of every individual. The necessity of freedom of conscience in religion was emphasized by Baha'o'llah and Abdul Baha and they laid great stress on inner guidance which is another aspect of it.

But there is this satisfaction about the whole matter. The officials of the British Government took these steps in order to secure all the information possible from me and to keep this information on file for use in the future should the emergency arise, and through the data I have put at their disposal they are in a position at any time to take decisive action against Shoghi and his organization should he and his adherents ever become powerful. But they will not become powerful, as already shown his organization is rapidly decreasing in numbers, for no movement founded on fraud can succeed.

(Photostat copies of the ~~five~~ letters of the High Commissioner of Palestine, and the two letters of Shoghi Effendi written through his secretary, have been placed on file at the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.)

If the reader would like a more detailed history of this subject, the following books by the author, published by The TUTTLE COMPANY, RUTLAND, VERMONT, are recommended:

The Bahai Religion and Its Enemy the Bahai Organization -	\$2.00
The Alleged Will of Abdul Baha is Fraudulent. (Pamphlet)-	.25
Abdul Baha and The Promised Age. - - - - -	2.00

Those who feel they cannot afford these books may obtain them at half price (except the pamphlet) by writing direct to the author:

Mrs. H. Lawrence White
102 White Building
Utica, New York.

March 8, 2007

The Honorable Amy J. St. Eve
United States District Court
Northern District of Illinois
Courtroom 1241, Chambers 1260
Everett McKinley Dirksen Federal Building
219 South Dearborn Street
Chicago, Illinois 60604

Re: Civil Action No. 64 C 1878

Dear Judge St. Eve:

As amici curiae, members of the Reform Bahai Faith are concerned about the impact of the present lawsuit upon our denomination, though differing in view from all named parties. Religious liberty is not only involved but is the issue before the Court.

While all named parties essentially differ over their interpretation of the purported will and testament of Abdu'l-Baha, members of the Reform Bahai Faith agree with the 1929 opinion of Bahai Ruth White and the 1930 Report of Dr. Charles Ainsworth Mitchell that the will is a fraudulent document.

Dr. Mitchell was a leading forensic researcher of the time at the British Museum and his work is still cited in academic sources. His Report is deposited with the Library of Congress (LC Control No.: mm 81000871) and a recently obtained certified copy is herewith provided to the Court.

The key passage of Dr. Mitchell's Report, on the last page, second to the last paragraph, reads, "A minute comparison of the authenticated writing with the writing on every page of the alleged will . . . has failed to detect in any part of the will the characteristics of the writing of Abdu'l-Baha, as shown in the authenticated specimens."

Respectfully,

Frederick Glaysher

The Reform Bahai Faith
95 Theses - On Bahai Liberty
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Enclosures: Certified copy of Report, UPS return postage coupon

They are undeniably Pseudo Baha'is

<http://www.Bahai-Guardian.com>

The following information was published in United States Baha'i News No. 172, (page 17), December 1944, with respect to an amendment that the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States and Canada had made to the By-Laws of their Declaration of Trust, based on directions that had been received from Shoghi Effendi during the previous year:

Their statement follows:

"In the first place, the constitution and by-laws of a National Spiritual Assembly are, as far as possible, uniform and identical with those of every other National Assembly, thus laying the administrative basis of the Baha'i electoral bodies which later are to elect the members of the Universal House of Justice, and give every Baha'i community in the entire world the same organic law. Thus, the American National Assembly does not, of its own volition, initiate amendments, since to do so by independent action, would create differences between the various national constitutions, but takes such action only when the Guardian himself has sent directions which require amendments, as in the present case. . . .

Article II. The **Baha'is** of the United States and Canada, for whose benefit this Trust is maintained [Canada would establish its own NSA later], shall consist of all persons resident. . . who are accepted by the National Spiritual Assembly as fulfilling the requirements of membership in the Baha'i Community under the following qualifications set forth by the Guardian of the Faith:

"(a) Full recognition of the stations of the Bab as Forerunner, of Baha'u'llah as Author and of 'Abdu'l-Baha as True Exemplar of the Baha'i religion, unreserved acceptance of, and submission to whatsoever has been revealed by their Pen; loyal and steadfast adherence to every clause of 'Abdu'l-Baha's sacred Will; and close association with the spirit as well as the form of Baha'i Administration throughout the world. . ."

It may be noted from the qualifications enumerated by Shoghi Effendi above that the believer must maintain "steadfast adherence to every clause of 'Abdu'l-Baha's sacred Will." Shoghi Effendi has explained in his spiritual testament: "The Dispensation of Baha'u'llah" that this Will should be considered not only as the Will of 'Abdu'l-Baha but, as well, an expression of the Will of Baha'u'llah, and, as such, actually "their Will and Testament" — "the Heir of both the Originator and the Interpreter of the Law of God" — and in consequence thereof, "the Child of the Covenant." Moreover, Shoghi Effendi has emphasized that "the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha, which together with the Kitab-i-Aqdas, constitutes the chief depository wherein are enshrined those priceless elements of that Divine Civilization, the establishment of which is the primary mission of the Baha'i Faith . . . are not only complementary, but . . . mutually confirm one another, and are inseparable parts of one complete unit" and therefore the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha is clearly nothing less than a part of the explicit Holy Text, all of whose provisions have been promised to endure and remain in effect for at least a full thousand years.

Shoghi Effendi, as quoted above, has stipulated that one of the essential requirements that must be fulfilled to be accepted as a Baha'i is: "Steadfast adherence to every clause of 'Abdu'l-Baha's sacred Will."

This Will calls for an unbroken line of Guardians of the Cause of God as long as the Dispensation of Baha'u'llah's endures, each of whom, following the appointment of the first Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, by 'Abdu'l-Baha, inherits the Guardianship solely through an appointment made by his predecessor "in his own life-time." (i.e., not by testamentary document)

This Will states that "The mighty stronghold shall remain impregnable and safe through obedience to him who is the guardian of the Cause of God." and enjoins all "to show their obedience, submissiveness and subordination unto the guardian of the Cause of God, to turn unto him and be lowly before him"

Moreover, this Will stipulates that the Guardian of the Cause of God presides as "the sacred head and the distinguished member for life" of the Universal House of Justice and provides him with the sole authority to appoint Hands of the Cause.

In the light of the foregoing, it is crystal clear that those individuals who identify themselves as **Baha'is** but belong to an organization that does not have a living Guardian of the Cause of God as the Head of the Faith — "The Center of the Cause" — and the "sacred head" of its Universal House of Justice, as stipulated under the provisions of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha, are seriously deluded and, however blindly, are blatantly misrepresenting themselves as **Baha'is**, who, undeniably, at best, are no more than pseudo **Baha'is**.

For more information visit: <http://bahai-guardian.com>

Joel Bray Marangella Guardian of the Baha'i Faith April 2008

Relation between British Govt. and Haifan Baha'is

It appears that the British establishment and the Haifan Bahai establishment are no longer attempting to mask their long established ties to one another. Mr Barney Leith, a long-time serving member of the AO of the UK Bahai community, has recently been knighted for "serv[ices] to the Bahai Faith..."

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2011/jun/11/queens-birthday-honours-obe> (scroll down alphabetically)

"The Honourable John Barnabas Leith, For serv the Baha'i Faith and to Inter-Faith Relations."

It is fascinating to me that "...services to the Bahai faith..." constitutes grounds for granting a knighthood by the British Queen of the House of Windsor to someone. Does anyone have anymore doubts that Haifan Bahaism is the bastard child of the British Anglo-American establishment, puppeteered by the Corporation of London itself <http://taxjustice.blogspot.com/2009/02/corporation-of-london-state-wi...> & <http://www.newstatesman.com/economy/2011/02/london-corporation-city?>

<http://bahaisandbritannia.googlepages.com/home> 1. (Top Secret) British Government Foreign Countries Report (no.56) 16th November 1921

2. APPRECIATION OF THE ATTACHED EASTERN REPORT NO. LXX (May 1918)

Then see,

HOSTAGE TO KHOMEINI by Robert Dreyfuss (New Benjamin Franklin House: New York, 1980) pp.117-118 (Pdf pages 73-74)

<http://www.wlym.com/pdf/iclc/hostage.pdf>

&

<http://www.archive.org/details/HostageToKhomeini>

...Today the Bahai cult is hated in Iran, and is considered correctly to be an arm of the British Crown. During the destabilization of the Shah in 1978, it was widely reported that in several instances the Bahai cult secretly funded the Khomeini Shi'ite movement. In part, the money would have flowed through the cult's links to the same international 'human rights' organizations, such as Amnesty International, that originally sponsored the anti-Shah movement in Iran. These movements also derive from the "one world" currents associated with the Bahais since the early 1900s. (If any Iranians have been misled on the question of the Bahais by the supposed antipathy of Khomeini's clique to the Bahais, it should be noted that the Bahai cultists often deliberately encouraged anti-Bahai activities as camouflage)...

Also see pp. 115-116 (Pdf page 72)

Note as well, <http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&id=RvtAAAAAMAAJ&dq=%22The+Handboo...>

Reference: PALESTINE

EDITED BY : HARRY CHARLES LUKE, B.Lr1r., M.A.

ASSISTANT GOVERNOR OF JERUSALEM AND EDWARD KEITH-ROACH ASSISTANT CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT OF PALESTINE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY The Right Hon. SIR HERBERT SAMUEL, P.C., G.B.E. HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR PALESTINE

Issued under the Authority of the Government of Palestine

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED ST. MARTIN'S STREET, LONDON 1922

Quote

"...Sir 'Abbas Effendi 'Abdu'l Baha had travelled extensively in Europe and America to expound his doctrines, and on the 4th December, 1919, was created by King George V. a K.B.E. for valuable services rendered to the British Government in the early days of the Occupation...."

See, Wellesley Tudor Pole http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wellesley_Tudor_Pole

&

<http://gothicimage.co.uk/leymap.html>

Carroll Quigley THE ANGLO-AMERICAN ESTABLISHMENT <http://www.scribd.com/doc/431914/Carroll-Quigley-The-Anglo-American-E...>

Bahais engage in acts of cyber-terrorism against Iran (2010 Report)

Reference: <http://www.infowars.com/iran-arrests-30-over-u-s-linked-cyber-ring>

TEHRAN (Reuters) – Iran has arrested 30 people suspected of belonging to a U.S.-linked cyber network gathering information on Iranian nuclear scientists and sending people abroad for training, a news agency reported on Saturday.

It said the group sought to recruit people through the Internet for training in Iraq with the People's Mujahideen Organisation, a leftist exile group which launched attacks on the Islamic Republic from Saddam Hussein's Iraq

"Thirty people were arrested in connection with an organised American cyber war network via a series of complex security measures in the field of information technology and communications," the Fars news agency said.

Tehran's general and revolutionary court said one of the group was linked to an outlawed sect — a reference to the Baha'i religious minority, the agency said.

"Among the charges against this network are creating an intelligence gathering network, including identification of the country's nuclear scientists and staging illegal demonstrations and encouraging the public to take part in them after the presidential elections," it said.

Iran has seen its biggest domestic crisis since the 1979 revolution as supporters of candidates who lost to President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad last year took to the streets in protests, provoking a strong security clampdown.

Iran is locked in a dispute with Western countries who fear its nuclear energy programme is a front for developing nuclear weapons. Washington and its allies have condemned Iran for its treatment of the opposition movement. **(Editing by Jon Hemming)**

Baha'i Culture!!!

2006 New Year's party. A fun way to ring in the new year in a positive Baha'i atmosphere. All proceeds from this evening go towards the Scottsdale/Paradise valley Baha'i Center.

Universal Auxiliary Language – What nonsense!!!

The Bahai Faith has introduced the idea of having an auxiliary language. This is an important Bahai principle which claims to be a step towards bringing world peace, as Abdul Baha has been quoted to have said: “One of the great steps towards universal peace would be the establishment of a universal language.” (Paris Talks, The Eighth Principle)

Considering the fact that it is included amongst the important 12 Bahai principles, it would be worthwhile to know its conformity with divine laws.

The religion of God is always complete and perfect. In it, there is no confusion and all explanations have been provided. It does not leave man in the state of ambiguity and contradiction. In fact, its fundamentals are explicit and it outlines a defined path.

A look at the principle of universal language, raises many doubts about the validity of such a belief. The least needed for this idea to be divine was that the Bahai Faith should have provided a clear guideline about the language. The confusion exists not only amongst this day Bahais, but even among the Bahai leaders, themselves. Bahauallah in his writings has “recommended” Arabic as the universal language. “That proposition which is especially beloved, when presented before the Heavenly Throne, is that all should converse in the Arabic language. This, inasmuch as it is the most comprehensive of all languages (absat az kull al-lughat). (Tablet of Bahauallah commenting on the verse of Aqdas about the selection of International Auxiliary language and script)

The Bahai holy book of Aqdas too was written in Arabic, which reflects its importance and the possibility of becoming the universal language. But, with the disastrous failure of the Bahai Faith in the Muslim world, and the growing popularity of Esperanto (a constructed language) Abdul Baha miscalculated: “Esperanto has been drawn up with this end in view (of being the universal language): it is a fine invention and a splendid piece of work, but it needs perfecting. Esperanto as it stands is very difficult for some people... . Therefore appreciate ‘Esperanto’, for it is the beginning of the carrying out of one of the most important of the Laws of Bahá’u’lláh, and it must continue to be improved and perfected.” (Paris Talks, The Eighth Principle)

However, Esperanto could not sustain itself, and the widespread usage of English had the Universal House of Justice declare: The need for it (a universal auxiliary language) is now recognized on all sides, as reflected in the circumstances that have compelled the United Nations and much of the non-governmental community to adopt several “official languages”. Until a decision is taken by international agreement, the effect of such developments as the Internet, the management of air traffic, the development of technological vocabularies of various kinds, and universal education itself, has been to make it possible, to some extent, for English to fill the gap. (The Universal House of Justice, Century of Light (2001), p. 128)

The least one would expect from a religion is to outline the path. The central figures themselves were so confused that Abdul Baha declared: “An international Congress should be formed, consisting of delegates from every nation in the world, Eastern as well as Western. This Congress should form a language that could be acquired by all, and every country would thereby reap great benefit.” (Paris Talks, The Eighth Principle)

Why should the Congress form a language? Is this not a Bahai teaching? It is disgusting to note that religious leaders are so powerless, that they have to seek assistance from world diplomats. This teaching was easier said than done. Do you not think that if the interpreter of the religion is so confused that he cannot provide the solution, something is wrong with the faith?

Also, it would be worthwhile to note that Abdul Baha says a common language would pave the way for universal peace (quoted in the beginning), Shoghi takes a U-turn. What Bahá’u’lláh is referring to in the Eighth Leaf of the Exalted Paradise [Tablets of Bahá’u’lláh, p. 68, above] is a far distant time, when the world is really one country, and one language would be a sensible possibility. From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, March 16, 1946 republished in Lights of Guidance, p. 340

Confusion abound in this teaching, and the incessant change in the Bahai interpretation, emphasizes the missing link between the Faith and God. While truth is clear and explicit, and religion focusses on clearing confusion and doubts, the Bahai faith only adds to contradiction.

Is the Bahai Faith a religion?

An important element to establish the truthfulness and divine origin of any religion is to examine the prophecies made by their leaders.

The importance of prophecies is derived from the fact that Prophets (or Manifestations of God, as the Bahais call them) are sent by God. God, the Almighty, is Knower of All things. Since our knowledge is limited to the present and the past, God makes known the future to His appointed ones as a sign of their truthfulness. So while predictions can go wrong, prophecies are true and bound to happen. Thus, the foretelling by Prophets are prophecies, and any wrong forecasting is a manifest proof to establish the falsehood of the claimant.

Quranic verses and Prophetic traditions are exemplary evidences of prophecies, which the Bahais also acknowledge.

My intention, here, is not to scrutinize all the Bahai teachings and convert this article to an argument of academic interest. But my objective is to present to you an honest case and let you examine the Bahai Faith.

“In each cycle the guardian and holy souls have been twelve. So Jacob had twelve sons; in the time of Moses there were heads or chiefs of the tribes; in the time of Christ there were twelve Apostles; and in the time of Mohammad there were twelve Imams. But in this glorious manifestation there are twenty-four; double the number of all the others, for the greatness of this manifestation requires it.”

Some Answered Questions, Chapter 11: Commentary on the Eleventh Chapter of the Revelation of St. John, page 29-30

“O my loving friends! After the passing away of this wronged one, turn unto Shoghi Effendi as he is the sign of God, the chosen branch, the Guardian of the Cause of God, he unto whom all the Aghsan, the Afnan, the Hands of the Cause of God and His loved ones must turn.” **Will and Testament of Abdu'l Baha, page 11**

So far so good, but what about the remaining?

The Will and Testament continues *“He (Shoghi) is the Interpreter of the Word of God and after him will succeed the first-born of his lineal descendants.”* **Will and Testament of Abdu'l Baha, page 11**

And lo! Shoghi died without children. God guided mankind and proved Abdul Baha a liar.

Dear readers, Abdul Baha played a trick, he was blind about the unseen future. How will he show you the way, who himself is lost?

Baha'i Faith Core activites exposed

Baha'i Faith

Bahá'í Faith is banned in most of the countries.

“IT APPEARS THAT AS HARD AS THE BAHÁ'IS MIGHT HAVE TRIED OVER THE YEARS TO DISMISS WHAT THEY ‘CONSPIRACY THEORIES’ REGARDING THEIR CONNECTIONS TO THE BRITISH ESTABLISHMENT, MORE AND SUCH THEORIES CONTINUE TO PERSIST- WHILE WITH EACH DAY MORE EVIDENCE EMERGES PROVING THEORIES AS FACT RATHER THAN THEORY”.

During the 19th century, Britain had firm control over India; at the same time Russia had been expanding south and east into Central Asia toward India, and a rivalry started between Britain and Russia over territorial and political control in Central Asia. The piece of land that was located between India and Russian holdings, included Persia, was a highly coveted region, where both Russia and Britain worked to gain influence.



Briefly, the situation was –

- Support of the United Kingdom during the Constitutional Revolution,
- Anglo-Russian convention which solidified boundaries that identified control between Britain and Russia in Persia, Afghanistan, and Tibet,
- The occupation of Iranian territory during the First World War by the UK, Russia and the Ottoman Empire, as well as the coup d'état of 1921 which was backed by the British.

In such circumstances the Russian Government, to gain control over central Asia – especially Iran created a false Religion called as Bahatism.

The Bahá'í Faith and the Bahá'ís have had ties to foreign powers, and were agents of Russian imperialism, British colonialism, American expansionism and International Zionism.

Bahá'í teachings promote to be loyal to one's government and not be involved in politics but the fact is exactly contrary to what is preached. Baha'ís are always involved in politics and seen with political leaders. They are known to have been involved in espionage activities in each and every country. This is the reason why they are banned in most of the countries. These countries found the followers of Bahá'í Faith, having dual loyalty and of being involved with foreign or hostile powers.

Some of these countries are:

EGYPT

The late PRESIDENT JAMAL ABDUL NASSER BANNED THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH IN EGYPT IN 1960. His government found relationship between Baha'í Faith and Zionism. The President decree was as under:

Clause 1: All Bahá'í Assemblies and Centers existing in the two regions of the Republic are hereby dissolved, and their activities suspended. Individuals, bodies and institutions are forbidden to engage in any activity, as was conducted by these Assemblies and Centers. The Minister of the Interior will issue the necessary instructions to bring to an end the activities of these Assemblies and Centers.

Clause 2: The properties of the Bahá'í Assemblies and Centers shall be taken over by officials appointed by the Minister of the interior. The Minister shall designate a guardian to be in custody of the funds, documents and papers owned by the said Assemblies

Clause 3: Any infringement of this law is an offence deserving imprisonment of a minimum of Six months, and/or a fine from 100 to 1000 Egyptian pounds.

Clause 4: This Decree shall be published in the Official Gazette, and will be enforced from the Date of publication.

INDONESIA The President of Indonesia in 1960 dissolved Bahai Administration and made every Baha'í activity illegal. Recently in 2009 Bahá'ís were arrested in Indonesia on Criminal Charges of violating “The Law of Child Protection”. The Bahá'ís were prosecuted under the Law of Child Protection 23-2002 trying to convert children of other faith as young as 9 to 10 years.

IRAQ President Saddam Hussain not only dissolved Baha'i organization in Iraq but issued an order that any Baha'i activity will be met with death sentence. Following the Baathist coup in 1963, the then leaders drastically limited the freedoms previously guaranteed to the Iraqi citizens. The new regime began with attempts to prevent Baha'i activity in Iraq in 1967. This culminated in the decision of the Directorate of Civil Status No. 358 24 / 7 / 1975 that stopped registration of Baha'is in the records of civil status.

In May 1970, the Iraqi Government banned all Baha'i Institutions and Baha'i activities. In mid December 1973, an incident created a stir which engulfed the life of many Baha'is. In a government owned school, many Baha'i girls were secretly propagating the Baha'i Faith to other classmates. The girls reported the matter to the authorities that propagation of an Israeli based Faith is going on in the campus. The matter was reported to the Ministry of education. He ordered the investigation on the following day. The investigation revealed a network of Israeli based organization is behind it. The head Master was dismissed and the girl was arrested together with her three Baha'i classmates. Almost fifty people were arrested in the course of next few months. A military court sentenced fourteen of them to life imprisonment, three to fifteen years and nine to ten years in jail. Further severe action was taken against suspected members of this organization involved in conversion and espionage.

USSR The former USSR called Baha'is as Enemy of State. Surprising indeed from a country which nurtured the Faith initially.

In 1937, "NKVD" (People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs) outlawed about 40 Bahá'í communities existing at that time in USSR. From the 13th of October, all the members of the Bahá'í Spiritual Assembly of Baku and dozens of community members were arrested. All of them were punished for their illegal and anti State activities

The chairman of the Spiritual Assembly, Faraj Jaffargulu Gasimov (the nephew of the first Bahá'í from Salyan, Hadim Javad) and his wife, Fizza Muradova were imprisoned. The "NKVD" people called him "national enemy". Many were imprisoned and a few Baha'is were exiled to Siberia.

In October 1938 the building of the Bahá'í center was confiscated in Baku. Now there is a kindergarten in this building.

In November 1982, KGB started arresting the Bahá'ís. S.D. Asadova, I.F. Gasimov and I.G. Ayyubov were arrested. All their meetings were declared illegal and every Baha'i activity forbidden. Even the greetings on the phone "Allah'u'Abha" were forbidden.

UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC The UAR Government called Baha'is as "state within the state".

GERMANY In 1937 Heinrich Himmler signed an order disbanding the Bahá'í institutions in Germany. In 1939 and in 1942 there were sweeping arrests of former members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is of Germany. In May 1944 there was a public trial in Darmstadt. The Bahá'ís were heavily fined and it's institutions continued to be disbanded.

Following the fall of Nazi Germany, and with American and British control of Germany, an American Bahá'í, John C. Eichenauer (a medic of the 100th Infantry division then at Geislingen) started searching for the Bahá'í community in Stuttgart. He drove through Stuttgart looking and asking for Bahá'ís and was able to find an individual. The next day saw the first meeting of Bahá'ís since their disbandment in 1937.

Two other American Bahá'ís, Bruce Davison and Henry Jarvis, in Frankfurt and Heidelberg respectively, also connected with the Bahá'í community in Germany. At the beginning of the partition of Germany there were about 150 German Bahá'ís in the American section and they became registered with the American authorities. The National Spiritual Assembly was re-elected in 1946. Needless to say, US was involved in establishment of Bahaism in post-war Germany. John C. Eichenauer, Bruce Davison and Henry Jarvis were established US secret agents.

IRAN The Iranian Authorities always believed that Baha'is are the face of Israel in Iran. It is a well known fact that the Bahai Administration has issued statements for the Baha'is of Iran to go and teach the Iranians and face whatsoever consequences came. One should ask the Baha'is "where is the obedience to government" principle of the religion in this case?

Bahá'ís held many prominent positions in Iran during the Shah regime. In the government of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, half of the Shah's cabinet were Bahá'ís.

Shah's personal physician, Abd al-Karim Ayadi was a Baha'i. Amongst other Bahá'í who held position in the Shah regime was Asadullah Sanii. The then Minister of Defence, Parviz Sabeti, was raised in a Bahá'í family. The Prime Minister Amir-Abbas Hoveida was a Bahá'í. The Baha'is agree that Hoveida's father was a Baha'i but say that Hoveida himself was not religious. Other Bahá'ís included Mahnaz Afkhami, who was the Minister for Women's Affairs and the daughter of a Bahá'í mother and Farrokhroo Parsa, another cabinet member.

CIS COUNTRIES More recently the Baha'is are being under strict surveillance in CIS countries like AZERBAIJAN, UZBEKISTAN, TAJAKISTAN etc. In fact Baha'is are being deported from Uzbekistan for secretly converting children under 15 years. (Refer <http://uzbekbahai.blogspot.com>)

KYRGYZSTAN The 2009 Religion Law, passed under former President Kurmanbek Bakiev was aimed at curtailing the Baha'i Activities. It stated "If a community has "administrative centres located beyond Kyrgyzstan or having foreign citizens in its administrative body" it is classified as a "mission". This community must re-register every year and does not have legal status. It's registration can be refused if it poses "a threat to the state and social security, the inter-ethnic and ecumenical concord, health and morality of the population, or in other cases anticipated by legislation."

YEMEN The Baha'i Faith is banned in Yemen since 2008. Many Baha'is were deported because of their conversion activities. Last year in Yemen four Baha'is were arrested by the Interior ministry for secretly propagating their religion. The three Baha'is of Iranian origin, Zia'u'llah Pourahmari, Keyvan Qadari, and Behrooz Rohani, were arrested in Sana'a, on the night of June 20, 2008. A fourth Baha'i, Sayfi Ibrahim Sayfi, was also arrested around the same time and was deported to Iraq.

According to the source close to the group, the men were arrested and taken to the national security headquarters' prison where they spent 40 days – most of the time in isolated cells – before being sent to Sana'a General Investigation Department.

Countries like SAUDI ARABIA, OMAN, JORDAN, MOROCCO also see Baha'is as hands of Zionists.

The Bahá'í Faith was banned in the 1970s in several countries like: BURUNDI in 1974; MALI in 1976; UGANDA in 1977; CONGO in 1977; NIGER in 1978.

INDIA The world's largest democracy India with all its secular credentials has come out with "Anti conversion law" in its 11 states so as to prevent this very secret sect from deceptive propagation. The law states:

Prohibition of forcible or deceptive conversion No person shall convert or attempt to convert, either directly or otherwise, any person from one religious faith to any other religious faith by the use of force or by inducement or by any FRAUDULENT means nor shall any person abet any such conversion.

Punishment for contravention of the provisions of Section 3 Any person contravening the provisions contained in section 3 shall, without prejudice to any civil liability, be punishable with Imprisonment to the extent of two years and fine up to ten thousand rupees.

According to a report published in India's leading Newspaper, **The Hindustan Times in July 2006**, as per a complaint filed in city court – the members of National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of India were accused by their colleagues of using impersonations and forgery to clandestinely penetrate into prohibited defense establishment of the country and get hold of classified documents and supplied them to Israeli and Iranian spying agencies.

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA AND NORTH KOREA Bahá'í Faith is not recognized in the People's Republic of China and North Korea and so there is no organized Bahá'í activity.

JAPAN AND SOUTH KOREA Even in countries such as Japan and South Korea, where there is religious freedom, the position of the Bahá'í Faith resembles that of Western Europe where Baha'is are only on paper.

MOROCCO In Morocco in 1962-1963, 15 Bahá'is were arrested for their religious convictions; three were given death sentences and several others years of prison term at hard labor. There were months of diplomatic efforts which bore no results.

On March 31, 1963 during a visit to the United States and the United Nations, King Hasan of Morocco was interviewed on television. He addressed the audience saying that "Though the Bahá'í Faith was against good order and morals" that he would still pardon the death sentences. It is evident that he succumbed to the US pressure.

Arrest of Baha'is occurred again in 1984, due to their secret teaching activities and sending confidential reports to Israel. Bahá'is have more recently been denied passports and can practice their religion only in private.

ISRAEL Last but not the least... strange indeed – Baha'is are not supposed to teach in Israel. There is a total ban. The matter is very mysterious that although Israel supports Baha'is in all aspects, yet why the State of Israel does not permit the Baha'is to propagate the Bahai Faith.

Quote : Whenever an Israeli citizen living in the West, irrespective of his background and religious affiliation, declares his belief and interest in becoming a member of the Bahá'í community, he should be informed that the Faith is not taught in Israel and that there is no Bahá'í community there apart from those who are associated with the Bahá'í World Center. He cannot be accepted into the Bahá'í community if he is planning to return to Israel to reside there. If he plans to continue to reside outside Israel, his enrollment can be accepted, but he will then be subject to the same restrictions about travel to Israel as any other Bahá'í, in that he could do so only with the express permission of the Universal House of Justice. In any event, the Universal House of Justice should be informed of any such declaration.

(Letter from the Universal House of Justice, dated October 20, 1994, to several National Spiritual Assemblies)

This is why, should Jews wish to become Bahá'í even now, they need to leave Israel first.

WITH SUCH SUSPECT BACKGROUND, IS THERE A DOUBT ABOUT THE INTENT OF THIS FAITH???

Source : http://groups.google.com/group/talk.religion.bahai/browse_thread/thread/a8127ca931439/61b706a02f540a4d?lnk=raot#61b706a02f540a4d

Baha'i faith and Al-Qaida

The Baha'i faith stands for universal love, for tolerance, and for a separation of religion and state. The need for religious leaders to let politicians do the ruling is a key value stated over and over again in Baha'i scripture.

Unfortunately, a weird Baha'i sub-cult has arisen. It structurally resembles al-Qaida, and differs from al-Qaida only with regard to methods, not ideals. It does not usually employ violence or terrorism (though persons with this mindset have beaten up friends of mind).

And, most frighteningly of all, it has taken over and subverted the main institutions of the Baha'i faith.

1) Al-Qaida believes in the destruction of secular, civil governments and replacing them with a fascist theocracy.

Baha'i theocrats believe in the destruction of secular, civil governments and replacing them with a fascist theocracy. Ian Semple, a member of the Baha'i Universal House of Justice, has for decades cast scorn on civil governments and spoken of his dream of a future when Baha'i Institutions will rule in their stead.

One pilgrim wrote,

"I recall being in Haifa in the '70s ('72 and '78) and hearing long talks about this from Ian Semple, on how the world was destined to be ruled by houses of justice and there will eventually be no distinction between church and state, with rather snide and smug comments about how at last the world will finally get it right and have God and Government fused through the power of the Baha'i covenant."

Note that this is the opposite of what 'Abdu'l-Baha says in the Treatise on Leadership:

<http://www2.h-net.msu.edu/~bahai/trans/vol2/absiyasi.htm>

Ian Semple also put out a letter from the Secretariat of the UHJ:

"As for the statement made by Shoghi Effendi in his letter of 21 March 1932, the well-established principles of the Faith concerning the relationship of the Baha'i institutions to those of the country in which the Baha'is reside make it unthinkable that they would ever purpose to violate a country's constitution or so to meddle in its political machinery as to attempt to take over the powers of government. This is an integral element of the Baha'i principle of abstention from involvement in politics. However, this does not by any means imply that the country itself may not, by constitutional means, decide to adopt Baha'i laws and practices and modify its constitution or method of government accordingly."

In this passage he basically argues for a Nazi-like tactic of getting elected democratically and then abolishing democracy. By the way, the Islamists (with al-Qaida links) tried this in Algeria, and the democrats and secularists fought back, embroiling the country in a civil war that has cost 100,000 lives. This is the sort of conflict between theocratic Baha'is and the rest of society that Semple is urging on the world. At that point would the Baha'i theocrats refrain from violence?

2) Al-Qaida wishes to reestablish the Islamic Caliphate as the One World Government. Baha'i theocrats substitute the House of Justice for the Caliphate and envision it ruling the world.

3) Al-Qaida despises parliamentary democracy as corrupt, money-driven and unrepresentative. It wishes to overthrow parliaments and institute authoritarian religious rule instead. Baha'i theocrats despise parliamentary democracy and wish to substitute their religious institutions, which are not freely elected, for civil government. Long-time Baha'i leader Firuz Kazemzadeh said in 1988:

"If somebody is dissatisfied with a local assembly, he is not prevented from appealing to the NSA . . . It is something else when whispering campaigns or petitions are sent around for signatures objecting to the activities of the institutions. That also may be something which is countenanced by American democracy but has nothing to do with the Bahauallah and Baha'i Faith. We must always remember that our institutions are an unusual and unique combination of theocracy in the best sense of the term with democracy. The institutions of the Baha'i Faith have not been created by us, the institutions have been created by God.

Actually, Kazemzadeh's version of the Baha'i institutions has been created by Kazemzadeh.

4) Al-Qaida establishes cells throughout the world to work for theocracy, and recruits innocent Muslims at mosques. Baha'i theocrats have secret cells within the Baha'i community, and recruit Baha'is at deepenings and other events into their twisted world-view. Many "Auxiliary Board Members" and Assistants are secret theocrats who play dirty tricks on ordinary Baha'is to force them out of the Faith.

The Ian Semple / Kazemzadeh theocratic ideology aims at destroying American democracy. It aims at gutting the Constitution and abolishing Congress in favor of Kazemzadeh's weird, secretive, authoritarian way of ruling.

5) Al-Qaida demands absolute obedience from its recruits, and no dissent is permitted.

Baha'i theocrats demand absolute obedience to "the Institutions" and tolerate no dissent. Kazemzadeh told a group of Baha'i intellectuals, "the word dissent implies separating oneself from the activities of the group and putting oneself outside the mainstream of the community, and that is contrary to Baha'i practice.

You can't disagree with the NSA.

The dangers to the pristine Baha'i faith, with its values of tolerance, allowing the expression of diverse points of view, and firm commitment to the separation of religion and state, of this theocratic cult that has taken control of the community cannot be overstated. Moreover, it is a threat to the whole world.

Now that we have seen where such authoritarian theocracy leads, on September 11, I call upon all Baha'is to step back, reread the scriptures, and adhere to the real values of our religion.

Juan Cole

Bahai Faith is a copy and paste religion

Baha'is Long Obligatory prayer is similar to Muslim's prayer

The Kitáb-i-Aqdas Long Obligatory Prayer

TO BE RECITED ONCE IN TWENTY-FOUR HOURS

Whoso wisheth to recite this prayer, let him stand up and turn unto God, and, as he standeth in his place, let him gaze to the right and to the left, as if awaiting the mercy of his Lord, the Most Merciful, the Compassionate. Then let him say:

O Thou Who art the Lord of all names and the Maker of the heavens! I beseech Thee by them Who are the Daysprings of Thine invisible Essence, the Most Exalted, the All-Glorious, to make of my prayer a fire that will burn away the veils which have shut me out from Thy beauty, and a light that will lead me unto the ocean of Thy Presence.

Let him then raise his hands in supplication toward God – blessed and exalted be He – and say:

O Thou the Desire of the world and the Beloved of the nations! Thou seest me turning toward Thee, and clinging to Thy cord, through whose movement the whole creation hath been stirred up. I am Thy servant, O my Lord, and the son of Thy servant. Behold me standing ready to do Thy will and Thy desire, and wishing naught else except Thy good pleasure. I implore Thee by the Ocean of Thy mercy and the Daystar of Thy grace to do with Thy servant as Thou wilt and pleasest. By Thy might which is far above all mention and praise! Whatsoever is revealed by Thee is the desire of my heart and the beloved of my soul. O God, my God! Look not upon my hope and my doings, nay rather look upon Thy will that hath encompassed the heavens and the earth. By Thy Most Great Name, O Thou Lord of all nations! I have desired only what Thou didst desire, and love only what Thou dost love.

Let him then kneel, and bowing his forehead to the ground, let him say:

Exalted art Thou above the description of anyone save Thyself, and the comprehension of aught else except Thee.

Let him then stand and say:

Make my prayer, O my Lord, a fountain of living waters whereby I may live as long as Thy sovereignty endureth, and may make mention of Thee in every world of Thy worlds.

Let him again raise his hands in supplication, and say:

O Thou in separation from Whom hearts and souls have melted, and by the fire of Whose love the whole world hath been set aflame! I implore Thee by Thy Name through which Thou hast subdued the whole creation, not to withhold from me that which is with Thee, O Thou Who rulest over all men! Thou seest, O my Lord, this stranger hastening to his most exalted home beneath the canopy of Thy majesty and within the precincts of Thy mercy; and this transgressor seeking the ocean of Thy forgiveness; and this lowly one the court of Thy glory; and this poor creature the orient of Thy wealth. Thine is the authority to command whatsoever Thou wilt. I bear witness that Thou art to be praised in Thy doings, and to be obeyed in Thy behests, and to remain unconstrained in Thy bidding.

Let him then raise his hands, and repeat three time the Greatest Name. [Alláh-u-Abhá]

Let him then bend down with hands resting on the knees before God – blessed and exalted be He – and say:

Thou seest, O my God, how my spirit hath been stirred up within my limbs and members, in its longing to worship Thee, and in its yearning to remember Thee and extol Thee; how it testifieth to that whereunto the Tongue of Thy Commandment hath testified in the kingdom of Thine utterance and the heaven of Thy knowledge. I love, in this state, O my Lord, to beg to Thee all that is with Thee, that I may demonstrate my poverty, and magnify Thy bounty and Thy riches, and may declare my powerlessness, and manifest Thy power and Thy might.

Let him then stand and raise his hands twice in supplication, and say:

There is no God but Thee, the Almighty, the All-Bountiful. There is no God but Thee, the Ordainer, both in the beginning and in the end. O God, my God! Thy forgiveness hath emboldened me, and Thy mercy hath strengthened me, and Thy call hath awakened me, and Thy grace hath raised me up and led me unto Thee. Who, otherwise, am I that I should dare to stand at the gate of the city of Thy nearness, or set my face toward the lights that are shining from the heaven of Thy will? Thou seest, O my Lord, this wretched creature knocking at the door of Thy grace, and this evanescent soul seeking the river of everlasting life from the hands of Thy bounty. Thine is the command at all times, O Thou Who art the Lord of all names; and mine is resignation and willing submission to Thy will, O Creator of the heavens!

Let him then raise his hands thrice, and say:

Greater is God than every great one!

Let him then kneel and, bowing his forehead to the ground, say:

Too high art Thou for the praise of those who are nigh unto Thee to ascend unto the heaven of Thy nearness, or for the birds of the hearts of them

who are devoted to Thee to attain to the door of Thy gate. I testify that Thou hast been sanctified above all attributes and holy above all names. No God is there but Thee, the Most Exalted, the All-Glorious.

Let him then seat himself and say:

I testify unto that whereunto have testified all created things, and the Concourse on high, and the inmates of the all-highest Paradise, and beyond them the Tongue of Grandeur itself from the all-glorious Horizon, that Thou art God, that there is no God but Thee, and that He who hath been manifested is the Hidden Mystery, the Treasured Symbol, through Whom the letters B and E (Be) have been joined and knit together. I testify that it is He Whose name hath been set down by the Pen of the Most High, and Who hath been mentioned in the Books of God, the Lord of the Throne on high and of earth below.

Let him then stand erect and say:

O Lord of all being and Possessor of all things visible and invisible! Thou dost perceive my tears and the sighs I utter, and hearest my groaning, and my wailing, and the lamentation of my heart. By Thy might! My trespasses have kept me back from drawing nigh unto Thee; and my sins have held me far from the court of Thy holiness. Thy love, O my Lord, hath enriched me, and separation from Thee hath destroyed me, and remoteness from Thee hath consumed me. I entreat Thee by Thy footsteps in this wilderness, and by the words "Hear am I. Here am I" which Thy chosen Ones have uttered in this immensity, and by the breaths of Thy Revelation, and the gentle winds of the Dawn of Thy Manifestation, to ordain that I may gaze on Thy beauty and observe whatsoever is in Thy Book.

Let him then repeat the Greatest Name thrice, and bend down with hands resting on the knees, and say:

Praise be to Thee, O my God, that Thou hast aided me to remember Thee and to praise Thee, and hast made known unto me Him Who is the Dayspring of Thy signs, and hast caused me to bow down before Thy Lordship, and humble myself before Thy Godhead, and to acknowledge that which hath been uttered by the Tongue of Thy grandeur.

Let him then rise and say:

O God, my God! My back is bowed by the burden of my sins, and my heedlessness hath destroyed me. Whenever I ponder my evil doings and Thy benevolence, my heart melteth within me, and my blood boileth in my veins. By Thy Beauty, O Thou the Desire of the world! I blush to lift up my face to Thee, and my longing hands are ashamed to stretch forth toward the heaven of Thy bounty. Thou seest, O my God, how my tears prevent me from remembering Thee and from extolling Thy virtues, O Thou the Lord of the Throne on high and of earth below! I implore Thee by the signs of Thy Kingdom and the mysteries of Thy Dominion to do with Thy loved ones as becometh Thy bounty, O Lord of all being, and is worthy of Thy grace, O King of the seen and the unseen!

Let him then repeat the Greatest Name thrice, and kneel with his forehead to the ground, and say:

Praise be unto Thee, O our God, that Thou hast sent down unto us that which draweth us nigh unto Thee, and supplieth us with every good thing sent down by Thee in Thy Books and Thy Scriptures. Protect us, we beseech Thee, O my Lord, from the hosts of idle fancies and vain imaginations. Thou, in truth, art the Mighty, the All-Knowing.

Let him then raise his head, and seat himself, and say:

I testify, O my God, to that whereunto thy chosen Ones have testified, and acknowledge that which the inmates of the all-highest Paradise and those who have circled round Thy mighty Throne have acknowledged. The kingdoms of earth and heaven are Thine, O Lord of the worlds!

“Who gave the right to Britain to grant Palestine to the Jews?”

And Abdul Baha was awarded the title ‘SIR’ by the Britishers for his valuable services.

Reference : The handbook of Palestine EDITED BY : HARRY CHARLES LUKE, B.Lr1r., M.A. ASSISTANT GOVERNOR OF JERUSALEM AND EDWARD KEITH-ROACH ASSISTANT CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF PALESTINE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY The Right Hon. SIR HERBERT SAMUEL, P.C., G.B.E. HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR PALESTINE

Issued under the Authority of the Government of Palestine

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Quote “...Sir ‘Abbas Effendi ‘Abdu’l Baha had travelled extensively in Europe and America to expound his doctrines, and on the 4th December, 1919, was created by King George V. a K.B.E. for valuable services rendered to the British Government in the early days of the Occupation.”



The General claims of Baha'i Faith

The conception on which Bahaism bases its claim is false. Truth does not grow old, nor is it possible to change the religion with the growth of the race. A universal religion must present truth in a form that will reach men in every stage of civilization, for the reason that in every period of the world since the dawn of history there have been simultaneously men in every stage of intellectual development.—W. A. Shedd in "Miss. Review of the World."

It (Bahaism) has not enough assurance of personal immortality to satisfy such Western minds as are repelled by the barren and jejune ethical systems of agnostics, positivists, and humanitarians who would give us rules to regulate a life which they have rendered meaningless.—Professor Browne in Phelps' "Life of Abbas Effendi," p. xviii.

The essence of being a Bahai is a boundless devotion to the person of the Manifestation and a profound belief that he is divine and of a different order from all other beings.—Professor Browne, Art. "Bab" in Ency. of Religion and Ethics.

THE claims of Bahaism are many and varied. They cover a wide range. I will first consider its general claims and of these the most significant.

I. First of all, Bahais claim that a new religion is needed. All the great religions, they say, were true in their day; not only Moses, Christ, and Mohammed, but Zoroaster, Confucius, and Buddha were Divine Manifestations, and revealed God's truth. But now the old religions are dead. Abdul Baha says: "The Spirit has passed away from the bodies of the old religions. While the forms of their doctrines remain, the Spirit has fled." "The principles of the religion of Christ have been forgotten. It is then clear and evident that in the passage of time religions become entirely changed. Therefore they are renewed." "There is to-day nothing more than traditions to feed upon. ... The world of humanity is in the dark." One chapter in Thornton Chase's "The Bahai Revelation" is headed "The Bahai Revelation is needed." This he argues, stating that Christianity is condemned because after 1900 years it has not been accepted by all people; because it refuses to reject miracles and the blood atonement and will not confine itself to the "principles of Jesus," as the Brahma Samaj; because it tends to separate peoples, holding itself to be the only religion authorized by God; because people are dwelling in bondage and are no longer satisfied. Tares are many and Baha Ullah must come and uproot them. "The old order of things is passing away," says Sprague; "people are being tossed about with every wind of doctrine." "True religion is forgotten," says Phelps, "or has become a hollow name; faith has waned, men are wandering in the dark." This decay, they teach, is inevitable and in accord with divine arrangement. They deny the belief of Christians that Christianity is the permanent religion of humanity; and that of Moslems, that Mohammed was the "seal of the prophets," and hold that Christianity was succeeded by Islam, Islam by Babism, and Babism by Bahaism. Abdul Baha says: "Time changes all things. Transmutation and change are requirements of life. All religions of God are subject to the same law. They are founded in order to blossom out and develop and fulfill their mission. They reach their zenith and then decline and come to an end." "A new cycle must begin, for the world needs a new luminary."

It is not necessary to refute the fundamental fallacy of this first claim, for it is patent that Christianity is alive and growing. Its manifold spiritual activities, its varied and progressive efforts for righteousness and peace among men, for social and moral reforms, its zeal for Missions and their marvellous success, show that Christianity is neither stagnant nor dead. It has a forward triumphant movement. The Church renews its strength from its divine Head; He, alive forevermore, is its Light and its Life.

II. Bahaism claims to be the divine Revelation in this new cycle—a new Dispensation or Covenant. It disclaims being a new religion, affirming rather that it is a renewal of religion or religion renewed. One writes: "The Revelation is not a new religion, but the very essence of God's word as taught by Christ (and Moses and Mohammed), but not perceived by Christians at large" (nor by Jews nor Mohammedans). Baha Ullah says: "Of the utterances of the prophets of the past we have taken the essence, and in the garment of brevity clothed it." Abdul Baha says: "The same basis, which was laid by Christ and later on forgotten, has been renewed by Baha Ullah." "All that is true in all religions will stand; by the new Dispensation, new spirit is infused into these teachings." Phelps says: "The body of doctrine which Bahaism teaches is not put forward in any sense or particular as new, but as a unification and synthesis of all other religions." Of its system of morals the same is true. It is a restatement in unsystematic form of common ethics. It reiterates the second table of the Mosaic Law, and the New Testament principles of brotherly love and unity. Yet in some of his addresses Abdul Baha names certain principles as new in the Bahai faith, such as universal peace, the unity of humanity, arbitration, compulsory education of both sexes, the harmony of science and religion, the evil of prejudice and fanaticism, need of investigating the truth, etc. Not one of these is new; not one owes its position in the world of thought or activity to the Bahai propaganda. But whether Bahaism claims to be new in its principles or disclaims it, in fact it is a new religion. The disavowals are, no doubt, made for the sake of obtaining easier access to the followers of the old religions, and are only a temporary expediency. In this they are simply following the example of Mohammed, who proclaimed his message to the people of Arabia as the religion of Abraham, and as the same as that of the Law and the Gospels. But it is evident that Bahaism is inconsistent with Christianity, as indeed with Islam. Bahais' claims, if admitted, would lead to the superseding of Christianity. This will appear when I state its doctrines.

The present attitude of Bahais in maintaining connection with Christian Churches and at the same time worshipping Baha and propagating Bahaism is one of intellectual stultification or of moral blindness. In the same way, in Moslem lands, Bahais conform to the externals of Islam. In the case of the latter the cause of this is often moral obliquity or fear; with deceived Christian brethren it is probably ignorance; by the Bahai propagandist it is allowed from astute policy. It is an intellectual impossibility for one to accept the teachings of Baha Ullah and to be his disciple and at the same time to be an intelligent disciple of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one excludes the other.

Bahaism is a distinct religion. It is not even a sect of Islam. It abrogates and annuls it. Professor Browne says: "As Christianity is a different religion from Judaism, and as Islam is distinct from Christianity, so Bahaism is a separate religion, distinct from Christianity or Islam." It even superseded and abrogated Babism. The Bab has been relegated to the background, and put into the position of a John the Baptist. His book, the "Bayan," is long ago neglected to such an extent that Professor Browne had difficulty in obtaining a copy in Persia. Remey says: "Babism fulfilled its purpose, and when this was accomplished in the appearance of Bahauddin, it, as such, ceased to exist." Mirza Abul Fazl says: Babism "is not the same

religion or creed as Bahaism”

What is Baha'i Faith?

As an introduction to a discussion of Bahaism and its claims, I will sketch briefly and simply its origin and history. Bahaism is derived from Babism. Babism has its roots in Shiahism, a soil impregnated with the doctrines of the Imamate and Mahdism. The atmosphere is filled with millennial hopes and dreamy mysticism, with Sufi philosophies and allegorical fancies of its poets. This soil has been fruitful of many sects. The Shiahism of Persia is called the "Religion of the Twelve" because its fundamental doctrine is that the twelve Imams, the lineal descendants of Ali and Fatima, the daughter of Mohammed, were the rightful Caliphs of Islam, in succession to Mohammed. In the tenth century (329 A. H. or 940 A. D.) the Twelfth Imam disappeared into a well, and still lives in Jabulka or Jabulsa whence he is expected to reappear as the Mahdi or Kaim. After his concealment, four persons in succession were channels of communication between him and the faithful. The title given to these was Bab or the Gate. Among the sects which sprang up among the Shiahs or were related to them were the Ismielis, Carmathians, Druses, Hurufis, Ali-Allahis or Nusairiyeh, Assassins, Batinis and many others. A group of these were called Ghulat, because they rendered excessive honour to the Imams, believing them to be incarnations of the attributes or essence of God. Those holding this view anticipated that the Imam Mahdi would be a divine Manifestation.² At the beginning of the nineteenth century, a sect arose in Persia, called Sheikhis. It received its name from its founder, Sheikh Ahmad of Ahsa, 1752-1827. He taught that there was always in the world a "perfect Shiah," who held communication with the absent Imam and revealed his will. Sheikh Ahmad was that "perfect one." He was favoured by the Kajar Shahs and had a considerable following. His successor, Haji Kazim of Resht, near the time of his death, announced to his disciples at Kerbela that the Manifestation was at hand. One of his disciples was Mirza Ali Mohammed of Shiraz. When twenty-four years of age in 1844, he laid claim to be the "promised one." He took the title of "Bab," the Gate or Door of communication of the knowledge of God. His followers were called Babis. He soon advanced his station and claimed to be the Kaim or Mahdi. Still advancing he took the title of Nukta or Point of Divine Unity and announced his "Revelation" or "Bayan" as the abrogation of Islam and the Koran. From Shiraz he went to Mecca and proclaimed his manifestation. On his return he was imprisoned. Many of the Sheikhis became his zealous followers and by their active propaganda caused great agitation throughout Persia. The Bab was transferred to the extreme northwest of Persia and confined in prison at Maku and Chirik. His sectaries, oppressed and persecuted, rose in arms against Mohammed Shah, anticipating victory through divine interposition. The Bab was executed at Tabriz in 1850. The insurrections were put down and many of the brave captives were treacherously slaughtered. A few Babis, seeking revenge, attempted to assassinate the new Shah, Nasr-ud-Din. This led to cruel reprisals. Four score Babis were executed at Teheran. Others fled into exile, especially to Bagdad. Among these was Mirza Yahya whom the Bab had appointed his successor. His title was Subh-i-Azal, the Dawn of the Eternal, or His Holiness the Eternal. A special point of the Bab's teaching was the announcement of the coming of "Him whom God should manifest." **After his death a number of the Babis claimed to be the promised incarnation. There was a "chaos of divine manifestations," including Hazret Zahib, Janab-i-Azim, Nabil and others. Among these claimants was Mirza Husain Ali, a son of Mirza Abbas, surnamed Buzurk, and his concubine.** The father was steward or "vizier" of the household of Imam Verdi Mirza, Governor of Teheran. He was half brother to Mirza Yahya and thirteen years his senior. His title was Baha ullah, the splendour or glory of God. For many years Baha acted in Bagdad (1852-67) as factotum for Azal, and acknowledged him as supreme. Then he announced that he himself was "He whom God should manifest," and took active measures to supplant Azal. About this time the Turkish Government transferred them to Adrianople. Here developed bitter jealousies, quarrels and foul play. The Sultan intervened and sent Subh-i-Azal to Famagusta, Cyprus, and Baha Ullah to Acca (Acre), Syria, August 1868. Both were granted pensions and kept under police surveillance as parties dangerous to religion and the state. Azal continued to be the head of the Babis, called henceforth also Azalis. Baha attracted most of the Babis to himself, and they became known as Bahais. Baha relegated the Bab to the position of a forerunner, and declared the "Bayan" and other books of the Bab to be superseded by his own "Revelations." He changed in a measure the doctrines and laws of Babism, liberalizing its provisions. He put himself forward as the Lord of a new dispensation, the founder of a new religion. During the next quarter of a century Bahaism made little stir in Persia. Its advancement was by no means as rapid as during the earlier years of the Bab. The zeal and devotion of the followers sensibly slackened. Tagiya (dissimulation regarding one's religion) was allowed and practiced. The fierce warriors turned to professing the doctrines of expediency, condemning as unwise zealots the fighting Babis of the previous generation. During these years they escaped bloody persecutions except in rare instances. They tried to make their peace with the Shah, constantly emphasizing their loyalty, expurgating their books to suppress condemnation of the dynasty, and inducing the Sadr-Azam, the Prime Minister of Nasr-i-Din Shah, to tolerate and befriend them. In Acca, too, Baha soon acquired considerable freedom, built a palace, called Bahja, in a delightful garden and freely received the pilgrims. He sent out many tablets, composed his Books of Revelation and had them published in Bombay. He died at Acca in May, 1892, in his seventy-fifth year. His temple tomb is near the Bahji. Baha's haram consisted of two wives and a concubine. After his death, the sons of the different wives quarrelled regarding the succession. Abbas Effendi, the only son of the oldest wife, proclaimed himself the successor, the Interpreter, the Centre of the Covenant, the Source of Authority. **Mohammed Ali and his brothers strenuously opposed Abbas and intense animosity was engendered which divided the followers in Acca and Persia. Abbas drew the greater number with him. He assumed the title of Abdul Baha (Servant of Baha). He has the ambition to make the faith a world religion and has inaugurated a propaganda in the West.** After the proclamation of constitutional liberty in Turkey, he resided in Egypt. Later he made several journeys to Europe and one to North America. His visit to the Occident brought him into the lime-light. He was given good opportunity to present his cause. The addresses of this "Infallible Interpreter" of the cult did not reveal clearly the real doctrines and aim of the movement. Abdul Baha confined himself mainly to the utterance of popular platitudes such as are stock-in-trade for a multitude of social and religious reformers, and most of which are original and accepted principles and precepts of Christianity. The real claims of Bahaism are set forth in the Books and Tablets (Epistles) of Baha Ullah and Abdul Baha, and in a considerable literature by Persian and American Bahais. Abdul Baha is an intelligent, well informed man, of fair sagacity. He was educated at home after the custom of Persia. He says of himself, "I have studied Arabic profoundly and know the Arabic better than the Arabians themselves. I have studied the Persian and Turkish in my native land, besides other languages of the East. But when I visit the West I need an interpreter." He said to Doctor Jessup, "Yes, I know your Beirut Press and your books." His references to ancient and modern philosophers, to historical events and to European writers, quoting from the same, show some familiarity with literature. He repudiates the claims of some of his disciples that he has no literary culture, as that of Abul Fazl or of M. A. Lucas who says: "He has had no access to books, yet his knowledge is unbounded." On this point Professor Cheyne remarks: "His public addresses prove that through this and that channel he has imbibed something of humanistic and even scientific culture. He must have had some one to guide him in the tracks of modern inquiry. I venture to hope that his expounding may not, in the future, extend to philosophic, philological, scientific, and exegetical details. Abdul Baha may fall into error on secular problems, among which it is

obvious to include Biblical and Koranic exegesis.” “I am bound to say that Baha Ullah has made mistakes and the almost equally venerated Abdul Baha has made many slips.” A word should be said about the number of Bahais. I have many data on this point, but can here give only a summary. Regarding their numbers, the Bahais have indulged in gross exaggeration. “Millions” is the usual figure used by American Bahais. Thus Phelps speaks of “the millions of Bahais in Persia.” MacNutt, in “Unity through Love,” declares that “His followers number millions from all the religious systems of the world.” Kheiralla says: “Abdul Karim, 1896, assured me that the believers in Baha were fifty millions. I wrote to Syria to ask. Sayid Mohammed, secretary of Abbas Effendi, said that the number was fifty-five million souls.” Kheiralla afterwards denounces it as a gross deceit. As to Persia, they place the proportion at one-third or one-half. Dreyfus writes,¹² “Probably half the population of Persia is Bahai.” Some judicious non-Bahai writers allow them half a million or less in Persia on a basis of ten millions of population. American missionaries, as Jordan at Teheran, Frame at Resht and Shedd at Urumia, calculate that the number in Persia does not exceed 100,000 to 200,000. After careful inquiry I agree with this estimate.

As to other races and countries, let us see. Abul Fazl claims¹³ that “Jews, Zoroastrians, and Nusaireyah by thousands” are Bahais. M. Haidar Ali says: “The majority of Zoroastrians are recognized as Bahais in all sincerity.” On the contrary Professor Browne writes: “I had been informed that Zoroastrians were accepting Bahaism. However after much intercourse with the Zoroastrians of Yezd and Kerman for the space of three and a half months, I came to the conclusion that few, if any, had adopted the Bahai creed.” In India the proportion of Parsee-Bahais is very small. As to Jews:—Remey says: “In Hamadan there is a large Israelitish following of Baha.” A census made by a European Jew showed exactly 59 parents and with their children 194 persons out of a population of 6,000 Jews. As to the United States, I give some particulars in the closing chapter. The census of 1906 reported 1,280 Bahais, which may have increased to two or three thousand.

In the Turkish empire they are few, for Sunni Moslems are utterly indifferent to Bahaism. The Egyptian Gazette says of Egypt where Abdul Baha resided for two years, “The new religion has made little perceptible progress; Islam remained indifferent, and the Christian community was ignorant of his presence.” Of Syria, Mr. Phelps wrote: “All the Bahais in Acca are Persians. No other nationalities are among them.” The inference is plain that no native of Acca had become Bahai through forty years of contact with Baha and his seventy followers. Bahais outside of Persia are probably all told not more than 15,000 and one-third of these are Persians in Russia. Abdul Baha gave the impression that many of the Christians of Persia are converts to Baha. Dr. J. H. Shedd wrote, 1894, “I have heard of no case of a Christian conversion to Bahaism.” Dr. G. W. Holmes wrote, 1903, “I do not know of a single Christian in Persia, who has been converted to Bahaism. Some Bahais who made a profession of Christianity turned back to Baha.” Rev. J. W. Hawkes declares that in his observation none of the members of the Syrian (Nestorian) or Armenian churches in Persia have become Bahais. I have known of one Armenian family in Resht and two men in Maraga, one of whom was a notorious ne’er-do-well, who kept up his opium using as before.

The divorce law of Baha'i Faith

The regulation of divorce is another matter that vitally affects the relation of man and woman. The divorce law of Baha, as prescribed in the "Kitab-ul-Akdas," is a loose one.

I again quote from Professor Browne's translation.³⁵⁶ It will be noticed that the conditions of the law are set forth from the standpoint of the man. "If quarrels arise between a man and his wife, he may put her away. He may not give her absolute divorce at once, but must wait a year that perhaps he may become reconciled to her. At the end of this period, if he still wishes to put her away, he is at liberty to do so. Even after this he[166] may take her back at the end of any month so long as she has not become the wife of another man." "The practice of requiring a divorced woman to cohabit with another man before her former husband can take her back is prohibited." (This abolishes one of the vile laws of Mohammedanism.)

"If a man is travelling with his wife and they quarrel, he must give her a sufficient sum of money to take her back to the place they started from and send her with a trustworthy escort." From these quotations it is evident that the wife is dependent on the good pleasure and whim³⁵⁷ of the man. He may put away; he may take back. The law says nothing of her right to divorce him. It does not appear that she has the right to divorce her husband even in case he is guilty of adultery.

The penalty for adultery is slight. A fine of nineteen miscals of gold, equal to fifty to sixty dollars, is imposed for the first offense and this is doubled for the second offense. The fines are to be paid to the "House of Justice."

According to the "Bayan" of the Bab the husband must pay the divorced wife a dowry of ninety-five miscals of gold (\$300) if they are city folks, and ninety-five miscals of silver (\$10) if they are villagers. These are paltry sums even on the basis of Persian poverty. I may say, in passing, that the Laws of Inheritance give to the father a greater portion than to a mother, to a brother greater[167] than to a sister, and gives the family residence to a male heir.

Freedom from the marriage bond is made easy by desertion. "Married men who travel must fix a definite time for their return and endeavour to return at that time. If their wives have no news from them for nine months, after the fixed period, they can go to another husband. But if they are patient it is better, since God loves those who are patient."

How the husband who is away from his wife can act, we may judge by the example of a celebrated Bahai,³⁵⁸ Maskin Kalam, who was agent for Baha to watch over and spy upon Azal and the Azalis in Cyprus. His wife was in Persia; he simply took another in Cyprus.

The ease with which desertion may be practiced under Bahai law is seen in the conduct of Doctor Kheiralla, one of the first apostles of Bahaism to America, and founder of the Chicago Assembly. Dr. H. H. Jessup wrote: "A cousin of Doctor Kheiralla, who is clerk in the American Press in Beirut, gave me the following statement: 'Doctor Kheiralla, after the death of his first wife in Egypt, in 1882, married first a Coptic widow in El Fayum, whom he abandoned, and then married a Greek girl, whom he also abandoned, and who was still living in 1897 in Cairo. He then married an English wife, who abandoned him when his matrimonial relations became known to her.'" ³⁵⁹

According to the claims of Bahais these loose and imperfect divorce and marriage laws are to be accepted and administered universally under the future kingdom of Baha in its world-wide triumph!

It may be remarked in passing that Bahaism encourages the mixture of races by marriage. Already several American Bahais have married Persian women, and Persian men American women. One American Bahai woman has married a Japanese.

Abdul Baha illustrates the relation of the races by a reference to animals. "Consider the kingdom of the animals. A pigeon of white plumage would not shun one of black or brown." In a tablet sent to America, he directs: "Gather together these two races, black and white, into one assembly and put such love into their hearts that they shall even intermarry."³⁶⁰

Again he says:³⁶¹ "The coloured people must attend all the unity meetings. There must be no distinctions. All are equal. If you have any influence to get the races to intermarry, it will be very valuable. Such unions will beget very strong and beautiful children." Mr. Gregory, an American negro, followed this advice by marrying an English woman, Miss L. A. M. Mathew

References:

356 Jour. Roy. As. Soc., 1892.

357 "The wife is still in a helpless state; her fate remains entirely in the power of her husband's caprice" (Vatralsky in Amer. Jour. of Theology, 1902, p. 72).

358 "Trav.'s Narr.," pp. 378-379.

359 Outlook, of New York, quoted in The Missionary Review, October, 1901, p. 773.

360 "A Heavenly Vista," by L. G. Gregory, p. 31.

The Quarrel over the succession in Baha'i Religion

Baha Ullah died at Acca in May, 1892, in his seventy-fifth year. The death of the father was the signal for a bitter quarrel among his sons.

The occasion was the succession to the leadership. The cause, no doubt, lay partly in that jealousy which results from a polygamous household. This polygamy was the occasion of misfortune even at the time, for the Persian consul at Bagdad, named Mirza Buzurk Khan Kasvini, had desired to wed one of the women and vented his disappointment on the Bahai community by making accusation against them before the Persian and Turkish Governments. Baha Ullah had twelve children.

The four sons who grew to manhood received "great swelling" titles. Abbas was entitled "The Greatest (Azam) Branch of God" and regarded as the "return" of Jesus; Mohammed Ali, "The Mightiest (Akbar) Branch of God" and the "return" of Mohammed; Ziah Ullah, "The Purest Branch and as Abraham" (died 1898); Badi Ullah, "The Most Luminous Branch and as Moses."

Abbas Effendi was the son of Aseyeh.

The other three were sons of Ayesha or Madh Ulya. Abbas Effendi claimed the succession, basing his right and title on the Will of Baha, called the Kitab-il-Ahd and on previous declarations. His right was disputed by the other brothers.

I have a manuscript by a lifelong Bahai which gives the following account: "Nine days after the 'ascension' of Baha, Abbas Effendi desired nine of the chief men to come to the house of Mohammed Ali Effendi. He opened the will. It was in Baha's own handwriting and two pages long. The nine men saw it. On the second page, over a part of the writing, Abbas had put a blue paper that it might not be read, and he refused to have it read. On the same day, the whole congregation (men) gathered to the palace of Baha. Mirza Majd-i-Din (Abbas' sister's son) rose and read the will up to the blue paper. Later the women were called to the Kasr Bahja and the will was again read, but the concealed portion was not made known.

It was evident that it was for his own selfish purposes that Abbas concealed it, because the future authority did not pertain to him.

From Persia and India many wrote, saying: 'Show the last portion; it is the writing of His Holiness.' He refused. To this day it is concealed."

Abbas assumed authority as the Supreme Ruler of the new dispensation, the Centre of the Covenant, and the Infallible Interpreter of its teachings.

His claim is clearly set forth in a Tablet wherein, speaking in the third person, he declares: "All Bahais must obey the Centre of the Covenant and must not deviate one hair's breadth from obedience to Him." "He should be looked upon as authority by all." "Obedience and submission must be shown Him and the face turned to Him completely." He was given such titles as "His Holiness the Master," "Our Lord," "The Centre of the Cause of God," "Dawning Place of the Divine Light," "Dayspring of the Light of the Covenant." Indeed his first Apostles to Persia bore the message, "I am the Manifestation of God. My paps are full of the milk of Godhead. Whosoever will, let him come and suck freely." His claims to headship were strenuously opposed by his brothers and some of the nearest disciples.

A bitter quarrel began as a consequence and has raged to the present time. Letters were sent by each party to the Persian Bahais, involving them in the quarrel.

Mohammed Ali composed a book, called the "Ityan-i-Dallil," presenting proofs of the invalidity of Abbas' claims, from the writings of Baha.

They charge Abbas with concealing and annulling Baha's will, perverting his teachings, changing the writings of Baha, publishing expurgated and interpolated editions of them, and attempting to suppress the authorized Bombay editions. Specifically they accuse him of publishing a Lawh-i-Beirut, a Tablet in which Abbas is greatly exalted, and attributing it to Baha, though it is spurious; that he has inserted verses into letters written in the hand of Baha's amanuensis and published them as genuine; has omitted verses from the "Tablet of Command"; made up the "Treasure Tablet" from parts of several others; appropriated to himself Tablets pertaining to Mirza Mohammed Ali; and commanded to destroy all Tablets of Baha which have not his (Abbas') seal upon them. Per contra the party of Abbas accused his brothers of intemperance and profligacy and of heresy, covenant-breaking and fraud. Mr. Hadad reported M Mohammed Ali and Badi Ullah as "being profligate and wanton, frequenting wine shops and being spendthrifts."

Mr. Getsinger said he had seen Badi Ullah in the street intoxicated and being helped home by two servants, that he and his brother had taken and pawned the effects of Baha, rugs, hand-bags, etc., and a pearl rosary belonging to Baha which was valued at \$10,000 (!) and had squandered the money."

Abbas said to Mrs. Grundy, "Mohammed Ali has appropriated many papers and tablets written by the Blessed Perfection (Baha). It is possible for these writings to be altered, as the meanings in Persian are greatly changed by a single dot here and there. Before His Ascension, the Blessed Perfection said to me, 'I have given you all the papers.' He put them in two satchels and sent them to me. After His Ascension, Mohammed Ali said, 'You had better give me the two satchels to take care of.' He took them away and never returned them."

He said that Mohammed Ali deceives, "for the Will was also written by Mohammed Ali's own hand from dictation of the Blessed Perfection. By violating the Covenant (Will) he has become a fallen branch. All the beautiful blossoms upon the Tree of Life were destroyed by Mohammed Ali."

Abbas proceeded to the use of boycott and anathema. He ordered that no one of the Acca community should send any letters anywhere without first showing them to him, and commanded the Bahais in Persia not to receive any letters that were not sealed by him, but to send them back to him, and that in writing to Acca they should send their letters open.

These restrictions on freedom gave great offense. Abbas also prohibited his followers from associating with his brothers and their followers, strictly ordering them “not to sit, meet, speak or correspond with them, not even to trade or associate with them in any profession.”

Khadim reports that “once in his own house, Abbas rose up and furiously attacked” his stepmother, who, in return, reviled him and fled from the house, wailing. “At the sacred tomb he used cruelly to treat the brothers and sisters.”

“On one occasion he repeatedly struck his youngest (half) sister in the presence of her little ones and many believers,” scolding her “with a loud voice, uttering many harsh words.” On another occasion he “insulted and beat Khadim (Mirza Aga Jan, Baha’s amanuensis) at the sacred place” and afterwards “ordered his followers to imprison and cruelly beat him, which they did.”

He sent adrift Abdul Gaffar Ispahani, called Abdullah, one of the first believers on Baha, in such destitute condition that he died of hunger and was buried in a potter’s field at Damascus. “Alas! Alas!” exclaims Mirza Aga Jan, “Abbas Effendi has caused his followers to display such vehemence of hatred and rancour, the like of which has never been shown by barbarous nations, and even by the most ignorant tribes.” Of Abbas, Mrs. Templeton writes: “His pride, alas, is great. ... He seems to be blinded. ... With regard to business matters Abbas Effendi has not been just to his brothers, who have suffered a good deal in consequence.”

Abbas Effendi cut off the living of his stepmothers, brothers and their dependents.

Baha Ullah and his household had a stipend from the Turkish Government, as Azal and the Babis in Cyprus had, and it was not an ungenerous allowance. **“The family had an income from the Government, as well as a revenue from three villages.”**

“These funds Abbas Effendi appropriated and with these made his charitable gifts (?) leaving the forty dependents of the younger brothers to live as best they could.” This excluding the protesters from their share of the income and offerings embittered the strife, at the same time weakening their ability to propagate their contention. Bitterness and enmity increased; recriminations and accusations inflamed the passions of both sides. Mirza Abul Fazl, the philosopher of the movement, gives, as a partisan of Abbas Effendi, an account of these times in his “Bahai Proofs.”

He describes the “ruinous discords and divisions,” “the world-consuming flame of jealousy and hatred of the people of error,” “the hard hearts of the men of hostility,” “the animosity and groundless pride,” “the senseless hatred, degradation and shame of the violators of the covenant.” He gives the opprobrious title of Nakhazeen to Mohammed Ali’s party.

He continues, “The evil intrigues, calumnies, false pamphlets and accusations, evil tongues and cursings of the Nakhazeen divided the community and filled it with foul odours.” Several outside parties tried to act as mediators and bring about a reconciliation. Among these were the British Consul at Haifa and Mrs. Templeton. The younger brothers agreed to the terms. Abbas Effendi was formally requested to show the Will before impartial witnesses and all were to abide by its word. “This he resolutely refused to do and he must stand condemned for this before all impartial men.”

After the failure of these efforts at reconciliation, the anger and bitterness waxed hotter. To quote Abul Fazl again: “The Nakhazeen cursed and insulted the visitors to the tomb of the Blessed Perfection,” so that there was danger of its desecration. “Consequently Abbas Effendi asked the local (Turkish) Government to supply a guard to accompany and protect” his party. Abbas also went to Tiberias and made complaint to the Government there.

As a result of all these conditions, “The people of hostility and violation,” says Abul Fazl, “availed themselves of political machinations,” in other words, Mohammed Ali’s party, “those dwellers in hellfire,” appealed to the “fanatical men of those lands,” i.e., those same Turkish Authorities. Mohammed Ali formally complained to the Governor of Damascus, Nazim Pasha, sending Mirza Majd-ud-Din as his special messenger.

They accused Abbas of retaining their stipends, of confiscating their patrimony, including the father’s gold watch which had been donated to Mohammed Ali. Above all, according to the interesting narrative of Abbas’ sister, Bahiah Khanum, they made accusation that the shrine which was being erected on Mount Carmel “was intended as a fort, in which Abbas and his followers would intrench themselves, defy the Government, and endeavour to gain possession of this part of Syria.”

To use the words of Abbas, they said that “he had hoisted the banner of independence; upon that he had inscribed ‘Ya Baha-ul Abha’: that he had summoned all to assemble that he might found a new monarchy.” Therefore “an inquisitorial body (a Commission) was appointed by the Government.

To them the copartners of my brothers confirmed them (the reports) and added to them.” After the report of the Commission and in consequence of these charges and counter-charges of the “Greatest Branch of God” and the “ Mightiest Branch of God,” a telegram was received from the Sultan to the Governor “issuing a firman, decreeing the original order, by which Baha’s family were confined within the walls of Acca.”

After nine years of quarrelling (nine being the sacred number of Bahais) this order was put in force, 1901 A.D. They were still confined to Acca in 1906 when I visited Haifa. I saw the shrine and the fine residence of Baha at Haifa, just beside the English Mission. It deserves to be emphasized that the cause of the Bahai leaders being restricted to Acca was not religious persecution by Moslems but their own quarrellings.

Samuel Graham Wilson

For more detail refer: [Bahaism and its Claim](#) by Samuel Wilson

Baha'i rift: Baha'is upset with Orthodox Baha'i Faith

Mainstream group doesn't want the name Baha'i by any other group May 18, 2009

|By Manya A. Brachear, Tribune reporter

Every religion has been riven by struggles over authority and authenticity.

Buddhism began when a maverick Hindu prince inspired disciples to embrace asceticism. Judaism has sprouted branches from ultra-orthodox to ultra-liberal, even Jews for Jesus. Christianity went through numerous profound splits, including the Protestant Reformation sparked in the 16th Century by Martin Luther in Germany and the 19th Century Mormon movement led by Joseph Smith in the U.S.

Now the Baha'i Faith, the organization representing the most recent sect to spring from Islam, is struggling to defend its identity in federal court in Chicago, where North American Baha'is have been based ever since believers came to the U.S. about 90 years ago. They contend that a tiny band of believers known as the Orthodox Baha'i Faith can't call themselves Baha'i or use one of its key symbols without violating trademark law or a previous court ruling more than 40 years ago.

In the hands of the federal 7th Circuit Court of Appeals, the case could set a precedent for settling religious schisms, doctrinal disputes and claims to truth.

"The word Baha'i carries with it implications for a certain sets of beliefs — and we have to protect that," said Robert Stockman, a practicing Baha'i and religious studies instructor at DePaul University.

Adherents of the Orthodox Baha'i Faith believe the international community has strayed from the religion's original teachings. That deviation, they say, threatens to interfere with God's plan for the world.

Baha'u'llah, who founded the faith in Iran in the mid-19th Century, is regarded by Baha'is as the most recent messenger of God in a long line including Abraham, Buddha, Krishna, Jesus and Muhammad. Baha'is believe Baha'u'llah revealed God's plan by which humanity one day would unite to become a single race.

On a Web site called www.truebahai.com, the orthodox group faults the mainstream denomination for corrupting that plan.

The mainstream Baha'is have responded with a lawsuit that tries to bar the orthodox from calling themselves Baha'i and sharing the "The Greatest Name," a sacred and trademarked symbol. Baha'is believe they are not only safeguarding their identity. They are defending the truth with a capital T.

The Orthodox say that is not a matter for the courts to decide.

"We're the true faith. That's what we would say," said Jeffrey Goldberg, a member of the Orthodox Baha'i Faith who left Chicago to be closer to an Orthodox community in New Mexico. "That has to be decided in the hearts and minds of the Baha'i, not by a secular court order."

The Baha'is first took breakaway believers to court in 1966 after a tumultuous time for their community. Nine years earlier, Shoghi Effendi, guardian of the faith and direct descendant of the founding prophet, had died unexpectedly and allegedly without naming a successor.

Leaders decided a Universal House of Justice envisioned by Effendi would oversee the faith. But shortly after the leaders announced their solution, one of them declared that Effendi actually had intended for him to serve as the next guardian.

Charles Mason Remey, then in his 90s, said Effendi had addressed him in letters as his son or spiritual descendant.

The National Assembly of France and about 100 others followed Remey. But the rest of the Baha'i community declared Remey a covenant breaker, expelled him from the faith and successfully sued his followers, barring them from calling themselves Baha'i and using the sacred symbol. Remey's group disbanded, but orthodox believers reorganized and continued to maintain the guardianship.

Thirty years later, Goldberg, an active Baha'i in Barrington, came upon the splinter group while surfing the Internet. He became convinced that he had been duped.

With no explanation, Goldberg quietly resigned from the community because he knew the consequences. When Bahai's are declared covenant breakers, they are shunned or ostracized with the exception of business relations.

But Janice Franco wouldn't let Goldberg go that easily. She insisted on knowing why he left and, when he told her, went on a quest to prove him wrong. After plunging herself into Baha'i literature, Franco discovered Goldberg might have a point.

Indeed, both Goldberg and Franco were declared covenant breakers and shunned. Goldberg's wife was encouraged to divorce her husband. Franco's home-schooled children lost a number of friends. To this day, they are wary of organized religion.

"It was devastating news to find out the larger group had strayed," Franco said. "I want to follow the truth. I don't want to support a mistake. The consequence is I don't have a community."

Then in 2006, the mainstream Baha'is filed a lawsuit, accusing the orthodox believers of violating the court order issued 40 years earlier.

The Orthodox Baha'is insist they aren't the same group. They also say a religious denomination can't trademark truth. The term Baha'i refers to a follower of Baha'u'llah. That applies to him and other Orthodox Baha'i, he said.

"From our point of view, if you believe in Christ you can use the word Christ in your name," Goldberg said. "It's a little bit like asking you to recant your faith. It's unacceptable to us."

But Stockman said it is the religion's responsibility to protect the Baha'i name.

"Baha'is are told again and again to try to exercise discipline on what they say about their faith and don't confuse the public. ... We have our own community to build," he said.

There are 5 million Baha'is in the world — 150,000 in the U.S., including 2,000 in the Chicago area. Why the mainstream denomination waited four decades to enforce the court ruling is a mystery. Baha'i leaders declined interview requests.

Barring the Orthodox believers from using the name "Baha'i" prevents them from popping up in Google when users type in that term.

Stockman said the Web is a tricky place to have conversations about spiritual truth.

"It's not our desire to convert people. It's our desire to put our material out there for people to know what the truth is and decide themselves."

http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2009-05-18/news/0905170216_1_ortho...

Factions and Fractures in the Baha'i Religion

While I find the claim of Mason Remey to be weak and poorly supported, it does highlight the weaknesses of the mainstream Baha'is' claim to administrative authority by the UHJ.

For one, the concept of Guardianship was not a minor point in the Baha'i religion prior to the death of Shoghi Effendi. Indeed, it was no less important to Baha'is than the patriarchies of the Orthodox Christian and Roman Catholic religions.

I would go so far as to say that it is more important, since the Guardianship was far more emphasized in Baha'i writings than was the papacy or patriarchies.

.... the administration of the church was far less—far less emphasized in the Bible than was the case of the Guardianship among Baha'is. Given this critical emphasis upon the Guardianship, its abandonment clearly undermines the claims of the Baha'i religion to divine inspiration.

This is especially true since the transmission of Guardian authority would have been such an easy matter to arrange. At the least, Shoghi could have put in writing (in multiple copies for security) the name of his successor, and if he wished to keep the matter a secret until the right moment, could have sealed the appointment and deposited it for safekeeping in any of a number of secure repositories.

He didn't.

Why? That's a huge inconsistency, just absolutely huge.

In order for majority-faction Baha'is to explain this, they have to abandon large chunks of the basic foundations of their religion. For example, they could no longer claim superiority of writings. Their writings (scripture) could no longer be regarded as definitive compared to translated copies of the Bible, for example. Everything suddenly had to be "interpreted."

Publications had to be subject to censorship. The Guardianship had to be de-emphasized, indeed, scuttled, as if it had never really been important (when in fact it had been crucial). Suddenly, with the passing of Shoghi Effendi, the claims of divine revelation had been revealed to be the works not of God, but of man.

The point I made was to contrast the stated crucial importance of the guardianship during Shoghi's life, and afterward. While he was alive, there was enormous emphasis on a continuing, inherited or appointed, guardianship. But upon Shoghi's death, with no heir apparent, all that crucial importance became discarded as if it had never been written about. This is an enormous discrepancy, and I have never seen a reasonable reconciliation of the two teachings on the guardianship.

Bob

Baha'is One World Government

The Baha'i Faith envisions a one-world government, complete with a universal language, worldwide currency, and a unified religion.

The problem with this is that prophecy foretells two consecutive world governments. The second one will be ruled by Jesus. But the first one will be ruled by Satan, and its consequence will be, for a time, a hell-on-earth torment.

However, at first it will not seem that way. At first, it will seem that a utopian society has been established. Peace will reign, prosperity will abound, and all the major problems that beset the world today will seem to have been resolved.

Only a very few will warn that this is a disguise, an outwardly mighty oak, but full of inner rot. After a brief period, that inner rot will cause the entire house of cards to collapse. And then the wrath of Satan will descend on all the world.

The trap into which Baha'is are falling is a deadly one. The trend toward a world government is already very clear, and many Baha'is see this trend as a fulfillment of their religious beliefs. They celebrate the coming to fruition of all the foretellings and guidance of their prophet.

Worse yet, Baha'is may be instrumental in bringing about this one-world government. Even though Baha'is are supposed to remain aloof from secular politics, they are not. They are actively promoting, under various guises, the authority of the United Nations, which itself has no real authority to command any nation, but is only a gathering place where nations can sort out problems among themselves.

In this way, Baha'is are themselves becoming part of the problem.

In the United States, government is not predicated on the divine right to rule, which underlay the tradition of European monarchies. The US model is that the rulers are the people.

The Euro model is that if the people obey the government, the king will take care of the needs of the people.

The American model is that if the government obeys the people, the people will take care of their own needs, and will restrain the government to the confines of its limited and enumerated duties.

Sadly, the Euro model has infiltrated North America, and has savagely undermined the practice of the Constitution, until legislators feel free to pass into law, bills which they have not so much as even read.

So yes, the socialist model is in full ascendancy, and will eventually place everyone under its heel. For a time, this will seem to have been the best course—at least according to people who trade freedom for free things.

But eventually, the velvet glove will come off, and the iron fist will prevail until Jesus Himself defeats it.

Guardian Problem in Bahai Faith

To summarize the Guardian problem:

1. The station of Guardian was decreed by the Last Will and Testament of Abdul Baha, a document which some have alleged to be a forgery.
2. If the LW&T is not a forgery, then the Guardian's failure to obey his self-described duties are contrary to what a divinely appointed authority would be expected to do.
3. These self-described duties include the critical task of appointing a successor guardian, who would take over after the death or incapacitation of the preceding guardian. The successor was to have been appointed in a manner that would leave no room for doubt as to the validity of the successor's appointment.
4. There is no credible evidence that any successor guardian was ever appointed in such an unambiguous manner, although there were claimants.
5. No provision had ever been made concerning the contingency of a guardian dying without having appointed a successor. Indeed, such a possibility had never even been mentioned by Shoghi. That is why his death intestate led to the crisis it did.
6. The combination of these facts decisively refutes the notion that the Guardianship was ever a divine institution. It also demonstrates that Shoghi himself never believed that it was. He never made any attempt, neither to ensure a clear line of succession, nor to anticipate the lack of a succession.
7. Upon Shoghi's unexpected death, the Hands of the Cause took it upon themselves to resolve the matter by declaring that henceforth, the Baha'i Faith would have no living guardian. But they had no authority to make that declaration.
8. Shoghi's death created an unresolvable discrepancy, a contradiction, that pits the alleged divine authorship of the station against the physical facts. One cannot have it both ways. For the station to be of divine authorship, there must be a succession of guardians, or absent that, some provision to account for a lack of succession.
9. While the Hands made the best they could of a bad situation, their best was not enough. Nor could it be. It should become apparent that such an irregularity could not be explained in terms of a divinely appointed station. Shoghi Effendi had been inexcusably, and inexplicably, derelict in his duties, duties which he himself had repeatedly affirmed in the most emphatic manner.
10. Claimants to the succession of guardianship make such a weak and flimsy case for their divine authority that their claims make no improvement regarding the failure of Shoghi Effendi to be clear and unambiguous in the appointment of a successor.
11. Attempts by the UHJ to uphold the actions of the Hands are equally flimsy and unjustifiable. Even their most contorted explanations do not suffice to resolve the contradictions.
12. In all likelihood, the LW&T was a forgery by those who sought power in what they thought would become a powerful world religion. Even if it was not a forgery, it certainly had no divine authorship, as demonstrated by its abject failure to bear the fruit which it had promised.

Baha'i Faith is Hypocrisy Personified

The Baha'i faith as it stands today faces a challenge of becoming irrelevant to the sayings of Baha'u'llah and Abdul Baha. Having failed to attract converts and not getting acceptance from the world society, the Baha'i Faith today is trying to serve itself as a religion in terms of writing OPEN LETTERS (as against Holy writings!!) that have no bearing whatsoever on the targeted people.

Very recently we heard about a petition made by 31 Imminent Indians to the Government of Iran, on another occasion we heard that Baha'is wrote an irrelevant letter to the people of Egypt.

There was again an 'Open letter' in the Wall Street Journal republished Dr. Kishan Manocha, Director of the Office of External Affairs of the Bahá'í community of the UK. The document, dated 7th December and addressed to Ayatollah Mohammad Sadeq Larijani, stating the injustices meted out to Iranian Baha'is. Many more open letters must be in the pipe line.

These open letters afford Baha'is opportunity to be in touch with Media, non-governmental organizations, various government officials and prominent individuals.

Although The Guardian of the Baha'i Faith has forbidden Baha'is to take part in any such campaign, which is political in character, the present Baha'is have resorted to this as a last measure. Extract of the Guardians advice is indicated below:

"The Baháís should refrain from signing petitions designed to bring pressure on the Government which may have any political character whatsoever. There are so many other people who can carry on progressive types of activity, but only the Baháís can do the work of Baháulláh"... (Shoghi Effendi, dated March 19, 1946, in The Unfolding Destiny of the British Baháí Community, p. 44)

The Baha'is know it very well that these reactions will harm the Baha'is in Iran but the fact is that the UHJ wants MARTYRS IN IRAN so th they can shout BLOOD, BLOOD, BLOOD, Money, Money, Money.

The Baha'is of World have done nothing to help their fellow Baha'is inside or outside of the Iran. They have been content to benefit economically and extract cheap propaganda for themselves. The Baha'is are an inward-looking community which can sacrifice its own people for monetary gains.

We see so much injustice and oppression prevailing in the world, and thousands are dying, but the only thing that comes to the mind of Baha'is is perceived threat, violence to themselves. No mention is made of the fact that Jews, Christians and Muslims have been threatened or attacked. The Baha'is seem to judge the justice of a regime according to how well it treats the Baha'is. An unjust regime treating the Baha'is well is tolerated or even extolled, while a popular regime which deprives Baha'is of certain freedom (perhaps along with other religious groups) is regarded as evil.

When UHJ was approached to give a statement on 'Iraq invasion' it said that we follow the policy of non-involvement in politics. This 'non involvement' tag on Baha'is are 'get-out passes' from just about everything.

Needless to say, the Baha'is are gradually gaining a reputation for hypocrisy and self-interestedness.

The world of Internet has exposed the Baha'i Community that has a deliberate agenda of using education / educational institutions / educational programmes to promote their activities and their faith.

The Baha'is also have a deliberate policy of targeting prominent people, including teachers and other educationalists – all influential strata of society. Issues of common concerns are used to attract these strata but without making apparent it is the Baha'i Faith propagation that gets priority. Crowds are drawn in the names of these prominent personalities but intentions are different.

Look at how events are twisted to know the true character of the Baha'is. Baha'is were caught teaching Baha'i Faith to the children in IRAN, which is an illegal activity in Iran. Instead of humbly accepting their mistake, the Baha'is said they were teaching the underprivileged children (knowing Baha'i nature this can only be far from truth!!!). Baha'is indulge in such 'social' activities (read 'anti-social') for influencing the children of other community not only related to Iran but in many countries where such activities are not seen appropriate. A question arises in ones mind – is need of education in Baha'i community totally established that they have to educate only other communities?

In Uzbekistan, during a police raid, the Baha'is were caught proselytizing the children as young as 10 years about Baha'i Faith. On being questioned, if they had the consent of the parents, they said, "we were having Tea together and for having a cup of tea neither the consent of parents nor any authority is required". Have you heard ten year olds having tea with matured men? Needless to say the Baha'is were immediately deported out of Uzbekistan.

Refer <http://uzbekbahai.blogspot.com/> for details.

In India they said, "We are creating Promoters of the Community Well being". When the Baha'is were taken to the police station, Baha'i officials said that "we were conducting practicals for these students". They were told that schools were better places for the students to get their practical training. On further questioning, the students confessed that they were going to villages for conduction of Baha'i religious classes for children and youths and they were told by their teachers that their course will be completed only when they do these activities. The teacher had also warned them to be 'TACTFUL' while propagating the Baha'i religion. On seeing the Baha'i books it became clear for the Police that it was a conversion class. As the 'Ruhi Book' that they were having, contained Baha'i religious material and chapters such as

“UNDERSTANDING THE BAHÁ’I WRITINGS.” (Refer <http://panchgani-bahais.blogspot.com/> for details)

In Indonesia the Bahá’ís were arrested and prosecuted under the Law of Child Protection (23-2002) trying to convert children of other faith as young as 9 to 10 years. The Police found that there is very compelling evidence for the crime and violation of law of land. The Indonesian Government requires that Religious groups and social organizations must obtain permits to hold religious concerts or other public events. Permits usually are granted in an unbiased manner; unless there is concern that the activity could anger members of another faith who live in the area. Baha’is had once again violated the code of conduct (refer <http://agamabahai.blogspot.com/> for details)

In 2008 in Yemen four Baha’is, Mr. Zia’u’llah Pourahmari, Mr. Keyvan Qadari, Mr. Behrooz Rohani. and Mr. Sayfi Ibrahim Sayfi, were arrested and deported on charges of “proselytizing” in a manner against Yemeni law.

Reports are also there that the Christian priests have warned the Baha’is, in no uncertain terms, that they should conduct the Ruhi book courses only with Baha’i children and not with non Baha’i children.

With such frustrating experiences the Faith has no option but to gain sympathy from world by writing ‘Open Letters’. The world has now seen the true face of Baha’is and can no longer be deceived. History has never seen such deception ever. The Baha’is should spend rest of the time left for the Faith and reflect on validity of their Faith and the hoax care-takers of the Faith (the Universal House of Justice).

Reality will not be hidden then. In the interest of humanity this is a MUST.

Universal House of Injustice

BAHA'I CONTROL ON THEIR ELECTORAL SYSTEM (IT IS SELECTION NOT ELECTION)

From UHJ to NSA to SBC/RBC down to LSAs all are selections in the name of elections

A- UHJ Elections

1-Every member of the present UHJ is from International Teaching Centre (ITC).It is clear indication that a Baha'i is first appointed on board of counselor, then he is promoted to ITC and finally he is elevated as UHJ member.

2-Mr. Razavi and Correa when promoted to ITC, they were given a world tour (Made a part of the Orchestra) to justify their programmed predetermined election.

3-Mr. Omid Seioshanseian in India and Mr. Jabbar Eidhelkhani in Bangladesh are sending false reports to UHJ with the intention of getting appointed on ITC.

4. India has the highest population of Baha'is of more than 2.2 million, but never even a single Indian has been elected as member of the UHJ. This speaks of the STAGE MANAGED, UHJ election.

5-There are National Spiritual assemblies in almost 200 countries but four members out of nine (45%) on UHJ are Persians.

All with approval of UHJ.

B- Nexus between UHJ and NSA

1-UHJ sees that no undesired member is elected on the NSA. This is done with collaboration of the UHJ member responsible for that country and the continental counselors.

2-Members of NSA also use fraudulent means of getting himself and his group elected every year.

3-When there are so many active local Indian Baha'is and more than half the delegates are Indian then how come the members elected are Persians.

4-Some of those members of the NSA, who are being elected year after year, do not possess an impressive record of services to the Faith.

5-The circle is so vicious and so tightly bound that there doesn't appear to be any way out of it for sincere active Indian Baha'is.

6-A Baha'i delegate purposely made his ballot invalid by writing 10 names but the report of the chief teller said there was no invalid votes.

7-Those members who get elected to the NSA by fraudulent means, also manage to manipulate the election/appointments to the State Baha'i Councils and Regional Baha'i Councils of their States, besides taking improper action on other matters.

8-There is a close nexus between these people. This has been going on.

All with approval of UHJ.

C- Counting process

The counting process of the Baha'i election is Stage managed, because, it is at this stage that the names mentioned in the votes are not read out correctly to the tellers that is why, year after year, the same men manage to get themselves on the National Assembly. Can appropriate handling of Funds be expected from such cheats!

D- Meetings of NSA

1-Whenever one or two 'prominent' members (Persian members) are not able to attend a meeting, the meeting is either cancelled or postponed.

2 Decisions are taken on phone. Although Baha'i administration do not allow for consensus decisions over the phone.

3 Decisions taken in this manner are improper and cannot be acted upon.

4-Mrs. Sorabjee after being removed as counselor tried very desperately to become NSA member despite her advanced age. She use to attend National Conventions and did thorough canvassing for her. With the approval of UHJ (Payman Mohajir) she was declared elected.

5-Certain members like Mr.Anil Sarwal, Dr. Mogbelpur and Dr. Ansari were made to resign to clear the way for Mrs. Sorabjee, Mrs. Farideh Vahedi and Ms. Nazneen Rohani. The love for women is not only the specialty of Dr. Payman but it is of entire Mohajir clan.

6-The undesired member Dr. Ansari was reelected but was again asked to resign after a month to clear the way for Dr. Sohail Mohajir.

7-Days are numbered for Dr. Telli, Mr. Ramsevak and Mr. Ali Merchant.

8. The decision by these women is taken in consultation with Mr. Mohajir and conveyed to the other respected members and they are left with no option but to accept it or else the door is open. Hats off to Mr. Ansari for maintaining his self esteem.

9. When no women member is allowed on the UHJ, then how come on the NSA we have a majority of decisions making by women and the others are made to look like show pieces just to fill in the seats.

All with approval of UHJ

PREPARED BY

FORMER MEMBERS OF NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF INDIA.

WHO REALLY ARE THE BAHÁ'IS?

Many of the concepts and approaches of the Baha'is are admirable human qualities. But there are also some major problems and inconsistencies in the Baha'i Faith.

World control and domination

A wide variety of approaches and activities are used by Baha'is to promote their Cause (religion) and make it more acceptable to the general community – including active involvement in, and initiation of, community programmes on issues such as: peace, unity, the environment.

The Baha'i Community has a deliberate agenda of using education/educational situations/educational programmes to promote their activities and their faith (see books such as: Each One Teach One – A Call to the Individual Believer [e.g. pp.10-11], Baha'i Education, Education – A Baha'i Perspective, The Individual and Teaching – Raising the Divine Call, Teaching the Baha'i Faith).

The Baha'is also have a deliberate policy of targeting prominent people, including teachers and other educationalists – as well as indigenous people (e.g. see chapters 5 & 6 Teaching the Baha'i Faith). They often join with, or collaborate with, other groups when community issues or concerns can be mutually raised or addressed. But Baha'is are reminded of the real purpose of all such ventures: 'In their collaborations with such associations they would extend any moral and material assistance they can afford, after having fulfilled their share of support to those institutions that affect directly the interests of the Cause. They should always bear in mind, however, the dominating purpose of such a collaboration which is to secure in time the recognition by those with whom they are associated of the paramount necessity and the true significance of the Baha'i Revelation in this day' (p.125-126 Baha'i Administration, see also pp. 348-369 [chapter 15] in the 3rd edition, 1996, Local Spiritual Assembly Handbook).

The ultimate goal and hope for all Baha'is is the ushering in of a Golden Age where the world will be unified under the Baha'i Faith and the complete rule of its ultimate authoritative body, the Universal House of Justice. This New World Order, which ALL Baha'is are hoping and praying for, and working towards, 'must in no wise be regarded as purely democratic in character' (The Dispensation of Baha'u'llah p.61).

This coming centralised, autocratic and anti-democratic Baha'i World Government will enact legislation in order to introduce and enforce the obligatory laws of Baha'u'llah (which will include total submission to the 'Will of God' – as interpreted by Baha'u'llah, the 'Guardians' who followed him, and the Universal House of Justice; obligatory daily prayers; keeping special Holy Days; fasting; and more). (ibid. p.61-62)

These Baha'i laws will be introduced world-wide by 'a world executive, backed by an international Force.' A uniform and universal language, monetary system, literature, communication system, religion, science, and more, will be introduced throughout the world. It will be 'a system in which Force is made the servant of Justice' – that is the justice of the Baha'i Universal House of Justice! (e.g. see The World Order of Baha'u'llah pp.201-205).

Local Baha'i Assemblies will become the local representatives for the rule and world government of the Universal House of Justice.

Unequal equality

The Baha'is often refer enthusiastically to their stated belief and practice of the equality of men and women. There is no clergy class, and women, as well as men, are involved in local leadership.

However, the absolute and supreme ruling authority in the Baha'i Faith is the Universal House of Justice, **'membership is confined to men' (9 men and NO women)** – there are clear indications that it is not envisaged for any women to be part of that authoritative body in this era. The statement: 'As women are the educators of the next generation, the education of girls takes precedence over that of boys' must also raise some questions about the much promoted total equality (e.g. see pp.76 & 231 A Basic Baha'i Dictionary).

Lack of Acceptance

Baha'is pride themselves, publicly, for their loving openness and acceptance of everyone, including those of other religious faiths. In theory they can make it sound very good, and very convincing. In reality, they are no different to many other religious groups who are intolerant of those whose religious viewpoints disagree with theirs, and especially of those who dare to leave the Baha'i Faith.

The Baha'is promote and practice 'SHUNNING' – as much as Jehovah's Witnesses, Exclusive Brethren, or similar groups.

The message is that Baha'is are 'to shun entirely all Covenant breakers as they are afflicted with what we might try and define as a contagious spiritual disease...most of them don't want to repent' (p.17, Directives from the Guardian). Those who leave the Baha'i Faith and are considered Covenant Breakers and regarded as a cancer to be cut out of the body.

The much promoted Baha'i concept of Unity is a 'Unity amongst friends' that includes 'the absolute shunning of whomsoever we feel to be an "enemy of the Cause"' (- see p. 16, Baha'i Administration).

Covenant Breakers are those who have been Baha'is but who then dare to contradict or 'attack', especially publicly, any aspects of the Baha'i Faith or any of its leaders, including the Universal House of Justice.

The message is currently reinforced with statements such as: 'Baha'is must shun Covenant-breakers entirely in order to preserve the unity of the Faith.' Such an attitude, behaviour and action is regarded as 'One of the greatest and most fundamental principles of the Cause' (see p.346 in the

3rd edition, 1996, Local Spiritual Assembly Handbook. See also Directives from the Guardian, Will and Testament).

The reading of material by Covenant Breakers (often referred to as Apostates in other cultic groups) is discouraged with warnings such as: 'The friends are warned in the strongest terms against reading such literature because Covenant-breaking is a Spiritual poison and the calumnies and distortions of the truth which the Covenant-breakers give out are such that they can undermine the faith of the believer and plant the seeds of doubt unless he is fore-armed with an unshakeable belief in Baha'u'llah and His Covenant and a knowledge of the true facts' (p.347 in the 3rd edition, 1996, Local Spiritual Assembly Handbook).

FORGOTTEN FACTS & DISUNITY

Like most cultic groups there are some true facts of which the Baha'i leaders would prefer the followers NOT to have any knowledge or awareness. These include some aspects of Baha'i history and the continuing disunity amongst the Baha'is themselves.

Baha'u'llah (Mirza Husayn Ali – who gave himself the title, 'Baha'u'llah' – 'Splendour/Glory of God') was supposedly a close follower of the Bab (the followers were known as the Babis), who later discovered that he was the special manifestation of God referred to by the Bab as 'He-Whom-God-Will-Manifest.' What is rarely acknowledged is that the Bab declared that he was a special manifestation of God and that the next manifestation would not come before 1511 years, but not later than 2001 years, after the Bab, which would disqualify Husayn Ali – Baha'u'llah!

Also omitted from official Baha'i writings are references to the fact that the Bab actually appointed Husayn Ali's younger step-brother, Mirza Yahya Subh-i-Azal, as his official successor. After some years Husayn Ali rejected his younger step-brother's authority and position, claimed a greater one for himself, and gathered followers. Followers of Husayn Ali/Baha'u'llah (Baha'is) killed many of the followers of the official successor to the Bab, the step-brother, Subh-i-Azal (Azalis). And at least one of the brothers tried to poison and kill the other. The Turkish government separated the two warring factions in 1868, with Subh-i-Azal and the Azalis being sent to Cyprus, and Husayn Ali/Baha'u'llah and the Baha'is sent to Akka (Acre) in Turkish ruled Palestine. In Akka Baha'u'llah and his followers did not use his full title, kept much of their Baha'i activity secret and pretended to be Sunni Muslim. They were so successful in this deception that, after their deaths, Sunni Muslim clergy conducted the funerals of both Baha'u'llah and his son and successor, Abbas Effendi.

The Baha'is under the authority of the Universal House of Justice, and the general public, are not informed of another schism that occurred after the First Guardian of the Faith, Shoghi Effendi, died in 1957. For several years affairs were led by a small group known as the Hands of the Cause, and then in April 1963 the Universal House of Justice was established. It has been claimed, by the mainstream Baha'i movement, that there was no appointed successor to the First Guardian of the Faith. However, this is disputed by a group of Baha'is lead by The Mother Baha'i Council of the United States, in Roswell, New Mexico. This group of Baha'is claims that Shoghi Effendi DID appoint a successor, the president of the original Universal House of Justice – which they say Shoghi Effendi proclaimed in embryonic form in 1951. This president, Charles Mason Remey, proclaimed his accession to the Guardianship in 1960. In 1961 he appointed Joel Bray Marangella as his future successor, and in 1966 publicly handed the authority of the Guardianship over to Joel Marangella. The Third Guardian, Joel Bray Marangella, has been living in Western Australia and first notified the Australian public about the existence of the ('True') Orthodox Baha'i Faith in AN OPEN LETTER TO THE HETERODOX BAHAI'S published in the West Australian newspaper in April 1982. Members of the 'Orthodox' Baha'i Faith seem fearfully reluctant to confirm the current (December 1996) whereabouts of the Third Guardian of the Faith, Joel Bray Marangella. Many of the mainstream ('Heterodox') Baha'is seemingly have either not heard of the Third Guardian, or don't want to hear of him.

So much for all the talk of peace and unity.

The more one examines Baha'i primary sources, and other historical information, the more disturbing the picture becomes. Exaggerated stories of mass persecutions are used to emotionally cloud issues (we acknowledge that there have been persecutions of Baha'is – which are wrong and unacceptable – but evidence also suggests that some claims have been exaggerated). Documentary evidence shows that the image of peace loving, open and tolerant people, firmly united throughout the past as well as in the present, is a false image. The Baha'is were described, not many decades ago, as a 'small obscure Islamic sect' – they have worked hard to change their image and to become acceptable in a naïve and ill-informed Western Society. They have misused the Bible and distorted both theology and history to conceal their true nature and promote an image of being a respectable major world religion with a message of love, peace and unity. Be aware of the Baha'is – their true cultic nature and ultimate agenda.

References/Sources:

Baha'is in Israel

The Baha'i administration claims there is no resident Baha'i population in Israel. The 650-700 Baha'is who can be found here at any given time are all volunteers who have come from some 85 countries to do service for periods ranging from a few months to a few years. The Baha'is who live here as tourists or temporary residents do not engage in any form of missionary activity. Some people erroneously believe that this is in accordance with the country's anti-missionary laws, but in fact it is a self-imposed Baha'i prohibition against seeking or accepting new believers into the Baha'i faith in the Holy Land that dates back to the time when the country was still under Ottoman rule.

No one knows why. It is one of several inexplicable Baha'i regulations.

It is a well known fact that according to a letter of Universal House of Justice¹ the Baha'is are not suppose to teach and convert the Jew population in Israel. Infact if a Jew outside Israel wants to accept Baha'i Faith and settle in Israel, then his declaration card is not to be accepted.

But The world Christian encyclopedia (WCE)² has something else to offer.

In the year 1990, the number of Baha'is residing in Israel were 9500.

The source of the information was Barrett, David B., World Christian Encyclopedia (2001), Data transcribed by Simeon Kohlman Rabbani

In the year 2000, the Baha'i population in Israel was 13734 which constituted 0.22% of the total population of Israel, again the source of this information was David B., World Christian Encyclopedia (2001),

Data transcribed by Simeon Kohlman Rabbani

If the WCE information is true than it is clear that the Baha'i Administration at Haifa is misusing the Hospitality offered so generously by the State of Israel, This is indeed a deceit to the Host country which has so generously offered all its help and hospitality to the Baha'is and the Baha'i Administration. Their hypocrisy has been exposed by WCE; the other facts which are inexpiable are following facts:

- For years the Haifan Baha'i leadership have been telling visiting pilgrims that they envisioned a day when the Baha'i establishment would become the government of Israel and that the Israeli population would convert en masse to Baha'i Faith.
- One of a very senior Baha'i official Mr. Ali Akbar Forutan said that a day will come when the Universal House of Justice will rule over the Israel.
- The present Persian counselors say in private that, we have to launch Intensive program of growth in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. Most of the Persian counselors have two passports one Israeli and other Persian.
- As far as I am concerned, the unchecked presence of Haifan Baha'is in Israel is as big and long-term existential threat to Israel itself.

When you have an organization openly fantasizing about becoming the governing authority over all of Israel-Palestine and giving false information about the presence of Baha'is in Israel then it is certain that it is more a threat to the State of Israel then blessing...

(1)For your information, the people in Israel have access to factual information about the Faith, its history and general principles. Books concerning the Faith are available in libraries throughout Israel, and Israelis are welcome to visit the Shrines and the surrounding gardens.

However, in keeping with a policy that has been strictly followed since the days of Bahá'u'lláh, Bahá'is do not teach the Faith in Israel. Likewise, the Faith is not taught to Israelis abroad if they intend to return to Israel. When Israelis ask about the Faith, their questions are answered, but this is done in a manner which provides factual information without stimulating further interest.

(2) World Christian Database (WCD) – Updated and maintained by the Center for the Study of Global Christianity, the World Christian Database is based on information provided by the World Christian Encyclopedia and World Christian Trends. Both of these books serve as standards for international religious statistics, and provide comprehensive estimates of religious affiliation around the world.

Until the late 1990s the UHJ was telling its visiting pilgrims that one day all the residents of Israel would become Bahais and that the UHJ would emerge as the government of Israel. This was stated point blank to a group of Bahai pilgrims in 1982 as well as 1986. Don't know whether they are saying these things anymore as brazenly as they once did, but if it is still the case, one could make the argument that the UHJ Haifan organization is ultimately a national security threat to the state of Israel itself.

The Reform Bahai Faith

<http://www.reformbahai.org/about.html>

The Reform Bahai Faith affirms the universal spiritual and moral principles taught in all of the great religious traditions. Similar to Mahayana Buddhism, Reform Bahais believe the Example set by Abdul-Baha during his travels to Europe and the United States in the early 20th century, an Example of universal love and brotherhood, was perhaps his greatest teaching.

As Abdul-Baha often suggested, far from having the exclusive truth and the fanaticism to which that notion has so often led, Reform Bahais look to what is universal and non-creedal in the world's religious experience, and include prayers and meditations from other religions in their private and community worship, listen to and learn from God's other religions all of which is to say the Reform Bahai Faith has moved on from its historical and cultural roots, as all living religions have and do, and is now a global, universal faith.

Abdul-Baha taught that the Bahai Movement was a way for people of all religious persuasions to come together in neutral territory and worship the Divine Being in a mutually respectful atmosphere of peace and harmony. Speaking in England, he said, "You can be a Bahai-Christian, a Bahai-Freemason, a Bahai-Jew, a Bahai-Muhammadan."

Reform Bahais believe Abdul-Baha's Interpretation for the modern world of his Father Baha u'llah's Teachings is much more profound than the prevailing conception of religion.

Speaking in Europe and North America from 1911 to 1913, Abdul-Baha stated on a number of occasions that he was a man just like anyone else and that the Bahai Faith could not be organized, yet often spoke paradoxically of the growth of the Bahai community throughout the world, grounded in democratic pluralism. Known during Abdul-Baha's time as the Bahai Movement or Cause, the Reform Bahai Faith is not an organization, but a way of life.

More "Protestant" along the lines, in some ways, of Unitarian Universalism or other similarly liberal denominations, Reform Bahais believe it's largely the responsibility of the individual to read the Bahai Writings and prayerfully decide, prayerfully discern, how to follow the spiritual message of Baha'u'llah, Founder of the Bahai Faith, and those of Abdul-Baha, the Interpreter of Baha'u'llah's Covenant, striving for spiritual development and service to humankind.

God has created the individual soul to develop in the integrity and freedom of his or her own search for spiritual maturity and conscience, through prayer and meditation, transforming the community and the world one soul at a time, achieving the timeless goal of self-sacrificing love, compassion, and service to humanity.

In practice, there are individual Reform Bahais who follow all or many commonly shared Bahai forms and teachings observed by other Baha'i denominations because they themselves believe they should or want to; not because they're pressured into them. There are other Reform Bahais who don't feel comfortable with one thing or another, believing perhaps the time is not right for themselves and others, or the particular teaching may be more culturally bound to the past than the more universal principles of Baha'u'llah. Reform Bahais follow Abdul-Baha's 1912 Authentic Covenant, which he delivered publicly in New York City, a broad, open, loving vision of God's relation to humanity.

While emphasizing what is universal in humanity's religious experience, Baha u'llah taught the changing, evolutionary, and progressive nature of religious truth, demonstrating it by his own example and teaching which evolved away from much of the teaching of his forerunner the Bab. Similarly, Abdul-Baha demonstrated essentially a re-Interpretation of Baha u'llah's teachings for the modern world. Reform Bahais do not regard the Bahai message as a rigid set of unchanging and inflexible doctrines and formulas. Nor is the universality of the Bahai vision frozen in a form subordinate to the exclusivism of the Judeo-Christian or Islamic and Sufi cultural heritage of the Bahai Faith. The universal, global Teachings of Baha'u'llah transcend the limitations of all past Dispensations, inspire and envision a new spiritual worldview and civilization.

Baha u'llah and Abdul-Baha taught that it is the Spirit that is important, not form, doctrine, or organization.

Accordingly, God is interested in the human heart, sincere worship, communion, and prayer, the individual cultivating the virtues of the spirit in selfless service to humanity, in practice and deed, not merely doctrine and theory, in every walk of life, respecting the unique cultures of the earth, even while revering what's universal or held in common by humankind.

Abdul-Baha envisioned the Bahai House of Worship as open to the faithful of all religions and traditions, as a place of universal prayer and meditation, not exclusively Bahai. Consequently, Reform Bahais honor the spirit wherever it is found and expressed in the writings and oral traditions of wisdom and belief.

Following Abdul-Baha, Reform Bahais elect Spiritual Assemblies, with nine members, for community consultation and guidance. Largely "congregational" in structure, local communities are independent grass-root associations, though they will ultimately elect national and an international unit with non-binding advisory and coordinating duties and responsibilities. While Abdul-Baha stated he had not "appointed" anyone to succeed him, he did not mean that the local, democratically elected assembly could not appoint people to serve in any position necessary, "to engage in service of the Kingdom." At every level of Bahai consultation, the independence and integrity of the individual is preserved.

Reform Bahais believe Baha'u'llah taught that the separation of church and state is the Will of God and distance themselves from any interpretation of an eventual Bahai theocracy, following Abdul-Baha's vision of a global spiritual democracy, enriched by pluralism.

Reform Bahais are free to express, write, and publish, without any type of “review” or censorship. The Reform Bahai Faith does not teach or practice shunning, nor any form of excommunication, following Abdul-Baha’s teaching that “The conscience of man is sacred and to be respected.”

Reform Bahai Faith Rochester, Michigan USA <http://www.ReformBahai.org>

Chicago Tribune. Baha’i rift. Baha’is upset with Orthodox Baha’i Faith May 18, 2009 <http://archives.chicagotribune.com/2009/may/18/local/chi-bahai-18-may18>

Comments posted to The Chicago Tribune Forum on one page: http://www.fglaysher.com/bahaicensorship/Chicago_Tribune.html

Yahoo Group – ReformBahai <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ReformBahai>

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About the Reform Bahai Faith <http://www.reformbahai.org/about.html>

Abdu’l-Baha’s 1912 Authentic Covenant <http://www.reformbahai.org/Covenant.html>

An Analysis of Abdul-Baha’s 1912 Authentic Covenant http://www.reformbahai.org/Covenant_comments.html

Blog > Reform Bahai Faith <http://reformbahai.blogspot.com>

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Federal appeals court rules in favor of splinter Baha’i group November 25, 2010 8:12 PM <http://archive.chicagobreakingnews.com/2010/11/federal-appeals-court-...>

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Blood thicker than water?

This is a short account of Bahauallah and his brother Mirza Yahya Noori, their lives together and the animosity between them. The objective of this article is simply to bring to the fore that fact that Bahauallah did not practice what he preached.

Let us see how.

Mirza Yahya "Subh-e-Azal" was 13 years younger than Bahauallah. He became a Babi at the age of 14. According to Nuqtatul Qaaf, when Mirza Yahya went in the presence of Qurratul Ayn at Barfarosh, "She truly nourished him with her milk until he became strong in manners and ethics under her training and guidance."

Since Mirza Yahya was a great favorite of Quddoos and Qurratul Ayn, all the other Babis also humored him. Consequently, he became everybody's 'darling'. Even the Bab himself sent him prized personal possessions like his ink pot, papers, writings, dresses and rings to Mirza Yahya. Moreover in his will he clearly nominated Mirza Yahya as his successor.

The Emperor of Iran had executed the Bab. Naturally, the Babis bore a lot of animosity against him. A feeling of revenge had crept into them. All this resulted in an unsuccessful attempt by the Babis to assassinate the Emperor. This attempt having failed, the Emperor now knowing of the intention of the Babis was furious at them. He imprisoned all those involved in the assassination attempt. In this connection, Bahauallah was imprisoned, whereas, Mirza Yahya escaped to Baghdad posing as a Sufi. After spending 9 months in prison, Bahauallah was released after the intervention of the Russian Embassy. After his release, Bahauallah went to Baghdad.

For the next 10 years the two brothers lived in Baghdad. During this period, since Bab appointed Mirza Yahya as the successor, Bahauallah too surrendered to his orders and executed his commands as his agent. This becomes clear from his writings during this period, which are full of expression and devotion to Mirza Yahya and announce his obedience to him.

(Ref: Book of Iqan, by Bahauallah, Page 195)

This continued until a dispute arose between the brothers over the leadership of the followers. It is from here that the power struggle between them becomes apparent. Bahauallah abandoned obedience to Yahya's orders and represented himself as the envoy of God and the leader of the Bahais. This claim which was in contradiction with the beliefs and the sayings of the Babis caused disunion and in this manner a conflict arose between Yahya and Bahauallah and consequently among their followers.

In this conflict, all human manners like 'politeness', 'etiquette', were conveniently forgotten. Bahauallah called his brother as 'lamb' (Ref: Asrar al Athar-e-Khususi, Vol 4 page 197), 'Satan' (Ref: Asrar al Athar-e-Khususi, Vol 4, page 101 and Vol 5, page 346) and entitled him as a 'bull' (Bahauallah, the Book Badi, page 772) He abused him as a 'deceptive snake' (Asrar al Athar-e-Khususi, vol 4 page 34) and called his followers as 'dogs'. (Ref: Asrar al Athar-e-Khususi, Vol 5 page 177) He considered their sayings as the calls of the 'wolf' and the 'pig' (Ref: Asrar al Athar-e-Khususi, Vol 5 page 177). At this time the brothers started divulging their hidden secrets. Consequently many of the concealed sins and unspeakable sins and defects hidden from the sight of the public were disclosed.

The disunion and conflict between the brothers and the followers did not cease with the name-calling and mud slinging, and after a while the followers of Bahauallah began to massacre the adherents of Yahya at his command. They trapped the opponents through foul lots and swooped down upon them and murdered them in cold blood.

(Ref: Ishraq Khavari, Abd-al-Hamid, Tarikh-e-Amr. page 245).

Bahauallah had a sister by the name of Madame Iziyah, who wrote a book entitled "Awakening the Sleepy." She points out to the inhuman massacres of the Babis in various parts of the book and names many people who had been killed through cutting off their necks or ripping off their bellies, or suffocating them in the river or shooting them, because of not believing in Bahauallah. (Ref: Iziya-e-Khanum, Tanbih-al-Na'imin, page 15-16)

This article is not about the inhuman acts of the group. The aim of the investigation has not been to prepare a report of their crimes, because only a list of them will form a voluminous book. We wanted to see only how this ideology which claims to be divine, has met the needs of men for unity and solidarity.

We saw that the foundation of this religion was essentially built on opposition to unity and correlation. We know that the family is the smallest and the most correlative organ of society and the cornerstone of the high mansion of "Oneness of Mankind."

Now if someone does not want to and is unable to establish unity in this small unit and on the contrary induces an abusive and bloody conflict in its place, he will never be able to think of "Oneness of Mankind", and will make no effort to create it. Rather he will make an attempt to destroy it as far as he can.

The above article and the references make it clear that **Bahauallah was unable to maintain a united relationship with his brother.** While he adhered to him in lesser times, he conveniently abandoned him at the first available opportunity. Truly, this reflects on the personality of Bahauallah and opens our eyes to their deception.

Biography of Neal Chase

Neal Chase is the great grandson of ‘Abdu’l-Baha, third President of the Universal House of Justice of Baha’u’llah (www.UHJ.net) and current Guardian of the Baha’i Faith seated upon the throne of King David which is to last for ever (Psalms 89; Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Baha, page 15).

Background and Education

Neal Chase was born on Candlemas Sunday, January 30, 1966 in Bridgeport Connecticut, home of the Charter Oak. As a child he attended Live Oaks elementary School. Later his family moved to Oak Park, Michigan, where they lived in Stratford Court near 8 Mile Road on the limit of the city of Detroit. He received his secondary education at Cranbrook School in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, was elected to student government without campaigning, and graduated as President of his class. He attended college for two years at Michigan State University, in East Lansing Michigan, located near the home of Malcolm X (El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz), where he first came into contact with the Baha’i religious faith in 1985.

In 1987, on March 21, he moved to Madison, Wisconsin, where he helped to establish the Mid-Western Baha’i Center of the United States, giving public talks at the University of Wisconsin, on diverse subjects such as the Harmonic Convergence, the Prophecy of Great Pyramid of Giza, the Book of Revelation as well as holding Baha’i Firesides in his home, and continuing his research and educational work.

After moving to Montana in August of 1990, he lived in the city of Deer Lodge, Montana, continuing research on prophecy fulfillment and publishing his book “Ezekiel’s Temple in Montana”. He later re-entered school in 1995 at the University of Montana, receiving his Bachelors Degree in Psychology on 22 December, 2000 AD, with a minor in History, and a specialization in symbolic systems in Mathematics, of which he also received the Mac Johnson Family Scholarship award for Mathematical Analysis in 1997. He currently holds a Master’s Degree, Master of Science in Psychology, and is working on his doctoral program toward completion of his Ph.D. Thesis.

Religion and Spirituality

As a young boy in Connecticut, Neal Chase, began to be aware of religious and spirituality experiences occurring in every day life. In a recent interview he explained that though he was not able to articulate it then due to his extreme youth, it came in general the form of a supernatural, yet invisible, persistent Presence. This Presence had a definite mind, will and purpose, and though its effects were noticed and observed by all those present during these occasions, the other people would come up with excuses to deny its existence, or to explain away its effects as mundane coincidences. He explains, “This Presence or Entity, was attempting to communicate, not just to myself, but apparently to everyone – it had a definite message to communicate to all the world of humanity, and was continually and persistently trying to make itself known. However, these attempts would wax and wane, like the Moon and the Tides, depending upon the amount of love or light in the room. It would appear to withdraw during episodes of negativity, and in its absence calamity, accidents and catastrophes would occur to greater and lesser degrees.

“The people I was surrounded by at that time were scientific, but avowed atheists, of a purely materialistic foundation. Ethnically my background of my family of origin is Jewish on both my father and my mother’s side. Jewish means descended from the tribe of Judah. That is the tribe of King David. But as atheists, secular Jews, I was, therefore brought up with no religious indoctrination or belief system of any type, which was a great blessing for myself on this plane, for it provided me with no preconceived ideas whatsoever.

“At any rate, directly experiencing and observing the effects of this phenomenon we have mentioned, helped to create in myself a life-long dedication and desire to both love to know and to come into constant direct contact with this Presence. Later, as I got older, I found that others had reported such events within their own life-times, or had pursued the evocation and invocation of such experiences – and that many of these people came from my own hereditary background as Hebrews from the family and lineage of Abraham, who himself had these types of natural, yet metaphysical, lifelong experiences. For example, Jesus, a descendant of Abraham through King David through his father Joseph (Rom. 1:3, 4 KJV) had similar experiences as this, until finally, un-submerging from the Jordan River – Jordan means the descender – he went up onto the Mountain for 40 days and 40 nights, and met with the Devil and Satan.

“Moses likewise went up onto a mountain where it is said he conversed with God while in the presence of bush that burned but which was not consumed. This is actually a species of plant from that area called the gas plant that Moses happened to be standing in front of upon Sinai when he had his experience. These plants secrete an oil from its leaves, which when very hot become gaseous and ignite on fire, thus the leaves give off a gas that burns with a flame of fire from every individual leaf, yet the species of bush is not consumed at all. It is all very scientific. Likewise Buddha under the bow tree in India, Krishna in the war chariot of Arjuna, Adam in the Garden of Qadman, Muhammad in the Cave of Hira, Zoroaster (of the Magi) at the setting sun, the Bab in a dream, and Baha’u’llah in the Siyah-Chal (the dungeon of the Black Pit), Who describes this presence as the appearance of a Beautiful Maiden, as well as all the other believers such as Galileo, Bruno, Newton, John Dee, Einstein, MLK (Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.), the Hebrew prophets, Nostradamus, Joseph Smith, Wavoka, Black Elk, etc., all relate similar experiences to greater and lesser degrees.”

Born Again Baha’i

After having reached the age of maturity in his teens, Neal Chase, had a born again experience which resulted in his accepting Jesus and the scriptures of the Bible as authentic, though it obviously contained many mysteries that were unexplained. These would later be explained to him through the methodology of his mentor Dr. Leland Jensen, the last remaining Knight of Baha’u’llah. He explains that though he now recognized and accepted Jesus he was unable to join any Christian church or organized religion. Later he found out about Christianity, like Judaism and Islam, and the other world religions including Baha’i had been hijacked and turned into money making schemes by usurpers called “clergy” for their own

aggrandizement and empowerment. In fact when all the promised ones and messengers from God appeared they were one and all opposed by this same "clergy class" of every day and age. The Jewish clergy such as Caiaphas was opposed to Jesus, the Christian clergy was against Muhammad, the Islamic clergy against that of the Bab, the followers of the Bab, like the followers of John the Baptist that were opposed to Jesus, were against Baha'u'llah, the "Baha'is" were against 'Abdu'l-Baha and killed his grandson Shoghi Effendi, the first Guardian, and so the ball of corruption continues to roll down throughout the ages.

At the age of 19 while attending Michigan State University, he first learned of the Baha'i Covenant preserved in the School of Dr. Leland Jensen, the last remaining Knight of Baha'u'llah. After a thorough interview he was matriculated into the college, where he received an education in religion, free of price.

He explains that all throughout his life, experiences and education, where God is the Real Teacher, he has always remained on one steady course. That he never actually converted to any other religion or Truth other than that which he had always held and experienced from the beginning – instead it has been a continual process in deepening into the Reality, never being separated from it. That through these many experiences though he has grown and matured spiritually as an individual, he has always remained the same personality and same individual since birth. He explains that this is not always the case for other people. For example take the famous cases of Paul or Nebuchadnezzar. These people belong to a religion or hold certain views that are different from that which is grounded in the Reality. Therefore when they come into contact with this Light and shines penetrating deeply into the core of their being, they undergo a conversionary experience which changes their personality and identity. Thus Saul became Paul. And Nebuchadnezzar lost his mind and ate grass like a cow, it says in Daniel, for 7 years, until his mind returned to him and was restored to the Kingdom under a different identity and different name re-created as wholly different person.

"Now this is different from the regular path of growth and transformation that is predestined for all in stages of maturation from the cradle to the grave, until in the final transformation the spiritual being is released from the mortal coil, as the caterpillar is released from the cocoon as a butterfly. The work in Greek for butterfly is psyche which literally means Soul. The Egyptians wrapped their dead in windings like a cocoon for the symbology of this reason. Thus the ancients had concept of the immortality of the soul as well, living transformed like the winged butterfly in the spirit world which is our real home of magic, love and light, where the Presence of God is absolute. Jesus called this true home the Kingdom of God. Now Baha'u'llah – The Revelation of the Most Great Name – has brought this Kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. Thus this is heaven or earth. The purpose the Davidic Kingship seated upon the throne of King David is so that we can recognize the true Universal House of Justice of Baha'u'llah from fakes frauds and imitations. This is so we can all live inside the shelter of this Spiritual City while our bodies are gathered together here on earth and our hearts dwell within this Kingdom. Those outside of this Kingdom, like those deprived of food and shelter in this world, suffer, are in darkness, and feel the sorrows of remoteness and are sad. Therefore as the door of this Kingdom are continually open, we call to them and invite them to the Supper of God. However, in that state outside the Kingdom, wars over oil and false religion occur on a daily bases. Rape, murder, injustice, ignorance, poverty, disease and all forms of depravity and illness are inflicted against the people almost on a daily basis. Therefore the people pray to God for relief. And God, being the Source of loving kindness IMMEDIATELY comes to their aid and answers their prayer. He sends them Baha'u'llah, the Prince of Peace and His everlasting Covenant of the Davidic Kingship to Comfort the people and establish this peace on earth from this time forth and for ever more.

"Thus the people pray for peace on earth and God immediately sends them the Prince of Peace, Baha'u'llah with His Covenant of peace. But the people don't want Baha'u'llah and don't want His Covenant. So the wars go on and the world remains in this state. This is prophesied to continue until the unimaginable point of unbearability. Then the people will think again and turn unto God. This will only occur after greater and greater levels of escalating catastrophes. Thus World War II was worse than World War I. Vietnam was worse than World War II. This current War which really started with the 9-11 is worse than all the other wars put together, and is getting worse and worse every day. As it is based upon violence it is unwinnable. Only establishing the Covenant of peace will remove these difficulties. This will not be accomplished through war, but through education and understanding. This is the true foundation of this Kingdom. This is why God has sent us the love of 'Abdu'l-Baha and the wisdom and guidance of Baha'u'llah. So that we could use the document of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha to frame our own constitution for the Kingdom of God upon the earth. Everything is possible in this Kingdom. Nothing is possible outside of it. This is why it is written, "Behold I make all things new".

"As long as we form that Council with the Davidic Kingship as a working loyal, loving and equal co-member of the family of man, we remain under the provisions of the covenant. If we reject this living person and deprive or deny him his personal rights, freedoms and inheritance, then we have rejected denied and robbed everyone of their individual rights, freedoms and inheritances as well. His inheritance is not he greatest inheritance it is only the most public the most visible. Thus it is a "sign from God" (W&T, p. 11). A sign that as he is deprived all shall be deprived; As he has received all shall receive. Now for me personally, I have not one worldly desire or aim. My whole life demonstrates this for all who know me. Thus I have achieved my goals and received my inheritance of both this world and the next. Can we say that Jesus was deprived and cast out by God because he hung on the cross? Absolutely not! Can we say that Baha'u'llah was deprived of God's love, Presence and grace, because he was imprisoned and in exile for 40 years? Heavens no! Thus like 'Abdu'l-Baha, and all the other servants of this Kingdom, I am firm in secure in my inheritance, and as I have received this to shall all the true believers under the provisions of this everlasting covenant receive and in greater bounty and shares than that which I myself have been so generously given in both this world and the next."

Exilarch

Neal Chase says that the best way to understand his position in society is that of an Exilarch. The Exilarchs are the exiled monarchs of King David. The word Exilarch literally means EXILED monARCH.

The first Exilarch is King Jehoiachin who was the last King to sit on the throne of King David in Jerusalem and the first King to be seated upon the throne of King David in exile, in Babylon. It states in the Bible that Nebuchadnezzar brought the Davidic King and the throne of King David in exile into Babylon with him. Later that one of Nebuchadnezzar's successors took Jehoiachin out of prison and set him back upon the throne of David and exalted the throne of King David above the throne of the other kings in captivity. From that time forward the throne-line of King David has

continued in exile down to the present day.

The most famous of all the historical Exilarchs of the past is the Exilarch Bostanai. Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l-Baha are direct male sperm descendants of King David through Solomon and Exilarch Bostanai through his Persian wife Dara of the throne-line. Neal Chase is also a direct-male sperm descendant of the Exilarch Bostanai through his Persian wife Dara, but from the cadet branch of the family of Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l-Baha that moved North into Russia out of the country of Persia which is modern day Iran.

Shiloh Prophecy

The Shiloh Prophecy of Genesis 49:10 states that the scepter shall depart between the feet and legs of Judah when Shiloh comes (KJV) and when it comes to whom it belongs (RSV). Between the feet and legs of Judah are the reproductive organs. The Shiloh prophecy is therefore the well known prophecy that when the second coming of Christ comes in the Potency of the Everlasting Father seated upon the throne of King David (Is. 9:6-7) He – The Ancient Root – will have physical son – the BRANCH – of which Baha'u'llah had 'Abdu'l-Baha the Most Great Branch, and then after this Root and Branch, the throne-line shall pass out from between the feet and legs of Judah in fulfillment of this Shiloh Prophecy and thus be continued by adoption – the Grafted Branch (Heb. Tsemach). Thus 'Abdu'l-Baha writes:

“Consider! The Divine Gardener cuts off the dry or weak branch from the good tree and grafts to it a branch from another tree. He both separates and unites. This is that which His Holiness Christ says: that from all the world they come and enter the Kingdom, and the children of the Kingdom shall be cast out.” ('Abdu'l-Baha, Master's Last Tablet to America, cf. Baha'i World Faith, p. 438)

This is what is meant when it states that the Gentiles will inherit the Kingdom. This is through adoption of the throne line. The prophecy further states (see Paul Romans 11 for more) that a natural branch shall then be grafted back in to inherit, when it comes “to whom it belongs”. This Shiloh Prophecy therefore is fulfilled in the throne-line succession directly following Baha'u'llah's son 'Abdu'l-Baha.

In fulfillment of Biblical prophecy 'Abdu'l-Baha adopted an American from the prophesied family of Masons. This American is Charles Mason Remey Aghsan. His father's family is that of Rear Admiral Remey of which an American battleship is named, and his mother, of the female line, is from the promised family Mason. Thus his middle name is actually the family name of the female line, and he was known to his friends as Mason Remey.

AGHSAN means BRANCH

As 'Abdu'l-Baha adopted Mason Remey to be his son, Mason Remey not only inherited the throne of King David after his father 'Abdu'l-Baha, but also the family sur-name of Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l-Baha entitled “Aghsan”. Aghsan literally means “branches” Ghush being the singular in Arabic and Persian for one branch. Baha'u'llah referred to all his sons and male descendants as Aghsan – branches. Thus 'Abdu'l-Baha was called the Most Great Branch. Therefore Mason Remey AGHSAN, is the direct male line successor to 'Abdu'l-Baha upon the throne of King David. An adopted son has all the rights and privileges of a natural son including the kingship. Mason in turn adopted his son Pepe, to succeed him as the only remaining aghsan in all the world. In 1991, Pepe adopted Neal Chase, a natural branch from the same family as that of Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l-Baha back into the throne-line succession to inherit as his only son both the name of AGHSAN and the legal succession to the throne of King David after him. In the year 2001 AD, on the day of September 21, the Autumnal or Fall Equinox, God fulfilled His promise and brought forth his “servant the BRANCH [Aghsan]” (Zech. 3:8 KJV) and this was the projection of the identity of Neal Chase in this role as the modern day Exilarch seated upon David's throne into the media, the internet and the court system.

As this kingship is not recognized by the majority of the people who are still unaware of this, the actual implementation of government for the material affairs of all mankind remains impeded; and thus this kingship and the current guardian remains in exile. Also as the mainstream “Baha'is” led by Ruhyyih Khanum and the “Hands” have violated the Covenant of Baha'u'llah and broken every single provision of the sacred Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha which is the Charter of the Kingdom, this kingship remains in exile from the historical Baha'i World Center properties of the Heroic and Formative Age in Haifa Israel as well. Thus it is in exile as an Exilarch.

However, in the place of its exile, the snow-white spot where 'Abdu'l-Baha designated its Rest in the Rocky Mountains of the United States during his visit in 1912, this fulfills the visions of the Book of Revelation for the New Jerusalem prophecies in the Rocky Mountains. This prophecy has been fully explained in the Book “Ezekiel's Temple in Montana” by Neal Chase and is depicted upon the map here <http://www.bupc.org/new-jerusalem.html> at <http://www.BUPC.org>.

Thus everything is how it should be!

Prophecies, Predications and Press Releases

Though the author of many books, letters, papers and articles of many subjects, Neal Chase has received the most public notoriety for his press release in which he accurately predicted the many future events now all come to pass, pertaining especially to the siege of the city of New York (the 9-11) and the War on Terror with al-Qaeda, and the invasion of Iraq and the killing of Saddam Hussein. These are fully explained at <http://www.BUPC.org>. What is unusual about this controversial subject, is the confirmation of many witnesses to this that themselves are of the mainstream or material perspective, as this article from the Missoula Newspaper demonstrates:

“In an editorial in The Missoulian, editor Mark Matthews, who had conducted several personal interviews with Neal Chase in his home in Missoula years earlier writes in ‘A Time to Weep’, written only days after the 9/11 attacks: “How could this have happened [the 9-11 attacks]? Some will say it's the beginning of the Biblical End Times. For a number of years, members of... Baha'is Under the Provisions of the Covenant have predicted that the World Trade Center Towers would be bombed by terrorists.” (The Missoulian, Editorial, September 20, 2001) A year after the 9/11 attacks The Missoulian newspaper also published a statement from Victor Woods, that Neal Chase had accurately predicted the

date of the attacks. (Missoulain article September 16, 2002). The accuracy of this prediction is well known to everyone in Montana that saw or watched Neal Chase on MCAT (Missoula Community Access Television, on his program Baha'i Phone-live that aired from 1992 until 2001" (Michaud, J. Understanding Prophecy Fulfillment)

Thus Mark Matthews a Journal independent of the Baha'i faith documents that for many years Neal Chase, along with Dr. Jensen had predicted the current state of world affairs of the now so-called "War on Terror", which Neal Chase described as a "World Civil War" as well as the triggering event, the destruction of the Trade Towers. Still yet come is the expectation of the nuclear attack on the UN Building, and the escalating entanglement with Israel and Iran. Neal Chase accurately predicted over a half a dozen events in what he published as a prophetic time-line, as well as giving the exact dates from the scriptures for the execution of Saddam Hussein, stating that the final attack on the UN Building is to occur after the assassination of Saddam which was fulfilled on Eid al-Adha, several years ago. This prediction can be viewed on YouTube, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=un1q-03RrPU> and the Prophecies Press Release and Predictions can be studied here <http://www.bupc.org/bupc-press-releases.html> at <http://www.BUPC.org>.

Court Cases: Montana and Colorado

After September 21, 2001, Neal Chase has been continually attacked by the Covenant-breaking Baha'is in variety of court cases and venues. Of the collateral damage in these cases is the loss of his two children and the dissolution of his first marriage.

The Covenant-breakers first tried to hijack the second IBC/UHJ that Dr. Leland Jensen had established on January 9, 1991, exactly 40 years after Shoghi Effendi had established the first one in January 9, 1951. Exactly as the Hands and the liaison officer of the first Council Ruhyyih Khanum had one and all rejected Mason Remy AGHSAN and attempted to hijack away the first IBC/UHJ and set up a headless Monster "UHJ" in its place, remarkably enough, the newly appointed members of the second IBC/UHJ including the second Liaison Officer, also attempting to dissolve the second IBC/UHJ. Neal Chase along with the other loyal members of the Council, active and firm in the Covenant were able to prevent this, and the council remains established since 1991.

Having found themselves removed from the Council by their own nefarious activities, outside the provisions of the sacred Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha, and unsuccessful in their attempt to imitate Ruhyyih Khanum and the "hands" – their coalition coup fell apart each going their own separate ways and making different claims. This resulted in the formation of more than one minority factions, none of which in and of itself amounted to either a quorum or majority of the Council.

One notorious faction led by the former Treasurer of the Council, allied itself with another faction led by the former wife of Neal Chase, who had taken away his two children via the American family court system, using religion and his role as the Guardian as pretext, all the while telling the children that their father had been expelled from the Baha'i Faith as Covenant-breaker (that is by her group allied with the group of the Treasurer) and therefore they should shun him and have no contact with him on these religious grounds whatsoever. This joint scheme was first run through the Courts system of the local Colorado Baha'i Council and then up through to the second IBC/UHJ. When it failed there, that is it divided the IBC/UHJ members, these two factions then took the case to the State Courts of both Montana and Colorado: to Montana to destroy the IBC/UHJ and in Colorado, to separate the children from their father.

However in the interim, these two factions separated themselves from the rest of the community, declared Neal Chase and those with him to be Covenant-breakers, and began to indoctrinate and alienate his own children into this way of thinking as well. It was Mason Remy all over again. Families were destroyed, homes wrecked, by these usurpers who – with no authority from the Will and Testament and text of the Covenant – aggrandized to themselves the switcheroo to declare those who remained firm in the Covenant as violators.

This choice of tactic by his former wife, though reported to the Colorado court as definite "parental alienation" by the Court appointed special advocate was upheld and enforced against him and two minor children by the Colorado Family courts. Not knowing what else he could do, not wishing to further disrupt the lives of his children who received threats and alienation tactics by the other parties after his visits with him, and after a very long and protracted attempt to be able to preserve visitation and relationships with his children, and after going into debt into the amount of tens of thousands of dollars, when asked about this, he said, "These types of things happen to many people – therefore why should I be spared from these things, when my mission is to help the people. Jesus was not the only person crucified thousands of years ago, this was a common occurrence that happened to many people. Another famous example is Spartacus. Examples such as these lead to the fall of the Roman Empire. America must transform or fall as well. The choice rests its leadership in government, in education, in the media, etc. The Baha'i faith brings justice for all, not justice for one. Therefore Baha'u'llah suffered 40 years of injustice, 'Abdu'l-Baha 40 years, Dr. Jensen suffered this type of injustice as well, and so shall I. This is because this faith, the true Baha'i Faith, establishes something the world has never seen before, Justice. Therefore those that promotes this learn a lesson in justice through these type of glaring injustices. Many of the people have lost their families and loved ones in these types of violations of the Covenant. Having survived these things many of these people – have seen through the lies, slander and calumny of the enemy and have seen and felt the real love and light and kindness and perseverance of those true ones under the provisions of the Covenant and have now come back from the many other groups (who masqueraded as "Baha'is") and have found refuge, haven and reunion with their families and loved here under the provisions of the Covenant in the true Kingdom, in association and communion with the living Davidic King, an aghsan, the great grandson of 'Abdu'l-Baha, in exile. It is the love of 'Abdu'l-Baha and his sacred Will and Testament that has drawn them all back, and re-grown the beautiful leaves, flowers and fruit on this blessed tree of the international community of the Covenant.

"This is what 'Abdu'l-Baha himself has said in his Last Tablet to America, "Behold from all over the world they come and enter the Kingdom, and the children of the Kingdom are cast out!" The real thing is to live the life, this means not hating anybody or anyone for any reason. Jesus said we must love on another. Thus you must love you neighbor, but you don't have to love the bad things he does to you. I have fullest confidence of God's wisdom in all things. In the end all the people will come back under the Covenant. They will do this in this life or the next. What choice have they? There is no where else to go, but into the Light. Surely they can hide from this from a few short years here, but in the end, as we live on his earth, and breath his air, and eat his food, there is no where else to go, no other place, haven or refuge. The problem for the people, is the type of

adjustments they may need to make based upon what they have done. Therefore ours is not to judge or condemn, but to leave them over to God for He is the prayer hearing prayer answering Lord! For example is the prayer or sacred verse “There but for the grace of God go I!” Therefore in cases such as these we must be every cautious to not only remain firm in the Covenant according to the letter, but to the spirit as well. When my other children are mature and are grown into their own, I will see them again, soon enough. This is predestined, if they share these same qualities and attributes we have spoken of here today.”

The attempted to destroy the IBC/UHJ in the Montana Courts bore no fruit for the violators either. In the end, they disbanded and went their own separate ways. All that remains, is the evidence, proofs, bona fides and legal credentials within the court system, for lawyers to see how the succession of the throne-line of King David continues legally from Baha’u’llah, to ‘Abdu’l-Baha, to Mason, Pepe and then to Neal Chase.

Court Cases: United Nations and United States Federal

<http://www.bupc.org/wipo/wipo-press-release.html>

Began a little while after, but continued con-currently with the Colorado and Montana cases, began the assault against the UHJ (www.UHJ.net) by the original group or ex-IBC members and their successors the ones that attacked Mason Remey AGHSAN back in 1957-1960. Thus while the ex-menders of the second IBC set up by Dr. Jensen were attacking the Guardian, the ex-members of the first IBC set up by Shoghi Effendi attacked him as well. They first attacked him in the United Nations through World Intellectual and Property Organization, whose international courts are based in Geneva Switzerland. Having no formal background in law whatsoever, he single handedly wrote the legal response to their caviling and claims citing the Will and testament of ‘Abdu’l-Baha and showing that they were the ones outside the legal provisions of the CHARTER (the sacred Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Baha, see Shoghi Effendi, World Order of Baha’u’llah, page 144 for more) and therefore could not be the actual Universal House of Justice that Baha’u’llah revealed, ‘Abdu’l-Baha delineated and Shoghi Effendi constituted on January 9, 1951 that continues on to this day at <http://www.UHJ.net>. They lost the case. Thus Goliath fell to one small stone flung by a descendant of King David. The Guardian therefore won the right for all the Baha’is of the world to teach the faith under the provisions of the Covenant internationally at the United Nations venue. Is it any wonder that the teaching effort has exploded on the scene internationally since that time? Now the majority of people are becoming educated to the meaning and provisions of very single verse of the sacred Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Baha.

Not satisfied with this sudden and devastating defeat, the Covenant-breakers then dragged the dead carcass of their defeat into United States Federal Court in the city of Chicago – forcing the Guardian to come down off the mountain with the other members of the UHJ to be deposed as well as to testify in open court. They lost again.

This episode has been chronicled by the station chief of the United States Mid-West Baha’i Center who attended the proceedings as witness to these historic events. The Covenant-breakers appealed the decision. So this Cause progresses through opposition as it is written: “What man plans for evil God plans for Good so that many people shall be saved”.

Select Works

Television and Radio. Every Friday night from 1992-2001, Neal Chase, hosted a weekly live call-in talk show on MCAT (Missoula Cable Access Television) called Bahá’i Phone-in Live. The format allowed callers to discuss issues ranging from religion, world events, politics, and special interests. Neal Chase was also invited to be a guest on the Art Bell radio show Coast to Coast AM on March 25, 1993, soon after the first World Trade Center Bombing which he accurately predicted. Neal Chase also appeared on Michael Moore’s TV Nation Episode Five where Dr. Leland Jensen was featured.

Neal Chase has also appeared in many other publications, reviews and literature, some of which focused upon the scientific study of the Baha’i Faith.

“One of the most significant events in the history of the [Baha’i Faith] BUPC was the recruitment of Neal Chase, a spiritual seeker from Wisconsin who proved to be brilliant at synthesizing Jensen’s teachings [establishing Baha’u’llah] with other prophetic beliefs... By 1990, Jensen, then seventy-six, had turned much of the responsibility for interpreting the scriptures over to Chase.” (Stone, J. R. Expecting Armageddon, p. 271, 272).

Personal Life

Neal Chase is re-married and currently lives in the United States of America in the Rocky mountains with his wife and their two children.

Publications. Aside from the large body of his published and unpublished letters, writings, press releases and research materials, some of his most notable publications include:

Ezekiel’s Temple in Montana.

Lazarus the Sick World.

Higher Dimensional Geometry in Mathematical Modeling.

Religion and Spirituality in the Psychology of Personality.

Universal Cycles of Time: 2012 and the Celestial Magi.

Links

Persecution of Bahais – Sign of Truth?

Visit any Bahai website and you will find a mention of “Persecution of Bahais”. While I condemn any kind of persecution, I believe we should not accept any claim at its face value. Moreso, if it comes from the Bahais. (Please read: Advancing the Status of Women and other articles).

Before we delve further, it would be very important to note, this discussion has very little to do with the Bahai Faith. This discussion is more for social interest than religious significance. Simply because being persecuted or not is not a proof for establishing the truthfulness of the claimant or the veracity of the claim.

To explain this further, if being persecuted was a characteristic of a Prophet, every executed traitor would become a Manifestation of God. This would become an established methodology of recognising a Prophet.

In fact, the Ghulam Ahmed Qadian, a contemporary of Bahaullah, was in a more formidable position to be a Prophet instead of Bahaullah, as the Qadianis are seeing more difficult times than the Bahais. On the other hand, the Bahais would then be required to deny the Prophethood of king and Prophet David (the one from whose progeny would be the Manifestation of God (read Bahaullah) as claimed by the Bahais). In short, being persecuted or not is not a sign of being a divine religion.

Let me touch upon an important aspect of this discussion. Past prophets have been harassed and persecuted – Prophet Mohammed (pbuh) is the best example. He was troubled by the Quraish, the polytheists, the Christians and the Jews. Please note, he was troubled by all those whose beliefs he abrogated. By ALL, and not by the followers of the previous Prophet only. Bahais, as they claim, are persecuted in Muslim countries, only give a new dimension to our discussion. Why is it that the Bahais are persecuted in Muslim countries and supported by non-Muslim countries? Is Bahaullah not a Prophet for the Jews, as well? Are Israeli Jews not eligible for salvation by accepting the Bahai Faith? Then why the arrangement between the Bahais and the Jews of Israel that the Faith would not be sold to them? Why are Jews supporting the Bahai Faith (as long as they do not preach the Jews)? Why is the West (primarily Christian countries) supporting the Bahais? Is this the continuation of persecuting the Muslims, now ideologically? So is it the Bahais who are being persecuted or is it the Muslims?

So, if persecution establishes the veracity of a religion, then we can simply close the discussion and submit to Islam. Muslims are not only being persecuted politically, but ideologically as well.

I am sure the Bahais would now insist that being persecuted is no proof for truthfulness.

Huququallah- The Right of God

There is a great importance of Huququallah in the Bahai Faith.

Huququallah is an Arabic word comprised of two words. Huquq meaning “Right” and “Allah” meaning “God”. Therefore Huququallah means “Right of God”, a part of the individuals possession and income offered at the Threshold of God. Huququallah being the Right of God and bounty for the people is clear from the Bahai Holy writings of sayings of The Bab, Bahauallah and Abdul Baha.

Writings of The Bab

O people of the world, whatever ye have offered up in the way of the one true God, ye shall indeed find preserved by God, The Preserver, and Intact at Gods Holy Gate.

Thus the embryo of the sacred law of Huququallah was established by the Bab in the Persian Bayan, His book of Laws. Bahauallah brought some modifications in its content and fashioned it as one of the worlds shaping ordinances of His stupendous Revelation.

Writings of Bahauallah:

Bahauallah affirms “...the payment to the Right of God is conducive to prosperity, to blessing and to honour and divine protection” “As to Huququallah, this is the source of blessing and the mainspring of God’s loving kindness and tender love vouchsafed unto men”.

In Kitab-i Aqdas verse 97, it has been revealed by Bahauallah:

Should anyone acquire one hundred mithqals of gold, nineteen mithqals thereof are Gods and to be rendered unto him, the fashioner of the earth and heaven. Take heed o people, lest you deprive yourselves of such a great bounty. This we have commanded you, though though we are well able to dispense with you and with all those who are in the heavens and on earth, in it there are benefits and wisdoms beyond the ken of anyone but God, The Omniscient, the All-informed Say, By this means He hath desired to purify what ye possess and to enable you to draw nigh unto such stations as none can comprehend save those whom God hath willed, He in truth is the Beneficent The Gracious, The Merciful .O people deal not faithlessly with the Right of God , Nor without His leave , make free with its disposal .Thus hath his commandments been established in the holy tablets and in this Exalted book .He who dealeth faithlessly with God shall in justice meet with faithlessness himself , He , however , who acteth in accordance with Gods bidding shall receive a blessing from the heaven of the bounty of His lord , the Gracious , the Bestower , the Generous , the Ancient of Days.He verily hath willed for you that which is yet beyond your knowledge , but shall be know to you when , after this fleeting life , your souls shall soar heaven wards and the trappings of your earthly joys are folded up.Thus admonished you He in Whose possession is the Guarded Tablet.

Writings of Abdul Baha: –

O friends of Abdul Baha The Lord as a sign of his infinite bounties hath graciously favoured His servants by providing for a fixed money offering (Huqooq) to be dutifully presented unto Him, through He m, the true One and His servants have been at all times independent of all created things, and God verily is the all-possessing, exalted above the need of any gift from His creatures. This fixed money offering however causeth people to become firm and steadfast and draweth Divine increase upon them. (Will and Testament of Abdul Baha)

Abdul Baha commenting on the manifold powers latent in the Law of Huququallah writes”

“...In accordance with His inscrutable wisdom and in order to apply a unique test to distinguish the friend from the stranger, He hath enjoined the Huqooq upon His servants and made it obligatory.”

From all the above quotations it is amply clear that the source of energy for upholding the law of huquallah is the individuals love and loyalty to the covenant.

As Abdul Baha, Himself says that it distinguishes the friend from the stranger; this is nothing more or less than a test of ones firmness in the covenant.

The Two Mirzas

Mirza Golam Ahmed

Mirza Hosain Ali



What do they say for each other?

This is what the Ahmadiyyas have to say regarding the Baha'is :

The following important differences between the Ahmadiyya claims and the Bahai claims :

1. One of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's basic aims was to teach the world the Islamic doctrine of the absolute oneness of God, which strongly rejects the concept that any human being can ever be a manifestation of God. The Bahai teachings are that there have been various manifestations of God on earth (Moses, Jesus, Muhammad, Baha-ullah). Therefore Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was teaching the opposite of the Bahai beliefs.
2. As noted above, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad proclaimed that the Islamic scripture, teachings and law are valid forever, and will never be abrogated or replaced. Again this is exactly the opposite of Bahai beliefs which teach that Baha-ullah's scripture and law have abrogated and replaced the Holy Quran and the Shari'ah of Islam.
3. The Prophet Muhammad taught that prophets before him had been sent by God to all nations, and he required his followers (Muslims) to believe in all of them. Moreover, he taught, as stated in the Quran, that these prophets had prophesied to their nations of the appearance of the Prophet Muhammad and had instructed their followers to believe in that Promised Prophet when he came. So the Prophet Muhammad became the converging point of the previous prophets and religions. He addressed the whole of humanity, while the previous prophets addressed only their individual nations. He was thus the Last and Final Prophet through whom all humanity is to be united.

To preach the oneness of humanity and to seek to unite religions on fundamentals in the seventh century, as the Prophet Muhammad did, at a time when no one even knew what the whole world consisted of, is a clear proof of the Prophet Muhammad getting revelation and knowledge from God. But for someone in the nineteenth century like Bahaullah to repeat similar ideas (i.e. unity of humanity) cannot be called new revelation coming from God, particularly when he himself originally arose from within the religion of Islam.

<http://www.muslim.org/intro/bah.htm>

These are the ideas of Baha'is regarding Ahmadiyya Muslims :

While some of the few quotes of their (Ahmadi) writings I have read seem quite forceful and rarely seem inspired, the correlations to Baha'i scripture is quite astounding. Their founder also claims to be the Mahdi and Messiah, as well as claiming the same ties to Buddhism and Hinduism. They also promote non-violence and uphold jihad as personal struggle not the warring aspects Muslims have accepted widely.

They differ in many ways, they uphold more closely everything in the Qu'ran and much of their writings are about this book. He also claims Jesus didn't actually die on the cross, but rather journeyed to India where he died an old man of natural causes.

Obviously, I do not believe time based prophecies apply since it was founded in 1889, thus 45 years late for Jewish, Christian, Muslim, and Hindu prophecy at least. They also call their leader Caliph, which I agree with Riggs is the mark of the beast – the 666 referred to in Revelation. Still, it is interesting, could their leader have been exposed to Baha'u'llah's writings at this time? There are already 200 million members of this group apparently, so I think it would be a valuable group to target with pioneering, they already accept many things Baha'u'llah has said so presenting time based prophecies might be enough to bring them to the Baha'i Faith?

I sort of liken them to Mormonism in that they have writings that correlate to what Baha'u'llah has said – and in the case of Mormonism, accurately describes the Baha'i dispensations coming – however entirely focus on a previous dispensation rather than bringing anything new.

<http://bahaforums.com/interfaith/2906-ahmadiyya-muslims.html>

What the Christians have to say about both of these "Mahdi"s? <http://www.iranian.com/main/blog/covenant/bahauallah-biblical-prophecy>

Manish Desai's response to the shrewd Baha'is who are using prominent Indians to serve their purposes.

The petition written by Baha'is and signed by prominent Indians can be found here <http://www.bahai.in/news/national-news-of-the-bahais-of-india/petition-to-the-iranian-government-for-immediate-release-of-the-staff-and-faculty-of-the-bahai-institute-of-higher-education.html>

Here is a response to it by Mr. Manish Desai. It is pretty immature on the part of 86 Indians' Petition to the Iranian Government for Immediate Release of the staff and faculty of the Bahá'í Institute of Higher Education. As most of these eminent personalities are highly educated – some even authorities on law – it would have been appropriate that they should have verified the facts before making a petition. Has anyone of these personalities checked with the Government of Iran? Are petitions to be signed purely on single side of the story? On whose influence are signatures taken? Do these personalities know that the Government of India cannot support a resolution which is country specific?

This was none of the business of so called imminent citizen to issue an petition. If they were so concerned about the Release of the staff and faculty of the Bahá'í Institute of Higher Education, they would have just conveyed their concerned to the government of India and not breaking into pens or shouting from roof tops. The shrewd Baha'is have used these imminent citizens of India.

Now let us see the facts! 1. The Baha'i community has repeatedly been convicted in several sensitive countries of carrying espionage activities. The Baha'is have been under scanner for violating law of the land in several countries for carrying out religious conversions by deception. It seems the Baha'i administration is interested in having "martyrs" for its cause in different countries rather than to see their own people save their lives.

2. Baha'is involved in espionage in India. Why, even in India there are cases filed against the Baha'i faith members for possessing fraudulent documents and carrying out espionage activities and for supplying classified defense documents to Iranian and Israeli spying agencies in return making huge amount of foreign currency. (Refer Hindustan Times 13th July 2006 New Delhi Edition,)

3. Baha'i Administration with all modern techniques involved in conversion of Simple Indians. Recently Universal House of Justice, the apex organization of the Baha'i Faith in a new encyclical has issued a call to Baha'is to go out and actively convert Indians. In this era of globalization, Baha'i administration with unlimited funds use sophisticated, deceptive techniques to lure, brainwash and convert innocent people.

They forcefully convert Hindus by inducement and deception. Many poor illiterate tribal people in Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh were deceptively converted into Baha'i Faith, although anti-conversion law is passed in 11 of the states in India. This will have a disastrous effect on India's political, cultural and social fabric.

For centuries Indians have been forcefully converted into other religions. Religious conversion has profoundly affected our cultural legacy by the after-effects of genocidal coercive religious conversion. It has left its wounding imprint on our individual psyches and our collective consciousness.

Although coercive religious conversion of Hindus in India and abroad has deep historical roots, recent deceptive religious conversion techniques used by Baha'i movement pose serious political, social, ethical and psychological problems. <http://ruhibooks.blogspot.com/>

4. Baha'i Teaching Institutes involved in deceptive conversions. On 3rd March 2011, the locals of Wai district in Panchgani caught the Baha'is red handed indulging in conversion activities. The Baha'is arrived in a Mini Bus to propagate Baha'i religion to the local people in Wai. The Baha'is were taken to the police station where Baha'i officials said that "we were conducting practicals for these students". They were told that why the students can't go to different schools and get their practical training.

The students confessed that they were going to villages for conduction of Baha'i religious classes for children and youths and they were told by their teachers that their course will be completed only when they do these activities. The teacher warned them to be 'TACTFUL' while propagating the Baha'i religion.

On seeing the Baha'i books it became clear for the Police that it was a conversion class. As the 'Ruhi Book' that they were having, contained Baha'i religious material and chapters such as "UNDERSTANDING THE BAHAI WRITINGS."

The Police officials reprimanded Baha'is of their hypocritical behavior and warned them not to teach Baha'i Faith to the students/staff of NETTC as well as locals of Wai and Panchgani.

On further inquiry it was revealed by the staff, that

There are numerous complaints against all the three institutes of Baha'is namely:

- NETTC • New Era School and Junior college • New Era Baha'i Academy

The conversion activities going on in these institutes are in the name of Children Moral Classes, Youth Classes etc. In fact some of the staff of these institutes have given a written complaint to the government authorities that these institutes demands 'Conversion' in return of confirmation and promotion in these institutes. Therefore some of the staff just to gain the facilities provided by these institutes like good salary, food, boarding and lodging have apparently accepted the Baha'i Faith, but in actuality they practice their ancestral Religion.

The heads of all the three Baha'i institutions are Iranians who have hired local Indians to go to the villages, schools, colleges and universities to teach Baha'i Training courses which are nothing but purely 'Baha'i Religious Teachings'. Some of these people are well versed in local languages so they cunningly escape the authority scanners.

The staff further gave information that sometimes they have to conduct 'Ruhi Classes' for all the students of the class. The students are least interested in these courses but the staff and students have to do it compulsorily for hours and hours together. These courses have hidden agenda of teaching of Baha'i religious passages. The students are supposed to memorize long Baha'i prayers and quotations in order to enrich themselves with Baha'i Teaching and culture.

Even the tiny tots are not spared from Baha'i teachings. They too have to undergo various Baha'i children courses designed for them, that are based on Ruhi books.

One of the senior staff who has retired from the school and now taken another assignment in one school elaborated the whole teaching process of the Baha'is. He said that Baha'i Faith has no acceptability in the society. Baha'i Faith has nothing new to offer to the society although they claim that they have solutions for all the problems, but first the people should accept Baha'i Faith. In fact Baha'i teachings have been copied from other religions. Therefore in order to spread the Baha'i teachings, the Baha'i Administration emphasizes on establishment of Schools and considers the children as best and fruitful targets.

Some of the parents have seriously objected to Baha'is proselytizing going on in these Baha'i Institutions. But then they have limitations to change the schools at this stage. <http://panchgani-Bahais.blogspot.com/>

BAHA'I METHODOLOGY It has been the habit of the Baha'is to have active public relations and persuade high ranking government official and eminent personalities in every country to speak for them. Why do the Baha'is never speak of the huge injustice and oppression being meted out to fellow Indian citizens in different parts of world? Are Indian Baha'is, first Baha'is and then Indians? It is not the first time that the 86 Indian have fallen into the trap of cunning Baha'is. Earlier in 2010 there were 31 eminent Indians who were taken by the Baha'is for a ride. In the Issue of 7 Baha'i prisoners in Iran. This point to a very strong Baha'i network operating in India.

In India from Sorabjees to Mistris, from Corporators to Member of Parliaments and from State Minister to Cabinet Ministers are being contacted to bring pressure on Iran as if the Government of India has nothing else to do except protect the Baha'is. In spite of these efforts the Baha'is do not lack behind in claiming that we do not interfere in politics.

Unfortunately, the petition by eminent Indian citizens has served the following purpose for the Baha'is

1. Propagation of Baha'i Faith in India 2. Defamation of Iranian Government 3. Attempt to sabotage the good and cordial relation between India and Iran.

I earnestly request Indian politicians and bureaucrats not to succumb to Baha'is charming persuasion and verify facts and evaluate long term repercussions before taking-up a stand.

Manish Desai Source http://groups.google.com/group/talk.religion.bahai/browse_thread/thread/5a86f9ec58a998bd

Parents Be Aware of “Baha’i cup of Tea” for Your Children

Following 15-day jail terms handed down to two Baha’is in Tashkent, one of the two, Timur Chekparbayev, who was subsequently expelled from Uzbekistan. The authorities accused the two of missionary activity and proselytism, following a police raid on a meeting for teenage Children.

Chekparbayev stated that these were not conversion meetings with young children and Jr. Youth but it was just to drink a cup of tea together. In response, Akram Nematov of the Justice Ministry told Forum 18 that “They can drink tea – that’s not forbidden, but they must inform the Department when they HOLD RELIGIOUS EDUCATION WITH YOUNG PEOPLE.”

It is clear that Mr. Chekparbaev arrived in Uzbekistan with the aim of propagating Baha’i Faith in the country, drawing on the support of generous donations from sponsors. By the way, the headquarters of the Baha’is operate in the open in Israel. Certain elements from that country find it very useful to use the Baha’i community to shatter the unity of the Muslim ranks, since the Jews see Islam as the main opponent of Judaism. It is also interesting that in the dawn of Baha’ism, Russia offered asylum to one of the leaders of this persecuted religion. And in Ashkhabad [Turkmenistan], one of the Baha’i communities was built.

Timur Chekparbayev carried out missionary and proselytizing activity without having the consent of the Uzbekistani authorities and the consent of the parents, it was in clear violation of the Uzbekistani law, and the rules governing stays in the country.

On the 24th of July of this year, Mr. Chekparbaev was arrested and sent to the court for holding yet another “meeting” in house 36 on Bayikurganska Street in the Khamzin region of Tashkent. The regional court gave him a rather lenient sentence: 15 days in prison followed by an expulsion from the country without a right to return.

Chekparbaev couldn’t carry out his proselytizing activity because Baha’i isn’t recognized as a religion by the world community. Therefore, this ideological sabotage had very clear goals that are connected to increasing the geo-political influence of Israel, and sowing confusion in the minds of millions of Uzbekistani citizens. It seems that such a decisive step taken by Mr. Akram Nematov will defiantly stop this sort of deceptive proselytizes activity aimed at destroying the unity and moral fabrics of Uzbekistan. It will also serve as a warning to all those who wish to test their luck based on the questionable field of false prophets.

The decision taken by Uzbekistani authorities should be an eye opener for the CIS Countries to counter the moral damage inflicted on the fragile souls on young people (by the way, Mr. Chekparbaev’s so-called flock included minors!). A constant vigil at this deceptive and Zionist created false and fabricated religion is the need of the time.

This is Zionism attempt of transferring the work of false prophet Baha’u’llah from their country to Muslim countries and take vital information of CIS and Middle East countries.

Originally Posted on Iranian.com <http://iranian.com/main/blog/ravian-bilani/parents-be-aware-baha-i-cup-tea-your-children>

Baha'i writings on covenant breakers

The Status of UHJ

Here's one of the Haifa Baha'i counselors speaking about the UHJ:

"We don't want to be like those people who want to see God with their own eyes, or hear His melody with their own ears, because we have been given the gift of being able to see through the eyes of the House of Justice and listen through the ears of the House of Justice." – Baha'i Counselor Rebeque Murphy

To hear this section of her talk go to:

<http://media1.bahai.us/tab/Highlights/Sunday/...>

—

Note that this idolatrous statement has not been reputed by the UHJ, it is the level of enthrallment to themselves that they now expect: unquestioning obedience.

Cheers

Larry Rowe

Caste System in Baha'i Faith

Currently, the Baha'is think of humanity as being divided into a few official groups or castes. I have organized them in a list from "best" to "worst" based on how many rights they would have in a future Baha'i world order:

1. Baha'i in good standing 2. Baha'i with administrative rights removed 3. non-Baha'i 4. Covenant-breaker

If you include more subtle gradations, which may possibly acquire a greater degree of official status in the future, the list would look like this:

1. Baha'i in good standing, active
2. Baha'i in good standing, inactive
3. Baha'i with some administrative rights removed
4. Baha'i with all administrative rights removed (Feast attendance, voting, eligibility for election, contribution to Funds, contribution to Huququ'llah, plus anything I'm forgetting to mention)
5. non-Baha'i (never been a Baha'i)
6. ex-Baha'i, left voluntarily (not an opponent)
7. ex-Baha'i, membership revoked/expelled by UHJ (not an opponent)
8. opponent or enemy of the faith, non-Baha'i
9. opponent or enemy of the faith, ex-Baha'i
10. child or grandchild of Covenant-breaker, not practicing in Covenant-breaker organization
11. Covenant-breaker, not officially declared by UHJ but member of Covenant-breaker organization
12. Covenant-breaker, officially declared by UHJ

Groups 10-12 constitute the Baha'i version of the "untouchable caste." Groups 4-12 (the vast majority of categories) would not have the right to vote in elections for the highest governmental positions, i.e. the Baha'i Houses of Justice that would have final authority at the local, national, and international levels.

How's that for unity of all people, huh?

Best, Eric Stetson (Group 11 – I think ☐)

Iran justifies it's stance on Baha'is

In addition to cooperation and connection with colonialists supporting and accompanying the dictatorships have been among the principles of this sect.

The tie between Bahaism and the Pahlavi regime reached it peak after the coup of 19 August 1953 and the Bahaists mounted to the highest political, economic, cultural and military positions in the last two decades of the rule of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi.

Presence of the leaders of this misled sect in the important political, military and economic positions also prepared the ground for expansion of its propagation activities against the Shiites in the cradle of Shiites (Iran) from which they took the highest benefit.

It is noteworthy that ties to colonialists still continue in the forms of official support of the white House and the Occupier Regime of Palestine for them and the apparent cooperation against the Islamic republic of Iran.

Wahid Azal's "Ridvan" Message to the Universal House of Justice

19 Terms and Conditions for the Unconditional Surrender of the Haifan Baha'i cult

Now that the Baha'i cult has been thoroughly weakened, cut to minute size and is therefore hemorrhaging to an assured and well-deserved (and long overdue) death, I am hereby making the following offer to you Haifan Baha'is to unconditionally surrender, walk away, and save whatever you have left of your personal lives. I urge you to seriously consider this offer because if you don't, whatever else shall unfold will be on your own heads personally. Now that this demand has been spelled out, here are the 19 terms for your unconditional surrender:

- 1) The immediate dissolution of the ITC (international teaching center), the written and unequivocal dismissal of all haifan Baha'i continental board of councilor members and their underlings (Auxiliary board members, etc), to be followed by the immediate resignation without equivocation of all 9 members of the bogus and illegal universal house of justice based in Haifa, Israel;
- 2) The immediate and unequivocal dissolution of the entire infrastructure of the haifan Baha'i administration and bureaucracy globally – in every capacity and function – and the dismissal/dissolution of every national spiritual assembly, regional council and local assembly tied to your specific organization on the planet; as well as the immediate and unequivocal suspension of all activities under the name and rubric of the haifan Baha'i organization;
- 3) The immediate and unequivocal dissolution and suspension of all Ruhi Institutes globally;
- 4) The immediate and unequivocal relinquishment and full disclosure in writing of all assets, chattels, investments, funds, stocks, bonds, monies and otherwise belonging to the haifan Baha'i organization in Israel, North America, the United Arab Emirates, Europe and throughout the rest of the world; whether immediately tied or tangentially;
- 5) The immediate and unequivocal disclosure in writing of all subsidies and all monies and perquisites received by your organization since 1910 – in any capacity whatsoever – by any individual(s), entities or groups, governments or otherwise, not immediately tied to your organization, and specifically from the state of Israel since 1948;
- 6) The immediate financial and documentary auditing of your entire organization on all continents, beginning with the Baha'i world centre in Haifa, Palestine;
- 7) The immediate and unequivocal surrender of all legal and official documentation as well as letters and correspondences of your organization from the dates of 1871 to present;
- 8) The immediate and unequivocal surrender of all files and archives kept in any policing or surveillance capacities by the haifan Baha'i organization whatsoever upon individuals, whether these be files regarding rank-and-file members of the haifan Baha'i cult or those put out by it as well as those not;
- 9) The immediate and unequivocal surrender in writing of the full names, addresses, duties and capacities of all those serving under your Internet Committee based in the United States and spread out throughout the globe as well as the full unequivocal disclosure of the date of its establishment and any/all outside aid obtained;
- 10) The immediate and unequivocal surrender of the entirety of the archives of all texts and source documents (as well as artefacts) of a specifically scriptural and historical nature to a panel consisting of members of the Bayani community, the Reform Baha'i movement, the Orthodox Baha'i Communities – 1) Marangella and 2) Soghomonian -, the Baha'is Under the Provisions of the Covenant, ex-Baha'i academics of a reputable nature such as Denis Maceoin as well as those such as Margrit Warburg etc, and any others determined in consensus by the Panel;
- 11) The immediate and unequivocal disclosure of the facts regarding the fate of the National Spiritual Assembly of Iran circa 1979 and a complete explanation with documentation as to the reasons for the conspicuous silence of the so-called universal house of justice in world fora afterwards regarding the fate of this body;
- 12) The immediate and unequivocal release and publication of the Will and Testament of Shoghi Effendi to the worldwide Baha'i community;
- 13) The immediate and unequivocal and unhindered and unimpeded return of all documents, texts, scriptures, histories, papers and effects in your possession belonging to one Mirza Yahya Nuri Subh-i-Azal, which were illegally and fraudulently obtained by one Mirza Husayn 'Ali Nuri Baha'u'llah in Baghdad and Edirne in the 1860s, to the Bayani community;
- 14) The immediate and unequivocal return of all the properties of Bahji to its rightful owners, namely, the descendents of Mirza Muhammad 'Ali ibn al-Baha' and Mirza Badi'ullah ibn al-Baha';
- 15) The case one Hozhabr Yazdani (NOW DEAD) to be thoroughly examined for his execution of state sanctioned and protected criminal activities on behalf of your organization in Iran from the years 1953-1979;
- 16) The immediate and unequivocal disclosure in full regarding the criminal hawala networks operated by members of the haifan Baha'i organization throughout Asia, the Middle East, South America, Europe, North America and elsewhere, and an explanation with documentation regarding the nature of such activities and especially the names, addresses and capacities of those persons involved with these criminal hawala

networks;

17) The immediate and unequivocal disclosure of all documents and papers regarding the unexplained murder of one Dan Jordan in New York City in 1982 as well as the immediate and unequivocal disclosure of all documents and papers regarding the suspicious murder of one Hedi Ma'ani in New Zealand;

18) The immediate arrest and criminal prosecution of misters Peter Khan, Alan Waters, Stephan Hall, Manijeh Rayhani, Robert C Henderson, et al., including their various staff, helpers and agents;

19) The immediate opening of the fake and disputed shrine on Mt. Carmel to an independent team of international scientific examiners expert in forensic scientific analysis in a completely uninhibited scientific determination involving the exhumation of the body claimed to be that of Siyyid 'Ali Muhammad Shirazi, the Bab, and its free and unfettered scientific determination as to whether this body in fact be that of the person claimed;

a) No individuals either haifan Baha'i or peripherally tied to the Baha'i religion (from any denomination) may serve on this team of scientific forensic experts;

b) An independent and impartial team shall serve as an oversight committee to the work of the scientific team in question which shall report on a daily basis to the aforementioned panel above on the status of the work.

Gay marriage in the City of the Covenant

Abdul Baha said : This American nation is equipped and empowered to accomplish that which will adorn the pages of history, to become the envy of the world and be blest in both the East and the West for the triumph of its people... The American continent gives signs and evidences of very great advancement. Its future is even more promising, for its influence and illumination are far-reaching. It will lead all nations spiritually."

Abdu'l-Bahá in His addresses in America and elsewhere frequently expressed the hope, the prayer and the assurance that the banner of international peace would be first raised in America. At Cincinnati, Ohio, on November 5, 1912, He said:—

America is a noble nation, a standard-bearer of peace throughout the world, shedding her light to all regions. Other nations are not untrammelled and free of intrigues like the United States, and are unable to bring about Universal Peace. But America, thank God, is at peace with all the world, and is worthy of raising the flag of brotherhood and International Peace. When the summons to International Peace is raised by America, all the rest of the world will cry: "Yes, we accept." The nations of every clime will join in adopting the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, revealed over fifty years ago. In His Epistles He asked the parliaments of the world to send their best and wisest men to an international world parliament that should decide all questions between the peoples and establish peace ... then we shall have the Parliament of Man of which the prophets have dreamed.

(Dr. J. E. Esslemont, Baha'u'llah and the New Era, p. 242)

During his visit to America in 1912, he prayed for the American elections and American nation thus :

O Thou kind Lord! This gathering is turning to Thee. These hearts are radiant with Thy Love. These minds and spirits are exhilarated by the message of Thy glad-tidings. O God! Let this American democracy become glorious in spiritual degrees even as it has aspired to material degrees, and render this just government victorious.

Confirm this revered nation to upraise the standard of the oneness of humanity, to promulgate the Most Great Peace, to become thereby most glorious and praiseworthy among all the nations of the world.

O God! This American nation is worthy of Thy favors and is deserving of Thy mercy. Make it precious and near to thee through Thy bounty and bestowal.

Abdul Baha Called New York the City of Covenant <http://abdul-baha-the-mystery-of-god.blogspot.com/>

Today after 100 years [New York Assembly passes bill to legalize gay marriage 80-63; and Legislation now heads to Senate](#)

Courtesy: <http://bahaism.blogspot.com/>

No clergy in Bahai faith!!

The Baha'i Faith proudly states that it has no priesthood, yet Auxiliary Board Members, Counselors of Continental Boards, individual travel-teaching "stars" and other influential individuals have, to a large extent, either been given or have taken on priest-like duties.

Peter an ex Bahai writes.....

Let us review some Bahai rules about gender equality

* No women are included in the 9-member Universal House of Justice (UHJ) with the sole exception of the widow of Shoghi Affendi.

Why only this lady is included? Is she not a normal woman!

* The shroud to be given by the eldest male child. Women are disallowed.

* Dower to be given to women only.

* Polygamy is acceptable but polyandry is banned.

* If a man wishes to travel he should inform his wife of the time duration, which if exceeds nine months the lady has right to remarry. Then if the husband does not specify the time of his journey the wife should wait for him all her life. * Maintenance of women is obligatory on the man.

* Only women should attend to the household chores.

* No Hajj for women. Nor are they expected to keep the fasts lapsed during the days of menstruation. Why?

Tahera Qazvini sanctified her life for Bahauallah but her grave is not included in the Hajj.

Why was her body not brought to Akka like others?

* The house and the clothes of a deceased are the sole property of the eldest male child and nothing is there for women.

Is this not inequality?

Stupidity of nineteen days months in bahai faith

19 days month in Bahai Faith is totally unscientific and absurd.

And then to make a year of 365 days they have made a stupid adjustment of 4 days- also called as **inter-calary days**. Why this adjustment is done?

If at all Bahai faith is a religion of God, then why they have deviated from 12 months calendar when all other divine religions have 12 months year. The debate is open for discussion. The only apparent reason for converting the number of month to 19 is due to the significance of number 19 in Bahai faith(as the number of early converts were 19).

Scandal in Kalimat Press

The Scandal involving Kalimat Press.

Posted by Dale Husband on November 30, 2010

Kalimat Press is a small Baha'i owned book publishing company that was recently at the center of a huge controversy, one that shocked me and apparently was the primary reason for Dann May and his wife Phyllis Bernard to leave the Baha'i Faith.

<http://www.kalimat.com/about.html>

Kalimat Press was founded in 1978 by Anthony A. Lee and Payam Afsharian, Bahá'ís in the Los Angeles area, during the Bahá'í month of Kalimat (words). It is a small, privately owned publishing company which is exclusively oriented towards the publication of books and other materials on the Bahá'í Faith. From its inception, Kalimat Press has sought to encourage the publication of new ideas and new approaches to the Bahá'í Teachings. The company has been especially interested in the publication of books for Bahá'í children, materials on Bahá'í history, translations from Persian, original Bahá'í scholarship, and essays on the relevance of Bahá'í teachings to contemporary social issues. Since 1978, Kalimat Press has published over one-hundred titles. These include the scholarly series Studies in the Bábí and Bahá'í Religions. The eighteen volumes of this series have included essays on history, theology, poetry, and other academic topics. These include essays on the Bahá'í Faith in America, in Europe, in India, and in other parts of the world. Kalimat Press now publishes only one or two books per year. Our intention is to ensure the continued production of serious Bahá'í books which will enrich and diversify the range of Bahá'í literature available in English. We are particularly interested in books on Bahá'í history, and more than half of the titles that we have produced have been directly related to this concern. We have published the Bahá'í Holy Day series in order to provide local Bahá'í communities with reference materials for important Bahá'í anniversaries. The titles include: The Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh, Days of Ridván, The Declaration of the Báb, Twin Holy Days, Naw-Rúz: New Day, The Passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá The Martyrdom of the Báb, and A Feast for the Soul. Why does Kalimat Press publish only one or two books a year, instead of dozens like a normal book publishing company would? Because of these:

<http://bahairants.com/fahrenheit-245-83.html>

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY of the BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE UNITED STATES 536 SHERIDAN ROAD,
WILMETTE,

ILLINOIS 60091-2849 • (847) 733-3537 • EMAIL: secretariat@usbnc.org December 29, 2005 To all Local Spiritual Assemblies Dear Bahá'í Friends, Enclosed for your information is a copy of our letter of today's date addressed to Kalimat Press. We ask you to comply with the decision we have made that all national and local Bahá'í agencies cease to distribute books and other items marketed by this publisher. However, you may continue to sell whatever you may have in stock until your inventories are depleted. Individuals are free, of course, to decide to purchase books from any publisher. Our decision was regretfully reached as a result of increasing concern in recent years that a number of titles handled by Kalimat Press, aside from those which have enriched Bahá'í literature over the years, contain matter inimical to the best interests of our Faith. It is highly inappropriate for Bahá'í institutions, which are obligated to safeguard such interests, to provide channels of distribution for publishers promoting such titles. With loving Bahá'í greetings, NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE UNITED STATES Robert C. Henderson Secretary-General ***** NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY of the BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE UNITED STATES 536 SHERIDAN ROAD, WILMETTE, ILLINOIS 60091-2849 • (847) 733-3537 • EMAIL: secretariat@usbnc.org December 29, 2005 Mr. Anthony Lee Kalimat Press 1600 Sawtelle Blvd., Suite 310 Los Angeles, CA 90025 Dear Bahá'í Friend, We write to inform you of our decision to instruct the Bahá'í Distribution Service and all other national and local Bahá'í agencies serving our community to cease to acquire and sell any titles marketed by Kalimat Press. We have been impelled to so decide out of a serious concern that your company is increasingly offering titles that are inimical to the best interests of the Bahá'í Faith. Yours in His service, Robert C. Henderson Secretary-General Followed by this: http://bahaiadmin.blogspot.com/2006_09_01_archive.html#115813307855199935 Agencies Supporting Shutdown of Publisher UK BAHÁ'Í NEWS EMAIL SERVICE National Spiritual Assembly nsa@bahai.org.uk 23 July 2006 Dearly loved Friends The National Spiritual Assembly has taken the decision that Baha'i Books UK and its agents will cease to distribute books and other items marketed by Kalimat Press with immediate effect. The National Assembly's decision was reached as a result of increasing concern in recent years that a number of titles published by Kalimat Press, aside from those which have enriched Baha'i literature over the years, contain matter inimical to the best interests of the Faith. The National Assembly believes that it would therefore be inappropriate for it, as the institution obligated to safeguard such interests in the United Kingdom, to provide channels of distribution for such material. Baha'i Books UK and its agents may continue, however, to sell whatever Kalimat titles remain in stock until their inventories are depleted. Further, individuals are free to decide to purchase books from other suppliers. With loving Baha'i greetings National Spiritual Assembly What brought that on? Who knows? What caused Joseph Stalin during the 1930s to purge and execute many members of his own Communist Party, along with many Soviet military officers who were otherwise loyal to Communism and/or the Soviet Union, but perhaps not to Stalin personally? That had the effect of weakening the Soviet Union so that when Nazi Germany attacked it in 1941, it almost fell. Likewise, the credibility of the National Spiritual Assemblies of the United States and the United Kingdom have been destroyed by this arbitrary and ridiculous decision to denounce and attempt to shut down a small book publishing company that by all accounts and appearances is a loyal promoter of the Baha'i Faith itself, rather than the whims of the current Baha'i leadership! <http://www.petitiononline.com/cgi-bin/mlk?http://bahaisonline.net/petition> The Bahá'í Faith is perceived by most people — Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís — as a generally liberal religion, far closer to the Unitarian-Universalists than to the Southern Baptists. Yet over the last 30-40 years the

governing institutions of the Bahá'í Faith have become ever more conservative in nature and in many ways are adopting strict control mechanisms on Bahá'is to maintain a form of Bahá'í fundamentalism. Bahá'í fundamentalism is an odd development. The scriptures of the Bahá'í Faith are generally progressive — calling for cooperation and understanding among faith communities, equality of the sexes, promotion of the oneness of humanity, the harmony of science and religion, the elimination of extremes of wealth and poverty, support of the United Nations and international order. In contrast to this liberal dimension, the Bahá'í community, especially through its conservative administrative order, promotes theocracy, forbids women to serve on the highest elected offices of the religion, defines homosexuality as a psychological disorder, forbids Bahá'is to join progressive groups like Amnesty International or the Interfaith Alliance, requires Bahá'is to stay aloof from controversial political issues, requires mandatory pre-publication censorship of all that individual Bahá'is seek to publish about their faith, has implemented internal spying on suspected believers, exercises administrative expulsion of Baha'is, and threatens shunning of Bahá'is who are targeted as "internal enemies." Kalimát Press has been a leader in Bahá'í publishing since its founding in 1978. It has experienced a series of conflicts with the Bahá'í administration over its attempt to publish academic studies of the Babi and Bahá'í religions. Although Kalimát Press has faithfully followed the demand of the Bahá'í administration to submit all works by Bahá'is to pre-publication censorship, the process of pre-publication review and censorship has created tension between Kalimát Press and the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States. The Universal House of Justice, the international head of the Bahá'í Faith based in Haifa, Israel, has been drawn into these disputes and has also expressed its dissatisfaction with Kalimát Press's agenda to foster Bahá'í studies. Besides works by Bahá'is published under the Kalimát Press imprint, other academic books from Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í publishers are distributed by Kalimát to their main market: the American Bahá'í community. These distributed titles include books on Islam and Iran. A handful of books written by non-Bahá'is, former Bahá'is, or liberal Bahá'is published by university presses or self-published has triggered the National Spiritual Assembly's call for a boycott of all Kalimát Press titles. The offending titles appear to be the following: 1. Juan Cole's *Modernity and the Millennium: The Genesis of the Bahá'í Faith in the 19th-Century Middle East* (Columbia University Press). 2. Abbas Amanat, *Resurrection and Renewal: The Making of the Babi Movement in Iran, 1844-1850* (Cornell University Press). 3. William Garlington, *The Bahá'í Faith in America* (Praeger Publisher). 4. Sen McGlinn, *Church and State: A Postmodern Political Theology. Book One* (self published, MA thesis, University of Leiden). All of these books have received positive reviews and are not particularly radical. Each of them does however rub against popular Bahá'í beliefs and the favorite theological views of conservative members of the Bahá'í leadership. For example, Sen McGlinn's book provides an exhaustive examination of Bahá'í texts, from Bahá'u'lláh to Shoghi Effendi, on Church-State relations and makes the case that the Bahá'í founders did not expect a Bahá'í theocracy to emerge in some distant future. Mr. McGlinn was subsequently expelled from the Bahá'í community by the Universal House of Justice for publishing his research. The Universal House of Justice complained that the author was attempting to impose his theology on the Bahá'í community. McGlinn was expelled from the Bahá'í community without a hearing or any semblance of due process. Shortly after the expulsion of Mr. McGlinn, the boycott of Kalimát Press was announced. So I have signed this petition to end the boycott of Kalimát Press and urge others to do the same: <http://www.petitiononline.com/kalimat/petition.html> Meanwhile, the courts in the USA are no longer taking the Haifa Baha'is as seriously as they might have in the past:

The punishment of a thief (in Baha'i writings)

Kyrgyzstan President signs New Religion Law Banning proselytism and deceptive conversions of children and Youths

Corruption in the Baha'i Faith

After losing his license to practice medicine in Ontario, due to several patients of his coming forward with allegations of sexual abuse, Hossain Danesh was protected by the NSA and given a plum job running Landegg Academy in Switzerland. That was a comfortable, out of the way posting. Especially since it allowed him to put the distance of half the world between himself and what had transpired recently. Danesh then applied his considerable executive talent to that organization.

The result?

Landegg closed its doors in 2005 declaring bankruptcy. So Danesh headed back to Canada. Now that 16 years have passed, washing away most people's memories, it seems that he is ready for his newest public incarnation. And he is being heavily promoted by the NSA.

Earlier this year Hossain Danesh started to give seminars on marriage and family life – akin to a pedophile priest giving a seminar on child rearing. Apparently the NSA is kicking things into high gear with a string of high profile seminars planned around Canada to promote Danesh even further and reintroduce him to the community as a public figure. Soon Bahai Rants will begin to give odds on when Danesh will end up back on the NSA.

Hossain Danesh's jam packed schedule includes workshops on such topics as "Unity of Faith and Reason in Action" and one targeted specifically to youth: "Shaping Our Destiny: An Open Forum for Youth and Young Adults". There is also his usual type of workshop which is being promoted under the auspices of the Baha'i Marriage and Family Life Committee. There is no question that this has the full support and backing of the NSA of Canada, the institution that Danesh served on for many years before his fall from grace in 1994.

The same institution that continues to have a healthy number of members that were his peers back then. All this makes me wonder if within a few years Franco Ceccherini will be promoted by the Italian NSA to go around that country giving workshops and talks on the fund.

Article Link : <http://bahairants.com/hossain-danesh-heavily-promo...>

Also read : <http://www.scribd.com/doc/41194053/Hossain-Danesh-...> <http://www.scribd.com/doc/41194063/Hossain-Danesh-...>

Position Paper of Tarbiyat Baha'i Community

Introduction

This paper constitutes one believer's attempt to objectively summarize the crux of the dilemma in which the Baha'i World found itself after the death of the First Guardian in 1957, and the genesis of the group of Baha'is who subsequently came together as the Tarbiyat Community. It is thoughtful and well-written, but nonetheless reflects a single individual's understanding and, for brevity's sake, cannot be comprehensive. In the spirit of independent investigation of truth, the Community plans to add other material and points of view to this web site in the future, and invites the reader who wants more information in the meantime to inquire directly by email, letter, or telephone.

Prepared by Dr. Galen Ewing
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National House of Justice of the United States and Canada
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Rev. 9/27/94

Background

There have been many inquiries as to the distinction between the Baha'i World Faith, centered in Haifa, Israel, and Wilmette, Illinois, on the one hand, and the Tarbiyat Baha'i Community, centered in Las Vegas, New Mexico, U.S.A., on the other. This paper is an attempt to explain this difference. First, it is necessary to emphasize that the Tarbiyat Baha'i Community and the group known as the Baha'i World Faith do not differ in their fundamental beliefs and theology; they share the same Sacred Writings, and follow the same religious practices. It is essential to set the background by summarizing briefly the history of the Faith.

All major religions have predicted that another Prophet or Manifestation of God would arise in good time, to bring mankind a further revelation of God's Word to serve as a guide for the present and future. This prophecy was fulfilled in double measure by the appearance in Iran (then Persia) of the Bab, followed shortly by Baha'u'llah, the founder of the Baha'i Faith. Baha'u'llah was persecuted by the civic and Islamic leaders of Iran, as a prominent member of the Babi Faith, which was considered to be apostate. It was while He was incarcerated in a foul dungeon in Teheran that Baha'u'llah Himself became aware of His true mission as a Manifestation of God. However, this was not announced to the Babi's, nor to the world, for several years. Eventually, after many vicissitudes and much suffering, He and His family were imprisoned in the ancient crusader's fortress in Acca, Palestine (now known as Akka, Israel). Here, and in the near vicinity, He spent the remainder of His life. His final two years were lived out under house arrest in the mansion of Bahji, a few miles north of Acca.

During His lifetime, Baha'u'llah authored a large number of writings, including many "tablets" or epistles addressed to specific individuals, and many prayers and shorter works. Baha'is believe all of these to have been divinely inspired or revealed. A great number of these writings, in English translation, have been compiled into book form, and are among the most treasured assets of the Baha'i Community.

Among the most significant works of Baha'u'llah is the Kitab-i-Aqdas (The Most Holy Book), which contains, in the flowery language of the time, a blue print for the conduct of the faithful and for the eventual civil government of mankind as well. In this and a related work called the Kitab-i-Ahd, He appointed His eldest son, Abdu'l-Baha, as the "Center of the Faith" to whom the faithful should turn after His (Baha'u'llah's) passing. It was clearly set forth that Abdu'l-Baha would not share His Father's station as a Divine Manifestation, but would rather be the "Perfect Exemplar" of the Faith, endowed with infallibility in the interpretation of His Father's teachings.

Baha'u'llah departed this life in 1892, and Abdu'l-Baha, often known as "The Master", assumed the leadership of the Faith. During His long ministry Abdu'l-Baha added many writings to those of His Father, and Baha'is consider them to have been divinely revealed. The position of Abdu'l-Baha was not unchallenged, but his opponents eventually all fell by the wayside and are not remembered.

Of greatest import for the Faith among the papers left by the Master is his Will and Testament. This remarkable document is considered to be an extension of the Kitab-i-Aqdas, in which the details of the plan for governance of the Faith and of the world are filled in. Three features in particular must be emphasized as leading to the present position of the Tarbiyat Community. These have to do with the establishment of a governing body to be known as the Universal House of Justice; with a body of persons known as the Hands of the Faith; and with the inauguration of the hereditary office of Guardian of the Cause of God. Abdu'l-Baha's grandson, Shoghi Effendi, was named as the first Guardian of the Faith. Pertinent portions of the Will and Testament can be paraphrased as follows:

Cracks in the Covenant

Bahais present their “Covenant” as something unique to their religion. They present it as an undisputable documented contract of inheritance, a will and testament, if you will, that is protected by God so that any violaters against it will be rendered impotent by it.

The Bahai Faith’s history is full of fragmentation, and the course the Bahai Faith has taken has taken quick surprise turns on a number of occasions.

Bahai Faith is itself a product of Covenant Breaking

First Covenant Breaking

The act that brought the Bahai Faith itself into existence was in defiance of such a covenant. The Bab’s successor, was actually Mirza Yahya and Not Bahauallah. Bahais produced evidence that Bahauallah was the Bab’s intended successor, but did not deny that the Báb appointed Mirza Yahya.

Second Covenant Breaking

Bahauallah appointed his eldest son Abdul Baha as his successor and after him his younger son Mohammed Ali. After the death of Abdul Baha although Mohammed Ali was alive still many followed , Shoghi effendi the grandson of Abdul Baha. Not following Mohammed Ali was Covenant Breaking of Bahauallah’s writing.

Third Covenant Breaking

Later, the third Bahai leader, Shoghi Effendi, died childless. Having failed to produce a will, and having failed to leave any clear indication of a successor, Shoghi left the Bahai world in a precarious situation. What he did was in apparent violation of the Bahai Covenant.

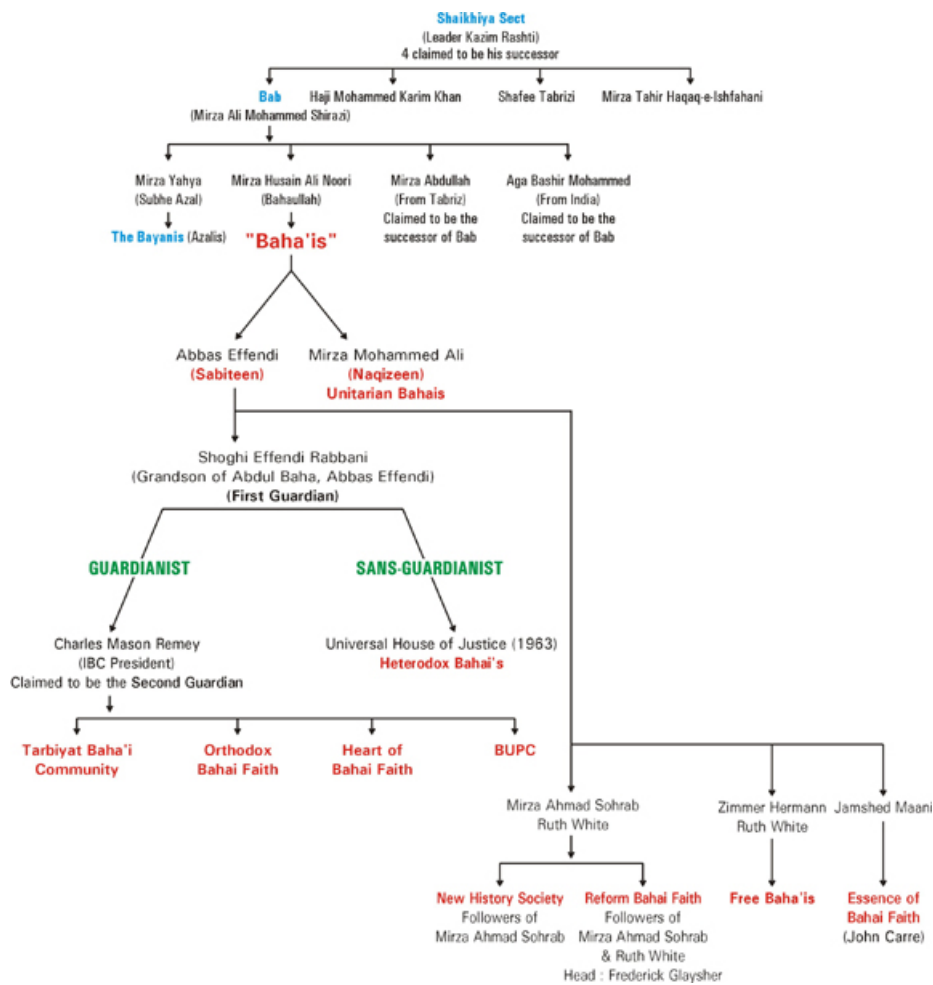
The Bahais whose allegiance lies with the heterodox organisation, those loyal to the Universal House of Justice currently seated in Haifa, Israel, maintain that those who are true to the Covenant will be empowered by the Covenant.

Bahai history shows us a different picture. At many times, the Bahais who eventually prevailed were nearly vanquished. Only recently has there been such a dominant sect in the Bahai Faith, but even that denomination seems impotent and obscure, lacking the influence to even familiarize the world with the word Bahai in this information age.

Bahai history is mottled with inheritance disputes. In defense of their Covenant, Bahais regard the darker periods as divine tests, arguing that egos are often tested by opportunities for power.

What Bahais do not acknowledge is the fact that their history is just as fragmented as other religions, with breaks occurring from its first years to the years following the death of Shoghi Effendi.

At present The Bahais are fragmented in following sects:



12 Principles of the Baha'i faith

[1. The Oneness of Humanity](#)

[2. Independent, Unfettered Investigation of the Truth](#)

[3. Religion is Progressive, All having a Common Foundation](#)

[4. Religion must be the Source of Unity](#)

[5. True Science and True Religion must Correspond](#)

[6. The Equality of Men and Women](#)

[7. Removal of all Prejudice](#)

[8. Universal Peace upheld by a Spiritual World Government](#)

[9. Universal Compulsary Education](#)

[10. A Spiritual Solution to the Economic](#)

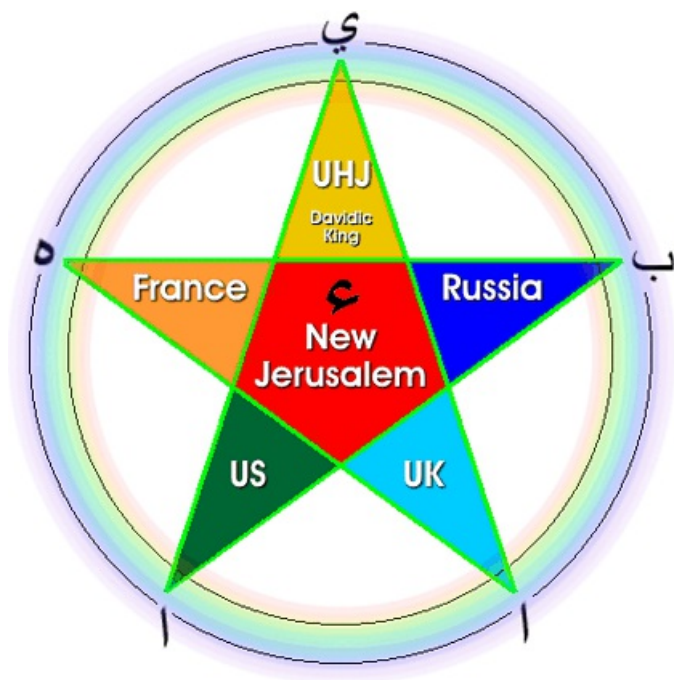
[Problem 11. A Universal Auxiliary Language](#)

[12. Universal House of Justice with the Davidic King](#)

Defeat of Haifan Baha'is

iranian.com

25-Nov-2010



BUPC.org

This is a victory for the Baha'is Under the Provisions of the Covenant, and a victory for the freedom of speech, the separation of church and state and the core values of the American system as espoused and envisioned by the American founding fathers.

Now at the 390th year anniversary of the Mayflower Compact and the Pilgrims landing on Plymouth Rock both in 1620; and in precise time for both the Day of the Covenant celebration and the memorial ascension of Abdu'l-Baha commemorating the activation of the sacred Charter of the Kingdom (see World Order of Baha'u'llah, p. 144) the Will and Testament (W&T) of Abdu'l-Baha, on the 26th and 28th of November respectively; as well as coinciding with the American Thanksgiving Holiday: once again the Covenant-breakers in Wilmette and Haifa have been thwarted in their attempts to shut down the public teaching effort and close down all the websites and publications of the Baha'is under the provisions of the Covenant.

In order to get out of the 6-66 injunction Joel Marangella and the other splinter groups fearing that if Abdu'l-Baha's aghsan son, Mason Remey was bound by the 6-66 injunction, this would pass on down to his successors, stood up and publically confessed in the courts of law that in fact they were not the successors to Mason Remey at all but his RIVALS!! Thus a legal confession to being a) boldfaced usurpers attacking Mason; and b) to being outside the provisions of the Covenant altogether. Thus, in order to save their own butts, so to speak, they admit they are not the successors to Baha'u'llah, Abdu'l-Baha, Shoghi Effendi and Mason Remey the son of Abdu'l-Baha!!!

In the case of the BUPC, we were able to testify in open court, 1) that Dr. Jensen who left the NSA in New Mexico in 1964 was never bound by the 6-66 injunction at all. We further pointed out that the Publishers and the IBC/UHJ established by him are not the successorship to Mason Remey, but are the lineal successorship to Baha'u'llah, Abdu'l-Baha and Shoghi Effendi, and then comes the UHJ set up on January 9, 1951 by Shoghi Effendi as that first IBC that the Hands demolished and which was then re-established on January 9, 1991 by Dr. Leland Jensen. As such, none of the entities, Dr. Jensen, the Publishers or the IBC/UHJ (www.UHJ.net) were in legal succession to Mason Remey, therefore none of them are bound by the 6-66 injunction.

Judge: Baha'i believers can call themselves Baha'i

November 23, 2010 9:11 PM

[Chicago News](#)

A federal court in Chicago has ruled a group of self-proclaimed orthodox Baha'i believers can keep calling themselves Baha'i despite a 1966 court decision that stopped an offshoot organization from using the Baha'I name. Today, the federal 7th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the 1966 decision does not apply to a different offshoot known as the Orthodox Baha'i Faith. Though the judges criticized the ruling from more than four decades ago as wrongfully trying to resolve a question of religious authority, they determined it was moot point since the original defendants led a denomination that no longer exists. Tuesday's ruling sidestepped any questions about whether a religious organization can trademark its name or icons. North American Baha'is have been based in Chicago ever since believers came to the U.S. about 90 years ago. Adherents of the Orthodox Baha'i Faith—about 50 strong in the U.S.—believe the mainstream Baha'i faith — about 5 million strong in the world — has strayed from the religion's original teachings.

— Manya A. Brachear

BAHA'I CONTROL ON THEIR ELECTORAL SYSTEM – EXPOSED

Posted by alex stewart

The Baha'i Influence at the United Nations

There are nearly 130 agencies and organizations operating within the UN system, each overseeing programs that require vast sums of money and massive bureaucracies to operate. These UN programs are all strategic parts of a plan to achieve global governance and eliminate national sovereignty from the planet. Most of these programs are never covered in the world's media and are able to operate outside of the awareness of the public they hope to govern. This giant bureaucracy is so far outside the realm of accountability that most people have no idea how it is operating or what agenda it is moving forward. Most Christians would be shocked to know how deeply involved the United Nations is in the spiritual agenda of the interfaith movement. Just as they are striving for a world government, they are also working with religious leaders and organizations to create the one world religion found in Bible prophecy – the religion that is to be an integral part of the Antichrist's rise to power.

The Baha'i community has, as a duly accredited non-governmental organization, long worked closely with the United Nations, supporting many of its goals and programs, and taking a leadership role in several international gatherings. Its involvement in the United Nations dates back to the founding of the UN in 1945. In 1947, the Baha'i communities of the United States and Canada were recognized by the UN Department of Public Information (DPI), and the next year, the Baha'i International Community itself was recognized by the UN DPI as an international non-governmental organization. In May 1970, they were granted consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), allowing for a greater degree of interaction with the Council and its subsidiary bodies. Since then they have also been granted consultative status with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and relationships with the many UN bodies have deepened and expanded over the years. Today for example, the Baha'i organization has a working relationship with the World Health Organization (WHO), is associated with the United Nations Environment Programme, and is involved in joint activities with UNIFEM and UNICEF as well as many other religious, environmental and social programs within the UN, to include peace-building, human rights, women's affairs, education, health, and sustainable development.

When you examine the beliefs and writings of the Baha'i community, it is not hard to understand the United Nations' support and confidence in this organization. Their end goal is the same. Just as the United Nations believes that a new world order is just around the corner, the Baha'i believe the human race is nearing the next stage in their spiritual evolution – a phase that brings us one rung higher on the evolutionary ladder toward world peace and utopia. In their belief statement they write that, *"The current world confusion and calamitous condition in human affairs is a natural phase in an organic process leading ultimately and irresistibly to the unification of the human race in a single social order whose boundaries are those of the planet."* They use their voice at the United Nations to convince global leaders of the need for a spiritual element in the development of the new world order. In the Baha'i document "A Vision of World Peace", written by the Universal House of Justice, they state that *"no serious attempt to set human affairs aright, to achieve world peace, can ignore religion."* The Baha'i "incarnation of God", Abdu'l-Bahá, said, *"religion is the greatest of all means for the establishment of order in the world."* They refer to the organized religions of today as "stuff of history" and claim that these religions of exclusivity, intolerance, and perversions of truth are the root of all evil and the cause for all of the world's social, political, and economic ills.

"A Vision of World Peace" goes on to say that *"those who have held blindly and selfishly to their particular orthodoxies, who have imposed on their votaries erroneous and conflicting interpretations of the pronouncements of the Prophets of God, bear heavy responsibility for the confusion and artificial barriers erected between faith and reason, science and religion"*. They blame the resurgence of "fanatical religious fervor" occurring across the globe for what they call a *"dying convulsion that is undermining the spiritual values which are conducive to the unity of mankind"*.

In 2 Peter 3:3-5, the Bible warns the following: *"First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation. But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water."*

Always eager to fulfill prophecy, a Baha'i statement reads: *"The time has come when those who preach the dogmas of materialism, whether of the east or the west, whether of capitalism or socialism, must give account of the moral stewardship they have presumed to exercise. Where is the 'new world' promised by these ideologies? Where is the international peace to whose ideals they proclaim their devotion?"* Of course the new world of peace will come when our Lord Jesus Christ returns to establish His kingdom on earth.

I Thessalonians 1:10 *"...and wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath."*

God warns us not to be deceived by those who will try to pave the way for the Antichrist's false peace and deception.

II Thessalonians 2:3, 6-7 *"Let no one in any way deceive you for it (the Day of the Lord) will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction. And you know what restrains him now, so that in this time he may be revealed. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way."*

The Bible teaches us that in the end times a global religion will be established. It is referred to as Mystery Babylon, the mother of all harlots, and it will ride in on the Beast that is Antichrist. We can see the beginnings of this global faith today in our increasingly ecumenical religious leaders, such organizations as the United Religions Initiative, the Parliament of World Religions, and in the United Nations.

The Baha'i faith sees the United Nations as the vessel by which the unifying of the world's religions into one faith will come to fruition. Their plan for the future of our world and the role of the United Nations and a regionalized world, are an eerily complete and detailed picture of Bible prophecy. Baha'i writings state *"the oneness of humanity implies an organic change in the structure of present-day society, a change such as the world has not yet experienced...It calls for no less than the reconstruction and the demilitarization of the whole civilized world – a world organically unified in all the essential aspects of life, its political machinery, its spiritual aspiration, its trade and finance, its script*

and language.” They also promote a redistribution of wealth and a communist system of government that would be able to bring about this leveling of the playing field. This brings to mind the Antichrist’s future financial system in which no one will be able to buy or sell without the mark of the Beast.

While the Baha’i praise the United Nations as the only hope for the “world peace promised by all the major religions”, they are not satisfied with its progress and are a loud voice on the international stage for stepping up the pace of our “spiritual evolution”.

In a statement to the World Summit on Sustainable Development in August 2002, the Baha’i Community wrote, “*despite significant achievements, the United Nations has yet to grasp fully both the constructive role that religion can play in creating a peaceful and prosperous global order, and the destructive impact that religious fanaticism can have on the stability and progress of the world.*” They go on to say “*while the United Nations’ human rights machinery has been used to condemn religious intolerance and persecution, UN development policies and programs have hardly begun to address religious bigotry as a major obstacle to peace and well-being.*” While we do not deny that the world has seen a great deal of death and violence due to religious fanaticism (most prevalently today from Islamic fundamentalists), the Baha’i view goes further. The Baha’is won’t be satisfied until Bible-believing Christians join them in believing that all paths lead to God, and all claims to truth are silenced. In response to what they call religious fanaticism, they suggest that religious leaders need to “*work untiringly to exorcise religious bigotry and superstition from within their faith traditions and renounce claims to religious exclusivity and finality*”. And who decides what is superstition and what is truth? The Baha’i and the world community, of course. “Abdul-Bahá, the Baha’i “incarnation of God”, in “The Promulgation of Universal Peace”, defined superstition as “*beliefs and opinions that are found contrary to the standards of science; for the antithesis of knowledge is ignorance, and the child of ignorance is superstition.*”

Baha’i writings also stress that force and coercion in matters of religion and belief are violations of the Divine command. This sounds reasonable. No one should be forced to accept a religion. However, Baha’i writings also consider simple proselytizing to be coercive. They believe humans should be able to investigate reality for themselves, and to present your truth to another is to violate that spiritual right. They believe all religions are equally valid and just different expressions of the same God, so there is no reason share your faith with others.

The Baha’i make no distinction between the government and private citizens when condemning intolerant religious speech and expression. They support building on the “Convention Against Discrimination in Education” to include sanctions for those who, in the name of religion, would use education and media to oppress freedom of conscience and to promote division. Whether public or private, they say, there should be no tolerance for educational institutions and initiatives, or media policies and programs that promote intolerant attitudes and behaviors. Remember, as proselytizing to others, claiming an exclusive path to salvation, or condemning a lifestyle like homosexuality is deemed intolerant, this would apply to private religious schools and quite possibly churches. In a statement to the United Nations on the spiritual dimension of Sustainable Development, the Baha’i International Community wrote “*Ultimately, the creation of a peaceful and just global civilization, in which the diverse peoples of the world live in harmony with one another and with the natural world, will require a significant reorientation of individual and collective goals and a profound transformation in attitudes and behaviors.*”

So, just how do they plan to bring about this transformation? In a statement to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Baha’i community presented several possible next steps for transforming the United Nations. As a first priority, they proposed holding a convention on freedom of religion and belief to be drafted and ratified as expeditiously as possible by all of the governments of the world. They suggested the foundation within the United Nations system of a permanent religious forum, patterned on the UN’s recently founded Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. The creation of this body would be responsible for beginning the integration of religion into the UN’s work of establishing a peaceful world order.

Of course, to participate in this forum, religious leaders would need to meet certain criteria. Their proposal states “*only those religious leaders who make it clear to their followers that prejudice, bigotry and violence have no place in the life of a religious person should be invited to participate in the work of this body.*” You can be sure that any religious leader who actually believes that Jesus is “the way, the truth and the life, and no one comes to the Father except through Him”, would be disqualified from participation. A belief in the Bible as absolute truth puts you in the category of intolerant and would make you guilty of prejudice.

The statement closes by saying that “*until the religions of the world renounce fanaticism and work wholeheartedly to eliminate it from within their own ranks, peace and prosperity will prove chimerical. It is they who must raise their voices to end the hatred, exclusivity, oppression of conscience, violations of human rights, denial of equality, opposition to science, and glorification of materialism, violence and terrorism, which are perpetrated in the name of religious truth.*” How very tolerant! Oppress someone’s conscience, have the nerve to believe the Bible is the only absolute truth, or claim there is only one path to God, and you will be eliminated. Once again, the Baha’i have written their script for the world’s future directly from the prophecies of the Bible, and have given us a perfect example of the Spirit of Antichrist that marks all false prophets and false religions.

Are Baha'i Christian?

Foundations of Christianity vs. Baha'u'llah

Baha'i Faith and Christianity

It is said that Baha'i people are committed follower of Jesus Christ, but denies what the New Testament declares as truth in the same process. Basic Baha'i faith are diametrically opposed to biblical Christianity. The Baha'i also rejects the fundamental teachings of the New Testament such as:

1. The Trinity
2. The Deity of Christ
3. Virgin Birth of Christ
4. The physical Resurrection of Christ
5. Christ's Atonement (the doctrine concerning the reconciliation of God and humankind,)
6. Salvation by Faith In Christ Alone
7. The Holy Scripture as Final Authority
8. The Second Coming of Christ

This shows that what Baha'i faith followers follows in Jesus and embrace are only those they consider authentic teachings of Christ that are in accord with their principles. This means to say is they "pick out" the ones that agrees the teaching of Baha'u'llah.

This also means that only some part of the Bible is from God but this is contrary to what the Scripture says, "All scripture [is] given by inspiration of God, and [is] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16).

Baha'i in its relativistic system teaches that all religions are valid way to God. Again, this goes against to what Jesus said namely that He is, "The Way, The Truth, The Life" (Jn. 14:6). As you can clearly see, Baha'i Faith is irreconcilable with Christianity. As Dr. Walter Martin said,

There is very little indeed that a true Christian can have in common with the faith of Baha'i. There is simply no common ground on which to meet... The Baha'i Faith is at its very core anti-Christian theology [The Kingdom of The Cult].

**ALLBELIEFS site controlled by the BAHAI INTERNET
AGENCY: BEWARE!**

[Read more](#)

Reform Bahai Faith

The Reform Bahai Faith has once again been born anew from tyranny and oppression, from essentially the same spiritual upheavals as that of Ruth White, Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, Julie Chanler, and the thousands of Bahais who left in protest under the imposition of an oppressive organization based on the fraudulent will and testament of Abdul-Baha throughout the 1920s, '30s, and '40s. God has, throughout the decades, preserved the historical record of events for perceptive minds and souls.

Despite all fanatical, fundamentalist attempts to suppress all memory of Abdul-Baha's vision and interpretation of Baha'u'llah's Faith, to root it out, to coerce and slander, malign and expell, shun and besmirch the testimony of the Writings and the early believers, the Bahai Movement has continued to endure, quietly persist, giving testimony to the vision of God's oneness, the oneness of humanity and religion, and the human potential for peace and brotherly love.

The books and publications of White, Sohrab, and Chanler have kept this vision alive, while the Baha'i upheavals and conflicts of the last three decades have led many thousands of Baha'is to experience for themselves the depth and degree to which the Faith of Baha'u'llah has been traduced and desecrated by people who seek to use and exploit it for their own worldly benefit, power, glory, and material gain.

The Divine Being has created a world of impermanence, evanescence, where nothing lasts forever, and all humanity is subjected to the vicissitudes of life, the fragility of health and constitution, the limits of human existence that He alone knows and sets. With an increasing sense of mortality, I feel it is incumbent upon me to set down, in writing, my own testimony of what I believe to be the truth about the Bahai Faith, having now been a member for over thirty years and having watched or participated in many struggles and debates and studied or watched those of many other souls in their search for truth and understanding.

Thinking of Martin Luther and John Wesley, I feel it especially as a duty and obligation to leave a record of my views for the Reform Bahai Convocation, which, God willing, one day, shall convene to restore and revive the moderate, spiritual religion of Baha'u'llah and Abdul-Baha and clearly set a new course away from the fanatical and fundamentalist Islamist sect of the Haifans, based on their fraudulent will and testament, propagating a manipulative creed intended only to coerce the individual believer and subject him or her to the tyranny of an illegitimate and mutilated organization.

Article I

"The Revelation which, from time immemorial, hath been acclaimed as the Purpose and Promise of all the Prophets of God, and the most cherished Desire of His Messengers, hath now, by virtue of the pervasive Will of the Almighty and at His irresistible bidding, been revealed unto men. The advent of such a Revelation hath been heralded in all the sacred Scriptures." – Baha'u'llah.

Article II

Baha'u'llah's appointed heir and Interpreter, the Center of the Covenant, is Abdul-Baha.

Article III

As scientifically judged by Dr. C. Ainsworth Mitchell, the purported will and testament of Abdul-Baha is a fraudulent document: "That is to say, the writing does not agree with the hypothesis that it was all written by one person." "A minute comparison of the authenticated writing with the writing on every page of the alleged will . . . has failed to detect in any part of the will the characteristics of the writing of Abdul-Baha, as shown in the authenticated specimens." – Dr. C. Ainsworth Mitchell, *Report on the Writing Shown on the Photographs of the Alleged Will of Abdul-Baha*, Library of Congress, 1930.

Article IV

The Baha'i organizations, based upon the fraudulent document, including the writings of Shoghi Effendi*, are inescapably defective and deficient: "There is apparent contradiction between this section of the Will and his lifelong teachings" (56). "Abdul Baha had never in speech or writing given the slightest indication that there would be a successor to himself. On the contrary, a number of addresses delivered by him on various occasions had made the opposite impression" (61). – Mirza Ahmad Sohrab. *The Will and Testament of Abdul Baha, An Analysis*. New York: Universal Publishing, 1944.

Article V

The results of the spurious document has reverberated down the generations and decades, as Ruth White rightly perceived: "**Whether the alleged will of Abdul Baha is authentic or spurious, the results of the administration of Shoghi Effendi and the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is stand as an historical indictment against them.** [Boldface in original] They no more represent the Bahai Religion than the bigots of the dark ages of Christianity" (100). – Ruth White. *Abdul Baha's Questioned Will and Testament*. Beverly Hills: White, 1946.

Article VI

"The Bahai Movement is not an organization. You cannot organize the Bahai Movement." – Abdul-Baha. The mystery of that paradox calls all Bahais to seek its meaning and return to the universal, liberal Teachings of Baha'u'llah and Abdul-Baha and their Writings.

Article VII

Far from creating a theocratic tyranny, the Founders of the Bahai Faith taught a moderate, universal, global religion, grounded in a spiritual democracy, teaching the separation of church and state, with science in its own respected domain, each a profound differentiation of social duty and responsibility, as in Abdul-Baha's "Sermon on the Art of Governance":

"The religious law is like the spirit of life, the government is the locus of the force of deliverance. The religious law is the shining sun, and government is the clouds of April. These two bright stars are like twin lights in the heavens of the contingent world, they have cast their rays upon the people of the world. One has illuminated the world of the soul, the other has caused the earth to flower. One sowed pearls in the oceans of conscience, while the other has made the surface of the earth a garden of paradise." (Tr. Sen McGlinn)

Article VIII

With every passing year, the Writings of Baha'u'llah are being restored to humanity, from those who debased and lowered them to the level of a trademark and copyright.

Article IX

Reform Bahais choose to leave those who choose hatred, shunning, and interminable recrimination over the fraudulent will and testament and over stultifying legalisms, and look to the Spirit of brotherhood and love, knowledge and understanding, prayer and meditation, worship and community, service to one's country and the world of humanity.

With the assurance of Abdul-Baha that humanity has entered the stage of maturity, wherein the individual can independently search for truth, Reform Bahais testify, in this universal, global age, that He reserves for Himself the "hearts of men," rendering to Caesar what is Caesar's, as Baha'u'llah taught in the *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, accepting and embracing His multifaceted vision, the mystery that surpasses understanding.

Reform Bahais invite all Bahais, all humanity, to a Convocation of celebration, peace, love, and brotherhood, to seek humbly together His Will and service, for the good of all people and nations of this spinning globe. The Reform Bahai Faith 95 Theses – On Bahai Liberty
www.ReformBahai.org

October 4, 2007

** Please note that the Reform Bahai Articles do not accept the authenticity of the purported will and testament of Abdul-Baha and, hence, the legitimacy of any guardianship. See [Abdul-Baha's Covenant](#).*

reformbahai.org

Why is Zoroastrianism under-represented on Iranian.com?

If a casual, non-Iranian observer were to stroll into this site and attempt to gauge a perspective on Iranian religions they would quickly form the mistaken impression that after Islam the only other Iranian religion being practiced amongst Iranians was Bahaism. Yet besides Islam or Bahaism Iran has a rich tapestry of various religious views and practices that are neither Islamic nor Baha'i. Zoroastrianism is where Iran and Iranians maintain their historical roots of religious views and practices. But barely is this ancient creed mentioned here. There are countless postings by Bahais promoting their product (only recently less than usual) but barely by the Zoroastrian community talking about themselves. In the interests of balance can longstanding members of the Zoroastrian community kindly step forward and share their perspective and experience. They are the only true ancient Iranian religion of present minority capacity and their views on Iran's past and future should matter more than any other of the various religious minorities here. www.iranian.com

The Role of Baha'i Administration



The convert is liberated from his or her tradition, spiritual practices, ethical norms and social helping networks and is enslaved with irrational, blind, dogmatic faith.

The converts must then submit to the monopoly of the Baha'i Administration. Spiritual desires are suppressed and converts are forced to carry the toxic belief system and to serve the true owner, the UHJ. The Counselors and ABMs, in effect function to consolidate the conversion activity. The Baha'i institutions are used as instruments of personal, family and social control and conditioning. The converts are forced to reject tolerance, pluralism, temple visit, Hindu religious practices and they are permitted no compromise with other divinities, except Bahauallah. The convert must abandon all past spiritual practices and must wholly belong to the new world order. They are psycho programmed to consider Hindus as non-believers or devil worshippers and faith in Bahauallah is the only way for salvation... The converts are brainwashed to consider outsiders as condemned forever.

Any disobedience or questioning of the Baha'i orders either from local national or international bodies are met with administrative or spiritual sanctions. The converts become aliens in their land until delivered by death.

RuhiBooks.blogspot.com

Converting Indian in large numbers



For centuries Indians have been forcefully converted into other religions. Religious conversion has profoundly affected our cultural legacy by the after-effects of genocidal coercive religious conversion. It has left its wounding imprint on our individual psyches and our collective consciousness. Although coercive religious conversion of Hindus in India and abroad has deep historical roots, recent deceptive religious conversion techniques used by Baha'is movements pose serious political, social, ethical and psychological problems. Recently Universal House of Justice, the apex organization of the Baha'i Faith in a new encyclical has issued a call to Baha'is to go out and actively convert Indians. In this era of globalization, Baha'i administration with unlimited funds use sophisticated, deceptive techniques to lure, brainwash and convert innocent people. They forcefully converted Hindus by inducement and deception. Many poor illiterate tribal people in Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh were deceptively converted into Baha'i Faith, although anti conversion law is passed in 11 of the states in India. This will have a disastrous effect on India's political, cultural and social fabric.

<http://ruhbooks.blogspot.com/p/articles.html>

Q: What is the difference between the Tarbiyat Baha'i Community and other Baha'i groups?

A: The only difference between the Tarbiyat Baha'i Community and the rest of the Baha'i world relates to the spiritual leadership of the Faith. The Tarbiyat Baha'i Community believes that the institution of the hereditary Guardianship, delineated by Abdu'l-Baha in his Last Will and Testament, is necessary to preserve the long-term integrity of the Faith. The Tarbiyat Baha'i Community believes that the Guardian must come from the bloodline of Baha'u'llah, and that a Guardian from the Holy Family will arise in due time. The largest Baha'i group, with American headquarters in Wilmette and international headquarters in Haifa, Israel, believes that the institution of the Guardianship terminated when the Faith's first Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, died without children and, apparently, without appointing a successor Guardian.

<http://tarbiyatbahai.blogspot.com/>

Cracks in the Covenant

Bahais present their “Covenant” as something unique to their religion. They present it as an undisputable documented contract of inheritance, a will and testament, if you will, that is protected by God so that any violaters against it will be rendered impotent by it.

The Bahai Faith’s history is full of fragmentation, and the course the Bahai Faith has taken has taken quick surprise turns on a number of occasions.

Bahai Faith is itself a product of Covenant Breaking

First Covenant Breaking

The act that brought the Bahai Faith itself into existence was in defiance of such a covenant. The Bab’s successor, was actually Mirza Yahya and Not Bahauallah. Bahais produced evidence that Bahauallah was the Bab’s intended successor, but did not deny that the Báb appointed Mirza Yahya.

Second Covenant Breaking

Mirza Muhammad Ali

Bahauallah appointed his eldest son Abdul Baha as his successor and after him his younger son Mohammed Ali. After the death of Abdul Baha although Mohammed Ali was alive still many followed , Shoghi effendi the grandson of Abdul Baha. Not following Mohammed Ali was Covenant Breaking of Bahauallah’s writing.

Third Covenant Breaking

Later, the third Bahai leader, Shoghi Effendi, died childless. Having failed to produce a will, and having failed to leave any clear indication of a successor, Shoghi left the Bahai world in a precarious situation. What he did was in apparent violation of the Bahai Covenant.

The Bahais whose allegiance lies with the heterodox organisation, those loyal to the Universal House of Justice currently seated in Haifa, Israel, maintain that those who are true to the Covenant will be empowered by the Covenant.

Bahai history shows us a different picture. At many times, the Bahais who eventually prevailed were nearly vanquished. Only recently has there been such a dominant sect in the Bahai Faith, but even that denomination seems impotent and obscure, lacking the influence to even familiarize the world with the word Bahai in this information age.

Bahai history is mottled with inheritance disputes. In defense of their Covenant, Bahais regard the darker periods as divine tests, arguing that egos are often tested by opportunities for power.

Copper converted to gold

In Kitab-i-Iqan or the Book of Certitude, Bahauallah claims that copper, in a span of 70 years would be converted to gold. "For instance, consider the substance of copper. Were it to be protected in its own mine from becoming solidified, it would, within the space of seventy years, attain to the state of gold. There are some, however, who maintain that copper itself is gold, which by becoming solidified is in a diseased condition, and hath not therefore reached its own state.

Be that as it may, the real elixir will, in one instant, cause the substance of copper to attain the state of gold, and will traverse the seventy-year stages in a single moment. Could this gold be called copper? Could it be claimed that it hath not attained the state of gold, whilst the touch-stone is at hand to assay it and distinguish it from copper?" [12]

Certainly interesting for Alchemists who have turned into Biochemists! Regarding Bahauallah's scientific wisdom, I can only add that such ignorant and incorrect statements, presented by Bahauallah as solid and clear facts, naturally questions his credibility and mental sanity. Now let's look into



some of Bahauallah's and Baha'ism's universal and superior directives. The punishment of theft

In the Kitab-i-Aqdas, Bahauallah instructs his followers to punish thieves [13]. On the first offence the thief is exiled, on the second, imprisonment is prescribed and on the third offence a mark is placed on the thief's forehead. This means that if a thief is caught for the first time, he is to be exiled. In the new city he continues to steal and when caught people will not know of his past, so he will be exiled to another city and will keep on stealing. Let's though assume that a thief is recognized and caught on the third offence, will the mark on his forehead now prevent him from stealing if exile and imprisonment did not? Is the mark on the thief's forehead a license to continue his crimes? What about those caught for the fourth time? How will they be punished? **The punishment for adultery** Adultery and fornication according to Bahauallah is punishable by a fine paid to the Universal House of Justice, (UHJ). On page 15 of Kitab-i-Aqdas (The Most Holy Book), he writes, "It is a must for every adulterer and adulteress that they must pay to the Universal House of Justice and give 9 mithqals of gold. And should they repeat the act, the atonement will be doubled." [14] However if the adulterer/adulteress cannot afford it, then "the poor are the trust of God in your midst" [15] This means that the rich will easily commit adultery and the poor who can't afford the adultery penalty, will still very easily commit adultery as they are "in the protection of God"! Further, I am very curious to know why adultery and fornication have the same punishment- are both crimes considered equally destructive and injurious to the society and the individuals involved?

Also what an honorable way for the men of Universal House of Justice to fill their coffers and 'fulfill their responsibilities'! (The UHJ consists only of Baha'i men since Bahai women are not allowed to participate in the law making process in their faith's supreme governing institution. ...Now, that's called gender equality!) Although Baha'i proponents seem to preach 'unity, peace and equality among mankind' their history, marred by violence, and their teachings, which are in fact twisted and changed Islamic laws, contradict their averred concept of world peace and gender equality.

[13] Kitab-i-Aqdas, text nr. 45 http://www.ishwar.com/bahai/holy_kitab_i_aqdas/texts03.html [14] Kitab-i-Aqdas, text nr 49 http://www.ishwar.com/bahai/holy_kitab_i_aqdas/texts03.html [15] Kitab-i-Aqdas: its place in Baha'i literature Published in The Baha'i World 1992-93 pages 105-117 Baha'i World Centre, 1993, ISBN 0-85398-996-6, Original written in English. Haifa: 1993 http://bahai-library.com/file.php5?file=aqdas_bahai_literature&language= See the part on 'Government'

Infallibility of UHJ

As a historian of religion, I would argue that the disenrollment of Sen McGlinn is another in a series of signs that the Baha'i Faith is becoming a church in the Weberian sense, bound together by doctrinal considerations rather than informal enthusiasm (as was often the case in the 1960s and 1970s). The two doctrines, departing from which has resulted in sanctions, are the absolute infallibility of the Universal House of Justice and its future role at the head of a global theocracy wherein Baha'i administrative institutions will also form the civil government. I know that Baha'i readers will object that Shoghi Effendi expressed reservations about the phrase "theocracy," but I would argue that the doctrine of theocracy now being imposed from Haifa is anyway incompatible with the plain texts of the holy figures. So I am using the word as a social science term, since social scientists would typically consider the assertion that religious institutions will exercise temporal rule a form of theocracy.

The doctrine of the infallibility of the Universal House of Justice has evolved radically in recent decades. Abdul-Baha called the institution *ma'sum* or "guarded from sin by God," but said its *'ismat* was derivative, which certainly makes it sound not very strong, and far from absolute. And, of course, he had also expressed the hope in *The Secret of Divine Civilization* that the Iranian cabinet would prove "*ma'sum*," or protected by God from making big errors. Orally, he denied his own infallibility. So he did not mean by the term anything approaching "absolute infallibility." Once a body calling itself the Universal House of Justice was actually elected, at a time when the original plans for the structure of the religion, found in the writings of the holy figures, had clearly fallen through, there was a natural tendency for that body and its appointees and clients to put very strong emphasis on infallibility. It is a way of asserting leadership of a disparate community. They developed the doctrine into one of absolute infallibility. This process is a form of the iron law of bureaucracy, wherein entrenched elites inevitably have far more power over time to shape things than rank and file "citizens." The absolute infallibility of the Universal House of Justice is an implicit, assumed belief, and for those who uphold it, it is one of the things that define being a Baha'i. The doctrine of theocracy is mysterious in its origins, though Sen McGlinn has given many clues as to its development in the Western communities. It certainly directly contradicts the position of the Baha'i holy figures. Precisely because it is contrary to the scriptural texts, policing this doctrine is all the more crucial for those who believe in it (and who have somehow managed to make believing in it a criterion for rising high in the religion). Otherwise, as a doctrine it is volatile and unstable, constantly in danger of deconstructing itself. Actually, insofar as the most great infallibility was reserved by Baha'u'llah for the Manifestations of God, the absolute infallibility of the Universal House of Justice is likewise not scriptural. (And since Baha'is have to live every day with numerous errors made by that body, it is also contrary to common sense). It, too, is an unstable doctrine and so must be imposed zealously if it is to survive.

The adherents of absolute infallibility and of theocracy are reluctant to promulgate these ideas as a formal orthodoxy to be affirmed, e.g., in acatechism. They certainly would like to do so. But they tend to treat the New Orthodoxy (they would deny it is new) as a goal toward which they want to take the community, gradually and over time. In many ways, this Orthodoxy is often a secret from the rank and file, and many Baha'is only encounter it if they move high up in the administration. When the doctrine of theocracy was first discussed on the old This e-mail address is being protected from spam bots, you need JavaScript enabled to view it in the mid-1990s, many posters remarked that they had never encountered it and certainly did not believe in it.

All of the Baha'i scholars and intellectuals who have been threatened, harassed or sanctioned by the Baha'i administration since the late 1970s have been guilty of publicly disputing one of these two doctrines. Since the high administrators believe that these two doctrines define Baha'i orthodoxy and legitimate membership in the community, an open, public, and vocal challenge to them is almost always met with sanctions. The Baha'i administration is well aware that most Baha'is probably have not yet accepted these two doctrines, but is willing to chalk this phenomenon up to the immaturity of the believers. They are not sanctioned because they are not writers, and have no particular influence, and are not so much opposed to the New Orthodoxy as they are just not convinced of it.

The sociological mechanisms whereby Baha'i administrators and intellectuals throughout the world are inducted behind the scenes into this two-fold New Orthodoxy are unclear and need investigation. Many of the signals given by high administrators lack explicitness.

So, it is clear that the Universal House of Justice has called upon members of the National Spiritual Assemblies throughout the world (is that 1100 persons or so?) to refute Sen McGlinn's book, a powerful signal that they must uphold the doctrine of theocracy. It is also clear that removal of McGlinn from membership in the community is a form of excommunication or *takfir* (*takfir* is simply saying that someone who considers himself or herself a believer is not actually a believer, because of some essential deficit). And the basis for the *takfir* is his public refutation of the key doctrine of Theocracy.

Doctrinally-based churches, such as Roman Catholicism, always impose sanctions on believers who publicly reject key doctrines. This move is necessary in part to protect the doctrines themselves, since sanctioning an author brands his or her work with a sort of taboo, making the work less likely to prove able to challenge the Orthodox doctrine within a community eager to stay on the right side of orthodoxy. The Baha'i faith has simply become such a doctrinally-based church. Since so many rank and file believers came in via the old "sect-like" route of popular enthusiasm, the administrative Church above presides unevenly over the remnants of the Sect (in the technical sense) below.

That is why the New Orthodoxy must remain a secret orthodoxy, but must nevertheless be policed, putting the "heretics" in the Kafkaesque position of not knowing exactly why they have been sanctioned. The "doctrine" may not be named as such, the "heresy" may also not be named, and even the sanction, of excommunication of various sorts, may not be called that, either. Naming these things would signal to the rank and file that their administration had become a doctrinal church, of a sort many of them joined the Baha'i faith to get away from.

cheers

Juan Cole History, U of Michigan

What has brought the Baha'i Faith to this juncture?

This place where several Baha'i sects vie to be recognized as the one and only true Baha'i sect? Where the Haifan Baha'i sect refuses to even recognize the very existence of other Baha'i sects, claiming that because those sects have so few adherents they are insignificant and virtually non-existent.

How is it that the lofty ideals and concepts that are supposedly central to Baha'i belief have been left in the dust in a blind pursuit to raise one version or another of a supposedly inviolable Baha'i covenant over the several other versions of that Baha'i covenant which are all held to be sacrosanct by those Baha'is who hold to those particular versions?

Why is it that respect for the diversity of religious interpretation is missing amongst all Baha'i sects? Why? Because a respect for the diversity of religious interpretation was not held or practiced by the founders of the Baha'i religion.

Although the founders of the Baha'i religion gave lip service to the principle of the oneness of religion they failed to recognize that they themselves were responsible to apply such principles in their own lives. Mirza Husayn Ali – Baha'u'llah failed to do this in regards to the Babi/Bayani faith and its followers, Abbas Effendi – Abdu'l-Baha' failed to do this in regards to his own half brother Muhammad who chose to hold to a more unitarian interpretation of Baha'ism.

When exceptions are made to the oneness of humanity it is no longer true oneness, it is the same old same old religious exclusivity that has been practiced by religionists since the beginning of organized religion. When there is no respect for a true diversity of religious interpretation religion falters, it then becomes more of a source of disunity than it is source of unity; more of a bane to humanity than a boon.

The present situation amongst Baha'i sects is a case in point. Of course Haifan Baha'is will discount this reality stating that all other Baha'i sects are insignificant and unimportant. While each Baha'i will blindly cleave to their own religious interpretation all along allowing those interpretations to make a mockery of any pretense of a true belief in the oneness of humanity, the oneness of human spirituality.

What is the source of this profound dysfunction? The founders of the Baha'i religion themselves. Men who had words stating that shunning had been abolished, that humanity should no longer see others as their enemies, drawing lines, that the former religious practice of dividing humanity had been removed; while all along out of the other side of their mouths came contradictory words, hypocritical words, counseling their followers to engage in the very religious practices they had supposedly left behind. What you see is the result of these contradictory and hypocritical religious teachings and religious practices.

If Baha'is of all sects truly believe in the oneness of humanity, truly believe in the oneness of human spirituality, they will have to leave the immature, ignorant, and contradictory religious practices of the founders of their religion behind them. They will have to truly embrace religious diversity, as well as diversity of religious interpretation and not see such diversity as a threat to their chosen orthodoxies but as genuine and healthy expressions of human spirituality. Until this occurs the Baha'i Faith as a religion will continue to be more of a source of disunity than it is a source of unity and humanity would be better off without it.

Cheers

Larry Rowe

Caste System in Baha'i Faith

Currently, the Baha'is think of humanity as being divided into a few official groups or castes. I have organized them in a list from "best" to "worst" based on how many rights they would have in a future Baha'i world order:

1. Baha'i in good standing 2. Baha'i with administrative rights removed 3. non-Baha'i 4. Covenant-breaker

If you include more subtle gradations, which may possibly acquire a greater degree of official status in the future, the list would look like this:

1. Baha'i in good standing, active
2. Baha'i in good standing, inactive
3. Baha'i with some administrative rights removed
4. Baha'i with all administrative rights removed (Feast attendance, voting, eligibility for election, contribution to Funds, contribution to Huququ'llah, plus anything I'm forgetting to mention)
5. non-Baha'i (never been a Baha'i)
6. ex-Baha'i, left voluntarily (not an opponent)
7. ex-Baha'i, membership revoked/expelled by UHJ (not an opponent)
8. opponent or enemy of the faith, non-Baha'i
9. opponent or enemy of the faith, ex-Baha'i
10. child or grandchild of Covenant-breaker, not practicing in Covenant-breaker organization
11. Covenant-breaker, not officially declared by UHJ but member of Covenant-breaker organization
12. Covenant-breaker, officially declared by UHJ

Groups 10-12 constitute the Baha'i version of the "untouchable caste." Groups 4-12 (the vast majority of categories) would not have the right to vote in elections for the highest governmental positions, i.e. the Baha'i Houses of Justice that would have final authority at the local, national, and international levels.

How's that for unity of all people, huh?

Best, Eric Stetson (Group 11 – I think ☐)

Division among the followers of Bab and Baha'u'llah

Here is a brief presentation on the history of divisions in the Bahá'í Faith – right from its inception, the Báb, ‘Subh-i-Azal, Bahá'u'lláh, Abbas Effendi, Shoghi Effendi and finally till the present day Universal House of Justice.

Baha'is are not supposed to indulge in politics but the Universal House of Justice does!!!

FREE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

“There are no officers in this Cause. I do not and have not ‘Appointed’ anyone to perform any special service, but I encourage everyone to engage in the service of the Kingdom. The foundation of this Cause is pure spiritual democracy and not a Theocracy.” – Abdul Baha

Free Baha'is is an ideological group trying to disseminate the True Faith of Baha'u'llah as against the Baha'i Administration.

Some of the teachings of the Faith are:- – The oneness of all the world's great religions. – The Oneness of God. – The harmony of science and religion – The oneness of humanity. – Progressive Revelation – God has progressively revealed His attributes through a series of Manifestations or Prophets including Adam, Krishna, Buddha, Muhammad, Christ, Zoroaster, Moses, the Bab, and Baha'u'llah. – Independent investigation of the truth. – Strict adherence to the Covenant of Baha'u'llah and Abdul-Baha. – Free Bahais love the entire world; to love humanity and try to serve it; to work for universal peace and universal brotherhood. – We firmly and strongly believe that Abdul Baha, The Most Mighty Branch, did not appoint Shoghi Effendi as the Guardian and the Alleged Will of Abdul Baha is forged and a fake. Keeping this in mind one should expect that the teachings of the Shoghi Effendi should be a mirror of Baha'u'llah and Abdul Baha's teachings. Therefore we see that Shoghi Effendi's life is contrary to the beliefs and teachings of the Baha'i Faith. There are numerous contradictions in the statements of Abdul Baha and Shoghi Effendi. Let us just take two examples.

1-The infallible Center of the Covenant (Abdul Baha) said that Confucius was a Manifestation (Promulgation of Universal Peace, p.346). Which is the position held today. Shoghi Effendi states, “Confucius was not a Prophet (Manifestation)” (Lights of Guidance, p.349).

2-In the words of the infallible Shoghi Effendi:

“It is too late to save the world. The Message of Baha'u'llah has Been in the world over one hundred years ... but it has been rejected ... The calamity will be sudden ... The Russian submarines will paralyze Great Britain, the United States, Europe, the Atlantic, Pacific and Mediterranean seaboard ... Bahais should not only leave their homes but go away as far as possible from the coasts ... The coming calamity will be worse than war! Whole cities will evaporate! Especially in those cities where it is hardest to teach the Faith such as New York, Chicago, San Francisco ... The calamity will happen before the Lesser Peace.” (Bahai Lore, p. 122 from Ruhaniyyih Ruth Moffet, ‘Visiting the Bahai World Center’ [May 17 – June 1 1954], pp. 7-8.)

This “prophecy” bears all the marks of someone who is afflicted with an overabundance of morbid imaginings, possibly inspired by a fondness for reading “novels.”

For those friends who are new to the Free Faith or those who just want to know about it and how we differ from the Haifan sect.

<http://www.freebahais.com/> <http://freebahais.blogspot.com/>

DUPLICITY AND HYPOCRISY IN BAHÁ'Í FAITH



Bahá'ís indeed have strange and mysterious ways of operating. While to the world they declare that Ruhi books are selfless service of the Faith to the humanity towards moral upliftment, but the hidden agenda is conversion.

Therefore to hide their duplicity and hypocrisy, Bahá'ís always have two types of statements one is for “general public” and other “only for Bahá'ís”. One will find the two statements always in sharp contradiction to each other.

Recently Dr. Payman Mohajer in his speech to the Bahá'ís said that the purpose of core activities is for betterment of society but the actual Messages to the Bahá'ís clearly states that it is for proselytizing and conversion. This is evident when one reads through the messages circulated by the Faith's supreme body the Universal House of Justice.

What Bahá'ís Say : “In the course of the consultations, Dr. Mohajer posed a thought-provoking question to the participants, “What is the purpose of our core activities?”

“Dr. Mohajer then went on to share an explanation, by giving the example of a glass. He said that while it is not inaccurate to say that the glass is transparent, it is evident that transparency is not the purpose of the glass. Transparency is one of the attributes of the glass, but its purpose is to hold liquid. Similarly, one of the attributes of our core activities is that they become portals for entry by troops or instruments for teaching – but that is not their purpose *Now if someone were to ask us whether the purpose of our inviting them to join study circles is to make them Bahá'ís, we can confidently say ‘NO’ and tell them that the purpose of our core activities is to assist in the transformation and betterment of society.*”

1. The Bahá'ís must realize that the success of this work depends upon the individual. The individual must arise as never before to proclaim the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. The most effective way for them to carry on their work is for the individual to make many contacts, select a few who *they feel would become Bahá'ís, develop a close friendship with them, then complete confidence, and finally teach them the Faith, until they become strong supporters of the Cause of God.*

(Shoghi Effendi to all National Spiritual Assemblies, 13 May 1955)

2. The role of the individual is of unique importance in the work of the Cause. It is the individual who manifests the vitality of faith upon which the success of the teaching work and the development of the community depends. Bahá'u'lláh's command to each believer to teach His Faith confers an inescapable responsibility which cannot be transferred to, or assumed by, any institution of the Cause. The individual alone can exercise those capacities which include the ability to take initiative, to seize opportunities, to form friendships, to interact personally with others, to build relationships, to win the cooperation of others in common service to the Faith and society, and to convert into action the decisions made by consultative bodies. It is the individual's duty to “consider every avenue of approach which he might utilize in his personal attempts to capture the attention, maintain the interest, and deepen the faith, *of those whom he seeks to bring into the fold of his Faith.*”

(Ridván Message 1996)

3. “.... As you know, during the time of the Guardian, emphasis was placed on establishing the Faith throughout the world and in raising up the administrative institutions that would provide the foundation for the prosecution of the Divine Plan. As the House of Justice observed in its Ridván 2000 message, this task has been essentially completed. “The structures of an Administrative System that, at the end of the century, stands before the gaze of the world in the wholeness of its essential form.” The Cause has now entered a stage in its organic development in which *it is necessary to prepare the community for entry by troops and, beyond that, mass conversion.* The current series of global teaching Plans have focused the energies of the Bahá'ís on stimulating the processes of growth and community development at the level of the cluster, and the friends have been encouraged to teach the Faith where they live. Those clusters with larger Bahá'í populations have been selected for close attention with the expectation that they can more rapidly advance, and the lessons learned can then be applied to other clusters”

DIVISIONS EXIST IN BAHAI FAITH ALSO...

The [Bahá'í Faith](#) has had challenges to leadership at the death of every head of the religion. The vast majority of Bahá'ís have followed a line of authority from [Bahá'u'lláh](#) to ['Abdu'l-Bahá](#) to [Shoghi Effendi](#) to the [Custodians](#) to the [Universal House of Justice](#). [Sects](#) diverging from this line of leadership have had relatively little success and have failed to attract a sizeable following. In this sense, there is only one *major* branch of the Bahá'í Faith, represented by at least 5 million adherents, whereas the groups that have broken away have either become extinct with time, or have remained in very small numbers. Globally the Bahá'í community has maintained its unity.

[Bahá'í scriptures](#) define a [Covenant](#) regarding succession which is intended to keep the Bahá'ís unified. Claimants challenging the widely accepted successions of leadership are shunned by the majority group as Covenant-Breakers, though such claimants likewise regard the others in the same way. Other than on the matter of leadership and organization, there are few if any differences between the schismatic and mainstream Bahá'ís in matters of doctrine and practice.

Bahá'ís are complicit in genocide.

This will be uncomfortable for many Bahá'ís... especially those with truly good hearts. But neutrality and silence in the face of injustice support tyranny. Of all people, Bahá'ís should know this. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cde3eyzdr63o> In what kind of world can one preach justice and claim to stand for truth, while remaining silent about the slaughter of children ... [Continue reading](#)